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Beyond Interpretation: The Meaning of Hermeneutics for Philosophy

Gianni Vattimo

Stanford University Press (1997)

Abstract

Hermeneutics has had a pervasive influence on contemporary philosophy, social and cultural theory, literary criticism, and aesthetics. In this book one of Europe's foremost contemporary philosophers provides hermeneutics with a fresh relevance and a substantive account of its philosophical meaning for science, ethics, religion, and art. Vattimo argues for a reading of hermeneutics that radicalises it according to what the author calls its 'nihilistic vocation', a term referring to the interpretive character of truth and taken from Nietzsche's statement that there are, in the modern period, no facts, only interpretations. Modernity, for Vattimo, is conceived as the advent of nihilism, and the central question of the book is to ask what it means to take this nihilistic vocation seriously. This involves not simply accepting the current status of hermeneutics, but evaluating why it appears when, and where, it does.

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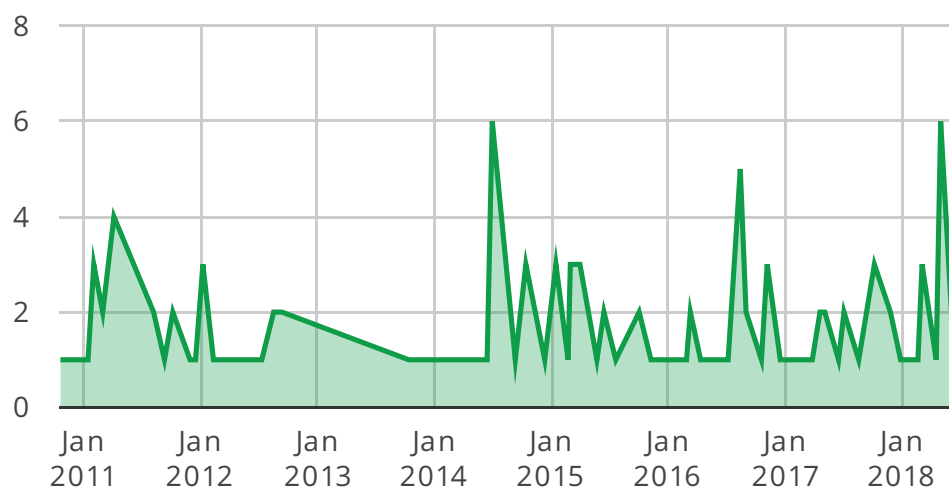
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