Rivista di Estetica, issue: Homology and analogy

Deadline: Mar 30, 2015

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Homology and analogy: relationships and conceptual synthesis across philosophy, life sciences and arts.

The special issue aims at understanding the polarity homology/analogy across different conceptual fields in contemporary debates within philosophy, life sciences, and arts. The history of this conceptual pair shows the pervasive capacity to build relationships among different objects of knowledge and, much more interestingly, the possibility to achieve a conceptual synthesis of different methodological approaches. The concept of analogy establishes a relation of similarity among different features based on a functional consideration of the organisms, while the concept of homology sees the systemic identity of characters: it indicates the meaning (“Bedeutung” as Richard Owen says) of the shared character under any modification of form and function, thus allowing us to rethink the role of teleology and morphology in contemporary thought. Although widely employed, this categorial couple is far from being unanimously defined, offering a large provision of open questions. The distinction of different meanings of “function” and the renegotiation of the biological concepts of organism and biological act, focusing on a morphological account of modularity, encourages a conceptual synthesis among philosophy, arts, and life sciences.

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