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Byung Chul Han

We no longer inhabit earth and dwell under the sky: these are being replaced by Google Earth and the Cloud. The

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terrestrial order is giving way to a digital order, the world of things is being replaced by a world of non-things – a constantly expanding 'infosphere' of

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information and communication which displaces objects and obliterates any stillness and calmness in our lives. Byung-Chul Han's critique of the

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infosphere highlights
the price we are paying
for our growing
preoccupation with
information and
communication. Today we
search for more

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information without
gaining any real
knowledge. We
communicate constantly
without participating in
a community. We save
masses of data without

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keeping track of our memories. We accumulate friends and followers without encountering other people. This is how information develops a form of life that has

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no stability or duration. And as we become increasingly absorbed in the infosphere, we lose touch with the magic of things which provide a

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stable environment for dwelling and give continuity to human life. The infosphere may seem to grant us new freedoms but it creates new forms of control

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too, and it cuts us off from the kind of freedom that is tied to acting in the world. This new book by one of the most creative cultural theorists writing today

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will be of interest to a wide readership.

Our competitive, service-oriented societies are taking a toll on the late-modern individual. Rather than improving

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life, multitasking,
"user-friendly"
technology, and the
culture of convenience
are producing disorders
that range from
depression to attention

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deficit disorder to
borderline personality
disorder. Byung-Chul Han
interprets the spreading
malaise as an inability
to manage negative
experiences in an age

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characterized by
excessive positivity and
the universal
availability of people
and goods. Stress and
exhaustion are not just
personal experiences,

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but social and historical phenomena as well. Denouncing a world in which every against-the-grain response can lead to further disempowerment, he draws

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on literature,
philosophy, and the
social and natural
sciences to explore the
stakes of sacrificing
intermittent
intellectual reflection

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for constant neural connection.

This book critically engages with the idea of transparency whose ubiquitous demand stands in stark contrast to its

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lack of conceptual clarity. The book carefully examines this notion in its own right, traces its emergence in Early Modernity and analyzes its

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omnipresence in
contemporary rhetoric.
Today, transparency has
become a catchword
outplaying other
Enlightenment values
like empowerment,

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sincerity and the notion of a public sphere. In a suspicious manner, transparency is entangled in the discourses on power, surveillance, and self-

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exposure. Bringing together prominent scholars from the emerging field of Critical Transparency Studies, the book offers a map of the various

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sites at which
transparency has become
virulent and connects
the dots between past
and present. By studying
its appearances in
today's hyper-mediated

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economies of information and by linking it back to its historical roots, the book analyzes transparency and its discontents, and scrutinizes the reasons

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why it has become the imperative of a supposedly post-ideological age. Finalist for the International Booker Prize and the National

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Book Award A haunting Orwellian novel about the terrors of state surveillance, from the acclaimed author of *The Housekeeper and the Professor*. On an unnamed

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island, objects are disappearing: first hats, then ribbons, birds, roses. . . . Most of the inhabitants are oblivious to these changes, while those few

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able to recall the lost objects live in fear of the draconian Memory Police, who are committed to ensuring that what has disappeared remains

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forgotten. When a young writer discovers that her editor is in danger, she concocts a plan to hide him beneath her floorboards, and together they cling to her

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writing as the last way
of preserving the past.
Powerful and
provocative, The Memory
Police is a stunning
novel about the trauma
of loss. ONE OF THE BEST

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BOOKS OF THE YEAR THE
NEW YORK TIMES * THE
WASHINGTON POST * TIME *
CHICAGO TRIBUNE * THE
GUARDIAN * ESQUIRE * THE
DALLAS MORNING NEWS *
FINANCIAL TIMES *

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LIBRARY JOURNAL * THE
A.V. CLUB * KIRKUS
REVIEWS * LITERARY HUB
American Book Award
winner
Niklas Luhmann's
Modernity

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The Expulsion of the
Other
Psychopolitics
Topology of Violence
What is Power?
Upheaval in the
Lifeworld

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This major study develops a new account of modernity and its relation to the self. Building upon the ideas set out in *The Consequences of Modernity*, Giddens argues that 'high' or 'late' modernity is a post

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traditional order characterised by a developed institutional reflexivity. In the current period, the globalising tendencies of modern institutions are accompanied by a transformation of day-to-

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day social life having profound implications for personal activities. The self becomes a 'reflexive project', sustained through a revisable narrative of self identity. The reflexive project of the self, the author

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seeks to show, is a form of control or mastery which parallels the overall orientation of modern institutions towards 'colonising the future'. Yet it also helps promote tendencies

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which place that orientation radically in question - and which provide the substance of a new political agenda for late modernity. In this book Giddens concerns himself with themes he has often been

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accused of unduly neglecting, including especially the psychology of self and self-identity. The volumes are a decisive step in the development of his thinking, and will be essential reading

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***for students and professionals
in the areas of social and
political theory, sociology,
human geography and social
psychology.***

***Most American soldiers in Iraq
had a deep, thick plastic box***

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called a “guerrilla box” which usually sat at the end of their cot. Soldiers would keep all kinds of things in their box. Weapon cleaning kits. Extra equipment. Blankets and pillows from home. Footballs.

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Protein powder. Mine was full of books. These are not confessions. Nor are they essays. Nothing is off the table in Did You Kill Anyone?, a hybrid compendium of thoughts and observations

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whose narrative thrust is propelled and shaped by the inquiry itself. Drawing from and elaborating on years of the author's work on the peripheries of this subject, published in such outlets as

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The Paris Review, The Atlantic, Rolling Stone, and The American Conservative, Did You Kill Anyone? asks a question that is rarely, if ever, discussed publicly: 'why do soldiers miss war?'. With the

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intimacy of a memoir and the force of a critical analysis, Scott Beauchamp gives his daring, counterintuitive take, interrogating the frivolous conformity of our increasingly inhuman(e) culture.

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We no longer inhabit earth and dwell under the sky: these are being replaced by Google Earth and the Cloud. The terrestrial order is giving way to a digital order, the world of things is being replaced by a

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world of non-things – a constantly expanding ‘infosphere’ of information and communication which displaces objects and obliterates any stillness and calmness in our lives. Byung-

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Chul Han's critique of the infosphere highlights the price we are paying for our growing preoccupation with information and communication. Today we search for more information

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without gaining any real knowledge. We communicate constantly without participating in a community. We save masses of data without keeping track of our memories. We accumulate

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friends and followers without encountering other people. This is how information develops a form of life that has no stability or duration. And as we become increasingly absorbed in the infosphere, we

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lose touch with the magic of things which provide a stable environment for dwelling and give continuity to human life. The infosphere may seem to grant us new freedoms but it creates new forms of control

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too and it cuts us off from the kind of freedom that is tied to acting in the world. This new book by one of the most creative cultural theorists writing today will be of interest to a wide readership.

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Please note: This is a companion version & not the original book. Sample Book Insights: #1 The subject today is a project, constantly reinventing itself. However, this projective freedom is

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actually a form of coercion and constraint, as the subject is subjugating itself to internal limitations and self-constraints. #2 Neoliberalism is a highly efficient system for exploiting freedom. Everything

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that belongs to practices and expressive forms of liberty – emotion, play, and communication – is exploited.
#3 The post-Marxist theory known as the Cooperative Multitude does not describe

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the contemporary mode of production. It is a mistake to believe that the cooperative Multitude will overthrow the parasitic Empire and bring forth a communist social order. #4 The neoliberal

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regime transforms allo-exploitation into auto-exploitation, and this affects all classes. The auto-aggressivity that results from this auto-exploitation means that the exploited are not

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***inclined to revolution so much
as depression.***

A Topology of the Present

The Agony of Eros

***My Encounters with Calm, Joy,
and Compassion at 10***

Monasteries Around the World

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Pain Today

Lacan

Against Nature

In his philosophical reflections on the art of lingering, acclaimed cultural theorist Byung-Chul Han argues that the value we attach

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today to the *vita activa* is producing a crisis in our sense of time. Our attachment to the *vita activa* creates an imperative to work which degrades the human being into a labouring animal, an animal laborans. At the same

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time, the hyperactivity which characterizes our daily routines robs human beings of the capacity to linger and the faculty of contemplation. It therefore becomes impossible to experience time as fulfilling. Drawing on a

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range of thinkers including Heidegger, Nietzsche and Arendt, Han argues that we can overcome this temporal crisis only by revitalizing the *vita contemplativa* and relearning the art of lingering. For what distinguishes

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humans from other animals is the capacity for reflection and contemplation, and when life regains this capacity, this art of lingering, it gains in time and space, in duration and vastness. Our societies today are

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**characterized by a universal
algophobia: a generalized fear of
pain. We strive to avoid all painful
conditions – even the pain of love
is treated as suspect. This
algophobia extends into society:
less and less space is given to**

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**conflicts and controversies that
might prompt painful discussions.
It takes hold of politics too:
politics becomes a palliative
politics that is incapable of
implementing radical reforms that
might be painful, so all we get is**

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more of the same. Faced with the coronavirus pandemic, the palliative society is transformed into a society of survival. The virus enters the palliative zone of well-being and turns it into a quarantine zone in which life is

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increasingly focused on survival. And the more life becomes survival, the greater the fear of death: the pandemic makes death, which we had carefully repressed and set aside, visible again. Everywhere, the prolongation of

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life at any cost is the preeminent value, and we are prepared to sacrifice everything that makes life worth living for the sake of survival. This trenchant analysis of our contemporary societies by one of the most original cultural

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critics of our time will appeal to a wide readership.

Beauty today is a paradox. The cult of beauty is ubiquitous but it has lost its transcendence and become little more than an aspect of consumerism, the aesthetic

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dimension of capitalism. The sublime and unsettling aspects of beauty have given way to corporeal pleasures and 'likes', resulting in a kind of 'pornography' of beauty. In this book, cultural theorist Byung-

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Chul Han reinvigorates aesthetic theory for our digital age. He interrogates our preoccupation with all things slick and smooth, from Jeff Koon's sculptures and the iPhone to Brazilian waxing. Reaching far deeper than our

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superficial reactions to viral videos and memes, Han reclaims beauty, showing how it manifests itself as truth, temptation and even disaster. This wide-ranging and profound exploration of beauty, encompassing ethical and

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political considerations as well as aesthetic, will appeal to all those interested in cultural and aesthetic theory, philosophy and digital media.

In this wide-ranging book, renowned philosopher and

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cultural theorist Peter Sloterdijk examines art in all its rich and varied forms: from music to architecture, light to movement, and design to typography. Moving between the visible and the invisible, the audible and the

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inaudible, his analyses span the centuries, from ancient civilizations to contemporary Hollywood. With great verve and insight he considers the key issues that have faced thinkers from Aristotle to Adorno, looking at art

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**in its relation to ethics,
metaphysics, society, politics,
anthropology and the subject.
Sloterdijk explores a variety of
topics, from the Greco-Roman
invention of postcards to the rise
of the capitalist art market, from**

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the black boxes and white cubes of modernism to the growth of museums and memorial culture. In doing so, he extends his characteristic method of defamiliarization to transform the way we look at works of art and

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artistic movements. His bold and original approach leads us away from the well-trodden paths of conventional art history to develop a theory of aesthetics which rejects strict categorization, emphasizing instead the crucial

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importance of individual subjectivity as a counter to the latent dangers of collective culture. This sustained reflection, at once playful, serious and provocative, goes to the very heart of Sloterdijk's enduring

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philosophical preoccupation with the aesthetic. It will be essential reading for students and scholars of philosophy and aesthetics and will appeal to anyone interested in culture and the arts more generally.

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The Paradoxes of Differentiation
Deconstruction in Chinese
Non-things
Culture and Globalisation
Capitalism and the Death Drive
Hyperculture

One of today's most widely read

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philosophers considers the shift in violence from visible to invisible, from negativity to excess of positivity. Some things never disappear—violence, for example. Violence is ubiquitous and incessant but protean, varying its outward form according to the social constellation at hand. In *Topology of*

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Violence, the philosopher Byung-Chul Han considers the shift in violence from the visible to the invisible, from the frontal to the viral to the self-inflicted, from brute force to mediated force, from the real to the virtual. Violence, Han tells us, has gone from the negative—explosive, massive, and

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martial—to the positive, wielded without enmity or domination. This, he says, creates the false impression that violence has disappeared. Anonymized, desubjectified, systemic, violence conceals itself because it has become one with society. Han first investigates the macro-physical manifestations of

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violence, which take the form of negativity—developing from the tension between self and other, interior and exterior, friend and enemy. These manifestations include the archaic violence of sacrifice and blood, the mythical violence of jealous and vengeful gods, the deadly violence of

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the sovereign, the merciless violence of torture, the bloodless violence of the gas chamber, the viral violence of terrorism, and the verbal violence of hurtful language. He then examines the violence of positivity—the expression of an excess of positivity—which manifests itself as over-achievement,

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over-production, over-communication, hyper-attention, and hyperactivity. The violence of positivity, Han warns, could be even more disastrous than that of negativity. Infection, invasion, and infiltration have given way to infarction. Please note: This is a companion version & not the original book. Sample

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Book Insights: #1 The past century was an immunological age. The twentieth century was dominated by the vocabulary of the Cold War, which was an entirely military dispositive. Everything foreign was simply fought off. #2 The immunological paradigm is incompatible with the process of

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globalization. The world is still marked by borders, transitions, thresholds, fences, ditches, and walls that prevent universal change and exchange. #3
The violence of positivity that comes from overproduction, overachievement, and overcommunication is no longer viral. It does not constitute

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immunological defense, but digestive-neuronal abreaction and refusal. #4 The genealogy of hostility that Baudrillard outlines is that the enemy first takes the form of a wolf. He is an external enemy who attacks and against whom one defends oneself by building fortifications and walls.

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What we call growth today is in fact a tumorous growth, a cancerous proliferation which is disrupting the social organism. These tumours endlessly metastasize and grow with an inexplicable, deadly vitality. At a certain point this growth is no longer productive, but rather destructive.

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Capitalism passed this point long ago. Its destructive forces cause not only ecological and social catastrophes but also mental collapse. The destructive compulsion to perform combines self-affirmation and self-destruction in one. We optimize ourselves to death. Brutal competition ends in destruction. It

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produces an emotional coldness and indifference towards others as well as towards one's own self. The devastating consequences of capitalism suggest that a death drive is at work. Freud initially introduced the death drive hesitantly, but later admitted that he 'couldn't think beyond

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it' as the idea of the death drive became increasingly central to his thought.

Today, it is impossible to think about capitalism without considering the death drive.

The Burnout Society
Stanford University
Press

The Protection and Negation of Life

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Society, Perception and

Communication Today

Modernity and Self-Identity

Self and Society in the Late Modern

Age

No-cosas

The Scent of Time

In celebration of the 250th

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anniversary of the birth of G.W.F. Hegel, Slavoj Žižek gives us a reading of the philosophical giant that changes our way of thinking about our new posthuman era. No ordinary study of Hegel, Hegel in a Wired Brain investigates what he

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might have had to say about the idea of the 'wired brain' – what happens when a direct link between our mental processes and a digital machine emerges. Žižek explores the phenomenon of a wired brain effect, and what might happen

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when we can share our thoughts directly with others. He hones in on the key question of how it shapes our experience and status as 'free' individuals and asks what it means to be human when a machine can read our minds. With characteristic

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verve and enjoyment of the unexpected, Žižek connects Hegel to the world we live in now, shows why he is much more fun than anyone gives him credit for, and why the 21st century might just be Hegelian.

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A journey around the world to find tranquility, quiet the mind, and understand the power of silence. Suffering from information overload and unable to sleep, acclaimed journalist Sarah Sands tried countless strategies to de-

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stress, only to find temporary relief. Searching for something different, something lasting, Sands went on a quest to uncover ancient and proven wisdom for a happier, quieter, and more compassionate life. In this insightful and

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beautifully written book, Sands takes us along on her pilgrimage to ten monasteries around the world. In the remoteness of these sacred spaces, Sands observes a hidden knowledge held by monks and nuns—what she calls "the interior

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silence." Renouncing the material world, their inner concentration buoys them in an extraordinary weightlessness and freedom, an oasis of reflection. Behind the cloistered walls, Sands too finds a clarity of mind and an unexpected

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capacity for solitude. From a Coptic desert community in Egypt to a retreat in the Japanese mountains, discover another way of being—moving from appetite, envy, and anxiety to compassion and appreciation. The ultimate remedy

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for a digital age in which everyone is talking, and no one is listening, this book reminds us of the importance of silence and the power of stillness. BEYOND MINDFULNESS: The trendiness and explosion of books on

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meditation and mindfulness does not always solve our modern-day stressors or our fight-or-flight existence. The Interior Silence goes beyond new-age mindfulness to offer traditional wisdom from monks for quieting the mind and

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embracing simplicity. DISCOVER ANCIENT WISDOM: For spiritual readers and wisdom seekers, The Interior Silence takes you directly to the root of these ancient practices, learning from monastic life around the world. FOR

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ARMCHAIR TRAVELERS: For readers who enjoyed *The Geography of Bliss*, anyone who enjoys learning about new places and cultures, or for those craving a trip, this book will take you to the countryside's, deserts, and

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mountains of Japan, France, Egypt, Greece, and more. Digital audio edition introduction read by the author.

El nuevo libro del filósofo vivo más leído del mundo. «Hoy estamos en la transición de la era de las cosas

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a la era de las no-cosas. No son las cosas, sino la información, lo que determina el mundo en que vivimos.» Hoy en día, el mundo se vacía de cosas y se llena de información inquietante como voces sin cuerpo. La digitalización

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desmaterializa y descorporeiza el mundo. En lugar de guardar recuerdos, almacenamos inmensas cantidades de datos. Los medios digitales sustituyen así a la memoria, cuyo trabajo hacen sin violencia ni demasiado esfuerzo. La

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información falsa los acontecimientos. Se nutre del estímulo de la sorpresa. Pero este no dura mucho. Rápidamente sentimos la necesidad de nuevos estímulos, y nos acostumbramos a percibir la realidad como una

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fuerce inagotable de estos. Como cazadores de informaci3n, nos volvemos ciegos ante las cosas silenciosas y discretas, incluso las habituales, las menudas y las comunes, que no nos estimulan, pero nos anclan en el ser. El nuevo

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ensayo de Byung-Chul Han gira en torno a las cosas y las no-cosas. Desarrolla tanto una filosofía del smartphone como una crítica a la inteligencia artificial desde una nueva perspectiva. Al mismo tiempo, recupera la magia de lo

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sólido y lo tangible y reflexiona sobre el silencio que se pierde en el ruido de la información. Reseñas: «Byung Chul-Han es un filósofo necesario para conocer lo que las redes y el ciberespacio hacen con cada uno de nosotros». La Razón

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«Byung-Chul Han el pensador de referencia del nuevo milenio y el que con mayor contundencia critica los vicios de la sociedad conectada: de la dependencia de las redes sociales al atracón de series. Su última llamada de atención es

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No Cosas». El Mundo
Untrammelled neoliberalism and
the inexorable force of production
have produced a 21st century crisis
of community: a narcissistic cult of
authenticity and mass turning-
inward are among the pathologies

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engendered by it. We are individuals afloat in an atomised society, where the loss of the symbolic structures inherent in ritual behaviour has led to overdependence on the contingent to steer identity. Avoiding

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saccharine nostalgia for the rituals of the past, Han provides a genealogy of their disappearance as a means of diagnosing the pathologies of the present. He juxtaposes a community without communication – where the

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intensity of togetherness in silent recognition provides structure and meaning – to today's communication without community, which does away with collective feelings and leaves individuals exposed to exploitation

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and manipulation by neoliberal psycho-politics. The community that is invoked everywhere today is an atrophied and commoditized community that lacks the symbolic power to bind people together. For Han, it is only the mutual praxis of

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recognition borne by the ritualistic sharing of the symbolic between members of a community which creates the footholds of objectivity allowing us to make sense of time. This new book by one of the most creative cultural theorists writing

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today will be of interest to a wide readership.

Shanzhai

Summary of Byung-Chul Han's
The Burnout Society

In the Swarm

Toward a Sociology of Algorithms

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Reunderstanding My Military
Experience as a Critique of
Modern Culture

The Palliative Society

*An introduction to the
nature of modernity as
envisioned by Germany's*

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leading social theorist of the late-20th century, Niklas Luhmann. The book injects concepts derived from Luhmann's influential systems theory into debates about modernity

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*and postmodernity,
constructivist and
foundationalist
epistemologies, the
relationship between
politics and ethics, and
the possibilities of*

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*interdisciplinary work
that spans the great
divide between science and
the humanities. The book
stages challenging
engagements with
such thinkers as Jurgen*

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*Habermas, Jacques Derrida,
Jean-Francois Lyotard,
Drucilla Cornell, Judith
Butler, Michel Serres, N.
Katherine Hayles, and such
political theorists as
Chantal Mouffe and Carl*

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Schmitt. The book closes with two interviews: one a discussion with Luhmann and Hayles on epistemology, the other with Luhmann on the functional differentiation

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*of modern society.
Tracing the thread of
“decreation” in Chinese
thought, from constantly
changing classical
masterpieces to fake cell
phones that are better*

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*than the original.
Shanzhai is a Chinese
neologism that means
“fake,” originally coined
to describe knock-off cell
phones marketed under such
names as Nokir and*

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Samsung. These cell phones were not crude forgeries but multifunctional, stylish, and as good as or better than the originals. Shanzhai has since spread into other parts of

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Chinese life, with shanzhai books, shanzhai politicians, shanzhai stars. There is a shanzhai Harry Potter: Harry Potter and the Porcelain Doll, in which Harry takes on his

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nemesis Yandomort. In the West, this would be seen as piracy, or even desecration, but in Chinese culture, originals are continually transformed—deconstructed.

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*In this volume in the
Untimely Meditations
series, Byung-Chul Han
traces the thread of
deconstruction, or
“decreation,” in Chinese
thought, from ancient*

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masterpieces that invite inscription and transcription to Maoism—“a kind a shanzhai Marxism,” Han writes. Han discusses the Chinese concepts of quan, or law, which

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literally means the weight that slides back and forth on a scale, radically different from Western notions of absoluteness; zhen ji, or original, determined not by an act

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*of creation but by
unending process; xian
zhan, or seals of leisure,
affixed by collectors and
part of the picture's
composition; fuzhi, or
copy, a replica of equal*

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value to the original; and shanzhai. The Far East, Han writes, is not familiar with such “pre-deconstructive” factors as original or identity. Far Eastern thought begins

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with deconstruction.

In the wake of globalization, cultural forms of expression have become increasingly detached from their places of origin, circulating in

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*a hyper-domain of culture
where there is no real
difference anymore between
indigenous and foreign,
near and far, the familiar
and the exotic.*

Hyperculture is a state of

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the deep intertwining of cultures in which once formerly separate cultural spheres now overlap and interpenetrate. It is a profoundly rhizomatic culture of intense

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hybridization, fusion and co-appropriation. Today we have all become tourists, even in our 'own' culture, to which we do not even belong anymore. Examining the distinctive

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characteristics of our contemporary hyperculture and its costs, Han demonstrates why we need to renounce our status as perpetual sightseers in the realm of 'cul-tour'

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and devise a new way of orienting ourselves in the world.

Zen Buddhism is a form of Mah y na Buddhism that originated in China and is strongly focused on

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meditation. It is characteristically sceptical towards language and distrustful of conceptual thought, which explains why Zen Buddhist sayings are so enigmatic

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and succinct. But despite Zen Buddhism's hostility towards theory and discourse, it is possible to reflect philosophically on Zen Buddhism and bring out its philosophical

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insights. In this short book, Byung-Chul Han seeks to unfold the philosophical force inherent in Zen Buddhism, delving into the foundations of far-eastern

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thought to which Zen Buddhism is indebted. Han does this comparatively by confronting and contrasting the insights of Zen Buddhism with the philosophies of Plato,

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*Leibniz, Fichte, Hegel,
Schopenhauer, Nietzsche,
Kierkegaard, Heidegger and
others, showing that Zen
Buddhism and Western
philosophy have very
different ways of*

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*understanding religion,
subjectivity, emptiness,
friendliness and death.
This important work by one
of the most widely read
philosophers and cultural
theorists of our time will*

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*be of great value to
anyone interested in
comparative philosophy and
religion.*

Writings on Art

*The Disappearance of
Rituals*

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The Interior Silence

A Novel

Quiebras del mundo de hoy

A Philosophical Essay on

the Art of Lingerin

We commonly think of

society as made of and by

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humans, but with the proliferation of machine learning and AI technologies, this is clearly no longer the case. Billions of automated systems tacitly

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*contribute to the social
construction of reality by
drawing algorithmic
distinctions between the
visible and the invisible,
the relevant and the
irrelevant, the likely and*

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the unlikely – on and beyond platforms. Drawing on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, this book develops an original sociology of algorithms as social agents, actively

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participating in social life. Through a wide range of examples, Massimo Airoidi shows how society shapes algorithmic code, and how this culture in the code guides the

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*practical behaviour of the
code in the culture,
shaping society in turn.
The 'machine habitus' is
the generative mechanism
at work throughout myriads
of feedback loops linking*

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humans with artificial social agents, in the context of digital infrastructures and pre-digital social structures. Machine Habitus will be of great interest to students

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*and scholars in sociology,
media and cultural
studies, science and
technology studies and
information technology,
and to anyone interested
in the growing role of*

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algorithms and AI in our social and cultural life. Transparency is the order of the day. It is a term, a slogan, that dominates public discourse about corruption and freedom of

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information. Considered crucial to democracy, it touches our political and economic lives as well as our private lives. Anyone can obtain information about anything.

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Everything—and everyone—has become transparent: unveiled or exposed by the apparatuses that exert a kind of collective control over the post-capitalist world.

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Yet, transparency has a dark side that, ironically, has everything to do with a lack of mystery, shadow, and nuance. Behind the apparent accessibility of

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knowledge lies the disappearance of privacy, homogenization, and the collapse of trust. The anxiety to accumulate ever more information does not necessarily produce more

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*knowledge or faith.
Technology creates the
illusion of total
containment and the
constant monitoring of
information, but what we
lack is adequate*

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interpretation of the information. In this manifesto, Byung-Chul Han denounces transparency as a false ideal, the strongest and most pernicious of our

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*contemporary mythologies.
The days of the Other are
over in this age of
excessive communication,
information and
consumption. What used to
be the Other, be it as*

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*friend, as Eros or as
hell, is now
indistinguishable from the
self in our narcissistic
desire to assimilate
everything and everyone
until there are no*

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boundaries left. The result is a 'terror of the Same', lives in which we no longer pursue knowledge, insight and experience but are instead reduced to the echo

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chambers and illusory encounters offered by social media. In extreme cases, this feeling of disorientation and senselessness is compensated through self-

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harm, or even harming others through acts of terrorism. Byung-Chul Han argues that our times are characterized not by external repression but by an internal depression,

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whereby the destructive pressure comes not from the Other but from the self. It is only by returning to a society of listeners and lovers, by acknowledging and desiring

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the Other, that we can seek to overcome the isolation and suffering caused by this crushing process of total assimilation.

Alain Badiou is arguably

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the most significant philosopher in Europe today. Badiou's seminars, given annually on major conceptual and historical topics, constitute an enormously important part

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of his work. They served as laboratories for his thought and public illuminations of his complex ideas yet remain little known. This book, the transcript of Badiou's

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year-long seminar on the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques Lacan, is the first volume of his seminars to be published in English, opening up a new and vital aspect of

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his thinking. In a highly original and compelling account of Lacan's theory and therapeutic practice, Badiou considers the challenge that Lacan poses to fundamental

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philosophical topics such as being, the subject, and truth. Badiou argues that Lacan is a singular figure of the "anti-philosopher," a series of thinkers stretching back to Saint

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*Paul and including
Kierkegaard and Nietzsche,
with Lacan as the last
great anti-philosopher of
modernity. The book offers
a forceful reading of an
enigmatic yet foundational*

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thinker and sheds light on the crucial role that Lacan plays in Badiou's own thought. This seminar, more accessible than some of Badiou's more difficult works, will be profoundly

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valuable for the many readers across academic disciplines, art and literature, and political activism who find his thought essential.

The Memory Police

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Good Entertainment

*A Deconstruction of the
Western Passion Narrative*

Hegel in A Wired Brain

Infocracy

Digital Prospects

The tsunami of information

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unleashed by digitization is threatening to overwhelm us, drowning us in a sea of frenzied communication and disrupting many spheres of social life, including politics. Election campaigns are now being waged

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as information wars with bots and troll armies, and democracy is degenerating into infocracy. In this new book, Byung-Chul Han argues that infocracy is the new form of rule characteristic of contemporary information

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capitalism. Whereas the disciplinary regime of industrial capitalism worked with compulsion and repression, this new information regime exploits freedom instead of repressing it. Surveillance and punishment give

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way to motivation and optimization: we imagine that we are free, but in reality our entire lives are recorded so that our behaviour might be psychopolitically controlled. Under the neoliberal information

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regime, mechanisms of power function not because people are aware of the fact of constant surveillance but because they perceive themselves to be free. This trenchant critique of politics in the information age will be of

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great interest to students and scholars in the humanities and social sciences and to anyone concerned about the fate of politics in our time.

A philosopher considers entertainment, in all its totalizing

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variety—infotainment, edutainment, servotainment—and traces the notion through Kant, Zen Buddhism, Heidegger, Kafka, and Rauschenberg. In *Good Entertainment*, Byung-Chul Han examines the notion of

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entertainment—its contemporary ubiquity, and its philosophical genealogy. Entertainment today, in all its totalizing variety, has an apparently infinite capacity for incorporation: infotainment, edutainment, servotainment,

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confrontation. Entertainment is held up as a new paradigm, even a new credo for being—and yet, in the West, it has had inescapably negative connotations. Han traces Western ideas of entertainment, considering, among other things,

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the scandal that arose from the first performance of Bach's Saint Matthew's Passion (deemed too beautiful, not serious enough); Kant's idea of morality as duty and the entertainment value of moralistic literature; Heidegger's

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idea of the thinker as a man of pain; Kafka's hunger artist and the art of negativity, which takes pleasure in annihilation; and Robert Rauschenberg's refusal of the transcendent. The history of the West, Han tells us, is a

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passion narrative, and passion appears as a killjoy. Achievement is the new formula for passion, and play is subordinated to production, gamified. And yet, he argues, at their core, passion and entertainment are not entirely

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different. The pure
meaninglessness of entertainment
is adjacent to the pure meaning of
passion. The fool's smile
resembles the pain-racked visage
of Homo doloris. In *Good
Entertainment*, Han explores this

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paradox.

This book by Roberto Esposito - a leading Italian political philosopher - is a highly original exploration of the relationship between human bodies and societies. The original function of

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law, even before it was codified, was to preserve peaceful cohabitation between people who were exposed to the risk of destructive conflict. Just as the human body's immune system protects the organism from deadly

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incursions by viruses and other threats, law also ensures the survival of the community in a life-threatening situation. It protects and prolongs life. But the function of law as a form of immunization points to a more disturbing

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consideration. Like the individual body, the collective body can be immunized from the perceived danger only by allowing a little of what threatens it to enter its protective boundaries. This means that in order to escape the

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clutches of death, life is forced to incorporate within itself the lethal principle. Starting from this reflection on the nature of immunization, Esposito offers a wide-ranging analysis of contemporary biopolitics. Never

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more than at present has the demand for immunization come to characterize all aspects of our existence. The more we feel at risk of being infiltrated and infected by foreign elements, the more the life of the individual and

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society closes off within its protective boundaries, forcing us to choose between a self-destructive outcome and a more radical alternative based on a new conception of community. Power is a pervasive phenomenon

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yet there is little consensus on what it is and how it should be understood. In this book the cultural theorist Byung-Chul Han develops a fresh and original perspective on the nature of power, shedding new light on this

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key feature of social and political life. Power is commonly defined as a causal relation: an individual's power is the cause that produces a change of behaviour in someone else against the latter's will. Han rejects this view, arguing that

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power is better understood as a mediation between ego and alter which creates a complex array of reciprocal interdependencies. Power can also be exercised not only against the other but also within and through the other, and

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this involves a much higher degree of mediation. This perspective enables us to see that power and freedom are not opposed to one another but are manifestations of the same power, differing only in the degree of

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mediation. This highly original account of power will be of great interest to students and scholars of philosophy and of social, political and cultural theory, as well as to anyone seeking to understand the many ways in

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which power shapes our lives today.

The Transparency Society

Transparency, Society and Subjectivity

The Philosophy of Zen Buddhism

Machine Habitus

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Digitization and the Crisis of
Democracy

Anti-Philosophy 3

Exploring how neoliberalism has
discovered the productive force of the
psyche Byung-Chul Han, a star of
German philosophy, continues his

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passionate critique of neoliberalism, trenchantly describing a regime of technological domination that, in contrast to Foucault ' s biopower, has discovered the productive force of the psyche. In the course of discussing all the facets of neoliberal psychopolitics

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fueling our contemporary crisis of freedom, Han elaborates an analytical framework that provides an original theory of Big Data and a lucid phenomenology of emotion. But this provocative essay proposes counter models too, presenting a wealth of

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ideas and surprising alternatives at every turn.

An argument that love requires the courage to accept self-negation for the sake of discovering the Other. Byung-Chul Han is one of the most widely read philosophers in Europe today, a

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member of the new generation of German thinkers that includes Markus Gabriel and Armen Avanessian. In *The Agony of Eros*, a bestseller in Germany, Han considers the threat to love and desire in today's society. For Han, love requires the

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courage to accept self-negation for the sake of discovering the Other. In a world of fetishized individualism and technologically mediated social interaction, it is the Other that is eradicated, not the self. In today's increasingly narcissistic society, we

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have come to look for love and desire within the “ inferno of the same. ”

Han offers a survey of the threats to Eros, drawing on a wide range of sources—Lars von Trier's film *Melancholia*, Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, *Fifty Shades of Grey*, Michel

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Foucault (providing a scathing critique of Foucault's valorization of power), Martin Buber, Hegel, Baudrillard, Flaubert, Barthes, Plato, and others. Han considers the “ pornographication ” of society, and shows how pornography

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profanes eros; addresses capitalism's leveling of essential differences; and discusses the politics of eros in today's “ burnout society. ” To be dead to love, Han argues, is to be dead to thought itself. Concise in its expression but unsparing in its insight,

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The Agony of Eros is an important and provocative entry in Han's ongoing analysis of contemporary society. This remarkable essay, an intellectual experience of the first order, affords one of the best ways to gain full awareness of and join in one

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of the most pressing struggles of the day: the defense, that is to say—as Rimbaud desired it—the “ reinvention ” of love. —from the foreword by Alain Badiou
Our societies today are characterized by a universal algophobia: a

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generalized fear of pain. We strive to avoid all painful conditions – even the pain of love is treated as suspect. This algophobia extends into society: less and less space is given to conflicts and controversies that might prompt painful discussions. It takes hold of

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politics too: politics becomes a palliative politics that is incapable of implementing radical reforms that might be painful, so all we get is more of the same. Faced with the coronavirus pandemic, the palliative society is transformed into a society of

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survival. The virus enters the palliative zone of well-being and turns it into a quarantine zone in which life is increasingly focused on survival. And the more life becomes survival, the greater the fear of death, which has become increasingly visible again.

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Everywhere, the prolongation of life at any cost is the preeminent value, and we are prepared to sacrifice everything that makes life worth living for the sake of survival. This trenchant analysis of our contemporary societies by one of the most original cultural

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critics of our time will be of interest to a wide readership.

A pithy work of philosophical anthropology that explores why humans find moral orders in natural orders. Why have human beings, in many different cultures and epochs,

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looked to nature as a source of norms for human behavior? From ancient India and ancient Greece, medieval France and Enlightenment America, up to the latest controversies over gay marriage and cloning, natural orders have been enlisted to illustrate and

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buttress moral orders. Revolutionaries and reactionaries alike have appealed to nature to shore up their causes. No amount of philosophical argument or political critique deters the persistent and pervasive temptation to conflate the “ is ” of natural orders with the

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“ ought ” of moral orders. In this short, pithy work of philosophical anthropology, Lorraine Daston asks why we continually seek moral orders in natural orders, despite so much good counsel to the contrary. She outlines three specific forms of natural

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order in the Western philosophical tradition—specific natures, local natures, and universal natural laws—and describes how each of these three natural orders has been used to define and oppose a distinctive form of the unnatural. She

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argues that each of these forms of the unnatural triggers equally distinctive emotions: horror, terror, and wonder. Daston proposes that human reason practiced in human bodies should command the attention of philosophers, who have traditionally

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yearned for a transcendent reason,
valid for all species, all epochs, even all
planets.

Immunitas

The Burnout Society

Saving Beauty

Did You Kill Anyone?

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Critical Perspectives Neoliberalism and New Technologies of Power

A prominent German thinker argues that—contrary to “Twitter Revolution” cheerleading—digital communication is destroying political discourse and

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political action. The shitstorm represents an authentic phenomenon of digital communication. —from *In the Swarm* Digital communication and social media have taken over our lives. In this contrarian reflection on digitized life, Byung-Chul Han counters the cheerleaders for Twitter revolutions

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and Facebook activism by arguing that digital communication is in fact responsible for the disintegration of community and public space and is slowly eroding any possibility for real political action and meaningful political discourse. In the predigital, analog era, by the time an angry letter to the editor

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had been composed, mailed, and received, the immediate agitation had passed. Today, digital communication enables instantaneous, impulsive reaction, meant to express and stir up outrage on the spot. "The shitstorm," writes Han, "represents an authentic phenomenon of digital

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communication." Meanwhile, the public, the senders and receivers of these communications have become a digital swarm—not a mass, or a crowd, or Negri and Hardt's antiquated notion of a "multitude," but a set of isolated individuals incapable of forming a "we," incapable of calling dominant

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power relations into question, incapable of formulating a future because of an obsession with the present. The digital swarm is a fragmented entity that can focus on individual persons only in order to make them an object of scandal. Han, one of the most widely read

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philosophers in Europe today, describes a society in which information has overrun thought, in which the same algorithms are employed by Facebook, the stock market, and the intelligence services. Democracy is under threat because digital communication has made

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freedom and control indistinguishable.
Big Brother has been succeeded by
Big Data.

The Aesthetic Imperative

Summary of Byung-Chul Han's
Psychopolitics