Preface to Volume 56

It is with great pleasure that we present volume 56 of the Danish Yearbook of Philosophy. This spring issue, vol. 56, no. 1 (2023), is a general issue containing four articles and four book reviews with no common theme. The autumn issue, vol. 56, no. 2 (2023), will be a special issue on applied philosophy following a call for articles within this field by our colleagues at the Centre for Applied Philosophy at Aalborg University, edited by Jacob Bo Lautrup Kristensen, with an introduction co-authored by Kristensen, Antje Gimmler, and Phillip Højme.1

“Applied Philosophy” was also the overall theme for the annual meeting of the Danish Philosophical Society in March 2021, which was organized and hosted by the aforementioned center but ultimately had to be held via Zoom due to yet another wave of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Danish philosophical community owes a lot to our colleagues in Aalborg for their persistent efforts to successfully hold the society’s traditional annual meeting despite all the difficulties during this period—difficulties that we will do well to remember, but which we hopefully nevertheless can consign to history. Despite the challenges, the Yearbook thus continues the format first presented in 2021,2 dedicating a special issue to the overall theme of the society’s annual meeting.3

The theme of the most recent annual meeting, held in March 2023, was “The Nature of Nature,” hosted by the Philosophy of Education research unit and the Danish Philosophy of Education Association at the Danish School of Education, Aarhus University. In continuation of the meeting, there is an open call for submissions for a special issue of the Yearbook on “The Nature of Nature,” edited by Sune Frølund and Jon Auring Grimm from the research unit. The call will remain open until autumn 2023.

This meeting also hosted a parallel session on “The Nature of Reproduction and the Public Sphere,” resulting in a call for papers for another special issue of the Yearbook edited by Lucrecia Paz Burges Cruz, Tomeu Sales Gelabert, and

---

1 See Jacob Bo Lautrup Kristensen, Antje Gimmler, and Philip Højme, “Applied Philosophy: Introduction,” Danish Yearbook of Philosophy 56, no. 2 (2023 [forthcoming]).
Returning to the present general issue of the *Yearbook*, allow me to emphasize how pleased we are to be able to publish in all of our official languages: English, German, and French. Moreover, by sheer luck, we have the additional pleasure of publishing two articles and a book review on indisputably one of the core subjects of Danish philosophy, namely Søren Aabye Kierkegaard. In the *Yearbook*, the first extensive treatment of his thought was the publication of proceedings from the 1966 conference in Copenhagen of the Institut international de philosophie on “Kierkegaard y la philosophie contemporaine,” edited by Johannes Witt-Hansen, and since then Kierkegaard’s work has been a recurrent subject of philosophical scrutiny in the volumes of the *Yearbook*.

In the first article of the present issue, Keisuke Yoshida argues that the understanding of Kierkegaard benefits from Adorno’s ambivalent critique. Adorno criticizes Kierkegaard’s escape from the world through objectless inwardness, but rather than an escape through closure, inwardness can also be understood as enabling an opening toward otherness. Recognizing the distinctive roles played by Climacus and Anticlimacus, Yoshida thus argues that, ultimately, Kierkegaard himself conceives of subjectivity as a dynamic transformation between objectless inwardness and other-regarding openness. The subject thus breaks with this objectlessness through inner reflection. Moreover, inward reflection implies a certain critical negation of mundane matters that is at the same time in conflict with the establishment and affirmation of eternal salvation. As Yoshida argues, Kierkegaardian inwardness thus has a potential for social criticism.

Yoshida’s article has been available as an advance online publication since 2020, and we are happy to finally be able to assign it to a proper issue. As explained in more detail last year, the *Yearbook* became a victim of its own success and did not have the capacity to publish all the excellent contributions that were submitted. By increasing the annual number of pages, publishing two issues annually, and raising the criteria for acceptance, we are now in a position to publish all the excellent contributions that were submitted.

---


6 See Sørensen, “Preface,” 1–2.
much better position. We would nevertheless like to apologize to the author for the unfortunate delay in publication.

In the second article, Per Jepsen may be said to follow up on and supplement Yoshida's analysis. Jepsen focuses on Kierkegaard's later work, hence deliberately ignoring the pseudonymous authorship and avoiding a wealth of interpretational questions. Both in notebooks and published works, the late Kierkegaard was consistently pessimistic about earthly matters, but optimistic about human being as such, considering the pursuit of earthly suffering a precondition for the heavenly blessing to be enjoyed in the eternal afterlife. In his quest for true Christianity, he therefore became critical of the mundane optimism and eudaimonism of the ‘Christendom’ of the established Danish church. As Jepsen argues in detail, it is pessimism as conceptualized by Schopenhauer that allows Kierkegaard to be precise in his critique and to recommend redemption through earthly ascetism. The wretchedness and hardship of the world is a gift from God, and in the denial of the world, the Christian is bestowed with the grace of martyrdom. Critique of the clerical establishment thus leads Kierkegaard to a general critique of the falsehood of Danish Protestantism.7

The third article brings the wretchedness of the earth to new heights. Confronted with contemporary discussions of the Anthropocene, Sune Frølund prepares the ground for the special issue mentioned above, namely by arguing that the distinction between human and nature is necessary to make sense of environmental and ecological issues as problems to be solved. Today, there is a growing trend to blur the distinction, but as Frølund argues, while one may of course discuss how the distinction should be made, recent attempts to do away with it completely are fraught with contradictions. As Frølund contends, this is the case with Steven Vogel and Timothy Morton, as well as with Bruno Latour. In his famous flat ontology, Latour deconstructs the distinction between nature and culture, but as Frølund points out in his meticulous analysis, he later readmits nature in inverted commas, discussing the various roles of ‘nature.’ However, Latour hereby contradicts his own rejection of human being as the privileged abode of agency, by extension endorsing even the classical ideals of objectivity and rationality, which Frølund meanwhile prefers to pursue through Gernot Böhme’s neo-phenomenology of nature.8

In the fourth and final article, by Anders Palstroem, there is even greater focus on neo-phenomenology, namely as one of two theoretical approaches Palstroem has chosen to discuss affective aspects of atmosphere and resonance. While neo-phenomenology has focused especially on the former, the latter is discussed within Spinozist theory. However, as Palstroem argues, even if the former may be said to be something hovering in the background, while the latter expresses some kind of active reciprocal participation, the two affective phenomena are both forms of affective relationality and may thus be subsumed under the idea of affective attunement, namely as different modes of the latter in interplay. Moreover, when it comes to understanding the specific relation between atmosphere and resonance, it is productive to bring the two approaches into play with one another rather than emphasizing their theoretical differences and discordances. Even though the neo-phenomenology of Hermann Schmitz may be said to emphasize felt experience and aesthetic sensitivity while Spinozist theory focuses on power and capacity, Palstroem argues that they should be orchestrated as a mutually complimentary affective arrangement that is productive for the understanding of affective phenomena.9

As mentioned, the present issue also contains four book reviews. The Yearbook publishes reviews of books published in English, German, or French by Danish philosophers, by philosophers with strong ties to Denmark, or about subjects related to Danish philosophy. Reviewers must be non-Danish philosophers. Authors of books eligible for review may contact the reviews editor, Mogens Chrom Jacobsen, who also happens to be the author of one of the books reviewed in the present issue.10 By coincidence, two of the other books reviewed in this issue are by two other editors of the Yearbook, Andrew Jampol-Petzinger and myself;11 the first of the books reviewed, however, is authored by Søren Mau, who so far has escaped editorial responsibilities.

---

Many people all over the world contribute to the realization of each single volume of the *Yearbook*, and not all are credited by name in the final publication. As editors, we would thus like to extend our appreciation for the support of the editorial boards—both the local Danish board, with its changing representatives from Danish philosophy departments, and the international board, which was expanded last summer.

In addition, we would like to specifically thank the following people for their support and assistance during the work on volume 56: Aaron James Goldman, Arne Johan Vetlesen, Asbjørn Steglich-Petersen, Borut Trpin, Carsten Fogh Nielsen, Christoph Törnqvist, Finn Collin, Gene McGarry, Gerhard Schweppenhäuser, Gisella M. Vorderobermeier, Hélène Leclerc, Henrik Jøkø Bjerre, Henrik Vase Frandsen, Jes Lynning Harfeld, Kresten Lundsgaard-Leth, Kristen Chevalier, Lars Erslev Andersen, Lovisa Andén, Monica Meijsing, Simon Rolls, Sune Frølund, Toni Rønnow-Rasmussen, Tonino Bernardo Griffero, and Zsolt Kapel.

*Asger Sørensen* | [ORCID: 0000-0002-5671-9060](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5671-9060)
Editor-in-Chief, *Danish Yearbook of Philosophy*
Philosophy of Education, Aarhus University, Copenhagen, Denmark
aso@edu.au.dk