



DOCUMENTALITY: WHY IT IS NECESSARY TO LEAVE TRACES, MAURIZIO FERRARIS

What are the “traces” that Maurizio Ferraris talks about in his important book? Why is our reality necessarily crowded with “social objects” such as money, works of art, receipts, weddings, courts, tax codes? The author explores these central themes of twentieth century philosophy, developing his own theory that underlines how “we can imagine a reality devoid of many things, but not of memory and records, since every role and every agreement relies on memory, and every behaviour on imitation: and this explains why archives and documents are so central to the life of people and societies. This consideration, valid for every era, is even more so in the light of the macroscopic phenomena of the last thirty years, characterized by an explosion of recording and writing systems, from computers to mobile phones to the web, which on one hand have radically transformed our way of living and working, and on the other hand have helped reveal the essence of social reality, that is, the fact they are based, not by chance, but necessarily on inscriptions and recordings.” (Maurizio Ferraris, *Documentality: Why It Is Necessary to Leave Traces*, Fordham University Press, 2013, p. XIV)

Maurizio Ferraris is one of Italy's foremost philosophers. Professor of Theoretical Philosophy at the University of Turin, he is the director of LabOnt (“Laboratory of Ontology”) and writes for the culture section of “la Repubblica”. He has written more than sixty books, many of which have been translated into various languages.

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