

Philosophy Kitchen #24/2026

## Rethinking Process: History, Categories and Applications

Edited by Maria Regina Brioschi & Christian Frigerio

### CALL FOR PAPERS

The opposition between substance and process philosophy can be traced back to Parmenides and Heraclitus. Whereas the former commonly includes philosophies based on the concepts of substance and being, the latter starts from the recognition of becoming as fundamental. Assorted philosophies have been accounted for processual, such as those of Leibniz, Schelling, Hegel, and Nietzsche. However, it is only since the beginning of the last century, in England, France and the United States, that one can more appropriately speak of “Process Thought”, with reference especially to Alfred North Whitehead’s philosophy, as well as to other coeval thinkers, such as Henri Bergson and William James, and also Charles Sanders Peirce, John Dewey, Samuel Alexander, and C. Lloyd Morgan. At the heart of this conception lie temporality and relationships, understood as primary and indispensable elements for understanding both the structures of reality and thought, on the ontological and epistemological levels. Indeed, processual thought aims at grasping and describing phenomena in their intrinsic temporality and relationality, overcoming and abandoning the conceptual dichotomies that, like those of subject-object and substance-quality, have marked the history of metaphysics.

Although it remains a minority line in the history of ancient and modern philosophy (see Ronchi 2017), throughout the twentieth century process thought has exerted a significant influence (more or less direct) on several authors, from Maurice Merleau-Ponty to Gilbert Simondon, from Gilles Deleuze to Isabelle Stengers and Bruno Latour, and others. Furthermore, it is in connection with other fields of research, beyond philosophy, that Process Thought has shown its peculiar fruitfulness: above all, consider the case of biology, in particular Joseph Needham, Joseph Woodger, and Conrad Waddington, and also, later on, the philosophy of biology of Nicholson and Dupré (2018).

However, process philosophy does not merely lay the groundwork for a new “philosophy of nature.” The reason for the renewed interest in process philosophy is primarily the search for

categories and conceptual tools that enable us to understand, with reference to both human and natural sciences, old and new phenomena in their irreducible complexity. In addition to the philosophy of ecology (Latour 2020, Stengers 2021), one may think of the philosophy of physics (Epperson 2004, McHenry 2015), the philosophy of technology (Hui 2019, Coeckelbergh 2021), as well as the philosophy of education (Petrov 2020), psychology (Stenner 2018) and more.

The challenge of the present issue of *Philosophy Kitchen* is to clarify the gist of process thought, that is, to elucidate the theoretical strengths of this promising approach. Developing the conceptual tools (logical, epistemological, and ontological) for rethinking “process” is urgent if one wants to avoid reducing ‘process philosophy’ to a vacuous refrain indicating a generic opposition to the alleged static nature of traditional metaphysics.

As the subtitle suggests, there are (at least) three ways to reach such clarification. The first one (“History”) focuses on a theoretical analysis of the proposals already made in the history of philosophy. For example, many philosophers mentioned above tried to push the laws of thought beyond the subject-predicate form and the associated metaphysics of substance; see Peirce’s logic of relatives (Brioschi 2023). The second (“Categories”) focuses on developing a processual logic of reasoning, epistemology and theory of categories, comparing them with other philosophical methods. Finally, the third (“Applications”) shows the strength of a processual approach in action by applying it to specific case studies or topics.

Contributions may address the following questions, as well as others related to them:

- How can one locate and characterize, in the history of philosophy, the various attempts to grasp reality as a process rather than a substance or set of substances? Which thinkers cannot be neglected for this purpose? What is their specific theoretical contribution?
- Process philosophy is often described as a philosophy of experience: what are the main differences, if compared to other traditions?
- Is it possible to properly “understand” process? If so, what “categories” enable us to conceptualize it? From a processual perspective, how can one account for those aspects of experience that, at least seemingly, eschew process (such as the laws of nature)?
- What formal tools (i.e., the logic of relations) can support process philosophy? What is their relationship to speculative thought?
- What are the possible applications of process, from both epistemological and ontological perspectives, in various research fields (biology, economics, technology, education, and more)?
- One of the distinctive themes of process philosophy is that of creativity. Given the advances in interdisciplinary research on the topic, what contribution can a process approach make today?

## THEMATIC SECTIONS

For proposals, below is a non-exhaustive list of the main topics that are welcome:

- Process philosophy as an alternative to substance philosophy: authors and peculiarities
- The fundamental concepts of process philosophy: categories and paradigms
- Process philosophy and analytic philosophy: What are the points of intersection, if any?
- The relationships between process thought and the phenomenological tradition, especially Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, about the pivotal role of temporality as the ultimate horizon of both the knowing subject's and objects' constitutions
- Logic of process: formal approaches
- Logic and metaphysics of relations
- Understanding "event" as a processual category
- Creativity and novelty
- Processual orientations in philosophy of science (physics, biology, mathematics, medicine)
- Processual thinking in literature and art, psychology and education
- Process approaches in architecture (design theories, sociology and theory of architecture)
- Applications of process philosophy (case studies)

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## SUBMISSION

To apply, please send an abstract of no more than 4.000 characters to [redazione@philosophykitchen.com](mailto:redazione@philosophykitchen.com), [mariaregina.brioschi@unimi.it](mailto:mariaregina.brioschi@unimi.it) and [christian.frigerio1@unimi.it](mailto:christian.frigerio1@unimi.it). Abstracts should consist of a file (.doc or .docx) and should include a title/subtitle, an essential bibliography and a biography of the proponent(s). Using the official PK template for the abstract is mandatory. It can be retrieved on [www.philosophykitchen.com](http://www.philosophykitchen.com) or directly at: <https://philosophykitchen.com/2024/11/cfp24-ripensare-il-processo-storia-categorie-e-applicazioni/> Proposals will be evaluated by the editors and the journal board; the selected authors will be contacted for submission of the full paper, which will undergo a double-blind peer review.

## DEADLINES

- 28/02/2025: abstract submission
- 31/03/2025: notification of acceptance/rejection
- 30/09/2025: full paper submission
- 31/01/2026: notification of the peer review results
- March 2026: publication

## LANGUAGES

English, Italian.