

# Phenomena at the Margins

Graduate Conference and Workshop in Phenomenology  
University of Sussex

19<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> June 2014

## Workshop Programme

### **Heidegger on *Enframing* and *Releasement***

Thursday, June 19th

Room Arts A 108

This workshop seeks to bring together a series of talks by both well established and up and coming Heidegger scholars on two key themes in the later thought of Martin Heidegger. The terms *Gelassenheit*, often translated as 'releasement', and *Gestell*, translated as 'enframing' or 'standing reserve', serve as two central and opposing concepts. With the recent translations into English of the two key volumes of Heidegger's collected works, the *Country Path Conversations* (2010) and the *Bremen and Freiburg Lectures* (2012), these critical terms in Heidegger's philosophy are finally able to be approached in their original contexts. The workshop focuses centrally on important Heideggerian critiques of science, technology, modern industrialized society, as well as his thoughts on the comportment (*Gelassenheit*) which is able to resist the restrictive domain of modern techno-scientific thought (*Gestell*). Also included are Heidegger's early reflections on the status of "things", the errancy of metaphysics, art and language, and proper thinking.

Together, these two texts and their attendant concepts are the central points of entry into Martin Heidegger's later thinking and this workshop seeks to bring together into dialogue this rich philosophical material.

**10:30 - 10:50 Registration + Coffee**

**10:50 - 11:00 Welcome by Organizers**

**11:00 - 13:00 Presentations and Discussion**

Dr. Mahon O' Brien (Sussex): Introduction to Heidegger's concepts of *Gestell* and *Gelassenheit*

Dr. Tobias Keiling (Freiburg): *Verhaltenheit* and *Gelassenheit*

Christopher Merwin (New School): Heidegger's Challenge: *Gelassenheit*, *Gestell*, and the *Beiträge* (for the few)

Chair: Christos Hadjioannou

**13:00- 14:00 Lunch Break**

**14:00- 15:20 Papers**

Margot Wielgus (Kentucky): Cultivating *Gelassenheit* through Thinking

Dr. Aaron Wendland (Johannesburg): *Gestell* contra *Gelassenheit*?: An Essay on Heidegger and Kuhn

Chair: Jana Elsen

**15:20- 15:30 Coffee break**

**15:30- 17:00 Keynote Address and Round Table Discussion**

Professor Simon Glendinning (LSE): A Settlement with Technology

Convener: Dr. Paul Davies (Sussex)

\*Drinks at IDS bar (on campus) and dinner in town

## **Conference Programme**

**Friday, June 20th**

Room Arts A 108

**11:00 - 11:30** Registration and Coffee

**11:30 - 11:40** Plenary Session Welcome

Dr. Paul Davies and Christos Hadjioannou

**11:40 - 13:00 Session 1**

Speaker 1: Cæcilie Varslev-Pedersen (New School): *Feminism and Phenomenology in Heinämaa, Butler and Beauvoir*

Speaker 2: Mihai Dan (Ecole Normale Supérieure): *The Dissolution of Temporal Intentionality with Regard to Binswanger's Concept of Melancholic Disorder and Heidegger's concept of Angst*

Chair: Christos Hadjioannou

**13:00 - 14:00 Lunch Break**

**14:00 - 15:20 Session 2**

Speaker 1: Dr. Zohar Atkins (Oxford): *Heidegger on the Holy: Suspending the Onto-Theological Difference*

Speaker 2: Claire Perryman-Holt (Sorbonne): *Jan Patočka and the sacrificial experience*

Chair: Dr. Tobias Keiling

**15:20 - 15:30 Coffee Break**

**15:30 - 16:50 Session 3**

Speaker 1: Devin Fitzpatrick (New School): *Embodiment and Alterity: Merleau-Ponty, Mead, and the Need for Receptivity*

Speaker 2: David Martinez Rojas (Sussex): *Kant and Levinas on ethical activity and passivity*

Chair: Christopher Merwin

**16:50- 17:00 Break**

**17:00- 18:30 Keynote Address**

Dr. Tanja Staehler (Sussex): *Elemental Relations*

Chair: Christos Hadjioannou

**18:30 - 18:45 Closing Remarks**

Drinks at IDS bar (on campus)

Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup>

Room Arts A 108

**9:30- 10:00** Registration and Coffee

**10:00- 10:10** Opening Remarks

**10:10- 11:30** Session 1

Speaker 1: Kate Kirkpatrick (Oxford): *A Phenomenology of the Pregnant Body: The Anxiety of Expectation*

Speaker 2: Dr. Bernardo Ainbinder (NCSR, Argentina): *Experiencing the Non-given: Birth, Death and the Methodological Foundation of Phenomenology*

Chair: Christos Hadjioannou

**11:30- 11:40** Break

**11:40- 13:00** Session 2

Speaker 1: Liam Sprod (Kingston): *Spatial Disruptions and Temporal Amplifications: The effect of Heidegger's turn to place on his reading of Kant*

Speaker 2: James Matharu (Oxford): *Wittgenstein's Wasp: Disorientation Towards Animals in the Remarks on the 'Philosophy of Psychology'*

Chair: Dr. Aaron Wendland

**13:00- 14:00 Lunch Break**

**14:00- 15:20 Session 3**

Speaker 1: Benjamin Draxlbauer (Vienna): *Uncovering the Presence - Oblivion in Husserl's Time-Consciousness*

Speaker 2: Patrick Levy (Sussex): *Phenomenology and Sleep – The Dream of Suspension*

Chair: Gabriel Martin

**15:20- 15:30 Coffee Break**

**15:30- 16:50 Session 4**

Speaker 1: Helen Ngo (SUNY, Stony Brook): *Racialisation and the Fragmentation of the Phenomenological Body*

Speaker 2: Zhu Xinqu (Hong Kong): *Between the Transcendental and the Mundane: The Embodied Subject and the Undismissible Tension in Husserl's Transcendental Phenomenology*

Chair: Patrick Levy

**16:50- 17:00 Break**

**17:00- 18:30 Keynote Address:**

Professor Ed Casey (SUNY, Stony Brook): *Taking Place (And Several Other Things) To The Edge*

Chair: Dr. Paul Davies

**18:20- 18:30 Break**

**18:30-19:00 Round Table discussion and conclusions**

**20:30- \_\_\_ DINNER**

## **Abstracts:**

### **Cæcilie Varslev-Pedersen (New School): Feminism and Phenomenology in Heinämaa, Butler and Beauvoir**

Phenomenology has often been viewed with suspicion by feminism: is the universal phenomenological subjectivity (whether we call it the transcendental Ego, *Dasein*, or being-for-itself) simply a white, Western, heterosexual man in disguise? Nevertheless, a *phenomenological feminism* has emerged in the last decades, one that attempts to do justice to those specifically feminine experiences routinely ignored by traditional phenomenology. In the paper, I critically examine the presuppositions of any attempt to bring together feminism and phenomenology. I focus on a relatively narrow topic, namely, a comparison between Finnish scholar Sara Heinämaa's and Judith Butler's respective readings of *The Second Sex*. Quite unconventionally, both thinkers read Beauvoir's text as a work of feminist phenomenology centered around a conception of the *lived body*. However, while Heinämaa's aim is to show what Beauvoir's feminism can bring to phenomenology, Butler asks how phenomenology can assist a feminist description of gender.

I show that despite points of divergence, Heinämaa and the early Butler agree that Beauvoir's work allows for an understanding of gender based on dynamic, phenomenological categories – such as *style* and *expression* – rather than biological properties. However, by the time Butler writes *Gender Trouble* she is far less sympathetic toward Beauvoir's position. Butler's skepticism leads me to discuss critical questions. For example, do the descriptions of the marginal phenomena of feminine experience (e.g. pregnancy and menstruation) enhance or constrain our conception of gender? Is phenomenology able to *re-describe* gendered experience in a non-biased way, or must it abandon its longstanding claim to *universal validity*? In this way, we can also begin to elucidate the *broader* problems phenomenology faces when engaging with a theoretical framework – e.g. feminism – with explicitly normative implications.



### **Mihai Dan (Ecole Normale Supérieure): The Dissolution of Temporal Intentionality with Regard to Binswanger's Concept of Melancholic Disorder and Heidegger's concept of *Angst***

Binswanger, the founder of existential psychology (Daseinsanalyse), undertook to explain the causal structure of melancholia disorder at the beginning of the 60s. He started from the structure of temporality, explicitly adopted from Husserl's work *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*. In the case of melancholia, as stated by the Swiss psychiatrist in his book *Melancholie und Manie: Phänomenologische Studien*, the changes that occur within the structure of temporality (*protentio-retentio-presentatio*) make the melancholic patient lose the 'what-about' (*Worüber*) of experience. My conference begins from the following observation: Binswanger's patients describe the melancholic delirium as having the same features that Heidegger uses to describe the experience *Angst* which makes possible the understanding of nothingness, in *What is metaphysics?* (these features also appear in paragraphs 40 and 41 of *Being and Time*).

The dividing point is the pathological character of melancholy disorder as opposed to the normality of the 'metaphysical' experiencing of nothingness through *Angst*. But, beyond this post-factual distinction, I shall endeavor to show that *Angst* as described by Heidegger and 'the loss of experience' which characterizes, in Binswanger's accounts, melancholy disorder, both have the same alteration of the intentionality of retention (as described by Husserl in his book) which takes part in the make-up of the normal unity of conscience flow. Therefore, we shall see what makes the two instances different, both of which share the same temporal deconstruction of the unified experience flow. As a result, I shall endeavor to justify the profound pathological character of melancholy, as well as the non-pathological character of Heidegger's concept of *Angst*. The final aim of my presentation constitutes, in a few words, to highlight the limit between normality and pathology, although quite obvious, but so difficult to explain at a conceptual level.

**Zohar Atkins (Oxford): Heidegger on the Holy: Suspending the Onto-Theological Difference**

This paper seeks to do three things: 1) To reflect on what Heidegger means by “the holy”; 2) to see how Heidegger’s discussion of the holy reconfigures the task of theology from being a rationalist discourse (science of God) to being a poetic discourse (a making room for the divine in its simultaneous presence and absence), and 3) to argue that this approach to theology is supplemental, i.e., is compatible with both theistic and nontheistic theologies. Ultimately, I argue that “the holy,” for Heidegger, is a way of naming the human encounter with the mystery of Being, particularly in its valence as both thrown from and projecting towards it. As such, the holy, as an indispensable theological and ontological category, provides a way to bridge the ontological/theological divide while also holding this divide in suspense.

This paper is in keeping with the conference theme, “phenomena at the margins.” First, the holy is often marginalized by both philosophers and theologians alike, the former regarding it as vague, and the latter regarding it as secondary to phenomena such as God and salvation. Yet the holy is also marginal in a positive sense: it testifies to and at the margins of meaningfulness.

Heidegger once said that if he were to write a theology, the word “Being” would not appear in it. Elsewhere, however, Heidegger complicates this remark, asking “How can man at the present stage of world history ask ... whether the god nears or withdraws, when he has above all neglected to think into the dimension in which alone that question can be asked? But this is the dimension of the holy, which indeed remains closed as a dimension if the open region of Being is not cleared



**Claire Perryman-Holt (Sorbonne): Jan Patočka and the sacrificial experience**

In the Varna lecture of 1973, Patočka writes:

“The experience of sacrifice is one of the most powerful experiences of our epoch, so powerful and definitive that humankind for the most part has not managed to come to terms with it and flees from it precisely into a technical understanding of being which promises to exclude this experience and for which there exists nothing like a sacrifice, only utilization of resources.”<sup>1</sup>

Traditionally a sacrifice is a ritual that produces something sacred, that brings something from the profane sphere of mere useful things over to the realm of sacred beings. But what does Patočka have in mind in these dark years following Prague’s spring and that were to lead to the Charta 77 and to his own tragic death at the hands of the police, when he called upon the old idea of sacrifice as “the most powerful experience of our epoch”, and yet one that is ruled out in principle by the essence of this very epoch?

This presentation intends to question the phenomenological nature of sacrifice and try to understand its role in Patočka’s work as both: revealing the essence of our technological times, and opening up a possibility of escaping the concealment inherent to them. It is in the experience of the *front line* of soldiers that Patočka finds evidence for a more massive, communal experience of the limit. It is the very *experience* of the limit, of absolute, radical negation that is at stake in this demythologized version of sacrifice. An experience that is made marginal by our epoch of pure transitivity, and that remains, nevertheless, the most essential: the experience of freedom.

---

<sup>1</sup> J. Patočka, *Liberté et sacrifice*, Trad. E. Abrams, Paris, Million, 1990, p. 337.

**Devin Fitzpatrick (New School): Embodiment and Alterity: Merleau-Ponty, Mead, and the Need for Receptivity**

The theme of embodiment represents the ineluctable ambiguity of lived experience revealed by the phenomenological method, and renders central what has been philosophically marginalized, yet its blurring of boundaries presents problems for questions of alterity and receptivity. The vulnerability and anonymity of the body, as emphasized by the early Merleau-Ponty, contradicts the strict boundaries essential to dualistic or substance metaphysics. In this, as Sandra Rosenthal and Patrick Bourgeois argue in a trilogy of texts, existential phenomenology and classical pragmatism, despite their differences over naturalism, share a critical and reconstructive approach to prior metaphysics. Merleau-Ponty's "philosophy of ambiguity" corresponds to the "principle of continuity" articulated by Dewey and implicit in Mead: all discontinuities are contextual, and nothing ineffable intervenes in experience. Yet a comparison of Merleau-Ponty and Mead's visions of embodiment, particularly in Merleau-Ponty's later text *The Visible and the Invisible*, exposes a divide over the status of alterity that Rosenthal and Bourgeois overlook and that casts into relief two differing paths and politics: a phenomenological struggle against solipsism to place a limit on the voracity of consciousness with an absolute difference, toward *commemorative thinking*, versus a pragmatic egalitarianism for which pluralism remains a source of shared value, through *constructive thinking*. Ultimately, the heightened significance of the marginal in the study of embodiment must be reconciled with a need for receptivity, a presence of the other which transcends the ambiguity of the self.

Rosenthal and Bourgeois's analysis of the similarities between Merleau-Ponty and Mead on the subject of lived experience extend these intersections to post-Husserlian phenomenology and classical pragmatism as a whole. But the differences between Merleau-Ponty and Mead on the "lived body" and role of cognition, which Rosenthal and Bourgeois attempt to address, and the inadequacy of Mead's "generalized other" to account for alterity, which they do not, help to elucidate the arc of Merleau-Ponty's thought on embodiment toward his concept of reversibility. The need for receptivity and the presence of the other as an absolute limit on consciousness is only revealed when the marginal concept of embodiment takes center stage.



**David Martinez Rojas (Sussex): Kant and Levinas on ethical activity and passivity**

In this paper I discuss Kant's and Levinas's philosophies considering activity and passivity. If one describes the subject in these authors, Kant associates this category with respect (for the moral law); freedom; autonomy. On the other hand, Levinas brings it together with responsibility (for the other); sincerity; passivity; heteronomy. Thus, Kant seems to be the philosopher of activity and Levinas of passivity. From this reading, it is possible to go further and take a path where one can look for traces of passivity in Kant in other concepts, such as sincerity (Davies, 2002) or *sensus communis* (Dalton, 1999), that are developed mainly in the *Third Critique*. However, I want to suggest that it is possible to read certain similarities between them within their ethical projects. In Kant, it seems that the moral law represents an exteriority that has to be respected by the rational agent. Thus, the ethical subject might be then not so far removed from Levinas's passivity. However, the subject in Kant has an active role because she has to recognise the law in herself not as a pure exteriority. Nonetheless, in an unexpected way it seems that the universality of the moral law has already taken the place of the active subject (Kant on the way to passivity?). From Levinas, the face to face encounter implies from the beginning the passivity of the subject and her impossibility of evading the neighbour's call. The subject is the substitution of me for the other, in an infinitely recurring event. However, the subject affected *has to answer* the call. This is why speech, the active saying, is ethical (Levinas on the way to activity?). This paper wants to shed light on the ethical connection between Kant and Levinas observing the differences and then the possible similarities in their ethical projects. Finally, it will discuss briefly how this topic can contribute to the understanding of social issues like gender relationships. This connection will be made recurring to the concepts of autonomy and responsibility where the former can be understood as activity and the latter as passivity.



**Kate Kirkpatrick (Oxford): A Phenomenology of the Pregnant Body: The Anxiety of Expectation**

In Levinas' *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology* we read that indeterminate, implicit 'horizons' always accompany explicit, clear forms of consciousness. 'We may let our sight wander around these horizons, illuminating certain aspects of them and letting others fall into darkness'.

This paper seeks to illuminate the horizons of an embodied experience which places women at the margins. 'Expectant' women are 'other' not only to men but to other, non-expectant women. They experience discontinuity in their bodies, altered social expectations, and (in many cases, at least) changes in their own experience of subjectivity. Drawing on Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* as well as on her later work, *Old Age*, this paper explores Beauvoir's so-called 'negative' approach to the pregnant body in light of recent literature on the tendency of women to 'mask' the difficulty of pregnancy and motherhood. It argues that Beauvoir is not the pessimist she is reputed to be, but rather gives voice to horizons many women see, but of which they dare not speak (for fear of being pushed further into the margins).

Importantly, the expectant woman does not know what to expect. The anxious 'horizons' of pregnancy are unknowns: at any point she may miscarry; she may face literal death or the death of her hopes. In presenting a phenomenology of the pregnant body, the paper therefore develops an account of expectant anxiety (drawing on Kierkegaard's *Concept of Anxiety*, etc.) on three connected but distinguishable levels: the body, society, and the self. It draws on Beauvoir's notion of the situated subject to show that one cannot offer a definitive phenomenology of pregnancy – there is no phenomenology of the pregnant body that could merit the definite article. The anxiety of expectation occurs in different ways, to different degrees, in different margins. Nonetheless, it is argued, unmasking the horizons of expectant consciousness illuminates ways in which the situations of women can be improved: in body, society, and the self.



**Bernardo Aibinder (National Council for Scientific Research, Argentina & Center for Subjectivity Research, Copenhagen): Experiencing the Non-given: Birth, Death and the Methodological Foundation of Phenomenology.**

Within the phenomenological tradition, Fink argued that in addition to Husserl's regressive phenomenology, the phenomenological method requires to be complemented with a *constructive phenomenology* (vid. HuaDok II:13). Constructive phenomenology is the methodological path to include within the scope of phenomenological research those phenomena that are not immediately given as such in experience. Among them are to be included phenomena such as the world of the Mesozoic Era or the Big Bang that cannot be experienced since they precede any experiencing subject as well as those that constitute the very limits of each subject's life as such, namely, my own birth and death.

If the only motivation for such widening of the phenomenological method were the desire to provide a phenomenological description of any possible object (such as the world of the dinosaurs), abandoning the criterion of intuitive givenness would be too high a price (vid. Kersten 1995, Crowell 2001). But there is a sense of totality phenomenology needs to refer to in order for it to be possible altogether, and to do so it needs to move beyond intuitive givenness as criterion for the truth and legitimacy of transcendental descriptions (*Ideas'* principle of phenomenology) or, at least, to reformulate drastically its own concept of what is given. This sense of totality is no other than the very idea of the totality of experience as the field for transcendental philosophy. Hence, the question concerning the methodological completion of phenomenology is one and the same with the problem of an internal need for phenomenology of overcoming the boundaries its own methodology imposes on it.

In this paper, I will claim that the *phenomenological analysis of our own birth and death* fulfills the crucial methodological function of gaining a phenomenological access to the totality of experience through an experience of something as non-given. I will trace back this idea in Husserl's analyses of death and birth in the C-Manuscripts, as well as in some considerations by Heidegger and Henry. What I intend to show is that there is a peculiar experience of the *non-given in the given* that is to be found in limit situations (Held 1972) and that such experience provides a way other than intuitive givenness to the phenomenological attestation (*Ausweisung*) of the description of experience as a totality.

**Liam Sprod (Kingston): Spatial Disruptions and Temporal Amplifications: The effect of Heidegger's turn to place on his reading of Kant.**

This paper will explore the ways in which the later developments in Heidegger's thought, in particular the growing emphasis on space and place, affect his earlier interpretations of Kant and the predominance of time and temporality within these interpretations. In turn, these examinations will reveal how space was already important to Kant himself and that while Heidegger's overly temporal interpretation in many ways occluded this importance or pushed it to the margins, its existence within Kant's system provided a disruptive element that played a part in Heidegger's turn towards spatiality and the philosophy of place. While Heidegger follows this spatial turn in his own thought he never explicitly returns to his interpretation of Kant to explore the way in which the neglect of spatiality in his interpretation perhaps effected or is itself affected by this turn. Although, he certainly does recognize the possibility of such a task, noting in the 1973 Preface to the Fourth Edition of the *Kantbook* that his engagement with Kant lead to both the manner of questioning from *Being and Time* and also later gave another, unspecified meaning to this manner of questioning; leading him to admit that he has "attempted to retract the overinterpretation [of Kant] without at the same time writing a correspondingly new version of the Kant book itself." This paper suggests that it is the role of space in Kant that provided the new meaning for the manner of questioning; and, using the aporias of time and space in both the *Critique of Pure Reason* and across Heidegger's work, sets out and argues for what such a new version of the *Kantbook* might look like. This will allow me to speculate on what this might mean for the place or orientation of phenomenology, in every sense of those terms.



**James Matharu (Oxford): Wittgenstein's Wasp: Disorientation Towards Animals in the *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*.**

In her *Queer Phenomenology*, Sara Ahmed describes how moments of disorientation towards objects can be 'queer': we can find these objects just beyond our reach, and this can foster a kind of 'horror' or unease. While Merleau-Ponty, she suggests, was concerned with how bodies become 'reoriented' to recover from this unease, she remarks that some orientations on which these objects remain unreachable can be sources of 'vitality as well as giddiness' (Ahmed [2007], 4).

This paper examines a variety of ways in which both horror and wonder can stem from disorientation towards animals. My starting point is a neglected passage in Wittgenstein's *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, concerning our 'uncertainty' toward animals such as flies, spiders and wasps [RPP II, §§659-660]. In making sense of his cryptic distinction between 'philosophical' and 'behavioural' uncertainty towards animals and other objects, I explore the different ways in which such disorientation manifests itself. These, I argue, are what Cora Diamond calls 'difficulties of reality': *inescapable* failures of orientation to which philosophy should pay attention (Diamond [2008], 44).

My paper has two chief aims relating to the conference theme: (1) regarding marginal limit cases, to offer new a case study of the idea that we can fail to 'reach' certain objects, (2) regarding marginal positionalities and embodiments, to explore how wonder and unease can relate in our bodily experience of animals and how doubt can be perceived in others' movements. It also aims to make use of phenomenology in developing a Wittgensteinian approach to animals, which is enjoying close attention (see, e.g. Stanley Cavell et al. [2008], *Philosophy and Animal Life*; Stephen Mulhall [2009], *The Wounded Animal: J.M. Coetzee and the Difficulty of Reality in Literature and Philosophy*; Niklas Forsberg et al (eds.) [2012] *Language, Ethics and Animal Life: Wittgenstein and Beyond*).

### **Benjamin Draxlbauer (Vienna): Uncovering the Presence - Oblivion in Husserl's Time-Consciousness**

In his late years Husserl's thinking was often occupied by limit-cases, such as death, birth, oblivion or the unconsciousness. In the presentation I will confine myself to the limit-case of oblivion, which is embedded in Husserl's considerations concerning the phenomenological time-consciousness. My aim is to show that Husserl's view on oblivion needs a revision, as to get a new and more adequate understanding of forgetting in consciousness. Concerning this project, I will at first give a short classification of the limit-cases, which Husserl discusses in the *C-Manuscripts (Husserliana Materialen VIII)* and the *Limit Problems of Phenomenology (Husserliana XLII)*. The second part consists of a detailed exposition of the Husserlian account of oblivion and its connection to the structures of time-consciousness. Husserl describes oblivion as a marginal case of the process of self-giving in presentifying consciousness. By retentive modification, a present phenomenal stock is brought to its *Zero-Limit*, where it rests in total darkness unless we revive it in recollection (if we ever do so). Husserl is clear on the point that a forgotten stock, which has been "sedimented" or "sunken" into the zero-horizon, has not become nothing (*Husserliana XLII, 62f*), but has just reached its zero of retentive modification. In this path of Husserl's analysis we will come across a definition of unconsciousness.

In the last part of my talk I will give a revision of Husserl's account and try to trace consciousness to its "unconscious" sides, which are interacting with self-giving consciousness. We will see that oblivion is a mode of consciousness, which as the constitutional function of uncovering presence from already done presentifications. Its constitutional effort is to keep away all the things and experiences that are irrelevant for the presence and would therefore clutter up consciousness.



### **Patrick Levy (Sussex): Phenomenology and Sleep – The Dream of Suspension**

The method of phenomenology begins, like waking, *from* an initial suspension. This opening claim ties both phenomenology and sleep to the notion of a practical suspension. This paper will explore the ways that this intertwining of these three concepts has, structurally, both facilitated and limited phenomenology's access to sleep. Our clue will be the suspicion that sleep has, all too often, amounted to nothing more than the dream of suspension for phenomenological philosophers and as such has been reduced to an inaccessible step away from wakefulness.

This paper undertakes a reciprocally limiting analysis of the place of suspension and that of sleep within phenomenological philosophy. It will become clear that neither sleep nor phenomenology, as a philosophical practice, can, consistently, be reduced to the movement of suspension. In the case of sleep we find an important example of the ways that phenomenological approaches both reveal and conceal in their, often all too quick, turns to the device of suspension itself. Sleep, *as the placing* in stasis of wakeful consciousness, proves at once appealing and problematic for such phenomenology. This, alongside the essentially constitutive and foundational position of sleep for any thorough-going phenomenological philosophy, then allows us to consider the possible limits of suspension in consistent phenomenology.

As Merleau-Ponty pointed out in his *Phenomenology of Perception* the "most important lesson that the reduction teaches us is the impossibility of the complete reduction." (p. xv) This paper should be seen as an attempt to problematise two inter-tangled dreams; the dream of the absolute suspension, and the dream that sleep can be, phenomenologically, confined to the suspension of waking. In this way it represents part of an on-going effort to retrieve sleep from the margins of phenomenological analysis and, in so doing, to performatively broaden and strengthen phenomenology itself.

**Helen Ngo (SUNY, Stony Brook): Racialisation and the Fragmentation of the Phenomenological Body**

In this paper, I consider some of the challenges posed to Merleau-Ponty's account of the phenomenological body, by the experience of racialisation (the process by which one is deemed to 'have' race). In particular, I consider the way in which the hypervisibility of racialised bodies, along with what I will call the 'non-event' nature of racialisation, lead to a spatial and temporal fragmentation on the level of the body schema. Drawing on thinkers such as Frantz Fanon, George Yancy, and Alia-Al Saji, I explore how the experience of racialisation entails a spatial being-before and temporal being-ahead (or behind) oneself, that is incompatible with Merleau-Ponty's declaration, "I am not in front of my body, I am in my body, or rather I am my body". Following this, I consider the significance of the 'non-event' nature of racialisation – that is, how both racialisation and racism very often take place in the course of unremarkable activities (walking, shopping, travelling) – to argue that this racial schema is already present and operative on a pre-reflective, bodily level.



**Zhu Xinqu (Hong Kong): Between the Transcendental and the Mundane: The Embodied Subject and the Undismissible Tension in Husserl's Transcendental Phenomenology**

Husserl introduces phenomenology by conducting the reduction, which suspends the subject's positing of the 'general thesis' and thus leads the heed back to the immanence of consciousness. In correlation, the world (and worldly objects), originally being factually posited, is phenomenologically modified as subjective-related phenomena constituted by the transcendental subjectivity.

As the transcendental character of phenomenology emerges, the paradox concerning the subject-world relation also becomes obvious. On the one hand, the subject is an 'empirical self' that *belongs to* the world; on the other hand, the subject acts as 'transcendental subjectivity' that *transcends* the world and *constitutes* the meaning of the world. Seeming contradictory, how can the two aspects be reconciled?

In *Crisis*, Husserl attempted to resolve the paradox by interpreting the transcendental subjectivity as intersubjectivity. However, as he emphasized the transcendental subjectivity's unhuman character in contrast to the concrete human subject, two ontological realms of existence seem to be implied, causing idealistic suspicions upon his transcendental position.

In fact, Husserl did not realize that the possible resolution already lies in his constitutive studies of the embodied subject in *Ideas II*. In this paper, I will explicate the embodied subject, being ontologically intertwined of physicality, animal nature and spirituality, is mortal but possesses the cultural-constituting capacity which is immaterial and in a sense immortal. Therefore, the subject-world paradox can be theoretically resolved by understanding the 'empirical self' and 'transcendental subjectivity' as two modes of the same subject, and thus avoid the idealistic challenge. Nevertheless, on the other hand, the paradox is essentially undismissible because it stems from the core of human being, who is born mortal but naturally desires eternity – but it is this tension that generates the cultural and artistic pursuit of human, which I will also discuss in my paper.