

ENCECON | ICP 2022

EMBODIED EXPERIENCE OF INTERSUBJECTIVITY: EXPLORING
THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN "SELF" AND "OTHER"



April 20, 2022

Dear colleague,

Thank you for accepting our invitation to participate in the first-ever joint ENCECON-ICP workshop, organized by Mind & Life Europe, that will take place at the Domaine de Fréchet - les PEP 59 in Le Reposoir, France on July 4-8, 2022. We are honored and delighted to include you in our collective exploration of **embodied intersubjective experience**.

As mentioned in our invitation letter to you, the goal of this workshop is to explore how phenomenology and microphenomenology may be deployed to inform and benefit neuroscientific research. We will do so by engaging in a co-emergent, collaborative effort to reach greater clarity about the affordances and obstacles to the realization of a contemplative science of mind and life. Our workshop will be one example of the work that is necessary to strengthen the gentle bridges of which Francisco Varela spoke during the first Mind and Life Dialogue between scientists, philosophers, and contemplatives.

During the workshop, we will collectively engage in an iterative process of exploring intersubjectivity through contemplative practices, microphenomenological interviews and analysis, small-group work, and dialogue and partnership with each other, drawing on insights and perspectives from phenomenology and the cognitive sciences. Coming together as equal co-investigators in the laboratories of our own embodied experience, and drawing on our individual expertise and experience, we hope to embark on an inner and outer journey of refining our individual and collective understanding of intersubjectivity and the study of it.

We are not planning for any formal talks during the workshop, but we are setting aside ample spaces in the schedule where everyone is invited to contribute their insights, both from their personal experience and from their disciplinary expertise. This workshop seeks to build on the mutual respect, openness, creativity, and curiosity that has characterized some of our previous MLE gatherings.

Attached you will find a detailed schedule for the workshop and we invite you to plan your travels accordingly (for an arrival during the day on Monday and a departure on Friday afternoon). As we get closer to the event, we will be in touch again to make sure that you have all the information you need for your arrival. We look forward to welcoming you at the workshop in July!

With kind regards,

The MLE Team & The Joint ENCECON-ICP Planning Committee

Time	Monday, July 4th	Time	Tuesday, July 5th	Wednesday, July 6th	Thursday, July 7th	Time	Friday, July 7th
		6:30	Optional Morning Activity (meditation, walk, run...)	Optional Morning Activity (meditation, walk, run...)	Optional Morning Activity (meditation, walk, run...)	6:30	Optional Morning Activity (meditation, walk, run...)
		7:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	7:30	Breakfast
		9:00	Morning Meeting: Introduction and reminder of the principles (of the microphenomenological interview)	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting	8:30	Morning Meeting
		10:00	Short Break	Short Break	Short Break	9:00	Looking Forward: Questions, Preliminary Findings & Deliverables
		10:10	i) Contemplative/experiential Exercise I (<i>solo</i>) ii) Microphenomenological Interview iii) Introduction and reminder of the principles (of the microphenomenological analysis)	i) Contemplative/experiential Exercise II (<i>pairs</i>) ii) Microphenomenological Interview	i) Contemplative/experiential Exercise III (<i>group</i>) ii) Microphenomenological Interview		
		12:00					
		12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	12:00	ENCECON ICP Closing
		13:30	Microphenomenological Analysis	Microphenomenological Analysis	Microphenomenological Analysis	12:30	Lunch
		14:30	Afternoon Session I: Presentation of Microphenomenological Analysis Results	Afternoon Session I: Presentation of Microphenomenological Analysis Results	Afternoon Session I: Presentation of Microphenomenological Analysis Results	14:00	Departures
16:00	Arrivals & Registration	15:30	Philosophical Intermezzo I	Philosophical Intermezzo I	Philosophical Intermezzo I		
		16:30	Afternoon Session II: Neuroscience - Emerging Questions in the Field	Afternoon Session II: Neuroscience - Emerging Questions in the Field	Afternoon Session II: Neuroscience - Emerging Questions in the Field		
		17:30	Break	Break	Break		
18:00	Meditation	18:00	Afternoon Session III: Dialogue between Neurophenomenology & Microphenomenology	Afternoon Session III: Dialogue between Neurophenomenology & Microphenomenology	Afternoon Session III: Dialogue between Neurophenomenology & Microphenomenology		
19:00	Dinner	19:00	Philosophical Intermezzo II	Philosophical Intermezzo II	Philosophical Intermezzo II		
		19:30	Meditation	Meditation	Meditation		
20:00	Welcome & Introductions	20:00	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner		
		21:00	Reflections from Contemplatives	Reflections from Contemplatives	Reflections from Contemplatives		
21:30	Evening Meditation	21:30	Optional Evening Meditation	Optional Evening Meditation	Optional Evening Meditation		

Elena Antonova



Biography

I obtained a BSc in Psychology from the University College London, UK, in 2000 and a PhD in Cognitive Psychology from the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience (IoPPN), King's College London, UK, in 2004. I then held a number of post-doctorate research positions at the IoPPN between 2004 and 2011, including developing virtual reality fMRI-compatible analogues of well-established animal spatial memory paradigms (Morris Water Maze and Olton

Octagonal Maze) as a biomarker of hippocampal function for drug development in Alzheimer's Disease, as well as investigating the neural predictors of responsiveness to CBT for psychosis, amongst others. Following a Templeton Positive Neuroscience Award as a personal fellowship for the project investigating the effect of mindfulness on sensory information gating in expert mindfulness practitioners held between 2011-2013, I transitioned to a lectureship post at the Department of Psychology, IoPPN. In mid-June 2019, I moved to Brunel University London to take on the position of Senior Lecturer at the Division of Psychology, Department of Life Sciences, College of Health and Life Sciences. I am also continuing my research collaborations at the IoPPN as a Visiting Researcher.

Research Profile

My main area of research interest and expertise is the neuroscience of mindfulness with the focus on investigating the effects of long-term mindfulness meditation practice using psychophysiology and neuroimaging methods with the application to the prevention and management of mental illness as well as promotion of mental health and wellbeing. I have been actively involved with the Mind and Life Institute since 2011 and Mind and Life Europe since 2013. In 2017 I was elected a Mind & Life Research Fellow for my contribution to contemplative science.

My research directions include:

- Long-term effects of mindfulness practice on information processing, cognition, and emotion regulation;
- Development of objective measures of mindfulness expertise using psychophysiology and neuroimaging;
- Development of new methodological approaches for analysing fMRI and EEG data to better understand neural dynamics associated with subjective experiences;
- Application of mindfulness interventions for the prevention and management of psychopathologies such as psychosis and schizophrenia, as well as the promotion of healthy aging.

Selected publications:

- Antonova E, Holding M, Maex R, Nottage J, Sumich A, Nehaniv C (2022). Functional significance and short-term test-retest reliability of EEG microstates. *Neuroimage: Reports*, 2(2) 100089.
- Datta S, Aondoakaa A, Holmberg JJ, Antonova E (2022). Recognition of silently spoken words from EEG signals using Dense Attention Network (DAN). *Proceedings of IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech and Signal Processing (ICASSP)*, IEEE Press, 4558-4562.
- Datta S, Holmberg JJ, Antonova E (2021). Electrode selection and convolutional attention network for recognition of silently spoken words from EEG signals. *Proceedings of IEEE International Symposium Series on Computational Intelligence (SSCI)*. IEEE Press, 1-8.

Michel Bitbol



Biography

Michel Bitbol was born on March 12, 1954. He is *Directeur de Recherche emeritus* at the CNRS, in Paris, France. He is presently based at the *Archives Husserl*, a center of research in Phenomenology. He received successively his M.D., his Ph.D. in physics, and his "Habilitation" in philosophy in Paris.

He worked as a research scientist in biophysics from 1978 to 1990. From 1990 onwards, he

turned to the philosophy of physics. He edited texts by Erwin Schrödinger and developed a neo-kantian philosophy of quantum mechanics. In 1997 he received an award from the *Academie des sciences morales et politiques* for his work in the philosophy of quantum mechanics.

Later on, he studied the relations between the philosophy of physics and the philosophy of mind, working in close collaboration with Francisco Varela. He then learnt some Sanskrit and published a book (*De l'intérieur du monde*, 2010) in which he draws a parallel between Buddhist dependent arising and non-supervenient relations, in quantum physics and the theory of knowledge. He recently developed a conception of consciousness inspired from an epistemology of first-person knowledge, together with a phenomenological critique of naturalist theories of consciousness (*La conscience a-t-elle une origine ?*, 2014). And he recently published a confutation of "speculative realism" entitled *Maintenant la finitude*, 2019.

Research Profile

Themes of research:

- Philosophy of quantum mechanics, along the lines of a neo-Kantian epistemology.
- Philosophy of mind
- Philosophy of consciousness based on a first-person approach

-Phenomenology : a general attitude of suspending speculative judgments and coming back to what Edmund Husserl called "the mothers of knowledge" (namely the dynamics of lived, embodied, experience). And, in particular some investigations in microphenomenology in collaboration with Claire Petitmengin and Natalie Depraz.

Themes that attracts me to this workshop:

- Phenomenological approach to the experience of meditation

Selected publications :

- M. Bitbol, « Phenoneurology », *Constructivist Foundations*, 12 (2), 112-115, 2017
- M. Bitbol & C. Petitmengin, « Neurophenomenology and the micro-phenomenological interview », In : M. Velmans & S. Schneider (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Consciousness*, Second edition. Wiley & Sons, 726-739, 2017. Reprint in : M. Velmans (ed.), *Consciousness*, volume III, Routledge, 2018
- M. Bitbol, « Neurophenomenology of surprise », In : N. Depraz & A. Celle, *Surprise at the intersection of phenomenology and linguistics*, John Benjamins, 2019
- M. Bitbol, « Consciousness, being and life: phenomenological approaches to mindfulness », *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 50, 127-161, 2019
- M. Bitbol, « The tangled dialectic of body and consciousness : a metaphysical counterpart of neurophenomenology », *Constructivist Foundations*, 16, 141-151, 2021

Natalie Depraz



Biography

I am a professor of philosophy at the University of Rouen Normandy and a University Member at the Husserl Archives ENS-CNRS Paris. Among my latest books: *Attention and Vigilance. At the crossroads of phenomenology and the cognitive science* (Paris, PUF, 2014) and *The subject of the surprise: a cardinal subject* (Bucarest, Zeta books, 2018). *Surprise. A History of Philosophy* will be published next year with Hermann, Paris.

Research Profile

I am developing an experiential practical phenomenology, with two main recent research orientations:

- 1) What is the philosophy of microphenomenology?
- 2) How is a political phenomenology based on multifarious understandings of intersubjectivity?

Selected publications:

As an initial reference, I mention my PHD thesis on intersubjectivity in Husserl, published 1995 with Vrin, Paris: *Transcendence and Incarnation: Intersubjectivity as Self-Alterity in Husserl*.

Antoine Lutz



Biography

Dr. Antoine Lutz is currently a director of research at the French Medical Research Institute (INSERM) in the Lyon Neuroscience Research Center (CNRL) where he co-leads the Experiential Neuroscience and Mental Training Team (EDUWELL). After a Master degree in engineering and a BA in philosophy at the Sorbonne under the direction of Natalie Depraz, he did his PhD in cognitive neurosciences in Paris, France, with Francisco Varela where he applied for the first time his neurophenomenology program to study the neural correlates of attention and perception.

Research Profile

Since 1998, he has studied meditation with various teachers including Mingyur Rinpoche, Tsoknyi Rinpoche, Matthieu Ricard and Joseph Goldstein. During his postdoctoral work with Richard Davidson, at the University of Madison-Wisconsin, he studied using neuroimaging techniques meditation practices such as mindfulness or compassion meditations in expert meditators and in novices who learnt to meditate using the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program (MBSR). In 2008, he and Richard Davidson were awarded a NIH-NCCAM grant to fund in Madison the first American Center of Excellence on Research dedicated to neurophysiological study of meditation practices. After working for ten years in the US as a research scientist, he joined the Lyon Neuroscience Research Center in France

in January 2013. His current research group focuses on the neurophenomenology of mindfulness and compassion meditations and on the impact of these practices on consciousness, attention and emotion regulations, and pain perception as measured by cognitive, affective and social neuroimaging paradigms using EEG, MEG, intra-cortical EEG, and fMRI. This research is currently funded by a European ERC consolidator grant (Brain&Mindfulness, 2014-2021). He is also currently collaborating to a European research consortium investigating the impacts of meditation practices on ageing and well-being as measured by brain imaging (PET, IRMf, DTI, EEG), biomarkers of ageing, and psycho-affective and cognitive behavioural measures (Meditageing, H2020, 2016-2021, study coordinated by Gaël Chételat, INSERM Caen, <https://silversantestudy.fr>). He recently started a collaboration investigating the neurocomputational principles of meditation (ANR MindMadeClear, coordinated by Hugues Mounier, CNRS).

Claire Petitmengin



Biography

Claire Petitmengin is currently Professor Emerita in Philosophy at the Institut Mines-Télécom and member of the Archives Husserl, Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris.

Research Profile

Her research focuses on the usually unrecognized dynamics of lived experience and “micro-phenomenological” methods enabling us to become aware of it and highlight its essential structures. She studies the epistemological conditions of these methods, as well as their educational, therapeutic, artistic, ecological and contemplative applications, notably in the context of the Micro-phenomenology Lab, an international “without walls” laboratory gathering researchers involved in micro-phenomenological research.

Selected publications:

- Petitmengin C. (2021). On the Veiling and Unveiling of Experience: A Comparison Between the Micro-Phenomenological Method and the Practice of Meditation. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 52: 36-77.
- Petitmengin C. (2021). Anchoring in lived experience as an act of resistance. *Constructivist Foundations* 16(2): 172-181.
- Petitmengin C., Van Beek M, Bitbol M., Nissou J-M., Roepstorff A. (2018). Studying the experience of meditation through micro-phenomenology. *Current Opinions in Psychology*.
- Petitmengin C., Remillieux A., Valenzuela-Moguillansky C. (2018). Discovering the structures of lived experience. Towards a micro-phenomenological analysis method. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*.
- Petitmengin C. (2017). Enaction as a lived experience. Towards a radical neurophenomenology. *Constructivist Foundations* 12 (2): 139-147.
- Petitmengin C. (2007). Towards the source of thoughts. The gestural and transmodal dimension of lived experience. *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 14 (3), 54-82.

Martijn van Beek



Biography

I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology and also affiliated with the Interacting Minds Centre, both at Aarhus University in Denmark. I was educated at Free University in Amsterdam (BA and MA) and at Cornell University (PhD 1996). My academic interests developed in conjunction with my activist engagement for Tibet from the early 1980s and the associated larger questions concerning development, politics, religion, and the rights of minorities. After finishing my MA on Tibetan refugees in Ladakh, I worked for a small ecological development NGO in Ladakh (and as a trekking guide in Nepal and India) before pursuing a PhD in Development Sociology at Cornell, studying Buddhist-Muslim conflict and the movement for regional autonomy in Ladakh.

In the past two decades or so, my focus has increasingly been on Buddhism and modernity, dialogues and collaborations between contemplatives and scientists, the (micro-) phenomenology of meditation, and emergent forms of contemplative life.

I live, and occasionally teach, at Vaekstcenteret, a contemplative community in Nørre Snede, Denmark.

Research Profile

Current research includes the Absence/Presence project (with Bess Boelsbjerg, Ema Demšar and Claire Petitmengin and others) on differences in the experience of contact in online and in-person contexts.

Selected publications:

- Petitmengin, Claire, M. van Beek, M. Bitbol, J.-M. Nissou & A. Roepstorff (2019) "Studying the Experience of Meditation through Micro-phenomenology. *Current Opinion in Psychology*. 28 (August 2019) p. 54-59. 10.1016/j.copsyc.2018.10.009
- Petitmengin, Claire, M. van Beek, M. Bitbol, J.-M. Nissou, & A. Roepstorff (2017). "What Is It Like to Meditate? Methods and Issues for a Micro-phenomenological Description of Meditative Experience." *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 24(5-6): 170-198. <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01653495/document>

Constanza Baquedano



Biography

Constanza Baquedano obtained her biochemistry degree from the University of Santiago de Chile, her Master's degree in Neurosciences from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, and her double degree of Doctor of Neuroscience through the cotutella between the Claude Bernard Lyon 1 University, Lyon, France and at the Catholic University of Chile, Santiago de Chile. Her doctoral thesis was titled "De-automation through awareness of subjective realism: A neurophenomenological account of meditative states

and their effect on cognitive bias." Under the joint supervision of Dr. Antoine Lutz and Dr. Diego Cosmelli.

Research Profile

Her research addresses meditation's dereification capability to de-automatize recurrent cognitive and neuronal patterns by dismantling semantic expectations and approach-avoidance tendencies.

Currently, Constanza investigates meditation and other contemplative states: for this she uses a multidisciplinary and diversified methodology that encompasses both quantitative measurements (third person), which include molecular methods, electrophysiology of the autonomic system, electroencephalographic (EEG), and behavioral measurements to qualitative measurements (first person) such as self-reports and interviews, to try to provide a "neurophenomenological" approach to the phenomena studied.

She is a research associate at the Millennium Institute for Research in Depression and Personality (MIDAP). She is president of the Andean Resilience Foundation, for the conservation of mountain ecosystems, the International Society for Contemplative Research, and a member of the EcoH Foundation, for the study of human consciousness. She is currently a Professor at the Faculty of Psychology at the Adolfo Ibáñez University and a Researcher at the Center for Social and Cognitive Neuroscience (CSCN) and

has national (FONDECYT) and international (Varela Award) funds to finance her line of research.

Selected Publications

- Timmermann C & Baquedano C (2021) "Exploring the convergences between meditation and psychedelics for nature connectedness, pro-ecological behaviour and human development". Poster presentation at the Mind and life Institute, summer research institute, "The mind, the human-earth connection and the climate crisis", June 2021.
- Fucci, E., Baquedano, C., Abdoun, O., Deroche, J., & Lutz, A. (2021). Validation of a Set of Stimuli to Investigate the Effect of Attributional Processes on Social Motivation in Within-Subject Experiments. *Collabra: Psychology*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.1525/collabra.21937>
- Baquedano, C., Lopez, V., Cosmelli, D., & Lutz, A. (2019). Electrophysiological evidence of the differential modulation of approach-related processes toward attractive foods by immersive or mindful viewing conditions. *European Journal of Neuroscience*, ejn.14632. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejn.14632>
- Baquedano C (2019) Chapter "Des-automatización a través de la meditación: educar la mente para una percepción alternativa" on the book "Pasos para una ecología cognitiva de la educación" Editorial Universidad de la Serena 2019, págs. 73 / 95 (ISBN 978-956-7052-65-3.)
- Baquedano C, Vergara R., Lopez, V., Fabar, C., Cosmelli, D., & Lutz, A. (2017). Compared to self immersion, mindful attention reduces salivation and automatic food bias «. *Scientific Reports*, 7(1), 13839. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-017-13662-z>
- Baquedano C. & Fabar C. (2017) Modeling subjects' experience while modeling the experimental design: A mild-neurophenomenology-inspired approach in the piloting phase. *Constructivist Foundations* 12(2): 166-179.

Thorsten Barnhofer



Biography

Thorsten Barnhofer, PhD, is Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Surrey, United Kingdom, where he conducts research into the use of mindfulness-based interventions for the prevention and treatment of depression and associated mental disorders across the lifespan. A cognitive-behavioural therapist and mindfulness teacher, he regularly offers mindfulness workshops and retreats for mental health professionals.

Research Profile

Field:

I am a clinical psychologist and work mainly in the field of affective disorders. I have a particular interest in the mechanisms by which mindfulness meditation may reverse the psychological and biological factors that hold chronic and recurrent forms of depression in place.

What brings me to the workshop:

I come to the workshop with an interest in exploring the use of micro-phenomenological approaches to better understand the mental processes that maintain affective disorders and uncover the lived experience of these often automatic and habitual processes.

Selected publications:

- Barnhofer, T., Reess, T. J., Fissler, M., Winnebeck, E., Grimm, S., Gaertner, M., Fan, Y., Huntenburg, J. M., Schroeter, T. A., Gummersbach, M., Bajbouj, M., & Hölzel, B. K. (2021). Mindfulness training changes emotion-regulation in depressed patients: increases in the capacity to decentre correlate with altered dorsolateral prefrontal cortex activation. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 83, 579-591. <https://doi.org/10.1097/PSY.0000000000000955>
- Barnhofer, T. (2019). Mindfulness training in the treatment of persistent depression: can it help to reverse maladaptive plasticity? *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 28, 262-267. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2019.02.007>
- Ford, T., Richardson, J., Wilinson, K., Smith, P., Berry, V., Barnhofer, T., Fox, J., & Kuyken, W. (2020). Could mindfulness-based cognitive therapy prevent a lifelong recurrent course of depression or anxiety by addressing key mechanisms of vulnerability in high-risk adolescents? *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 216, 175-177. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2019.183>
- Lifshitz, M., Sacchet, M. D., Huntenburg, J. M., Thiery, T., Fan, Y., Gärtner, M., Grimm, S., Winnebeck, E., Fissler, M., Schröter, T. A., Margulies, D. S., Barnhofer, T. (2019). Mindfulness-based therapy regulates brain connectivity in Major Depression. *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*, 88, 375 -377. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000501170>

Olaf Blanke



Biography

Olaf Blanke is Bertarelli Foundation Chair of Cognitive Neuroprosthetics at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL), where he directs the Laboratory of Cognitive Neuroscience at Geneva's Campus Biotech. He founded and directed EPFL's Center for Neuroprosthetics and is Adjunct Professor at Geneva University Hospital. Blanke's research focuses on the neuroscience of consciousness and embodiment, human augmentation and personalized medicine. Blanke pioneered robotics and virtual reality technology in neuroscience of consciousness studies and cognitive psychology. His medical-translational activities are dedicated to preventive, diagnostic and therapeutic procedures and devices in neurodegenerative disorders (Parkinson's disease, Dementia), mental health and well-being. Blanke is co-founder of Metaphysiks Engineering and member of the board of Mindmaze.

Research Profile

Selected Publications:

- Park H, Blanke O (2019) Coupling inner and outer body for self-consciousness. *Trends in Cognitive Science* 3:5.
- Park HD, Bernasconi F, Salomon R, Tallon-Baudry C, Spinelli L, Seeck M, Schaller K, Blanke O (2017) Neural sources and underlying mechanisms of neural responses to heartbeats, and their role in bodily selfconsciousness: An intracranial EEG study. *Cerebral Cortex* 7: 1-14.

- Blanke O, Slater M, Serino A (2015) Behavioral, Neural, and Computational Principles of Bodily Self-Consciousness. *Neuron* 88: 145-66.
- Blanke O, Pozeg P, Hara M, Heydrich L, Serino A, Yamamoto A, Higuchi T, Salomon R, Seeck M, Landis T, Arzy S, Herbelin B, Bleuler H, Rognini G (2014) Neurological- and robot-controlled induction of an apparition. *Current Biology* 24: 2681-2686.
- Aspell, JE, Heydrich L, Blanke O (2013) Turning body and self-inside out: Visualized heartbeats alter bodily self-consciousness and tactile perception. *Psychological Science* 24: 2445-2453.
- Ionta S, Heydrich L, Lenggenhager B, Mouthon M, Gassert R, Blanke O (2011) Temporo-parietal cortex encodes self-location and first-person perspective. *Neuron* 70:363-374.
- Blanke O (2012) Multisensory brain mechanisms of bodily self-consciousness. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*: 13: 556-571.
- Ionta S, Heydrich L, Lenggenhager B, Mouthon M, Gassert R, Blanke O (2011) Temporo-parietal cortex encodes self-location and first-person perspective. *Neuron* 70:363-374.
- Blanke O, Metzinger T (2009) Full-body illusions and minimal phenomenal selfhood. *Trends in Cognitive Science* 13: 7-13.
- Lenggenhager B, Tadi T, Metzinger T, Blanke O. (2007) Video ergo sum. Manipulating bodily self-consciousness. *Science* 317: 1096-1099.
- Arzy S, Seeck M, Spinelli L, Ortigue S, Blanke O. (2006) Induction of an illusory shadow person. *Nature* 443: 287.
- Blanke O, Spinelli L, Landis T, Seeck M (2004) Out-of-body experience and autoscapy of neurological origin. *Brain* 127: 243-258.
- Blanke O, Ortigue S, Landis T, Seeck M. (2002) Stimulating illusory own-body perceptions. *Nature* 419: 269-270.

Hanne Bess Boelsbjerg



Biography

Post Doc, Centre for Planned Surgery at the Regional Hospital Silkeborg & IMC, Aarhus University

In recent years I have established myself as a cross-disciplinary researcher, who explores lived experiences, both in relation to being embedded in a medical culture and being involved in spiritual traditions.

Research Profile

With my background in the study of religion and public health, I have contributed to investigating the process of death and dying by following cancer patients with ethnic minority or majority background in the last stages of their illness. I have also explored how hospice care staff experience being trained in mindfulness and compassion in relation to being exposed to death and dying on a regular basis.

I currently partake in the project "Borderlands of living". Here I contribute to the exploration of personhood, consciousness and decision taking among comatose patients by conducting fieldwork among clinicians and therapists working to detect signs of consciousness. In the present phase of the project, I am including the narratives of the relatives to explore strategies of negotiating hope and dealing with uncertainty.

Selected publications:

This newly published article touches upon subjective experience as part of academic knowledge-making:

- Boelsbjerg H.B. & Katan, L. (2022) ["Teaching and Writing \(as\) Academic Activism", Contention.](#)

I am looking very much forward to this article being published very soon!

- Heimann K., Boelsbjerg H.B., Allen C., van Beek M., Suhr C., Lübbert A., & Petitmengin C. "The lived experience of remembering a "good" interview. Micro-phenomenology applied to itself". *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*.

My profile as a cross-disciplinary researcher led me to this interesting collaboration:

- Boelsbjerg H.B., Kurita G.P., Sjøgren P. & Hansen N.V. (2022). "Combining subjective and objective appraisals of cognitive dysfunction in patients with cancer: a deeper understanding of meaning and impact on suffering?" *Supportive Cancer Care*.

Ema Demšar



Biography

Ema is a cognitive scientist interested in the study of lived experience in the research framework of neurophenomenology. She comes from an interdisciplinary background, with a BSc in Chemistry (University of Ljubljana) and a joint MSc in Cognitive Science (University of Ljubljana and University of Vienna). She has additional five years of experience with research and teaching in cognitive science, with focus on the application of first-person methods (primarily micro-phenomenology) in the science of consciousness.

Ema is currently a PhD candidate at Monash University, [Centre for Consciousness and Contemplative Studies](#) (main supervisor Jennifer Windt). Her PhD project, co-funded by MLE 2020 Francisco J. Varela Award, is a neurophenomenological investigation of the onset of meta-awareness in lucid dreaming. It combines conceptual analysis and empirical investigation of lucidity-related dream experiences in home and laboratory settings, and involves an ongoing collaboration with the [Donders Sleep & Memory Lab](#).

Research Profile

Fields of interest: Neurophenomenology, First-person Methods, Empirical Phenomenology, Dreaming, Mind-wandering, Meta-awareness, Altered States of Consciousness, Intersubjectivity.

What brings me to the workshop:

In addition to my current focus on dream research – where “self”, “other”, and the relation between them often emerge as important aspects of dream experience – I am engaged in various research projects directly related to the topic of intersubjectivity. One such project is the “Absence/Presence” project (carried out together with Martijn van Beek, Bess Boelsbjerg, Claire Petitmengin, and other members of the micro-phenomenology research community) investigating the experience of intersubjective contact in online and in-person encounters. Another project, carried out with

Camila Valenzuela-Moguillansky (Valenzuela-Moguillansky & Demšar, 2021), addresses intersubjectivity not only as a potential object, but also as an important ground for experience research. In particular, Camila and I suggest that a more theoretically coherent and phenomenologically informed understanding of intersubjectivity (including the intersubjective nature of research practices involved in studying experience itself) is critical for developing more consistent epistemological and methodological frameworks for experience research.

Selected publications:

- Valenzuela-Moguillansky, C., & **Demšar, E.** (2021). Toward a science of experience: Outlining some challenges and future directions. *Adaptive Behavior*, 10597123221084739.
- Kordeš, U., & **Demšar, E.** (2021). Horizons of becoming aware: Constructing a pragmatic-epistemological framework for empirical first-person research. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, 1-29.
- Kordeš, U., Oblak, A., Smrdu, M., & **Demšar, E.** (2019). Ethnography of meditation: An account of pursuing meditative practice as a tool for researching consciousness. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 26(7-8), 184-237.

Jonas Mago



Biography

Jonas is a wellbeing aficionado, interested in the cognitive mechanisms underlying human flourishing. His research investigates contemplative practices that aim to bring about wholesome states of mind – from meditation and prayer to collective cultural rituals and psychedelic therapies. He works from an interdisciplinary perspective, combining cognitive, neurobiological, computational, and phenomenological approaches to shed light on mechanisms of self-regulation. Jonas is currently pursuing his doctoral studies in Neuroscience at McGill University, supervised by Dr. Michael Lifshitz and co-supervised by Prof. Dr. Karl Friston. His work is supported by Mind & Life Europe and the German Academic Scholarship Foundation. Previously, he has completed a master's in Mind, Language, and Embodied Cognition with distinction at the University of Edinburgh (UK) and an undergrad in Liberal Arts and Sciences with Cum Laude at the University College Maastricht (Netherlands).

Research Profile

Fields and Research

I am a neuroscientist-in-training exploring the neuro-computational mechanisms underlying the beneficial effects of contemplative practices – from meditation and prayer to collective cultural rituals and psychedelic therapies. I take a multidisciplinary approach combining techniques from mobile neuroimaging, multi-person neuroscience, and computational neuro-phenomenology.

My current research projects focus on advanced Jhana meditators in a Western and Asian context, collective Christian prayer, the emergent phenomenology of entities during the psychedelic state, and theoretical models of cognitive flexibility and stability and their relation to human flourishing.

What brings me to this workshop

In regards to the ENCECON-ICP workshop, I am excited to explore the use of mobile multi-person neuroscience (Hyperscanning) for the study of collective contemplative rituals. Specifically, I am interested to use the Hyperscanning technique to measure to what extent a feeling of togetherness is expressed as an embodied phenomena and how this impacts the individual's and group's phenomenology during prayer, meditation, and psychedelic experiences.

Selected Publication:

- [Ramstead, M. J., Anil K. Seth, Hesp, C., Sandved-Smith, L., Mago, J., Lifshitz, M., Pagnoni, G., ... & Constant, A. \(2022\). From generative models to generative passages: A computational approach to \(neuro\) phenomenology.](#)

Daniel Meling



Biography

Daniel Meling is a cognitive scientist and experience researcher at University of Zurich and University of Freiburg. He obtained a joint master's degree in cognitive science (University of Vienna and University of Ljubljana) and specialized in the enactive approach and empirical phenomenological methods, including micro-phenomenology and neurophenomenology. His current PhD work focuses on the phenomenology of transformative experiences induced through meditation and psychedelics.

Research Profile

Fields & Research Interests: Enactive Approach, Micro-phenomenology, Meditation, Psychedelics, Experience of Groundlessness, Altered States of Consciousness.

What brings me to this workshop:

What brings me to the workshop is a genuine curiosity about how to deepen my understanding of meditation practices that is an alignment with both the enactive approach and empirical phenomenological inquiry. One very important entry point is to expand the phenomenon of meditation beyond the individual (and its brain) towards the intersubjective realm. While it is tempting to look at intersubjectivity from a third-person perspective, I am especially fascinated with the direct lived experience of "the other" of oneself, and the world, within various styles of meditation practice.

Selected Publications:

- Meling D (2021) Knowing Groundlessness: An Enactive Approach to a Shift From Cognition to Non-Dual Awareness. *Front. Psychol.* 12:697821. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2021.697821
- Meling D (2022) Knowing the Knowing. Non-dual Meditative Practice From an Enactive Perspective. *Front. Psychol.* 13:778817. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.778817

Magali Ollagnier-Beldame



Biography

I am 45 years old. I am a mother of three children (9, 15 and 18 years old). I hold a PhD in Cognitive Science from the University of Lyon in France (2006) and joined the French National Centre for Scientific Research in 2012. As a researcher in the field of human interactions, I am interested in the emergence and the creation of 'shared worlds', especially in situations of interaction between two people. I explore the lived experience of encounters between living beings: from human to human and from human to non-human. I lead scientific research at CNRS on those topics, relying on micro-phenomenology and I also investigate this field through psycho-corporal practices such as Person-Centered Approach, Focusing counselling, and some shamanic practices.

Research Profile

Selected publications:

(Full list available at [here](#))

- Ollagnier-Beldame, M. (2021). Renewing Experientially our Sense of Existence and Cultivating Seeds of Joy. *Constructivist Foundations* 16(2): 172-181.
- Ollagnier-Beldame, M. (2020). A Body of Knowledge: The Role of Human Experience and the Living Body in Knowing. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 002216782097450. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022167820974500>

- Ollagnier-Beldame, M. (2020). Exploring Experience as a Myriad Richness: Micro-phenomenology as a Transformative Approach to Research. *Integral Transpersonal Journal* 14:13-25. https://doi.org/10.32031/ITIBTE_ITJ_14-OBM1
- Ollagnier-Beldame, M. & Cazemajou, A. (2019). Intersubjectivity in first encounters between healthcare practitioners and patients: Micro-phenomenology as a way to study lived experience. *The Humanistic Psychologist* 47(4): 404-425. <https://doi.org/10.1037/hum0000133>
- Ollagnier-Beldame, M. & Coupé, C. (2019). Meeting you for the first time: Descriptive categories of an intersubjective experience. *Constructivist foundations* 14(2):167-180.
- Ollagnier-Beldame, M. (2019). Expérience corporelle, cognition et émergence de sens. *Intellectica* 71: 21-38.
- Dieumegard, G., Nogry, S. Ollagnier-Beldame, M. & Perrin, N. (2019). Lived experience as a unit of analysis for the study of learning. *Learning, Culture, and Social Interaction*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2019.100345>
- Coupé, C. & Ollagnier-Beldame, M. (2019). Epoché, verbal descriptions and corpus size in the conduct and analysis of explication interviews. *Constructivist foundations, Vrije Universiteit Brussel*, 14(2):158-160.
- Ollagnier-Beldame, M. & Coupé, C. (2019). Authors' response: Focus of interest and epistemological issues in the study of first encounters. *Constructivist foundations, Vrije Universiteit Brussel*, 14(2):193-196.
- Petitmengin C., Bitbol M. & Ollagnier-Beldame M. (2015). Vers une science de l'expérience vécue. *Intellectica* 64: 53- 76. <https://doi.org/10.3406/intel.2015.1012>.

Giuseppe Pagnoni



Biography

I am currently an Associate Professor at the Department of Biomedical Sciences, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy. After a Master in Physics, I completed a PhD in Neuroscience and worked for several years in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, at Emory University, Atlanta (GA), USA. I have led and collaborated in neuroimaging studies on diverse topics including reward processing, the interaction of immune and brain function, social cognition, intrinsic brain activity, pain processing, mental effort,

meditation. I am particularly interested in the theory of active inference and its application to the study of contemplative practices.

Research Profile

From the perspective of active inference, our model of the world – and thus our mental life – is continuously shaped by our interaction with our ecological niche, of which perhaps the most salient features are other individuals. Being able to infer the motivations and actions of other agents is a necessary precondition for our own viability, and indeed a powerful force in sculpting our mind *in response to other minds*. Furthermore, we also need to predict the likely sensory consequences of our own actions (and to distinguish them from sensations that are caused by external agents), a situation laying the groundwork for the appearance of a sense of self. For these reasons, I find the topic of this meeting, “Embodied experience of intersubjectivity: exploring the boundaries between ‘self’ and ‘other’” extremely interesting and important.

Selected publications:

- Ramstead MJD, Seth AK, Hesp C, Sandved-Smith L, Mago J, Lifshitz M, Pagnoni G, Smith R, Dumas G, Lutz A. From generative models to generative passages: A computational approach to (neuro) phenomenology. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, 2022.
- Feruglio S, Matiz A, Pagnoni G, Fabbro F, Crescentini C. The impact of mindfulness meditation on the wandering mind: a systematic review. *Neurosci Biobehav Rev*, 2021, 131:313-330.
- Kirk U, Pagnoni G, H’etu S, Montague R. Short-term mindfulness practice attenuates reward prediction errors signals in the brain. *Sci Rep*. 2019, 9(1):6964.
- Pagnoni G. The contemplative exercise through the lenses of predictive processing: A promising approach. *Progress in brain research*, 2019, 244:299-322
- Lutz A, Mattout J, Pagnoni G. The epistemic and pragmatic value of non- action: a predictive coding perspective on meditation. *Current opinion in psychology*, 2019, 28:166-171
- Pagnoni G, Guareschi FT. Remembrance of things to come: a conversation between Zen and neuroscience on the predictive nature of the mind. *Mindfulness*, 2017, 8(1):27-37.
- Khachouf OT, Poletti S, Pagnoni G. The embodied transcendental: a Kantian perspective on neurophenomenology. *Front Hum Neurosci*, 2013, 7, 611
- Pagnoni G. Dynamical properties of BOLD activity from the ventral pos- teromedial cortex associated with meditation and attentional skills. *J Neurosci*, 2012, 32(15):5242-5249.
- Pagnoni G, Cekic M, Guo Y. “Thinking about non-thinking”: neural correlates of conceptual processing during Zen meditation. *PLoS ONE*, 2008, 3(9):e3083.
- Pagnoni G, Cekic M. Age effects on gray matter volume and attentional performance in Zen meditation. *Neurobiology of Aging*, 2007, 28(10):1623- 7.

Stefano Poletti



Biography

Stefano Poletti is a clinical psychologist & constructivist psychotherapist trained in MBSR-MBCT programs and Insight Dialogue facilitator. He is currently part-time researcher in cognitive sciences (INSERM-CRNL, Lyon, France) and part-time teacher. During his PhD at the University of Padua (Italy) he explored how mindfulness interventions may affect the worldviews of participants undergoing an early palliative care program (my thesis is available here: [Mindfulness as complementary medicine intervention: a phenomenological enquiry on chronic patients' worldviews](#)).

Research Profile

Within a constructivist framework, I am interested in experimental research in clinical psychology and cognitive sciences. My current research activity in the ERC project Brain and Mindfulness (P.I. A. Lutz) explores how contemplative states affect pain (see [Poletti et al. 2021](#)), biographical self, embodiment, and worldviews, comparing expert vs novice meditators. My qualitative contribution to the ERC AgeWell-Meditageing Study (P.I. G. Chételat & A. Lutz) explores senior participants' cognitive-emotional integration of the 18-months English vs meditation program. These works also focus on the triangulation of phenomenological data with behavioral and neurophysiological data (see [Abdoun et al. 2021 on mixed-methods guiding principles](#)). Other collaborations

explore the impact of MBIs on different conditions such as metastatic cancer ([Poletti et al. 2019](#)), epilepsy ([Bauer et al 2019](#)), major depression, spinal lesions, and lung diseases. This workshop is compelling for me as it addresses the core feature of self-other boundaries as well as the embodied experience of their intersubjective bond. This topic is relevant for both my personal and clinical practice.

Willeke Rietdijk



Biography

Willeke Rietdijk is a post-doctoral researcher at the Department of Educational Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Originally qualifying as a clinical psychologist with a minor in psychology of religion, she became a residential teacher at an international school for contemplative education in England and subsequently worked as an educational researcher at the University of Southampton, UK, for ten years. Here she conducted research on various health and science education projects and completed a PhD studying micro-phenomenological processes of insight meditation. She is currently conducting further

research into this topic, funded by a MLE Francisco J. Varela Award. Her academic study of meditation has been deeply interwoven with her personal Vipassana practice. At the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam she has been investigating children's phenomenological experience of awe and wonder, as well as teachers' strategies for stimulating wonder in their classrooms.

Research Profile

Willeke's expertise is in the research fields of micro-phenomenology, contemplative phenomenology, contemplative education, and science education. She is also passionate about enactivism and integrating contemplative and scientific attitudes.

What brings me to the workshop:

The boundaries between self and other are a key theme in contemplative phenomenology and regularly feature in the micro-phenomenological interviews I conduct with meditators. My interest in this topic has also led to my involvement in a micro-phenomenology study led by Hanne Bess Boelsbjerg and others on a sense of presence/absence in online versus real-life interaction. With Véronique Servais and Magali Ollagnier-Beldame and others, I was also involved in developing a micro-phenomenological study on connectedness with nature as experienced by various populations. Further, as part of the 'Mindful Researchers' steering group I am conducting enactivist qualitative research on our own embodied interaction processes, to facilitate learning in relationship.

Interesting and important research questions for me would include:

- How are boundaries experienced at micro-phenomenological level - physically and otherwise, between ourselves and other people and nature, but also within ourselves?
- How do subjectively experienced boundaries emerge and dissolve, what does this emerging and dissolving look like phenomenologically, and what facilitates or hinders these processes?
- Is there a subjectively experienced 'optimal' extent of 'permeability' of boundaries between self and other, which is experienced as really seeing the other, really being in relationship? If so, what does this look like (micro-)phenomenologically? How is the other experienced?
- What kinds of contemplative or other exercises may facilitate such an optimal kind of permeability/relationship?

Selected publications

- Rietdijk, W. (2020). A micro-phenomenological study of processes and mechanisms of insight meditation [PhD Thesis, University of Southampton, UK].
- Conijn, J. M., Rietdijk, W., Broekhof, E., Andre, L., & Schinkel, A. (2021). A theoretical framework and questionnaire for wonder-full education. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 1-22.
- Rietdijk, W., Broekhof, E., and Schinkel, A. (journal article in preparation). Exploring children's experience of wonder.

Jacqueline Scholl



Biography

Jacqueline Scholl studied Natural Sciences (Psychology and Physiology) at the University of Cambridge (2007-2010) before moving to Oxford for an MSc (2010-2011) and a DPhil (2011-2015). In her DPhil, she investigated the neural and pharmacological mechanisms of learning and decision-making using functional MRI, MRI spectroscopy and drug manipulations. Since then she has held an MRC Skills Development Fellowship (2016-2022) in which she has been examining the neural mechanisms of attributional styles in depression. She has also held a BBSRC Discovery Fellowship (2021-2022) to understand how the brain uses emotions to prioritize behaviours. In April 2022, she moved to the Lyon Neuroscience Research Centre (France) to take up a staff scientist position funded by the Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale (INSERM, National Institute of Health and Medical Research).

Research Profile

My work aims to understand the brain and computational mechanisms underlying symptoms of mood disorders (e.g. apathy, anxiety). For this I use brain imaging (fMRI, MEG), computational modelling and clinical studies involving patients, drugs and psychological interventions (mindfulness). Recently, I've been particularly interested in asking how emotions can

be included in rational models of decision making. For this, and reflecting on what drew me to the workshop, I want to use meditation as an intervention to modify different aspects of emotion-behaviour interactions and include introspection/phenomenology to make links between the objective computational/neural measurements and participants' subjective experience.

Fields: computational cognitive neuroscience, decision-making, emotions, psychiatry

Selected publications:

- Scholl, Trier, Rushworth*, Kolling* (2022): "The effect of apathy and compulsivity on planning and stopping in sequential decision-making"
- Van der Velden*, Scholl*, Elmholdt, Fjorback, Harmer, Lazar, O'Toole, Smallwood, Roepstorff+, Kuyken+ (in revision, available online as preprint) "Mindfulness training changes brain dynamics during depressive rumination: a randomized controlled trial"
- Scholl & Klein-Flügge (2018) "Understanding psychiatric disorder by capturing ecologically relevant features of learning and decision-making"

Véronique Servais



Biography

My initial training was in clinical psychology, and more precisely in the interaction and constructivist view of the “Palo Alto School”, a group of scholars and therapists who gathered around the work of Gregory Bateson, second order cybernetics and systemic theory to establish the foundations of a new way of addressing human problems. I then turned to anthropology and communication studies and I am now Professor in Anthropology of communication at the Social Sciences Faculty of the University of Liège, in Belgium.

Research Profile

My research interests are in human-animal communication systems, including their therapeutic properties. I am interested in understanding the potential of change that lies in some encounters with animals (or natural settings). I have addressed this question by exploring the experience of encountering an animal or a natural setting, using microphenomenology interviews. Another of my research interest is in the multispecies ethnographic methods, i.e. implicated descriptive methods of animal behaviors and communications that allow descriptions that are not language-centric.

Christian Suhr



Biography

Christian Suhr is a filmmaker and Associate Professor at Department of Anthropology & IMC, Aarhus University. His research has focused on experiences of spirit possession, psychiatric illnesses, religious healing, and how film can be used to approach unseen dimensions of human life. He has explored these topics during fieldwork projects in Egypt, Papua New Guinea, and Denmark. He directed seven documentary films, including the Mind and Life funded Epoche (co-directed with Claire Petitmengin, see the trailer here: <https://vimeo.com/369014148>, and the full film here: <https://vimeo.com/368560301> (Password: mindandlife). My latest film, Light upon light, explores religious experiences of light in postrevolutionary Egypt, produced with the Cairo-based film collective Hassala Films, premiered at CPH:DOX in March 2022.

He is now working as the PI of the ERC-project "Heart Openings" a project which applies microphenomenological and audiovisual research tools to study the experience and cultivation of love in Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam" (2021-26). Due to his engagement in this project and due to his ongoing interest in microphenomenology, he is enormously thankful for the opportunity to engage in conversations with and learn from colleagues at the workshop

Embodied experience of intersubjectivity: exploring the boundaries between "self" and "other" in July.

Research Profile

Research interests: Possession, religious healing, psychiatry, radicalization, religious experience, love.

Selected publications

Monograph:

- Descending with angels: Islamic exorcism and psychiatry, a film monograph, Christian Suhr, Manchester University Press 2019

Edited volumes:

- When the media sets the agenda, Vibeke Borberg, Hjørn Zernichow Borberg, Christian Suhr, and Niels Valdemar Vinding, eds. Når medierne sætter dagsordenen, DJØF 2021.
- "Al-Ghayb: The poetics and politics of the unseen in Islam", Nils Bubandt, Mikkel Rytter, and Christian Suhr, eds. Contemporary Islam 13.1, 2019
- "Camera as cultural critique", Ton Otto, Peter Crawford, and Christian Suhr, eds. Journal of Visual Anthropology 31.4, 2018).
- Transcultural montage, Christian Suhr and Rane Willerslev, eds. Berghahn 2013.

Christopher Timmermann



Biography

Christopher Timmermann (PhD) obtained a BSc in Psychology in Santiago, Chile and an MSc in Cognitive Neuroscience at the University of Bologna in Italy. He is based at Imperial College London at the Centre for Psychedelic Research, where he led the first neuroimaging research on the effects of the potent psychedelic DMT in the brain and consciousness. He focuses on the neuroscience, psychology, beliefs, and ethics of the psychedelic experience.

Research Profile

I am a psychologist and neuroscientist doing empirical and theoretical work on the impact of psychedelics and non-ordinary states in conscious experience and mental health. My research attempts to employ neurophenomenological and first-person approaches to the study of consciousness facilitated by non-ordinary states.

What brings me to the workshop:

I am interested in exploring how non-ordinary states may generate various phenomena linked to alterations in self-other-world distinctions resulting in enhanced feelings of connectedness to others, nature, and the world, while also inducing feelings of presence and

immersion into alternate 'realms'. I believe the enactive approach provides fertile ground to account for these phenomena and I am interested in exploring this with the other participants.

Selected publications:

- Timmermann, C., Roseman, L., Schartner, M., Milliere, R., Williams, L. T., Erritzoe, D., ... & Carhart-Harris, R. L. (2019). Neural correlates of the DMT experience assessed with multivariate EEG. *Scientific reports*, 9(1), 1-13.
- Timmermann, C., Kettner, H., Letheby, C., Roseman, L., Rosas, F. E., & Carhart-Harris, R. L. (2021). Psychedelics alter metaphysical beliefs. *Scientific reports*, 11(1), 1-13.
- Timmermann, C., Watts, R., & Dupuis, D. (2020). Towards psychedelic apprenticeship: Developing a gentle touch for the mediation and validation of psychedelic-induced insights and revelations. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 13634615221082796.

Marieke Van Vugt



Biography

Marieke van Vugt is an assistant professor at the Bernoulli Institute of Mathematics, Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence of the University of Groningen (Netherlands). Her research aims to understand how, when, and why we mind-wander. She is also fascinated by how this mind-wandering process is adaptive--as in the case of creativity--and when it becomes maladaptive, as is the case for depressive

rumination. She makes use of a combination of computational modeling, neuroscience, and experimental psychology tools. She has developed a unique approach to studying meditation by using computational models of cognition. Using these methods, she showed that meditation reduces mental noise. She has also developed a novel method to track perseverative cognition, with which she showed that after mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, people were less "stuck" in recalling negative memories. She is also a pioneer in developing computational models of meditation and mind-wandering to better understand why, how, and when we get distracted. In a final line of research she tries to understand how the synchrony between brains is involved in social cognition, and has applied those methods in unusual contexts ranging from Tibetan Buddhist monks to dancers.

Research Profile

Fields of interest:

Cognitive modeling, mind-wandering, cognitive processes underlying meditation, analytical meditation

What brings me to the workshop:

I feel like the work I am doing with Tibetan monastic debate is exactly exploring the question of how embodied inter-subjectivity can lead to mental transformation that is also the topic of this workshop. Moreover, given my practice as a dancer of classical ballet, I am always curious how the embodied dimension

of our being affects the way we think. Importantly, a core question in my mind-wandering is how we can measure what it means when thinking gets sticky, and I feel that inter-subjective embodied practices are particularly good removing such mental stickiness, so I want to see how the collaborative research we will be doing can inform the research projects I am engaged in on this topic.

Selected publications:

- Mind the hype: A critical evaluation and prescriptive agenda for research on mindfulness and meditation NT Van Dam, MK Van Vugt, DR Vago, L Schmalzl, CD Saron, A Olendzki, ...Perspectives on psychological science 13 (1), 36-61
- Investigating the impact of mindfulness meditation training on working memory: A mathematical modeling approach MK Van Vugt, AP Jha Cognitive, Affective, & Behavioral Neuroscience 11 (3), 344-353
- The effects of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy on affective memory recall dynamics in depression: a mechanistic model of rumination MK Van Vugt, P Hitchcock, B Shahrar, W Britton. Frontiers in human neuroscience 6, 257
- Inter-brain synchronization in the practice of Tibetan monastic debate. MK van Vugt, J Pollock, B Johnson, K Gyatso, N Norbu, T Lodroe, ... Mindfulness 11 (5), 1105-1119

Holger Yeshe



Biography

Holger Yeshe was born in Nürnberg, Germany and began practicing Buddhism in 1999. Since that time, he has studied and practiced in both the Theravadan and Tibetan Buddhist lineages. In 2005, he met his main teacher, Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche with whom he has practiced with ever since. During two decades of study and practice, he became proficient in Tibetan language and now serves as primary interpreter for Khenpo Kunga, Mingyur Rinpoche's main Khenpo. In 2016 he returned to Europe and currently helps co-direct Tergar Meditation Community e.V., a non-profit organisation in Germany. Here, he offers meditation seminars in both English and German, coordinates community outreach, gives talks and provides support for students in their meditation practice, and also works as a contractor for Tergar International editing course material. In 2010, he was ordained as a Buddhist monk under the tutelage of Mingyur Rinpoche, splitting his time between facilitating meditation seminars, interpreting for teachings different projects and personal retreat. Seeing the benefits of meditation practise in his own life and those around him, he has a particular interest in making meditation available and in the intersection between the meditative tradition and Western scientific modes of inquiry. Since 2019, he has served as a planning committee member of the MLE Summer Research Institute, which is a great place to continue to explore this dialogue.

Research Profile

I was invited to take part in the last ENCECON meeting at Schloss Buchenau and very happy to have been invited again. I am rarely sure what I can actually contribute, but trust in emergence when people come together to try to understand the world and mind and hope to be able to contribute some of my experience of my meditation practise, the teachings of the Buddhist tradition through the lense of having lived in Asia many years, studying Tibetan and spending some time in retreat receiving teachings from many teachers and now teaching under the guidance of Mingyur Rinpoche and the Tergar community.

Gábor Karai

Managing Director



Gabor Karsai, based near Budapest, Hungary, is a long-standing member of the MLE Association, and presently serves as Rector of the Dharma Gate Buddhist College in Budapest, as well as Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies. Gabor has undertaken Ph.D studies with a focus on process philosophy (A. N. Whitehead), phenomenology and Buddhism. Over the last 15 years, he has had extensive management engagements, including as a deputy CEO at Bankar Holding Plc. (Hungary), Director of the Spirit of Humanity Forum (Iceland), the Education for Peace Foundation (Switzerland) and as CEO at the

Ling Jiou Mountain Buddhist Society (Taiwan). He combines practical experience in running a not for profit organisation together with a deep appreciation for contemplative practice and science as well as the values and vision which MLE embodies.

Johanna Magin

Community & Programs Manager



Originally American and based in Paris, Johanna holds a PhD in French literature from Columbia University (New York) and a BA in French from the University of Chicago. Her research has focused on the medico-philosophical practices of several early-modern French authors in an attempt to understand the relationship between mind and body, and more broadly between science and spirituality, in that time period. Always keen to understand mind-body processes from an experiential perspective, she has also practiced

Buddhism intensively since 2008 (Zen and Dzogchen), practiced improvisational dance and theatre since 2009, and is currently training to become a Rosen Method bodywork therapist. Before joining MLE, she worked as an academic program manager and adjunct faculty member at Sciences Po in France, where she taught on a wide number of subjects, from philosophy as a way of life to the politics of poetry.