

# Philosophy Workshop:

## Philosophical Paths to the Concept of Time

Tuesday 22 April 2025

2:00 pm – 6:30 pm

Zayed Theatre, SUAD Campus



## Abstract:

Time stands among the most important and difficult philosophical notions. Despite its elusive nature (for example when characterized by Aristotle as the succession of intangible and ungraspable “nows”), and its profound character (when defined, also by Aristotle, as the measurable attribute of all movement), time shapes our understanding of existence, consciousness and the very fabric of reality. This conference seeks to explore how various philosophical traditions have grappled with the phenomenon of time, with a view to reach an elucidation of the complex nature of time, and also by considering how time “temporalizes” in and through the human mind’s openness. Indeed, if it is true that the retention of the past, the anticipation of the future (with the related question of our mortality), and our openness to the present (in terms of capabilities and vulnerabilities), inform our individual and collective understanding of this all-pervading yet mysterious concept, then the question of time is intimately linked to a reflection on the structure of the mind itself, and the ways in which it is in relation to the world.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of philosophical questions that the conference proposes to address:

1. ***The subjective or objective nature of time.*** Is time objective in the sense of constituting a physical structure of the material universe, intimately linked to the motion of bodies, to be approached scientifically? Or is it first a subjective property of the mind and its cognitive abilities, whether psychological or transcendental (in particular through the faculties of memory and anticipation), to relate meaningfully to absent realities, whether past or futural, and to perceive the present as it also admits of a temporal duration?
2. ***The relation between time and finitude.*** Is human existence, and perhaps even Being itself, shaped by time, to the point that, in the words of Heidegger, time as a horizon is the meaning of Being? Is finitude then an unsurpassable condition, or should time be seen as pointing in the direction of an eternal transcendent reality, of which it is a sensory image?
3. ***The meaning of a shared temporality.*** The notion of time opens the question of the philosophical status of history and the temporal situation of humanity in the world. In the context of our modern outlook on the world, should history be grasped as a global unfolding progressively reaching out certain goals, or should such a teleological and universalist vision be problematized as abstract, or even secretly ethnocentric, obliterating the plurality and richness of lived histories?
4. ***The cultural perceptions of time.*** Is it possible to reach a philosophical understanding of the essence of time, or even a scientific description of objective time, that would apply uniformly for any culture? Or is the conceptualization of time intrinsically determined by certain cultural experiences and practices, opening up the need for an intercultural philosophical approach to the question of its plural meanings?

## Organization:

- Philosophy and Sociology Department, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi
- Student Affairs Department, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi
- *Noûs Libre* – Philosophy Club of Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi
  
- With the sponsorship of Philosophy House (Fujairah)
- With the participation of the HLP philosophy students of the Lycée Français International Théodore Monod (LFITM)
- With the participation of the HLP philosophy students of the Lycée Français Louis Massignon (LLM)
- With the participation of the philosophy students of the American University of Sharjah (AUS)

## Programme :

### 14h-14h05:

- *Welcome address from the management of Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi*

### 14h05-14h10:

- Students from *Noûs Libre* (Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi): *Concept note of the workshop*

## Session 1

### 14h10-14h30 :

- Dr. Claude Vishnu Spaak (Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi): *Introductory remarks to the philosophical problems of the concept of time*

### 14h30-15h :

- Dr. Cécilia Bognon-Küss (Sorbonne Université): *L'identité à l'épreuve du temps : une perspective biologique*

## Coffee Break

## Session 2

### 15h30-16h:

- Dr. Divya Dwivedi (Indian Institute of Technology Delhi): *Modals of Lost Responsibilities*

#### **16h-16h30:**

- Dr. Kurt Mertel (American University Sharjah): *Revisiting Historicity and Selfhood in Being and Time*

#### **16h30-17h:**

- Dr. Guillaume Dulong (Lycée Louis Massignon, Abu Dhabi): *De l'illusion cinématographique au Métacinéma. Temps mécanique, devenir et durée, reprise de Bergson par Deleuze*

#### **Coffee Break**

#### **Session 3:**

##### **17h30-18h :**

- Dr. Bassel El Zein (Philosophy House Fujairah): *Le temps comme intuition pure a priori*

##### **18h-18h30:**

- Prof. Nader El Bizri (University of London): *Time in the phenomenology of visual perception and the logical analysis of future contingents*