



International Conference
**RESPIRATORY PHILOSOPHY
A PARADIGM SHIFT**

Portorož, 18-21 June 2023

PROGRAMME AND ABSTRACTS

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KOPER 2023

**International Conference RESPIRATORY PHILOSOPHY: A PARADIGM SHIFT
Programme and Abstracts**

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ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

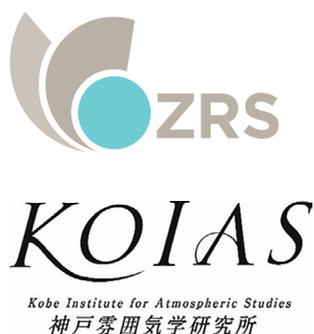
Breathing is a rare theme in today's institutionalized philosophy, and it is only in recent years that the philosophy of breathing as a new paradigm has begun to interest some thinkers. The pioneers of the field are Luce Irigaray (1983), David Kleinberg-Levin (1984), David Abram (1996) and Peter Sloterdijk (1998). It was only in the 2010s that explicit and systematic studies have been published on the philosophy of breathing.

The respiratory philosophy as presented and articulated at this conference deals with our relationships with the atmospheres of breathing and air. "Breath" might seem like a peculiar project, or at the very least disconnected from the way in which most European philosophy has understood itself and its goals. But the "forgetting of air and breathing" (Irigaray, Abram) in the modern European philosophical discourse is in itself one of the deepest, unacknowledged tensions, shaping its unfortunate outlook on the world. A new respiratory philosophy has the double merit of decolonizing the philosophical curriculum through an inclusion of non-European sources and insights, and of revealing how such "breathing" is a fundamental (even if erased) element of its own history. The potential of such a paradigm shift – especially in collaboration with cross-cultural Atmospheric Studies from this conference on – will bear far-reaching consequences for the areas of ontology, ethics, poetics, politics, art theory and praxis, environmental humanities, spirituality and health/well-being – as fields being in the forefront of this new respiratory paradigm.

CONFERENCE CO-ORGANISED BY

Science and Research Centre Koper, Institute for Philosophical and Religious Studies, Slovenia

Kobe University, Kobe Institute for Atmospheric Studies (KOIAS), Japan



ORGANISING AND PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Lenart ŠKOF, Science and Research Centre Koper, and AMEU ISH, Slovenia

Yuho HISAYAMA, Kobe Institute for Atmospheric Studies, Kobe University,
Japan

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Magdalena GÓRSKA, Graduate Gender Studies Programme and Institute
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Maja BJELICA, Science and Research Centre Koper, Slovenia

Lorenzo MARINUCCI, Faculty of Arts and Letters, Tohoku University and
Kobe Institute for Atmospheric Studies, Japan

Luka TREBEŽNIK, Science and Research Centre Koper, Slovenia,
and AMEU ISH, Slovenia

CONFERENCE FINANCIAL SUPPORT

This conference has been financially supported by the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency (ARIS), through the research project *Surviving the Anthropocene through Inventing New Ecological Justice and Biosocial Philosophical Literacy* (J7-1824) and research programme *Liminal Spaces: Areas of Cultural and Societal Cohabitation in the Age of Risk and Vulnerability* (P6-0279).

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CONFERENCE AIRY CONCERT

The Airy Concert performed by Irena Z. Tomažin is part of an international initiative of “Music Day” (*Fête de la Musique/Praznik glasbe*) and is prepared with the cooperation of SIGIC, Slovenian Music Information Centre, and under the local coordination of the non-profit organisation Združenje Muzofil.



Praznik Glasbe
fête de la musique

SIGIC

Slovenski glasbenoinformacijski center
Slovenian Music Information Centre



PROGRAMME

International Conference RESPIRATORY PHILOSOPHY A PARADIGM SHIFT

Portorož, 18–21 June 2023
Grand Hotel Bernardin Convention Centre

SUNDAY, 18 June 2023

17.00–18.00

Registration

18.00–19.00

Conference Opening

Signing of the Friendship and Cooperation Agreement
ZRS Koper & KOIAS
with

Prof Dr Rado Pišot, Director of ZRS Koper

H.E. Hiromichi Matsushima, the Ambassador of Japan

Prof Dr Lenart Škof, Head of Institute for Philosophical and Religious
Studies at ZRS Koper

Prof Dr Yuho Hisayama, Head of KOIAS

19.00–20.30

Dinner

20.30

Book series launch

Routledge Critical Perspectives on Breath and Breathing

with series editors Lenart Škof and Magdalena Górska

&

Book launch

Phenomenological Ontology of Breathing:

The Respiratory Primacy of Being

by Petri Berndtson

with Patrick Burke

MONDAY, 19 June 2023

9.30–11.30

Panel I

KOIAS PANEL: CONTRIBUTIONS BY CROSS-CULTURAL ATMOSPHERIC STUDIES

Chair: **Petri Berndtson**

Yuhō Hisayama: *Polarity: Goethe and the Cross-Cultural Atmospheric Studies*

Lorenzo Marinucci: *Breathing the Landscape in: Reading Bashō with Schmitz*

Tomoyo Arisawa: *Ki/ke (“気”) in Early Modern Japanese Literature: Human Body under the Influence of the Outside World*

Mao Matsuyama: *Breathing of Vision, Breathing of Painting: Akira Mizuno’s Eyes and Hands, Trust in the World*

11.30–12.00

Coffee break

12.00–13.30

Panel II

RE-ATTUNED RESPIRATIONS

Chair: **Magdalena Górska**

Pier Francesco Corvino: *Some Preliminary Considerations around a New Respiratory Anthropology*

Bart H. M. Vandeput: *MicroTuning – Tying Microbial, Cooling Tower and Human Respiration through Attunement*

Maja Bjelica: *Listening and Breathing: An Ethical Conspiracy*

* * * *

15.30–17.00

Panel III

BREATHING IN ART AND CULTURE

Chair: **Lorenzo Marinucci**

Kantaro Ohashi: *The Art of the Respiring Actor's Body and its Materialistic Basis in the thought of Denis Diderot*

Yuna Yoshimizu: *Breathing and Acting in Antonin Artaud's "An Affective Athleticism"*

Ayako Ikeno: *Figures of Breathing in Contemporary Art: The Artist as a Bricoleur*

* * * *

20.30–22.00

Workshop

WELL-BEING OF THE RESPIRATORY WORLD

With Petri Berndtson & Saara-Maija Strandman

TUESDAY, 20 June 2023

9.30–11.30

Panel IV

BREATH AS SOCIO-POLITICAL WORLDING

Chair: **Marijn Nieuwenhuis**

Magdalena Górska & Nasima Selim: *Breathing Undercommons: Biopolitical and Ethical Imperatives for More-than-Human Respiration*

Fabian Heubel: *Autometamorphic Democracy: Daoist Reflections on the Political Significance of Breath-Change/氣化*

Sozita Goudouna: *Respiratory Art: A Paradigm Shift in the Performing and Visual Arts*

Natasha Lushetich: *The Epistemology of Breath in Counter-Cultural Practices*

11.30–12.00

Coffee break

12.00–13.30

Panel V

BREATHING WITH DUST, EARTH AND LAND

Chair: **David Abram**

Marijn Nieuwenhuis: *Geographies of Pneumoconiosis: Miners, Lungs and Dust*

Cirila Toplak: *Elemental Politics at the Detriment of the Subaltern: Nature Worship of Primorska*

Agnieszka Rostalska: *Caring for Land and Living Beings: Ancient Indian Environmental Perspective*

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15.30–17.00

Panel VI

PRĀṆA AND QI/KI: FROM ETHICS TO SOMAAESTHETICS

Chair: **Agnieszka Rostalska**

Ana Laura Funes M.: *The Ethical Dimension of Prāṇa and the Cultivation of Equanimity in Classical Sāṅkhya*

Purushottama Bilimoria: *Alchemy of prāṇa-vital in Tantra-Yoga Traditions*

Geoff Ashton: *The Somaesthetics of Hara Breathing and Ki in Zen Buddhist Meditation*

17.00–17.30

Coffee break

17.30–19.00

Keynote lecture

David Abram

Into the Depths of a Breathing Planet
Corporeal Participation and Immersion in the Commonwealth of Breath

WEDNESDAY, 21 June 2023

9.00–10.00

Workshop

PRĀṆA – A RESPIRATORY JOURNEY INWARDS
With Purushottama Bilimoria & Agnieszka Rostalska

10.30–12.30

Panel VII

**RESPIRATORY POSSIBILITIES OF CARNAL POETICS AND
PHENOMENOLOGY**

Chair: **Michael Marder**

Raquel Ferrández Formoso: *A Carnal Relationship with Words:
María Zambrano's Lyrical Breathing*

Takuya Niikawa: *The Distinctive Status of Breathing in the Philosophy of
Action*

Boyu Xie: *Who Is Breathing? An Examination of Breathing in the Anonymous
Life*

Petri Berndtson: *The New Ultimate Ontologico-Respiratory Notion:
Fleshpiration*

* * * *

14.30–16.30

Panel VIII

MYSTICS AND POETICS OF BREATH

Chair: **Yuho Hisayama**

Lenart Škof: *Breath-kiss: A Philosophy of Loving Encounter*

Reza Akbari: *Shams al-Dīn al-Dailamī on the Mystical and Philosophical Discussion of Breathing*

Zahra Rashid: *Nafas: Breath Ontology in Rumi's Poetry*

Alberto Parisi: *Intentio Spiritus: the Pneumatological Origins of Intention in Augustine and the Stoics*

16.30–17.00

Coffee break

17.00–18.00

Concluding lecture

Michael Marder

The Specters of Vegetal Breath

18.00–18.30

Closing discussion

Respiratory Futures

20.30

Airy concert

Irena Z. Tomažin

ABSTRACTS

GUEST LECTURES

Tuesday, 20 June 2023

17.30–19.00

Keynote lecture

David Abram

Into the Depths of a Breathing Planet
Corporeal Participation and Immersion in the Commonwealth of Breath

Wednesday, 21 June 2023

17.00–18.00

Concluding lecture

Michael Marder

The Specters of Vegetal Breath

INTO THE DEPTHS OF A BREATHING PLANET: CORPOREAL PARTICIPATION AND IMMERSION IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF BREATH

David ABRAM

Harvard University

The atmosphere of this planet may most usefully be understood as a *commonwealth of breath*. For the air is hardly a bunch of gases that just happen to be drawn to Earth and held in place by Earth's gravity. Rather, our planet's envelope of air is continually born from the ongoing *interbreathing* between the innumerable plants and animals of this biosphere. Indeed, this continually replenished, far-from-equilibrium atmosphere would seem to be the very *signature* of a living planet. Until climate change forced a new reckoning with this unseen element, the uncanny invisibility of the air had led many modern thinkers and institutions to overlook the massive presence and influence of the atmosphere upon our lives (to the point of using the air as a convenient dumpsite for the toxic by-products of our industries). Yet that very same invisibility is what led diverse indigenous, oral cultures to acknowledge the air as the *most* sacred dimension of the sensuous world. For the medium of air is at one and the same time *utmost transcendence* (since we cannot see or grasp it) and *uttermost immanence* (since it is palpably up against us, inside our nostrils and circulating within our bodies). Recognized in its inherent dynamism, the elemental atmosphere – *the commonwealth of breath* – opens an ontology that is at once process-based and thoroughly relational, indissolubly conjoining spirit and matter, cognition and flesh, interiority and exteriority, humankind and the rest of nature.

Keywords: interbreathing, commonwealth of breath, atmosphere, ecology, orality and literacy, phenomenology, sensuous, reciprocity

David Abram, cultural ecologist and geophilosopher, is currently the Senior Visiting Scholar in Ecology and Natural Philosophy at Harvard University. Dr. Abram is the author of *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World*, and *Becoming Animal: An Earthly Cosmology*. Described as “revolutionary” by the *Los Angeles Times*, as “daring” and “truly original” by the journal *Science*, David’s work engages the ecological depths of sensory experience, exploring the ways in which perception, language, and wonder inform the relation between the human animal and the animate earth. He was the first contemporary philosopher to advocate for a reappraisal of indigenous “animism” as a complexly nuanced and uniquely practical worldview – a dynamic reassessment now underway in many disciplines. In his first book, David coined the phrase “the more-than-human world” in order to speak of nature as a realm that thoroughly *includes* humankind (with all our culture and technology) yet also necessarily *exceeds* humankind; the phrase has now been taken up worldwide within the broad movement for ecological sanity. Co-founder and director of the Alliance for Wild Ethics (AWE), Dr. Abram recently held the international Arne Naess Chair in Global Justice and the Environment at the University of Oslo. He has been the recipient of numerous awards, including Rockefeller and Watson fellowships and the international Lannan Literary Award for Nonfiction, and makes his home in the foothills of the southern Rocky Mountains.

THE SPECTERS OF VEGETAL BREATH

Michael MARDER

*Ikerbasque: Basque Foundation for Science & Department of Philosophy,
University of the Basque Country (UPV-EHU)*

In this talk we will survey the different specters of vegetal breath, from Spirit itself as a sublimation of pneumatic or pneumatological processes initiated by plants to the pneumatomachy of plant life, that is, the clash between the life-giving oxygen which plants generate and the massive incineration of long-dead vegetal matter converted into coal, natural gas, and petroleum that takes our breath away. Throughout, we will pay attention to the otherwise imperceptible hauntings of our breathing, thinking, and being by vegetal life-death. We will consider the anachronies and anarchies of vegetal spectrality that opens up the world, hosts existence in its open embrace, and intimately accompanies (also from within) our psycho-physical vitality.

Keywords: spirit, specter, plants, fossil fuel, vegetal breath, Jacques Derrida

Michael Marder is IKERBASQUE Research Professor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of the Basque Country (UPV-EHU), Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain. His writings span the fields of ecological theory, phenomenology, and political thought. He is the author of numerous scientific articles and monographs, including *Plant-Thinking* (2013), *Phenomena—Critique—Logos* (2014), *The Philosopher's Plant* (2014), *Dust* (2016), *Energy Dreams* (2017), *Heidegger* (2018), *Political Categories* (2019), *Pyropolitics* (2015, 2020), *Dump Philosophy* (2020), *Hegel's Energy* (2021), *Green Mass* (2021), *Philosophy for Passengers* (2022), and *The Phoenix Complex* (2023), among others. For more information, consult his website michaelmarder.org.

Panel I

**KOIAS PANEL: CONTRIBUTIONS BY CROSS-CULTURAL
ATMOSPHERIC STUDIES**

Chair: **Petri Berndtson**

Monday, 19 June 2023

9.30–11.30

Yuho Hisayama: *Polarity: Goethe and the Cross-Cultural Atmospheric Studies*

Lorenzo Marinucci: *Breathing the Landscape in: Reading Bashō with Schmitz*

Tomoyo Arisawa: *Ki/ke (“気”) in Early Modern Japanese Literature: Human Body under the Influence of the Outside World*

Mao Matsuyama: *Breathing of Vision, Breathing of Painting: Akira Mizuno’s Eyes and Hands, Trust in the World*

POLARITY: GOETHE AND THE CROSS-CULTURAL ATMOSPHERIC STUDIES

Yuho HISAYAMA
Kobe University

Polarity is a very old – and apparently somehow universal – schema of human understanding of the world (cf. Hermann Schmitz), and one of its central images would have been the complementary aspects of breathing: inspiratory and expiratory. Quite interestingly in this context, there are two Japanese words that could be translated into “breath” and, while one of them (*kokyû*) directly denotes the polarity of breath itself, the other (*iki*) can, according to the traditional East Asian concept of ki/qi, refer to deeper life force as a totality beneath the respiratory polarity. My talk will, however, focus not only on the problem of the Japanese language itself, but also take into consideration some of the issues related to cross-cultural Atmospheric Studies as well. It will analyse several selected passages from the work of J. W. v. Goethe (1749–1832), who is, in my opinion, a key figure in the European history of the ideas of polarity and totality, as he steadily gave these concepts a great deal of attention both in poetry (e.g. West-Eastern Diwan) and in the natural sciences (e.g. Colour Theory). Reading Goethe (mainly his Diwan) from an East Asian-Japanese perspective, such as the difference between *kokyû* and *iki* mentioned above, I will try to clarify the possibility of a new “Spheric Ontology,” which may be found beyond dichotomies of spirituality and materiality or of inside and outside every entity, for our further cooperation between Respiratory Philosophy and Atmospheric Studies.

Keywords: polarity and totality, New Phenomenology, *iki* (息) and *ki/qi* (気), atmosphere, Spheric Ontology, Goethe, Diwan (Divan), Geist

Yuho Hisayama, Head of the Kobe Institute for Atmospheric Studies (KOIAS), is currently an associate professor for German Studies at the Graduate School of Humanities, Kobe University, Japan. He received his first PhD (2013) from Technische Universität Darmstadt (Germany) as well as his second PhD (2021) from Kyoto University (Japan). His publications include *Erfahrungen des ki: Leibessphäre, At-*

mosphäre, Pansphäre (Karl Alber, 2014); “Weltseele, Weltgeist und das Ungesagte in Goethes Altersgedicht Eins und Alles” (in: *Goethe-Jahrbuch*, vol. 135 (2018), pp. 39–46); “Warum Goethe I. P. V. Troxler zitiert: Zum Geist-Begriff im morphologischen Kontext” (in: *Coincidentia: Zeitschrift für europäische Geistesgeschichte*, vol. 10–2 (2019), pp. 549–561. In 2022, he has established KOIAS to develop Atmospheric Studies as a new cross-cultural and interdisciplinary academic field (<http://www.lit.kobe-u.ac.jp/koiias/>).

BREATHING THE LANDSCAPE IN: READING BASHŌ WITH SCHMITZ

Lorenzo MARINUCCI
Tohoku University

Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694) is one of the greatest poets of Japanese literature, commonly regarded as the master of haikai (the trans-subjective poetic form that is the direct antecedent of contemporary haiku) and an exceptional author of travel literature. It is especially in the travel diaries written during the last ten years of his life, mixtures of poetry, travelogue and spiritual musings, that Bashō offers multiple insights into an original philosophy of spatiality, embodiment and sensibility. Bashō freely reframes Buddhist, Daoist and older Japanese sources through the actual psychophysical experience of walking, breathing, and wind – an image that returns almost obsessively in his writings, as an eternally dynamic, unstable movement into which cultural and embodied space, personal emotion and imagination are free to roam. Bashō’s subjective “windscape”, crossing the body as the site of its opening, rather than being an external reality, has arguably inspired the influential theory of landscape-culture formulated by Watsuji Tetsurō in his work *Fūdo* (1935), in turn the starting point of A. Berque’s work on landscapes. In my presentation, however, I will focus on another European theory of landscape centred on the experience of breath and atmosphere, that of Hermann Schmitz. Schmitz’s phenomenological grammar, with its stress on vital drive (*vitaler Antrieb*), contraction and expansion (*Engung und Weitung*) and on two particular modes of aesthetic connection, incorporation (*Einleibung*) and excorporation (*Ausleibung*), offers a way to understand the direct connection between aesthetic emotion, landscape and breath; but on the other hand, Bashō’s work challenges Schmitz’s grammar in more than one point, calling for a concrete fusion of living experience and theory. Considering breath, with its rhythmic dialectic, as the primary experience allows us to understand travel as a spiritual experience and intercultural communication as the renewed tension between something that is at the same time universal and culturally specific, just as breath is itself.

Keywords: Herman Schmitz, New Phenomenology, excorporation, fūryū, Matsuo Bashō, haikai, haibun, haiku, Japanese poetry, breathing

Lorenzo Marinucci is associate professor of Aesthetics at Tohoku University (Sendai, Japan), and a member of the Kobe Institute for Atmospheric Studies. He has been a Canon Europe Foundation Fellow (Kyoto University, 2020) and a Japan Foundation Fellow (Kyoto University, 2021) with a research topic focusing on olfactory culture as a philosophical paradigm, in a Japanese and cross-cultural context. He acquired his PhD in 2019 (University of Rome, Tor Vergata) with a dissertation analysing in a phenomenological framework the importance of wind and atmospheres in Japanese aesthetics and thought. He is an active translator from Japanese (Akutagawa, Kuki, Watsuji, Masaoka Shiki and others), as well as from English and German. Beside Japanese philosophy and literature, his research topics include phenomenology and the New Phenomenology of Hermann Schmitz.

KI/KE (“気”) IN EARLY MODERN JAPANESE LITERATURE: HUMAN BODY UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD

Tomoyo ARISAWA
Kobe University

In this presentation, I will focus on the concept of “気” (ki or ke) to describe how the relationship between the human body and the external world was perceived in early modern Japanese literature. It would also make it clear, which subject causes good or bad human behaviours.

“気”, pronounced “ki”, indicates phenomena such as “atmosphere”, “respiration”, “mood”, and “feeling”. “氣”, pronounced “ke”, indicates “momentum” or “presence”.

In other words, “気” has the character of (1) the natural phenomenon that flows around humans and (2) the energy that controls human behaviour. It can also move in and out of the human body.

In Eastern Culture, it was believed that “気” moves human organs and sensual functions and is controlled by “心” (*kokoro*), the human “heart”. However, “気” is easily influenced by external factors, so that the relationship between “気” and “心” can be often reversed.

In the picture book 人間一生胸算用 (1791), published in the mid-Edo period, the human body is seen as a “country” governed by “心” and “気”, and the story depicts how “気”, influenced by temptations from the outside world, overtakes “心” and becomes faithful to physical desires.

With this example, I will try to show how we can understand the relationship between “kokoro” and “ki” from the perspective of modern philosophy.

Keywords: Ki (気), kokoro/mind (心), human body, early modern Japanese literature, Ukiyo-e, East Asia

Tomoyo Arisawa's (有澤知世) area of expertise is Classical Japanese Literature (Edo Period). She earned her B.A. (2012) from Doshisya University, M.A. (2014) and Ph.D. (2017) from Osaka University. After she was working as a JSPS Postdoctoral Fellow (PD) (2017) and Specially Appointed Assistant Professor at the National Institute of Japanese Literature (2017-2021). In 2020, she became a member of Kobe University. She is now a member of the Kobe Institute for Atmospheric Studies (KO-
IAS).

BREATHING OF VISION, BREATHING OF PAINTING: AKIRA MIZUNO'S EYES AND HANDS, TRUST IN THE WORLD

Mao MATSUYAMA

Mukogawa Women's University

Maurice Merleau-Ponty once argued the excellence of the painter and said: "We speak of 'inspiration,' and the word should be taken literally. There really is inspiration and expiration of Being, respiration in Being." How could we today take the meaning of his word as more than a metaphor? Is it possible to find something related to breathing in painting, which has traditionally made the creation of static illusions its primary mission?

In this presentation, I will consider this question focusing on the works and creative process of Akira Mizuno (1974–) as a case study. Mizuno, who had a relationship with Antonio López García (1936–) and Tsuyoshi Ise (1954–2007) during his three stays in Spain, has attracted attention in recent years for his expression that goes beyond merely reproducing the external form of the object, even though it has been evaluated in the context of so-called realism. The vision and gestures of the painter, who spends several years on a single painting and repeatedly confronts the object – a mountain, trees or his own mother – across the canvas, are still present in his finished works. Mizuno's works could show the potential of the medium of painting, which at first glance lacks performativity and physicality, to breathe.

Keywords: Akira Mizuno, painting, breathing, vision, eyes and hands of the painter, Maurice Merleau-Ponty

Mao Matsuyama is an associate researcher for Environmental Aesthetics at the Mukogawa Institute of Esthetics in Everyday-Life, Mukogawa Women's University, Japan. She is also a member of the Kobe Institute for Atmospheric Studies (KOIAS). She worked for the Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art as a curator from 2011 to 2020, having a wide range of experience in the field of modern and contemporary art. Currently, she is working on transdisciplinary research: a case study on man-made environments and landscapes in the Kobe area, and an art project focusing on the aesthetic relationship with everyday things. (Homepage: <http://www.lit.kobe-u.ac.jp/koiias/>).

Panel II

RE-ATTUNED RESPIRATIONS

Chair: **Magdalena Górski**

Monday, 19 June 2023

12.00–13.30

Pier Francesco Corvino: *Some Preliminary Considerations around a New Respiratory Anthropology*

Bart H. M. Vandeput: *MicroTuning – Tying Microbial, Cooling Tower and Human Respiration through Attunement*

Maja Bjelica: *Listening and Breathing: An Ethical Conspiracy*

SOME PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS AROUND A NEW RESPIRATORY ANTHROPOLOGY

Pier Francesco CORVINO

University of Trieste

In this presentation I would like to offer some preliminary considerations on the possibility of a respiratory anthropology, which is to be intended as a new philosophical anthropology based on respiratory ontology. First of all, I will have to justify why respiratory ontology in its current state does not seem able to fully subsume the great enigma of human nature. That being said, I will proceed to propose some basic concepts for a respiratory anthropology, deriving them from the history of thought. In particular, I will dwell on 19th-century continental philosophy, going back to the time when human sciences separated from philosophy. Thereafter, I will focus on today's debate, starting from a supposed common perception of human nature. I would then proceed to demonstrate how this perception influences the problematization of the relationship between human beings and "nature". In light of these considerations, I will try to show how respiratory anthropology can present itself as a new space to think. Finally, I will sum up my considerations, showing how a new respiratory foundation of philosophical anthropology could also benefit the discipline per se, as it represents the reconfiguration of a branch of philosophical knowledge that today finds itself deeply inhibited.

Keywords: temperament, talent, inspiration, character, philosophical anthropology, romantic anthropology

Pier Francesco Corvino is *Cultore della materia* in History of Philosophy at the University of Trieste, while he teaches Philosophy, History and Humanities in high schools. His main line of research regards philosophical ecology and the history of thought between the 18th and 19th centuries. Currently he is researching an ecological broadening of the semantics of "vocation," toward a deeper understanding of the human being-environment relatedness. He recently published his first monogra-

ph, *Henrich Steffens, Filosofo della Natura* (2022) for Mauna Edizioni (San Benedetto del Tronto, AP). He has also published essays and contributions in books and peer-reviewed journals.

MICROTUNING – TYING MICROBIAL, COOLING TOWER AND HUMAN RESPIRATION THROUGH ATTUNEMENT

Bart H. M. VANDEPUT

Ghent University, Hasselt University & Aalto University

Natural-draft hyperboloid cooling towers of electrical power plants contribute to biodiversity due to the microbial communities that live in their hot-humid environment. As 'breathing' concrete bodies, they disperse aerosols that might carry microbes like *Legionella pneumophila* through the air. When inhaled by humans they pose severe health risks known as Legionnaires' disease or legionellosis. As potential pathogens, they are controlled and managed using biocides in cooling towers and antibiotics in humans. However, these chemical interventions also impact other, unknown microorganisms living in cooling towers and lung tissue and moving along their respiratory cycles.

The artistic research project KOELLEVEN/MICROTUNING aims to create and interweave new transdisciplinary understanding through attunement with microbial communities in cooling towers. Art processes integrate and share scientific learnings on microbial biodiversity, metabolic and respiratory responses to changing conditions and intra- and interspecies signalling. The project enquires into ways of applying L. Lipari's ethics of attunement as a possible tool for scrutinizing and modifying artistic and scientific proceedings and art-science works.

KOELLEVEN/MICROTUNING is an evolving ecosystem of microbes, light, electricity, minerals, natural-dyed solar cell, pH, artificial lung tissue, gravel, slime, spirit, algae, sand, titanium dioxide, science protocol, biofilm, cooling towers, protozoa, cellulose, ecology, platinum, glass, polymer, researcher, agar, bio-scaffold, salt, colourant, player, metal, iodine, spectrometer, root, soap, vibration, glass-cutter, respiration, emotion, hustler, energy dreams, improvisation, air, water, amoeba, ethics, glass, gelatine, latex, copper, socio-microbiology, pyomelanin, microfiber, sanding, antibacterial agent.

Keywords: bioart, cooling tower microbiomes, microbial colour, organic solar cells, art-science, bioethics

Bart H. M. Vandeput, PhD, is an artist (Bartaku) and visiting researcher at the New Energy Technologies Group at Aalto University, the Centre for Synthetic Biology at Ghent University and X-LAB at Hasselt University. These are partners in KOEL-LEVEN/MICROTUNING, a new 3-year transdisciplinary research project that explores ways of entangling with bacteria that live in natural draft cooling towers of a nuclear power station. Situated in the fields of Bio- and Energy art, Bartaku's practice explores relations between light, electrical energy, humans, plants and microbes. It senses for – and plays with – tensions between disciplines, process and result, makers and audiences, living and non-living, human and other-than-human. Recently he contributed to the book *Chance Encounters: A Bioethics for a Damaged Planet*, by philosopher Kristien Hens (Antwerp University). He is a member of the Bioart Society and co-founder of artist-run collectives r-Ohm and HangarOh.

LISTENING AND BREATHING: AN ETHICAL CONSPIRACY

Maja BJELICA

Science and Research Centre Koper

This research paper will be an exploration of both listening and breathing and their mutual resonances that contribute to the sphere of the ethical. As was shown by Luce Irigaray, breath and air were basically forgotten in the history of Western culture and philosophy. Similarly, we can observe the forgetting of listening in the postmodern technocratic world. Listening is connected to breathing also by their central element – air: sound travels through air, it communicates through air, which in both cases is a vehicle for expressing and exchanging. Cultivating the two, listening and breathing, requires space and time to slow down, which was elucidated by Michelle Boulous Walker in her *Slow Philosophy*. We will be listening and breathing also with philosophers and thinkers such as Jean-Luc Nancy, Lisbeth Lipari, Brandon LaBelle, Salomé Voegelin and others whose echoing tunes allow for a deeper understanding of the complementarity and conspiracy of the ethics of listening and breathing.

Keywords: listening, breathing, air, ethics, elementality

Maja Bjelica, PhD, is an associate researcher at the Science and Research Centre Koper's Institute for Philosophical and Religious Studies. Currently she is working on a research programme on liminal spaces or areas of cultural and societal cohabitation and a research project on biosocial philosophical literacy. She obtained her doctoral degree in 2018 at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Primorska, Slovenia, with the dissertation "A Philosophical-Anthropological Study of the Possibilities of the Ethics of Hospitality: Breath, Silence and Listening in Spaces of Inter-subjectivity". She transdisciplinarily cross-pollinates research in themes of ethics of listening, ethics of hospitality, (applied) ethnomusicology, anthropology of religion and environmental humanities.

Panel III

BREATHING IN ART AND CULTURE

Chair: **Lorenzo Marinucci**

Monday, 19 June 2023

15.30–17.00

Kantaro Ohashi: *The Art of the Respiring Actor's Body and its Materialistic Basis in the thought of Denis Diderot*

Yuna Yoshimizu: *Breathing and Acting in Antonin Artaud's "An Affective Athleticism"*

Ayako Ikeno: *Figures of Breathing in Contemporary Art: The Artist as a Bricoleur*

THE ART OF THE RESPIRING ACTOR'S BODY AND ITS MATERIALISTIC BASIS IN THE THOUGHT OF DENIS DIDEROT

Kantaro OHASHI

Kobe University

This paper aims at analysing the theories of French Enlightenment philosopher Denis Diderot (1713–1784) from the point of view of respiratory philosophy, in order to supply the void of the “philosophical oblivion” of breathing in early modern European thoughts. Diderot is known as playwright, novelist, materialistic philosopher and chief editor of the *Encyclopédie* of that age. As for the respiration theory, Diderot’s idea on the actor’s body is deserved to be examined in that it primally insists on the capacity of actor’s lungs in order to carry out a theatrical performance on the stage.

So firstly, I try to make clear the role of respiration on theatrical performance which is recognized in his theoretical work on theatres such as the *Discourse on the Dramatic Poesy* (1758), or the *Paradox of the Comedians* (1773). Secondly, I try to point out the physical and chemical basis of his body theory. As the materialistic theory of Diderot, including living organization, consists in pre-Lavoisier theory of chemistry, and as Lavoisier is one of the first persons to discover the chemical structure of human respiration, Diderot’s theory of life may have some theoretical potentiality to think of the philosophical role of respiration in the context of the European history of ideas. Does philosophy in early modern Europe really forget breathing? This research may provide an answer to one of the central questions of Respiratory Philosophy.

Keywords: Enlightenment, natural philosophy, French materialism, theory of act

Kantaro Ohashi is a Professor of Art Theory and has been at Kobe University (Japan) since 2015. His research focuses on modern French aesthetics in the 18th century, especially that of Denis Diderot, the relationships between natural history, literature and anthropology in modern and contemporary French philosophical

texts and contemporary French theories such as Deleuze, Derrida and Lyotard, etc. and its recent reception in Japan and the United States. His other research is concerned with contemporary media experience such as “post-truth” through which he tries to examine modern theories on fiction and virtuality. He has published several articles not only on Diderot, Rousseau and Buffon but also Foucault and Derrida. He also translated the book *After the Finitude* by Quentin Meillassoux (co-translation), and *Scribble* by Jacques Derrida. He is also a member of the Kobe Institute for Atmospheric Studies (KOIAS).

BREATHING AND ACTING IN ANTONIN ARTAUD'S "AN AFFECTIVE ATHLETICISM"

Yuna YOSHIMIZU
Kobe University

This presentation aims to clarify the relationship between breathing and acting in Antonin Artaud's "An Affective Athleticism". Antonin Artaud is a theatre director, actor, and poet in the first half of the 20th century in France. He advocated the "Theater of Cruelty" in the 1930s. His most famous book, *Theater and Its Double* (1938) is a collection of texts on the "Theater of Cruelty". In this book, Artaud criticizes the French theatre of the time, which placed the highest priority on drama, and describes the need for a theatre that emphasizes spectacle. The greatest emphasis in this "Theater of Cruelty" is placed on the actor, which is evident in "An Affective Athleticism" (1935) included in this book. In this text, Artaud proposes that the most important thing for the actor is his breath and that his body is sustained by it. He further states that acting and breathing correspond, and that emotion can be mechanically produced by the breath. Artaud explains this breath using the tempo derived from the cabbala of Jewish mysticism. It is thought that the issue of voice and breathing in French theatrical acting is behind his presentation of this original breathing method. In this presentation, I aim to examine the context of vocalization in acting theory from the 19th century to the first half of the 20th century and then consider what kind of acting Artaud's breathing was trying to introduce to French theatre.

Keywords: Antonin Artaud, theatre, acting, performance, breathing

Yuna Yoshimizu is PhD Candidate for the Art Theory at the Graduate School of Humanities, Kobe University, Japan. Her research focuses on analysing and understanding Antonin Artaud's theatrical theory "Theater of Cruelty" from the viewpoint of the relationship between the actor and the spectator.

FIGURES OF BREATHING IN CONTEMPORARY ART: THE ARTIST AS A *BRICOLEUR*

Ayako IKENO

Aoyama Gakuin University

Breathing has often been a motif in both the performing arts and contemporary visual arts. From Marcel Duchamp's *50cc of Paris Air* (1919) to Piero Manzoni's *Artist's Breath* (1960), Dada and Neo-Dada artists tried to bring such intangible media as air and breath into the arts to challenge conventional art forms. In subsequent years, however, the subject of breathing was related to cultural questions. Thus, I aim to analyse the representation of breathing in art since the 1960s.

Giuseppe Penone, a prominent artist of Italian avant-garde *Arte Povera* from the 1960s, said breath was sculpture. In his series of works titled *Breath*, he created a large sculpture of clay with impressions of an artist's body and mouth on the surface. Another *Arte Povera* artist, Gilberto Zorio, produced a unique work about breath. *To Purify Words* (1969) is an object consisting of a long rubber tube filled with alcohol and arranged in a circle. Taking turns, viewers place their mouths on one side of the tube and blow into it with their voices. Consequently, whispered words are purified with alcohol as if by a chemical reaction.

These examples show artists' deep interest in breathing not as a new medium of art, but as a fundamental human activity. In this paper, I will consider the works of these artists as a kind of bricolage that emerged from the dialogue between primitive thinking and modern materials.

Keywords: contemporary art, Italian art, *Arte Povera*, sculpture, bricolage

Ayako Ikeno is Associate Professor at Aoyama Gakuin University, and a member of the Kobe Institute for Atmospheric Studies (KOIAS). Her main field of research is art history, especially modern and contemporary art in Italy. One of her recent articles is "Volo e caduta: l'immaginazione cartografica nell'arte contemporanea

(Fright and Fall: The Cartographic Imagination in the Contemporary Art)” (in *Occhi e sguardi nella filosofia e nelle arti - Eyes and Gazes in Philosophy and Arts*, edited by Giuseppe Patella and Atsushi Okada, UniversItalia, Roma, 2015, pp. 347–363).

Panel IV

BREATH AS SOCIO-POLITICAL WORLDING

Chair: **Marijn Nieuwenhuis**

Tuesday, 20 June 2023

9.30–11.30

Magdalena Górska & Nasima Selim: *Breathing Undercommons: Biopolitical and Ethical Imperatives for More-than-Human Respiration*

Fabian Heubel: *Autometamorphic Democracy: Daoist Reflections on the Political Significance of Breath-Change/氣化*

Sozita Goudouna: *Respiratory Art: A Paradigm Shift in the Performing and Visual Arts*

Natasha Lushetich: *The Epistemology of Breath in Counter-Cultural Practices*

BREATHING UNDERCOMMONS: BIOPOLITICAL AND ETHICAL IMPERATIVES FOR MORE-THAN-HUMAN RESPIRATION

Magdalena GÓRSKA
Utrecht University

Nasima SELIM
University of Bayreuth

Human and non-human breathing is a vital force that has a bio-political and bio-ethical dimension. As a biological process saturated with power relations, it articulates “a fundamental right to existence” (Mbembe 2021: S62). This right, while universal, is socially, culturally and geopolitically stratified along intersectional dimensions of power relations and structural inequalities. Breathing can be understood as both common and differential (Górska 2016, 2022). This presentation asks: what does it mean to articulate not only the commonality but also differentiability of breathing as a vector of commoning? How can commoning be articulated as not only political and ethical, but also a biological, material-semiotic and historically situated process? We draw upon the contingent relations of breathing and oceans (atmospheric sharing), nonhuman actants (e.g. trees sharing breath with humans; Selim forthcoming a), air pollution (e.g. social inequality of not/sharing clean air), pandemic lifeworlds (e.g. global inequalities in not/sharing vaccine patent rights; Selim 2022), breathwork traditions (e.g. cultural appropriation/sharing of techniques; Selim forthcoming b) and caring practices for breath in/ across Asia and Europe. We offer preliminary insights into the incipient project of “breathing commons” (Tsaknaki et al. 2021) by expanding the possibilities of sharing breathing resources as biopolitical and ethical imperatives for more-than-human respiration.

Keywords: breathing undercommons, clean air, more-than-human respiration, politics

Magdalena Górska is Assistant Professor at the Graduate Gender Programme, Department of Media and Culture Studies and a research affiliate at the Institute of Cultural Inquiry (ICON) at Utrecht University. She was a visiting scholar at the Feminist Studies Department at University of California, Santa Cruz. Her work in the field of respiratory studies focuses on analysing breathing with regard to social power relations from an intersectional feminist and post-humanist perspective. Her respiratory publications include *Breathing Matters: Feminist Intersectional Politics of Vulnerability* (Linköping University Press, 2016), and articles and book chapters such as “Why Breathing is Political” (Lambda Nordica, 2021), “Corpo-Affective Politics of Anxious Breathing: On the Agential Force of Bodies and Affects in Vulnerable Protest” (Routledge, 2020), “Feminist Politics of Breathing” (SUNY Press, 2018). She is a founder of the Breathing Matters Network.

Nasima Selim is Postdoctoral Research Associate of Anthropology at the University of Bayreuth. Her work intersects medical anthropology, global health, public anthropology, and the anthropology of Islam. Her respiratory publications include “Breathing Hearts: Sufism, Healing, and Anti-Muslim Racism in Berlin” (Berghahn, forthcoming), “The Politics of Breathing Troubles in Covid-19” (Medicine Anthropology Theory, 2022), and “Companions of Breath for Planetary Health” (Resilience, forthcoming). Her current research project is titled “BreathAbility: The Politics and Poetics of Respiration in/across South Asia and Western Europe”. She has offered lecture performances about breathing (“Who has the Right to Breathe? Companions of Breath – a Tale of Two Trees” at Savvy Contemporary, 2022; “HU: Sufi Breathwork and the Sounds of Islam” at Gropius Bau, 2023). She is a co-founder of the Working Group Public Anthropology and a life member of the Public Health Association of Bangladesh.

AUTOMETAMORPHIC DEMOCRACY: DAOIST REFLECTIONS ON THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF BREATH-CHANGE/氣化

Fabian HEUBEL
Academia Sinica

In a fictional dialogue in the Zhuangzi, Yan Hui talks with Confucius about his plan to visit the king of Wei, protest against his dictatorial rule, and persuade him to change his behaviour. Confucius asks him how he plans to achieve this goal. After he confirmed that Yan Hui's plan was doomed to failure and even could be suicidal, he suggested he turn to the ascetic cultivation of "heart-fasting" (心齋). Billeter argues that Zhuangzi challenges the common mode of thinking about the relation between subjectivity and politics. He assumes that a Zhuangzian "paradigm of subjectivity" entails a philosophical potential for rethinking pluralism and democracy that has, however, been marginalized throughout Chinese history. This viewpoint leads Billeter to further ask whether this potential can facilitate a renewed exploration of the relationship between subjectivity and democracy to envision a "Chinese foundation of political freedom." This may sound absurd, but this paper will try to critically reflect on the thought experiment proposed by Billeter and further elaborate on it. The focus of this paper is not on democracy and related political institutions, but on the democratization of subjectivity.

My reflections are divided into five steps: 1. A short discussion of the relation between subjectivity and democracy in contemporary Chinese philosophy. 2. An analysis of interpretations of "heart-fasting" from the perspective of a moral subject (心性主體) in contemporary Neo-Confucianism. 3. A critical discussion of Billeter's reconstruction of a Zhuangzian "paradigm of subjectivity" that is centred around the "body" (身體主體). 4. An introduction of an alternative "paradigm of subjectivity" that focuses on "breath-change" (氣化主體). 5. A movement from "breath-change" to connected concepts of "self-change" (自化) and "self-government" (自治) that have been developed in the context of Daoist political philosophy. This leads to the question if the conception of "autometamorphic democracy" (自化民主), inspired by the philosophies of Zhuangzi and Laozi, may help think about alternatives to "liberal democracy" (自由民主).

Keywords: breath, Daoism, subjectivity, democratization, Zhuangzi

Fabian Heubel (何乏筆) is Research Fellow at the Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy, Academia Sinica, Taipei and Visiting Professor at the Institute for Philosophy, Free University of Berlin. His main research interests are in classical and modern Chinese philosophy, interpretations of Chinese philosophy in Western sinology, Critical Theory, contemporary German and French thought, aesthetics and philosophy of art. In recent years he has published the following books: *Chinesische Gegenwartsphilosophie zur Einführung*; 《若莊子說法語》 (If Zhuangzi speaks French) (2017); 《跨文化漩渦中的莊子》 (Zhuangzi in Transcultural Turmoil) (2017); *Gewundene Wege nach China. Heidegger-Daoismus-Adorno* (2020); *Was ist chinesische Philosophie? Kritische Perspektiven* (2021); 《修養與批判：跨文化視野中的晚期傅柯》 (Self-cultivation and Critique: The Late Foucault in Transcultural Perspective) (2021).

RESPIRATORY ART: A PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS

Sozita GOUDOUNA

Goldsmiths, University of London

The paper will present art practices and discursive positions that focus on respiration, examined as a strongly debated biological process with political and social potential. The focus on this primary human physiological function and its relation to art and politics is highly pertinent to the studies of human performance, the nature of embodiment and its relation to cultural expression. The “invisible” aspects of this organic function can be represented with auditory, olfactory, kinetic and tactile media, while its “formless” qualities provide the possibility of artistic experimentation. The aesthetic challenge of finding a form for formlessness and of showing a form that has no form or even the negation of form has aesthetic and ideological ramifications, while pneumatic thinking marks a paradigm shift for the visual and performing arts.

Air, the most necessary and common of all living resources, becomes a material signifier for the invisible political bonds that constitute a society. The “inability to breathe” and social “breathlessness,” are considered in the context of post-COVID-19 contemporary art practice. The socio-atmospherics of power affects our bodies, but also non-human or more-than-human creatures. Through the presentation of art historical and contemporary performances, strategies and artworks on the theme of respiration, the presentation examines the ways the recognition of the current “shared vulnerability” and the aesthetic “collaborations with the atmosphere” can also respond to environmental mourning and provide social opportunities. Humans deoxygenate themselves, and other species. Nevertheless, the metaphor of respiration can hold the potential for expanding climate and social change discourse in politically and ethically creative ways.

Keywords: aesthetic and formal shifts, pneumatic thinking, respiratory politics, environmental mourning

Dr Sozita Goudouna is a professor, curator and author of *Beckett's Breath: Anti-theatricality and the Visual Arts* (Edinburgh Critical Studies in Modernism/OUP) and forthcoming co-authored "MOURNING THE ENDS: Collaborative Writing and Performance" (Punctum Press, 2023). She is editing the *Performance Research Journal* Issue "On Breath" and has curated two major surveys on respiration and art "Combat Breathing" at EMST National Museum of Art and "The Right to Breath" at Undercurrent New York. She has published in *The Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*, *GPS Global Performance Studies*, *Theater Topics*, *Seismopolite Art & Politics Journal*, *BST Body Space & Technology Journal*. She is a visiting professor at Goldsmiths where she teaches the MA on Breath Studies: Breath in the Performing and Visual Arts. In 2022 she was the winner of the British Council Culture and Creativity UK Study Award. She holds a PhD in Respiration and Art, Beckett and American high-Modernism (University of London) and an MA (King's/Royal Academy of Dramatic Art RADA). She taught at the New School, SUNY, Roger Williams, University of the Peloponnese, CUNY, Pace and, since 2015, at NYU as inaugural Andrew W. Mellon Curator fellow at Performa Biennial. Her international projects include director of "Greece in USA" for the promotion of contemporary Greek art, participations at the New Museum as head of operations at Raymond Pettibon Studio, Documenta, Onassis Foundation New York, French Consulate NYC, Hunterian Museum, Benaki Museum, Byzantine Museum, EMST Contemporary Art Museum, MET Metropolitan Museum of Art. She served as treasurer of the board of directors of AICA Hellas International Art Critics Association and as a member of the board of directors at ITI International Theatre Association UNESCO.

THE EPISTEMOLOGY OF BREATH IN COUNTER-CULTURAL PRACTICES

Natasha LUSHETICH

University of Dundee

In spring 2007, John Crews, an Operations Manager at the Progressive, Cleveland, died in a high-rise condominium when a fire broke out. The company asked artist T. R. Ericsson to create a memorial work. While researching Crews' life, Ericsson came across an inflated toy that Crews had purchased in jest to decorate his office. Ericsson transferred the breath from the balloon to an air-tight glass vessel by means of a specially designed fitting that allowed the vessel to be filled with water in such a way that the air released into the glass displaced the water coming out. Crews' breath thus became a ready-made.

Tracing the use of breath in contemporary artistic practices, this paper interrogates their counter-cultural working with the aid of Bachelardian and Irigarayan conceptualisations of air and Lefevbre's notion of the festive instant, as related to breath and in-spiration. It places contemporary breath-based works in dialogue with the history of automation (understood in both senses of the word, as invariant repetition and as that which happens all by itself) in order to ponder the relation of breath, as the chief signifier of the spirit (in many languages the two concepts come in dyadic combinations, e.g. *nefs* and *rush* in Arabic, *pneuma* and *psyche* in Greek, *animus* and *spiritus* in Latin) and contemporary AI elaborations on ready-mades.

Keywords: in-spiration, ready-mades, body-mind, automation, automaticity

Natasha Lushetich is Professor of Contemporary Art, Media & Theory at the University of Dundee, UK, and Arts and Humanities Research Council Leadership Fellow. Her research is interdisciplinary and focuses on intermedia and critical mediality; global art and the status of sensory experience in cultural knowledge; biopolitics; datafication and performativity. Her books include *Fluxus: The Practice of Non-*

-Duality (Rodopi/Brill, 2014); *Interdisciplinary Performance* (Palgrave, 2016); *The Aesthetics of Necropolitics* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2018); *Beyond Mind* – a special issue of *Symbolism* (De Gruyter, 2019); *Big Data – A New Medium?* (Routledge, 2020), *Distributed Perception: Resonances and Axiologies* (co-edited with I. Campbell) (Routledge, 2021), and *Contingency and Plasticity in Everyday Technologies* (co-edited with I. Campbell and D. Smith) (Rowman and Littlefield, 2022).

Panel V

BREATHING WITH DUST, EARTH AND LAND

Chair: **David Abram**

Tuesday, 20 June 2023

12.00–13.30

Marijn Nieuwenhuis: *Geographies of Pneumoconiosis: Miners, Lungs and Dust*

Cirila Toplak: *Elemental Politics at the Detriment of the Subaltern: Nature Worship of Primorska*

Agnieszka Rostalska: *Caring for Land and Living Beings: Ancient Indian Environmental Perspective*

GEOGRAPHIES OF PNEUMOCONIOSIS: MINERS, LUNGS AND DUST

Marijn NIEUWENHUIS

Durham University

Pneumoconiosis is among the most prominent occupational dust diseases in mining communities around the world. Although long forgotten in the West – imagined eradicated – growing demand for coal means that pneumoconiosis is making a re-emergence in both the global North and the South. I study pneumoconiosis, occurring at the interstices of class, race and gender, by describing the geopolitical and biopolitical relationship between human lungs and Earth's materiality, dust. My main argument is that pneumoconiosis is a geologic entanglement, which disproportionately affects classed, raced and gendered bodies, characterised by a slow social and embodied suffocation that affects workers and those around them.

In this extractive milieu of geologic violence, lungs are located at several geopolitical, biopolitical and phenomenological intersections. They register and archive embodied geologic exposure; they shape what bodies can do and they shed light on whose and how bodies are affected. This paper tries to bring these issues together by starting from the position that the pulmonary damage that pneumoconiosis causes does not occur outside of a social context. The human lung is not a homogenous organ but 'shaped' by and functioning within specific historical and geopolitical relations of power.

Keywords: dust, lungs, miners, suffocation, pneumoconiosis, breath

Marijn Nieuwenhuis is Assistant Professor in Human Geography at Durham University. His work is driven by a curiosity for conceptual art, disregarded things, unexpected places and elemental experiments. He has written on holes, weather, air, breathing, skin, trust and sand. A lot of his writing is inspired by the places he lives and the human and non-human animals he meets there. He is currently writing on respiratory dust, the lives and afterlives of back lanes, and toilets in elite politics. Marijn can be reached at marijn.d.nieuwenhuis@durham.ac.uk and his website can be found at <https://www.durham.ac.uk/staff/marijn-d-nieuwenhuis/>.

ELEMENTAL POLITICS AT THE DETRIMENT OF THE SUBALTERN: NATURE WORSHIP OF PRIMORSKA

Cirila TOPLAK

University of Ljubljana

The secret historical counterculture of pagan Nature Worshipers of Western Slovenia had a profound spiritual connection to air, water, fire and soil – the fundamentals of their lifeworld. According to Nature Worshipers' tradition, one could be(come) a Nature Worshiper only by having lived off the scarce, but sacred soil of the Primorska region in Slovenia. The Nature Worshipers considered the Soča, the principal river of the Primorska region, sacred and revered many of its tributaries as sanctuaries. Fire was essential to Nature Worshipers' celebration of solstices, their most important religious holidays, by communal bonfires. Air was to animistic Nature Worshipers the realm of spirits and the energy depository of the deceased. Most importantly, air was the medium of the transmigration of souls, one of the key differentiating features of Nature Worship from Christianity.

In the 20th century, political processes in the region where Nature Worshipers secretly dwelt among Christians, forcefully transformed Nature Worshipers' elemental practices, and led to the dissolution of their community. The First World War resulted in such an overload of metals in the soil due to artillery fighting at the Isonzo front that Nature Worshipers' system of spatial triads – *tročans*, which ensured protection and fertility of the land, collapsed. Following the post-War occupation of the Primorska region by fascist Italy, Nature Worshipers were forbidden to burn bonfires and therefore stopped from performing their most important annual communal rituals. Italian fascist authorities built a series of dams and hydropower plants that desecrated the sacred River Soča. Intensive industrialisation and extractivism in the Socialist Yugoslav era after 1945 caused further pollution of the air, water and soil and fatally captured nature that Nature Worshipers treated like an awesome divinity. Elemental degradation by “development” and “progress” in the Primorska region in the 20th century thus not only had a direct impact on nature but also on a denied subaltern culture inseparable from and dependent on nature. Due to survivalist secrecy, Nature Worship-

pers had no means of protecting the precious elemental commons without exposing themselves to Christian intolerance. By the end of the 20th century, the elemental fundamentals of Nature Worshipers' culture were irreversibly lost and so was the Nature Worship of Primorska.

Keywords: Nature Worship, primorska, elements, politics

Cirila Toplak holds a PhD in History from Université Paris I – Sorbonne and is Professor of Political Science and Scientific Counsellor at the Department of Political Theory of the University of Ljubljana Faculty of Social Sciences. Her research interests include political history, political anthropology and Europeanisation processes. She is Head of the Research Centre on Political Theory at the University of Ljubljana and President of the Balkan Political Science Association. Her recent scientific monographs include *European Continentalism. A History of Europeanization* (Annales, 2016) and *“Our Faith” – Nature Worship of Primorska* (2023).

CARING FOR LAND AND LIVING BEINGS: ANCIENT INDIAN ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

Agnieszka ROSTALSKA
Ghent University

In this paper, I will present an ancient Indian ideal of societal activities related to environmental philosophy, which promotes care for nature in all its aspects, including air and the atmosphere. More specifically, I will examine prescriptions and political directives offered in the treatise *Arthaśāstra* [The Science of Success], i.e. the measures contributing to the collective success (*artha*) and promotion of the well-being, flourishing and harmony of a cosmopolitan community.

The philosophical and ethical discourse markedly influenced socio-political thought at the time of even the earliest layers of the *Arthaśāstra*. It explicitly enumerates the naturalistic orientation of critical inquiry (*ānvīkṣikī*): the traditions of Sāṃkhya, Yoga and Lokāyata. Their explanations of 'nature', ontological elements such as air, fire, earth, water, and affirmation of breathing practices suggest that care for nature comprising all sentient and non-sentient beings is fundamentally intertwined with human life and experience.

The discussion of success as foundational to governance or righteousness (*dharma*) and consisting of concern for livelihood and prosperity implies that not only the practical inclinations but also the ethical orientation of the political domain are envisioned in the earliest recensions of the AŚ. Ecological sustainability is ensured through irrigation, the water reservoirs, nature preserves, forest sanctuaries, animal hospitals and forests.

Notably, this perspective does not support a dichotomy between 'nature' and 'culture', nor 'nature' and 'technology'. Instead, a holistic and organic understanding of the world, grounded in practical reasoning and principled action, leads to care for other beings, which leads to general well-being and contributes to the collective success of a society. Moreover, the directive to not cause injury to other beings indicates the Buddhist and Jain influence on the text. I argue that in this early scholastic environment, *ānvīkṣikī* could be referring to non-Vedic philosophical practices of argu-

mentation and logical reasoning, including those employed by Buddhists and Jains (Halbfass 1988: 278–9).

This paper aims to contribute to contemporary ecological and ethical discourse, primarily related to climate change and sustainability, by including a relatively unknown Indian perspective.

Keywords: socio-political philosophy, India, governance, well-being, sustainability, ecology, success

Agnieszka Rostalska is WO Senior Post-doctoral researcher at the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy of Ghent University. She specializes in Asian, mainly Indian philosophy, contributing to cross-cultural and comparative research. Her current research project “Political Authority and Social Justice: A Philosophical Study of Arthaśāstra” concerns the socio-political philosophy of ancient India with a focus on gender and environmental issues. In 2022 she was a co-PI in the project “Cross-Cultural Conceptions of the Self: South Asia, Africa, and East Asia” awarded by the University of Birmingham’s Global Philosophy of Religion Project supported by the John Templeton Foundation. Her other ongoing research tackles the problems of Epistemic Authority as presented in Nyāya philosophical tradition with references to contemporary epistemology of testimony and virtue epistemology. She recently co-edited (with Nathan R. B. Loewen, The University of Alabama) *Diversifying Philosophy of Religion: Critiques, Methods and Case Studies* (Bloomsbury, 2023).

Panel VI

PRĀṆA AND QI/KI: FROM ETHICS TO SOMAAESTHETICS

Chair: **Agnieszka Rostalska**

Tuesday, 20 June 2023

15.30–17.00

Ana Laura Funes M.: *The Ethical Dimension of Prāṇa and the Cultivation of Equanimity in Classical Sāṅkhya*

Purushottama Bilimoria: *Alchemy of prāṇa-vital in Tantra-Yoga Traditions*

Geoff Ashton: *The Somaesthetics of Hara Breathing and Ki in Zen Buddhist Meditation*

THE ETHICAL DIMENSION OF *PRĀṆA* AND THE CULTIVATION OF EQUANIMITY IN CLASSICAL SĀṆKHYA

Ana Laura FUNES M.
Fairfield University

Studies on the notion of *prāṇa* in Indian Philosophy have mainly focused on two distinct aspects: cosmological/metaphysical and anatomical/physiological. However, in the *Yuktidīpikā*, which is an 8th century philosophical commentary on the *Sāṅkhya Karika* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, we find a unique description of the cultivation of *prāṇa* that involves the conscious practice of ethical and intersubjective aspects of each of the five vital winds through which it manifests. The ethical dimension of *prāṇa* in the Sanskrit yoga philosophical tradition has been overlooked due to the emphasis given on the benefits that the physical and physiological aspects of yogic breathing practices (*prāṇāyama*) have for our health. It is a common view that the cultivation of *prāṇa* is something that happens in the solitary practice of the yogin that regulates their breathing within their own body. However, we see in the *Yuktidīpikā* that there is an external aspect of *prāṇa* that must also be cultivated, mainly, the movement of our vitality in relation to others, be it the cosmos, nature, other humans or non-human beings. This talk will show how the ethical and interrelational aspect of *prāṇa* is of utmost importance for the process of self-transformation in the *Yuktidīpikā*. It will also present the Sāṅkhya moral psychology of equanimity implicit in this process of *prāṇic* transformation.

Keywords: equanimity, moral psychology, *prāṇa*, relational breath, Sāṅkhya, *Yuktidīpikā*

Ana Laura Funes Maderey is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Eastern Connecticut State University where she teaches Asian Philosophies, East-West Comparative topics in Philosophy, and Feminist Philosophies. Her research seeks to establish dialogues between phenomenology, feminism, and notions of bodily self-awareness in the Indian philosophical schools of Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Vedānta and Hindu Tantra. She

co-edited with Christopher Chapple the book *Thinking with the Yoga Sūtra: Translation, Interpretation* and has published several articles on Sāṅkhya-Yoga philosophy in specialized journals. She is currently preparing a manuscript on the philosophical dimensions of *prāṇa* in the history of Indian philosophy and the implications for an intercultural philosophy of breathing.

ALCHEMY OF PRĀṆA-VITAL IN TANTRA-YOGA TRADITIONS

Purushottama BILIMORIA

*State University of San Francisco; Jindal Global Law School (India);
University of Melbourne*

In last year's lecture I brought to light how Hinduism and Jainism regard *prāṇa* as the pervasive life-breath or respiratory substratum in microcosmos and macrocosmic manifestations alike, from the two-celled amoeba, plants, human and non-human animals to the air-spirits in the skies and galactic regions. Building on the polarity of *prāṇa* and consciousness as the wings of the one source – the *jivātman* (self), in this presentation I will explore the alchemy of breath-control and breath-rhythming integral to the practices of yoga and tantra ('magical rites') in achieving elevated states of consciousness, while also impacting the other non-conscious functions, such as circulation and reproductive replenishments. I draw from *Kashmir Śaivism, Kaula, Trika, Abhinavagupta, Utpaladeva, Somānanda* and other sources from the vast Tantra literature. Here *prāṇa* is considered to be a respiratory elixir that follows the breathing process but is more akin to élan-vital (vital impulse) and is channelled across the myriads of *nāḍi-s* (meridian nodes) and the *chakra-s* (seven energy-centres). The process is believed to be efficacious in the morphogenesis of the subtle stratas (*śakti-s*) of the body-mind complex, and purification of the vital parts. This results in elevating the conventional self to virtual higher realms, sometimes called 'beyond the luminous fourth' (i.e. waking awareness, sleep, dreaming, subliminal rest). Just as mercury in alchemical preparation is believed to transmute base metals into gold; tantric practices are said to transform and transmute the existential being into their purer, 'liquified essence,' which is its divinely-intrinsic nature. The same tantra rites are utilized for end-of-life preparations so that the soul-consciousness can be transported on the untethered wings of *prāṇa*, safely and successfully to the celestial realms (world of forebears, angelic beings, *deva-s*, or the heavens). In certain sub-traditions, such as Śaiva, Śākta, Kaula, Kuṇḍalinī and Haṭha-yoga, tantra can take unconventional, subversive, even transgressive turns, as the play of passions, in which liquor and meat purified with *mantra* are also used along with empathic imagination (*bhāva*), utheral suction of *bindu* (sexual fluids), and possible sexual union with cho-

sen partner(s) or with visualized deities (not uncommon in forms of Indo-Tibetan Himalayan Tāntra). In all of these sublimely numinous practices, the control, restraint and intensive expansion of *prāṇa*, under strict guidance of a *guru* and prescribed directives, are considered as *yoga-yāpāra*, i.e. indispensable pathways for the end to be achieved. This is the 'secret' journey of the gnostic (*jñānī*) and yogi (ascetic).

Keywords: *prāṇa*, tantra, Indo-Tibetan yoga, Śākta, Kuṇḍalinī, transgressions

Purushottama Bilimoria works in the areas of Indian & Cross-Cultural philosophy, Continental Philosophy, Philosophy of Religion, Critical Thinking, and Diaspora Studies. He has been recently recruited as Professor of Law and International Affairs in the Law School at O.P. Jindal Global University (India); he remains Principal Fellow at University of Melbourne; Faculty@San Francisco State University and University of California (Merced); he is also a Permanent Fellow of the Oxford Center for Hindu Studies; and serves as Co-Editor-in-Chief of *Sophia* and Assoc. Editor of the *Journal of Dharma Studies*. Recent publications include: *History of Indian Philosophy* (with Amy Rayner, 2019, 2021), *Religion and Sustainability* (UNGSD series, edited with Rita D. Sherma, 2021), *Contemplative Studies and Hinduism* (edited with Rita Sherma and Cogen Bohencac, Routledge, 2021); *Indian Ethics Vol. 2: Women, Justice, Ecology and Bioethics* (edited with A. Rayner Routledge, 2023, forthcoming).

THE SOMAESTHETICS OF HARA BREATHING AND KI IN ZEN BUDDHIST MEDITATION

Geoff ASHTON

University of San Francisco

Breath is the grounding phenomenon in many forms of Buddhist meditation. In the earliest meditative practices of Buddhism – *ānāpānasati* (“mindfulness of breathing”) and *vipassanā* (“insight meditation”) – the practitioner passively observes the breath, and from there surveys various physical and mental sensations in order to see things just as they are, including the nonduality of mind and body and how *duḥkha* (“suffering”) is not ultimately binding.

Similarly, the “seated meditation” practice (*zazen*) deployed by Japanese Zen Buddhists begins with attention to breath, refines one’s attention to psycho-physical sensations, and fosters a realization of mind-body unity that enables the practitioner to confront *duḥkha*. But Japanese Zen adapts the respiratory philosophy of early Buddhism in some important respects.

This presentation explores four of these adaptations by identifying parallels between *zazen* (specifically, in the Rinzai Zen tradition) and *neidan*, the internal alchemy of Chinese Daoism.

For one, *zazen* takes bodily posture to be an essential feature of meditation.

Second, it realizes mind-body nonduality through the body: breathing as a physical performance, not an object of passive mental awareness, has primacy in *zazen*.

Third, Zen seated meditation actively regulates breathing from *hara* (Chinese: “*tanden*”), where the lower abdomen remains expanded during both the inhalation and exhalation.

And fourth, *zazen* is a somaesthetic practice that uses the breath to not only attune one to a full-body sensation (namely, the sensation of gravity) but move energy along the vertical axis of the body in order to generate *ki* (Chinese: “*chi*”), the vital psycho-physical energy that unifies all things.

Keywords: breath, mindfulness, Zen, *zazen*, Daoism, *hara*, somaesthetics

Geoff Ashton is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of San Francisco. He has conducted research in Sanskrit, Thai, and Spanish, at numerous institutions of higher learning outside of the United States (twice as a Fulbright scholar), including Jawaharlal Nehru University (Delhi, India), Deccan College (Pune, India), the Jñāna-Pravaha Institute (Varanasi, India), Chiang Mai University (Chiang Mai, Thailand), Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok, Thailand), and La Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Madrid, Spain). He has authored numerous articles, book chapters, and essays on Indian philosophy, Buddhist philosophy, philosophy of religion, comparative ethics, and comparative aesthetics. He is currently revising a manuscript on the philosophy of nature in Indian philosophy. Another research project centres around the interrelation between meditative practice in Zen Buddhism and the phenomenology of gravity. Geoff Ashton is also a priest and dharma successor in the Chosei lineage of Zen.

Panel VII

**RESPIRATORY POSSIBILITIES OF CARNAL POETICS AND
PHENOMENOLOGY**

Chair: **Michael Marder**

Wednesday, 21 June 2023

10.30–12.30

Raquel Ferrández Formoso: *A Carnal Relationship with Words: María Zambrano's Lyrical Breathing*

Takuya Niikawa: *The Distinctive Status of Breathing in the Philosophy of Action*

Boyu Xie: *Who Is Breathing? An Examination of Breathing in the Anonymous Life*

Petri Berndtson: *The New Ultimate Ontologico-Respiratory Notion: Fleshpiration*

A CARNAL RELATIONSHIP WITH WORDS: MARÍA ZAMBRANO'S LYRICAL BREATHING

Raquel FERRÁNDEZ FORMOSO

UNED

In 1923, the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset published a work entitled *The Theme of our Time*. This theme consisted of putting philosophy back at the service of life, overcoming idealism to remember that thought is a vital function, just as is digestion, the circulation of blood or the act of breathing. Ortega y Gasset called this new reason, which corresponded to a new type of sensibility, “vital reason”. Just a century later, vital reason continues to make its way into the interstices of academic thinking, grappling with the pretensions of sovereignty of “pure reason”, dissociated from the life that makes it possible. In this presentation I will expose the still valid challenges of vital reason, based on the work of the philosopher María Zambrano, a disciple of Ortega. Defender of the “poetic reason”, Zambrano developed a “lyrical” philosophy in works such as *Clearings of the Forest* (1977), where the breath of being wants to be in tune with the breath of life, thus reaching the word-source from which all language emanates. The breathing of thought is here linked to an honest aspiration to the poetics of the word, which gives rise to literary genres very different from those dominated by discursive rules. In turn, this honesty of breathing-thinking embodies both a way of thinking life and a way of witnessing life in our thinking.

Keywords: poetic reason, breath of being, breath of life, José Ángel Valente

Raquel Ferrández Formoso is assistant professor in the Department of Philosophy at National University for Distance Education (UNED, Spain). She teaches comparative and Indian philosophy, and her research focuses on the practical roots of philosophy, currently at the crossroads between philosophy and literature.

THE DISTINCTIVE STATUS OF BREATHING IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF ACTION

Takuya NIKAWA
Kobe University

This talk aims to explore the status of breathing in the philosophy of action/mind. An action is what we do. There are a lot of examples of intentional actions, including eating, kicking, speaking, etc. In contrast, there are a lot of things that just happen in/to us. Digestion and heartbeat are the typical examples happening in us; perception and reflects may also be counted as something passive and automatic, namely things just happening in/to us. They are not things that we do intentionally. Given this, there seems to be a clear conceptual distinction in things concerning our body: intentional action vs non-intentional happening.

Is there anything that cannot be accommodated in this conceptual classification? One candidate is habitual behaviours, such as scratching one's head and brushing one's teeth in the morning. They seem to be what we do without conscious guidance of how to do them. Thus, they may be regarded as non-intentional but some kind of action rather than happening. In this talk, I want to emphasize another candidate that may not be accommodated in the conceptual classification in question, that is, breathing. Breathing resembles digestion and heartbeat in that (1) it just automatically happens in us, (2) it is innately programmed and (3) it is necessary for survival. However, they are dissimilar in that breathing rate and rhythm can be directly controlled by our will. Breathing is not habitual but innate; nevertheless, it has both characteristics of intentional actions and unintentional happenings. This suggests that breathing cannot be properly classified into the conceptual distinction between intentional action vs non-intentional happening. Considering this, I try to propose a way to update our conceptual framework to capture the unique status of breathing.

Keywords: philosophy of action, intention, breathing, controllability, non-intentional action

Takuya Niikawa is an Associate Professor at Kobe University. He works on the analytic philosophy of mind, in particular perception and consciousness. He also studies experimental phenomenology. He is a member of the Kobe Institute for Atmospheric Studies (KOIAS).

WHO IS BREATHING? AN EXAMINATION OF BREATHING IN THE ANONYMOUS LIFE

Boyu XIE

McGill University

In the chapter “Le Sentir” of *Phenomenology*, Merleau-Ponty writes: “If I wanted to express perceptual experience with precision, I would have to say that *one* perceives in me and not that I perceive.” Following the same path, we may say, more accurately, that *one* breathes in me and not that I breathe. But what does that mean? Arguably, ‘one’ has multiple referential meanings in *Phenomenology*. It could mean non-dualistic existence, the prepersonal and/or the impersonal body. However, they all come together in the anonymous life beneath the level of perception that lives in me, with me, before me and after me. The anonymous life is the condition of our perception of time and space; it is the dimension of ‘pure depth’ and ‘pure past.’

To understand how ‘one’ breathes in me and with me, then, requires us not to stop the investigation of the being of breathing in the personal life wherein time and space are given. Further inquiries must be made with respect to breathing in the anonymous life and how it intertwines with the origin of time and space. Petri Berndtson’s paper “The Respiratory Constitution of Space and its Connection to the Origin of Space” made the first movement in this direction. My paper will continue his work by 1) offering a preliminary examination of breathing in the anonymous life, thereby revealing the phenomenon of co-breathing with the world (the immense lung) and 2) supplementing Berndtson’s respiratory spatiality with a parallel account of respiratory temporalization. I will show that deep breathing not only brings about coexistence between breathing and consciousness, which shapes the sequential framework of time but also promotes the resonance of the anonymous body with the world.

Keywords: anonymous life, co-breathing, Merleau-Ponty, pure depth, respiratory temporalization

Boyu Xie is a PhD candidate in the Department of Philosophy at McGill University. She obtained her bachelor's degree in environmental engineering from Hunan University (China). Before entering McGill, she first received her graduate-level education at Yue Lu Academy (China) in Chinese philosophy and literature, then at the University of Saskatchewan (Canada) in Western philosophy. She is interested in phenomenology, respiratory philosophy and yoga philosophy. Outside of academic life, she dedicates herself to yoga practicing and teaching.

THE NEW ULTIMATE ONTOLOGICO-RESPIRATORY NOTION: FLESHPIRATION

Petri BERNDTSON

Science and Research Centre Koper

In my presentation, I will introduce a new word, a neologism that I have invented. It is an ontologico-respiratory word created in dialogue with Maurice Merleau-Ponty's late ontology. This new word is *Fleshpiration*. It is a word in which I intertwine the words "Flesh" (Merleau-Ponty's ultimate ontological notion) and "spiration" in a somewhat similar manner as in words like "respiration", "inspiration", "expiration", "suspuration" and "conspiration" the word "spiration" is conjoined with "re-", "in-", "ex-", "sub-" and "con-". This respiratory neologism grows out of my investigations of Merleau-Ponty's almost entirely unexplored ontologico-respiratory text fragment "There is really and truly inspiration and expiration of Being, respiration within Being" which appears in "Eye and Mind". In *The Visible and the Invisible*, Merleau-Ponty says that "Being ... is the flesh". If one tries to interpret the meaning of "inspiration and expiration of Being, respiration within Being" within the ontological atmosphere where Being is the flesh, then one needs to interrogate what could the expressions like *inspiration and expiration of the flesh* and *respiration within the flesh* mean? As for Merleau-Ponty the fundamental phenomenon of reversibility defines the flesh, then one may say that these three dimensions of breathing (1. in-breathing, 2. out-breathing, 3. again-breathing) define *Fleshpiration* as the ceaseless (*re-* as again and again and again) reversibility of in (*in-*) and out (*ex-*) of *spiration*. In addition this, the word *Fleshpiration* can be interpreted in a Pauline atmosphere as in this neologism I also intertwine in a paradoxical manner St. Paul's contrary ways of living, that is, the life "according to the flesh" and the life "according to the Spirit". In my presentation, I will explore a few possible Merleau-Pontian and Pauline themes of *Fleshpiration*.

Keywords: Maurice Merleau-Ponty, ontology, flesh, respiration, *Fleshpiration*, reversibility, St. Paul

Petri Berndtson (PhD) is a Research Associate at the Institute for Philosophical Studies in Science and Research Centre Koper (Slovenia). He has been a Full-Time Lecturer at the Lahti University of Applied Sciences (Finland) and a Visiting Lecturer at the Trondheim Academy of Fine Arts (Norway). He coedited with Lenart Škof the first anthology on philosophy of breathing titled *Atmospheres of Breathing* (SUNY Press, 2018). Berndtson's first book is titled *Phenomenological Ontology of Breathing: The Respiratory Primacy of Being* (Routledge, 2023) and it is the first publication of a new book series "Routledge Critical Perspectives on Breath and Breathing".

Panel VIII

MYSTICS AND POETICS OF BREATH

Chair: **Yuho Hisayama**

Wednesday, 21 June 2023

14.30–16.30

Lenart Škof: *Breath-Kiss: A Philosophy of Loving Encounter*

Reza Akbari: *Shams al-Dīn al-Dailamī on the Mystical and Philosophical Discussion of Breathing*

Zahra Rashid: *Nafas: Breath Ontology in Rumi's Poetry*

Alberto Parisi: *Intentio Spiritus: the Pneumatological Origins of Intention in Augustine and the Stoics*

BREATH-KISS: A PHILOSOPHY OF LOVING ENCOUNTER

Lenart ŠKOF

Science and Research Centre Koper and AMEU ISH

This presentation will explore selected Tantric and mystical Christian reflections on subtle bodily pranic-pneumatic energies in order to delineate the highest ethico-sexual plane of loving encounter. We will first focus on *The Great Tantra of the Lion's Perfected Display-Energy* in which the symbolism of the ultimate couple is presented. We will argue that the Tantric couple here indicates both the primordial union in twoness as well as that it points to the possibility of an elemental understanding of the path of enlightenment – achieved by virtue of body radiation and *prāṇa* as its essential subtle element. In the second part of our presentation, we will address the proximity of this symbolism of the couple with Jakob Böhme and Franz von Baader's philosophies and their mystico-elemental path of the supreme love encounter. For Von Baader, two *carnalities* preeminently meet in the embrace and kiss. Being in an embrace of a highest co-breathing (*conspiratio*) and breath-kiss of two lovers, the mutual exchange of the couple-in-oneness represents the peak moment in exchanging their subtle *pneuma-energy*. We will wind up our presentation with the meditation on the highest *conspiracy of love* and *breath-kiss* as shared in an encounter between Jesus and Mary Magdalene.

Keywords: Buddhist Tantra, breath-kiss, Jakob Böhme, Franz von Baader, conspiracy of love

Lenart Škof is Head of the Institute for Philosophical Studies at the Science and Research Centre (Koper, Slovenia) and Dean of Institutum Studiorum Humanitatis (Ljubljana, Slovenia). He is a member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts (EASA, Salzburg) and president of the Slovenian Society for Comparative Religion. He recently co-edited *Shame, Gender Violence and Ethics: Terrors of Injustice* (Lexington Books, 2021), *Atmospheres of Breathing* (New York: SUNY Press 2018), *The Poesis of Peace* (Routledge, 2017) and *Breathing with Luce Irigaray* (Bloomsbury, 2013). Škof is an author of several books, among them *Antigone's Sisters: On the Matrix of Love* (SUNY Press, 2021) and *Breath of Proximity: Intersubjectivity, Ethics and Peace*

(Springer, 2015). He is editor-in-chief of “Routledge Critical Perspectives on Breath and Breathing” series (with Magdalena Górska) and his main research interests are in respiratory philosophy, new elemental philosophy, and philosophical theology. Homepage: <https://zrs-kp.academia.edu/LenartŠkof>

SHAMS AL-DĪN AL-DAILAMĪ ON THE MYSTICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION OF BREATHING

Reza AKBARI

Imam Sadiq University

In the Islamic tradition, especially among the early mystics, one can find discussions on breathing. Al-Junaid al-Baghdādī, one of the outstanding mystics of the 3d century (AH), has written a treatise on breathing, titled *al-Sirr fī 'Anfas al-Ṣūfiyya* (*The Secret of Mystics Breaths*). Shams al-Dīn al-Dailamī, one of the mystics of the 7th century (AH), has interpreted Junaid's treatise in his book *Sharh Kitab al-'Anfas* (*The Exegesis of the Book Breaths*). In this paper, along with a report on Shams al-Dīn al-Dailamī's book, I will mention some of its topics. Among these topics, we can refer to the different divisions of breathing, such as vicious and righteous breathing, the effects of breathing in one's life and the afterlife, the typology of mystic breathing, and the breath connection to other concepts such as light, darkness, love, fire, and heart. I will also explain that the first mystics used breathing as a metaphor to refer to the different dimensions of the existence of God and human beings, including cognitive and action. This metaphor has transferred to and remained in Islamic philosophy.

Keywords: Al-Junaid al-Baghdādī, Shams al-Dīn al-Dailamī, breathing, Muslim mystics, Islamic philosophy

Reza Akbari has served as a faculty member at the Islamic philosophy and theology department at Imam Sadiq University since 1997. He received his PhD from the University of Tehran. Akbari teaches Islamic philosophy, Kalam, traditional and mathematical logic, and comparative philosophy. Besides teaching at Imam Sadiq University, he has taught as a guest professor at other universities in Iran. His primary interest is to reconstruct Muslim philosophy and theology and put them in dialogue with modern ideas in the field. Since 2007, he has served as the editor-in-chief of *Philosophy of Religion Research* (<https://prjournals.isu.ac.ir/?lang=en>), an academic journal indexed by Philosopher's Index. He is one of the founders of the

Iranian Association for Philosophy of Religion. He has served as the scientific committee manager in many international conferences organized by this association. He has lectured, virtually or in person, at conferences in Iran, Germany, Italy, England and Slovenia.

NAFAS: BREATH ONTOLOGY IN RUMI'S POETRY

Zahra RASHID

Lahore University of Management Sciences

The Irigararian proposition to bridge dichotomies through breath, extends to the so-called divide between Eastern and Western Philosophy. And it makes sense to look to the East for inspiration in the philosophy of breath, since many Eastern traditions including Buddhism and Sufism include breathwork in their somatic practices. In my paper, I wish to show how Rumi – a 13th century Muslim theologian and Sufi – used breath or *nafas* in his Persian poetry to outline how breathing is an originary phenomena. He did so by tying it to the inherent dynamism in our existence, which takes a new form with every breath. For Rumi, his Sufi heritage meant that breath carried immense importance in ontology because the Sufis emphasized on God creating Adam by ‘breathing’ into him and creating a new existence. Thus, in Rumi’s Sufi poetry, the breath features often as a metaphor of new-ness and creativity, as Rumi proclaims: *My life is a new garden with every breath, My ears hear a new story with every breath*. At another place he says: *Every breath is a new life put in the dead, Every breath is a new relief granted without respite*, because every passing breath ushers in a new existence as the old one ends to make room for new. Such a view of breathing creates an ontological sense in the reader of both the finiteness of existence through what has passed as well as the infinite possibilities it holds when the newness arrives. This I wish to argue, is the true promise of Rumi’s poetry for a philosophy of breathing.

Keywords: Eastern philosophy, Sufism, Rumi, continental philosophy, ontology, embodied phenomenology

Zahra Rashid is a Research Associate at Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) and Information Technology University (ITU) in Lahore, Pakistan. She completed her Masters in Philosophy as well as another Masters in Islamic Studies and Arabic. Broadly, her work spans the interaction of traditional religious systems with modernity/secularity/liberalism and specifically, it brings together continental philosophy and Sufi poetics.

INTENTIO SPIRITUS: THE PNEUMATOLOGICAL ORIGINS OF INTENTION IN AUGUSTINE AND THE STOICS

Alberto PARISI
Harvard University

Intention is one of the catchwords of 20th-century Western philosophy. Positively or negatively, it undeniably takes a central role in numerous traditions. Most prominently, it features as the fundamental concept of the Phenomenological school. According to the formulation of the school's founder, the German philosopher Edmund Husserl, intention (which is almost a synonym of attention) is the most fundamental characteristic of consciousness, which is always already *intending*, namely *directed towards*, an object. Most scholars agree that such a conception of intention derives – through Husserl's teacher, the psychologist Franz Brentano, and the Medieval scholastic tradition that Brentano recovered – from Augustine's *intentio animi* (intention of the soul), a fascinating mixture of attention and will.

What I will argue in my paper is that if this is indeed true, a whole other side of the history of intention has been forgotten. Indeed, through a new reading of Augustine's main uses of the word *intentio*, which appears every time he wishes to prove the immateriality and immortality of the human soul, I will show that his arguments take for granted and reject an earlier, materialist pneumatological conception of intention, whose traces can be found in some of the works by the Roman Stoic Seneca, as well as in certain now-lost 4th century CE Christian heretical theories about the Holy Spirit. Before becoming the intention of the immaterial soul, *intentio animi*, intention stood for the internal musical tension and tone of the material spirit pervading the entire universe and every being. Intention was, first and foremost, *intentio spiritus*: namely, the intention of the breath.

Keywords: intention, spirit, breath, attention, will, tension, tone, Augustine, Seneca, Stoicism, phenomenology, pneumatology

Alberto Parisi received his BA in Philosophy and Literature from the University of Warwick (2017) and his Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Harvard University (2023) with a dissertation on the relationship between intention and breath in the history of European philosophy and poetry. His reviews, articles and translations have appeared in *MLN*, *PMLA* and the *Journal of Italian Philosophy*, among others. He also writes about pop culture, digital media, and contemporary art for a wider audience. He is one of the Chief Editors at *layOut magazine*, an Italian publication of contemporary poetry, art and intermediality.

RESPIRATORY INTERVENTIONS

Monday, 18 June 2023

20.30

Book launch

***Phenomenological Ontology of Breathing:
The Respiratory Primacy of Being***

by Petri Berndtson
with Patrick Burke

Tuesday, 19 June 2023

20.30-22.00

Workshop

WELL-BEING OF THE RESPIRATORY WORLD

With Petri Berndtson & Saara-Maija Strandman

Wednesday, 21 June 2023

9.00-10.00

Workshop

PRĀṆA - A RESPIRATORY JOURNEY INWARDS

With Purushottama Bilimoria & Agnieszka Rostalska

20.30

Airy concert

Irena Z. Tomažin

***PHENOMENOLOGICAL ONTOLOGY OF BREATHING: THE
RESPIRATORY PRIMACY OF BEING BY PETRI BERNDTSON***

Patrick BURKE
Gonzaga University

In his book launch presentation, Professor Patrick Burke represents his interpretation of Petri Berndtson's new book *Phenomenological Ontology of Breathing: The Respiratory Primacy of Being* (Routledge, 2023). This book is the first publication in a new book series "Routledge Critical Perspectives on Breath and Breathing". Berndtson's book is the first study on the phenomenological ontology of breathing and it suggests that there is a deeper foundation to being-in-the-world than Maurice Merleau-Ponty's famous primacy of perception interprets there to be ("the perceptual openness to the world"). Berndtson calls this depth-dimension *the primacy of breathing* and according to this, our primordial way of being is *the respiratory openness to the world*. In relation to this idea of the primacy of breathing, Berndtson develops a new respiratory principle of philosophy and a new respiratory dimension of the method of phenomenological reduction. According to Burke, "If a very *strong* criterion for originality is that a philosophical work of *intrinsic merit* breaks from the past, constitutes a new beginning, inaugurates a new tradition, opens a new field of inquiry, is extremely different, innovative, or even revolutionary, given the scope, profundity, daring, and novelty of its conception, then I find Berndtson's book to be original in this sense. It genuinely extends our philosophical store, contributes a new dimension to our thinking, and adds a significantly different philosophical experience of intrinsic value." After his presentation, Burke will discuss the book with Berndtson.

Keywords: phenomenology, ontology, breathing, Merleau-Ponty, primacy of breathing, respiratory principle

Patrick Burke is Professor of Philosophy at Gonzaga University, assigned to its campus in Florence, Italy where he served as Dean for many years and has taught courses since 1989 on the art and philosophy of the Florentine Renaissance, existentialism and ethics. He specializes in contemporary French philosophy and has published extensively on the works of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and the influence of Schelling on his thought. His publications include, for example, *Merleau-Ponty in Contemporary Perspectives* (co-edited with Jan Van der Veken) and *The Barbarian Principle: Merleau-Ponty, Schelling, and the Question of Nature* (co-edited with Jason Wirth).

WELL-BEING OF THE RESPIRATORY WORLD

Petri BERNDTSON

Science and Research Centre Koper

Saara-Maija STRANDMAN

Vantaa Music Institute

In this experiential breathing workshop, we take our inspiration from Gaston Bachelard's elemental poetics of air and phenomenology of imagination as well as from Finnish pioneer of breathwork (psychophysical breathing therapy) Maila Seppä. According to Bachelard, "being is well-being" and "anxiety is factitious: we are made to breathe well." This means that anxiety is secondary to human existence as well-being is our primary way of being. Our ontological well-being is essentially intertwined with breathing, that is, with breathing well. These fundamental ideas of Bachelard become experiential for all of us as it is the well-being of the respiratory and aerial world that imagines and breathes itself within us. Often we are not aware of this perpetual event of respiratory well-being in our lives. Seppä's style of breathwork gives us a path to experience in flesh what Bachelard might mean with his ideas concerning well-being and breathing. According to Seppä, the art of wonder is the core matter of cultivation of breathing (the development of breath awareness). In her view, there is no right way to breathe and for this reason she does not teach any certain breathing techniques.

In the workshop, we experientially wonder in dialogue with simple breath-practices what could it mean that being is well-being, that there is no right way to breathe and that the phenomenon of breath is not, in the first place, a problem to be solved, but a deep mystery of being.

Keywords: Gaston Bachelard, Maila Seppä, well-being, respiratory world, wonder, cultivation of breathing, imagination

Saara-Maija Strandman is singer, voice teacher and psychophysical breathing therapy instructor. **Petri Berndtson** is a respiratory philosopher, inventor of Philosophical Breathwork and practitioner of mindfulness of breathing meditation. Strandman and Berndtson are a respiratory duo that guides breathing workshops and has written articles about Maila Seppä's unique breathwork.

PRĀṆA – A RESPIRATORY JOURNEY INWARDS

Purushottama BILIMORIA
Agnieszka ROSTALSKA

The workshop is meant as a rudimentary introduction to various different modalities of *prāṇayama* or breath exercises from Indian traditions (Hindu, Jaina, Buddhist and mildly Tantra). Most Yoga schools or classes in the West incorporate breathing exercises (inhalation-exhalation) from either Patañjali *Yoga-sūtras* or Haṭha-yoga (which is historically a much later development with its focus on *āsanas* or bodily postures). The range, however, is quite extensive, and there are variations to the central theme of inward breath-control or *prāṇic* outward restraint. Rather, on the contrary, when not confused with hyper-ventilation (excessive intake of oxygen), regulated respiratory modalities with increase in the intake of *prāṇa*, directed to different parts of the body-nervous system complex, working in with the hypothalamus in the cortical centre of the brain, is said to have healing as well as awareness-elevating capacities. Likewise, the regulated deceleration of breathing to the point of near-cessation, is said to lower the pulse-rate and heart-beat also, and has its own magnificence in bringing about what Abhinavagupta called *śāntarasa* (restful or peace state). Doubtless, certain *āsanas* do help with *prāṇayama* process as various vital glands in the body need to be mobilized so that they are energized by a more free-flow of *prāṇa*, rendering the organs more agile and the circulation more effective (as well as the digestive process). Visualization is another important supplement in the advanced *prāṇayama* practices with *mantra* recitations, wherein the third-eye and the lotus-*chakras* are looked upon as seats of their presiding deities (from the rich Hindu and Buddhist iconographies, e.g. Śiva-Śakti, Yab-Yum, Ying-Yang). The divinities are invoked, appeased and at the same time ‘awakened’ to unleash the ‘clear light of consciousness’ and much heightened expansion of awareness of all there is and there is not, within and without the participants. The workshop will modestly explore some of these contours of the *prāṇa* in action and in rest. (A personal yoga-mat and cushion are recommended, with light-coloured loose clothing, and perhaps eye-cover.)

Oṃ maṇi padme huṃ.

Keywords: *prāṇāyama*, breath exercises, postures, yantra focus, meditative practice, contemplative studies, applied philosophy, Indian philosophy, yoga.

Purushottama Bilimoria, PhD, and **Agnieszka Rostalska**, PhD, specialize in Indian and Cross-Cultural philosophy, Philosophy of Religion, and Critical Thinking. They are participating scholars in the Global-Critical Philosophy of Religion seminar held annually at the American Academy of Religion (<https://globalcritical.as.ua.edu/participating-scholars-tile/>) as well as scientific board members of Logic and Religion Association, LARA (<https://www.logicandreligion.com/lara>). Their most recent scholarly collaboration includes co-authored articles in volumes published by Bloomsbury Academics, London: “Diversity in Philosophy: Vignettes on Comparative Philosophy” and “Nyāya Rationalism and Critical Thinking on Matters Small and Great.” Their interest in the applied philosophy of breathing exercises is primarily theoretical. They are neither yoga nor *prāṇāyama* teachers, yet they are breathing, dilettantes of yoga, and enthusiastic academics.

AIRY CONCERT

Irena Z. TOMAŽIN

In her experimental concerts, Irena is exploring different layers of the voice and its landscapes that may be unusual to the everyday experience of our ears but are somehow part of our inner vocal life. Oscillating between guttural sounds, fragments of texts and melodic singing, Irena unfolds a musical reality that provokes and moves the listener.

Keywords: sound experimentations, landscapes of voices, words/text fragments, (traditional) melodic singing, extended vocal techniques

Irena Z. Tomažin (vocalist, performer and pedagogue) completed her BA in philosophy at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana. She is active as a creator and performer in the fields of experimental improvised music and movement theatre. She also teaches voice and movement workshops called “moved by voice” nationally and abroad.

She has released three albums: *Crying Game*, *Taste of Silence*, and *Lump in the Throat*. Her music, or more specifically her sound experimentation, is an exploration of the landscapes of the voice that include words, fragments of texts, (traditional) melodic singing, and other vocal techniques, including humming, clicking and other sounds made with the mouth that pertain not (only) to the voice but also to the body.

Irena performs solo and with a variety of ensembles and musicians in Slovenia, all around Europe and the world. She has performed her solo project iT or as experimental vocalist at numerous national and international festivals (Zagreb, Belgrade, Skopje, Dobia, Vienna, Biel, Basel, Geneva, Budapest, Berlin, Baltimore, Wels, Tokyo, Kyoto, Kassel, Wuppertal, Wrocław, Paris, Manchester, Beirut etc.). Her compositions for voice and the body were published in the books *Une exposition à être lue* and *Chorégraphier* by Mathieu Copeland and performed in Geneva, Paris and Madrid.

She has created ten voice/movement stage performances exploring the connections between the voice, gesture, body, space and sound. At the moment, she is working on a new site-specific project that will premiere in the beginning of June at the Cukrarna art gallery in Ljubljana.

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