



The Sense of the World

Jean-Luc Nancy

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An essential exploration of sense and meaning.

Is there a “world” anymore, let alone any “sense” to it? Acknowledging the lack of meaning in our time, and the lack of a world at the center of meanings we try to impose, Jean-Luc Nancy presents a rigorous critique of the many discourses—from philosophy and political science to psychoanalysis and art history—that talk and write their way around these gaping absences in our lives.

In an original style befitting his search for a new mode of thought, Nancy offers fragmentary readings of writers such as Nietzsche, Hegel, Marx, Lévinas, Lacan, Derrida, and Deleuze insofar as their work reflects his concern with sense and the world. Rather than celebrate or bemoan the loss of meaning or attempt to install a new one, his book seeks to reposition both sense and the world between the presence and absence of meaning, between objectivity and subjectivity. Nancy’s project entails a reconception of the field of philosophy itself, a rearticulation of philosophical practice. Neither recondite nor abstract, it is concerned with the existence and experience of freedom—the actuality of existence as experienced by contemporary communities of citizens, readers, and writers.

Combining aesthetic, political, and philosophical considerations to convey a sense of the world between meaning and reality, ideal content and material form, this book offers a new way of understanding—and responding to—“the end of the world.”

Jean-Luc Nancy teaches at the University of Human Sciences in Strasbourg. His books in English include *The Literary Absolute* (with Philip Lacoue-Labarthe, 1988), *The Inoperative Community* (Minnesota, 1991), *The Birth to Presence* (1993), *The Experience of Freedom* (1993), and *The Muses* (1996).

Jeffrey S. Librett is associate professor of modern languages and literatures at Loyola University of Chicago.

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