Call for Abstracts, Workshop on the Rational Role of Cognitive Phenomenology

>> The organisers especially encourage participation from members of under-represented groups. Travel and accommodation funding will very likely be available. Please scroll down for further information <<

Description
Previous orthodoxy in philosophy of mind held that there is something it is like to perceive — perceptual experiences have a phenomenal character — but there is no phenomenology associated with thought. Over the past few decades, this orthodoxy has been powerfully challenged: a number of authors have argued that there is a phenomenology of thought, or cognitive phenomenology ('CP').

Much research has focused on whether CP is reducible. Few deny that thoughts are associated with phenomenal experience, but many think that this fact can be explained by occurrent, remembered, or imagined perceptual experiences which are associated with the thoughts, rather than by attributing a phenomenal character to thought itself.

In this workshop we bracket the reducibility question, and focus instead on what the rational role of CP is. We understand CP broadly: in addition to the phenomenology of thought contents and attitudes, metacognitive feelings such as certainty or doubt, relevance or irrelevance, a thought being supported, or not, by a previous one, agency or passivity for thoughts, and so on, all count as instances. Given that thought has phenomenal character, what can this tell us about our nature as rational agents? We take serious engagement with this question to often require careful description of the nature of CP's relevant aspects, so we particularly encourage engagements with the topic that have a substantive descriptive component.

Confirmed speakers:
- Joelle Proust (Institut Jean Nicod)
- Elijah Chudnoff (Miami)
- Mette Hansen (Bergen)
- Fabian Dorsch (Geneva)
- Marta Jorba (Basque Country)
- Franz Knappik and Ole Koksvik (Bergen)
Call for Abstracts

Four talk slots (45 + 45 minutes) will be filled through the CfA process. Abstracts should be 1000 -- 1500 words long, prepared for blind review (taking care to remove all personal information), and emailed in a word or pdf attachment to post[a]fof.uib.no no later than 1 February 2017, with ‘Submission to Cognitive Phenomenology Workshop’ in the subject line. In preparing your abstract, please pay close attention to the workshop description and the below list of questions.

Where two submissions are otherwise deemed roughly equal in terms of quality and fit, submissions from members of under-represented groups will be preferred. If you feel comfortable doing so, please include relevant information about yourself in the email (though not in the abstract prepared for blind review).

You will be notified of our decision in writing no later than 1 March 2017. Travel will be organised shortly thereafter.

We cannot at this stage guarantee that we will be able to cover costs for speakers accepted through this process, but it is overwhelmingly likely that we will be able to do so.

Relevant questions for the workshop include:

- What are the role descriptions for 'work' that needs doing by a rational agent, and which CP is a good candidate to perform?
- How (if at all) does CP help us keep track of relevance / irrelevance in a chain of thought? How does this support our rationality, and how might this support break down?
- What role (if any) does CP play in determining which thoughts form part of a coherent line of thought, and which are external to that line? How does this support our rationality, and how might this support break down?
- How (if at all) does CP help us keep track of confidence-assessments of our judgements? How does this support our rationality, and how might this support break down?
- How (if at all) does CP help us keep track of relations between our present thoughts and our background attitudes? How does this support our rationality, and how might this support break down?
- In what ways (if any) does CP contribute to reasoning and deliberation? How does this support our rationality, and how might this support break down?
- What role (if any) does CP play in self-knowledge of thoughts and attitudes? How does this support our rationality, and how might this support break down?
- What significance (if any) do experiences of activity/passivity about thoughts have for rationality? What contributions can the study of pathological phenomena like thought
insertion and auditory verbal hallucinations make to an understanding of that significance?

- Is there a phenomenology of relevance? How does this support our rationality, and how might this support break down?
- What (if any) impact does verbal phenomenology related to our thoughts have on the structure of our thought-processes? How does this support our rationality, and how might this support break down?
- Is it possible to bring the rationality-supporting aspects of cognitive phenomenology into a taxonomy? Can those aspects be analyzed in terms of a limited number of basic types of experience?

Inclusiveness

**Members of groups that are under-represented in philosophy are especially encouraged to submit.** This includes, but is not limited to, women, persons of colour, LGBTQI persons, and persons with a disability. Where two submissions are otherwise deemed roughly equal in terms of quality and fit, submissions from members of under-represented groups will be preferred.

The workshop will be held in a wheelchair accessible venue, with an accessible toilet in the immediate vicinity, as will the workshop dinner.

We will assist in organising accessible accommodation as required.

We will support speakers in organising child care, and, if funding permits, also to pay for it.

**Talks will be conducted in accordance with the UK’s Society for Women in Philosophy’s ‘Seminar Chairing Policy Suggestions’.”**

Further information

The workshop will be followed by a one-day workshop on auditory verbal hallucinations on June 8th that we co-organize with neuroscientists from the University of Bergen (Department of Biological and Medical Psychology, Kenneth Hugdahl and collaborators).

The speakers from both events will be invited to a boat trip to the fjords around Bergen on June 9th.

After the workshop, the organisers will consider seeking a publication outlet for the presented papers, either in an edited collection or in a journal special issue.

Franz Knappik and Ole Koksvik