

MAPPING PHILOSOPHY AS A WAY OF LIFE
FINAL CONFERENCE

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ABSTRACTS & BIOS

“Philosophy as a Way of Life as a Distinctive Metaphilosophy”

(Matthew Sharpe)

It is a mark of the originality of the research program into philosophy as a way of life, that it does not readily fit either within the established intradisciplinary boundaries of philosophy, or within any cognate discipline, such as sociology, the history of ideas, or ethics. This paper situates PWL as a distinctive metaphilosophy, situating it in relationship to contemporary metaphilosophical positions staked since the 1970s, addressing the nature, limits, and ends of the discipline. I argue that, in contrast to almost all other contemporary positions in this field (examined in part 1), Hadot does not take contemporary philosophy as normative, and nor does he treat it as a solely intellectual, research-based activity. Instead, in a way which speaks to the lived realities of philosophers, he resituates philosophy as a pedagogical, institutional, and embodied set of practices; and in a way which challenges the normativity of contemporary philosophical approaches, he starts from the ancient conceptions of philosophy, looking at where we have arrived in that light. Part 2 of the essay examines the nature of Hadot’s claims for PWL as the predominant ancient metaphilosophy, starting from philosopher’s metaphilosophical statements (i), examining Hadot’s nuanced account of the relationship between philosophical discourse and philosophy as a way of life (ii), and his account of spiritual exercises. Part 3 address the demarcation issue, and recurrent criticism of PWL, that it is unable to demarcate philosophy as a transformative practice from forms of religion, spirituality, or literature.

Matthew Sharpe teaches philosophy at the Australian Catholic University, having completed his PhD in Philosophy and Social Theory at the University of Melbourne, and MA in Policy Studies at the University of Tasmania, and a Diploma of Counselling at the Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors. He is the author of six books, including *The Other Enlightenment: Race, Gender, and Self-Estrangement* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2023), *Philosophy as a Way of Life: History, Dimensions, Directions* (with M. Ure, Bloomsbury, 2021), and *Camus, Philosophie: To Return to Our Beginnings* (Brill, 2015/16). He is co-translator of *Pierre Hadot’s Selected Writings. Philosophy as Practice* (with F. Testa, Bloomsbury, 2020). He is co-editor of the Brill series on “Philosophy as a Way of Life, Texts and Studies”.

Over the years, he has edited ten edited collections and journal editions, as well as being the author of numerous articles in leading-rank journals and book chapters on philosophy, social and critical theory. Since 2010, his focus has increasingly become classical receptions and philosophy as a way of life, with a focus on the work of Pierre and Ilsetraut Hadot.

“Theory vs Praxis in Philosophy as a Way of Life”

(Marta Faustino)

Philosophy as a way of life (PWL) is generally presented as a conception of philosophy with a deeply performative and self-transformative potential. Contrary to the notion of philosophy that tends to prevail today in modern universities and academic institutions, PWL is not restricted to a set of theories, doctrines, and systems expressed in monographs, articles, and book chapters. Rather, its primary aim is to have an impact and transformative effect on one’s character and way of living. This fundamental distinction between theory and practice, and Hadot’s alleged privileging of the latter over the former, seems to be at the core of his conception of PWL. At the same time, Hadot’s emphasis on the practical dimension of ancient philosophy, to the apparent detriment of theory, is one of the most polemic and controversial aspects of his account. In this presentation, I will first analyze some of the criticisms that have been made to Hadot’s conception of PWL, including Nussbaum’s and Cooper’s criticism, according to which Hadot completely neglects the role of theory, reason and argumentation in ancient philosophy, and Miranda Vilchis’ more moderate reading, according to which Hadot acknowledges the role of theory in ancient philosophy but clearly privileges practice, thus ascribing to the former only a secondary and less important role. In a second moment, I will address these criticisms from an Hadotian point of view, clarifying the complex relation between theory and practice in his account of PWL and arguing that even though Hadot in fact sees practice as the end goal of philosophy and as such ascribes a certain primacy to it, in Hadot’s description of PWL theory and practice enjoy an equal importance and reciprocal relation. Finally, I will draw some conclusions from the preceding sections and reflect on

the importance of considering PWL in contemporary metaphilosophical discussions.

Marta Faustino is an appointed research fellow at IFILNOVA (NOVA Institute of Philosophy). She studied Sciences of Communication (2002) and Philosophy (2005) at the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences of the NOVA University Lisbon and earned her Doctorate in Philosophy (2013), from the same university, with a thesis on Nietzsche's conceptions of 'great health' and therapy. She is currently working on an individual research project on philosophy as a way of life, with a particular focus on Nietzsche, Hadot, and Foucault. From 2018 to 2022, she was the coordinator of the Art of Living Research Group and she is currently leading, as Principal Investigator, the FCT Exploratory Project "Mapping Philosophy as a Way of Life: An Ancient Model, A Contemporary Approach". She is a member of LNG (Lisbon Nietzsche Group), GIRN (Groupe International de Recherches sur Nietzsche), HyperNietzsche, Red Iberoamericana Foucault and Mellon Philosophy as a Way of Life Network. She is author of several articles and essays on Nietzsche, Hadot, Foucault and the Hellenistic philosophers, and co-editor of six books, including *The Late Foucault: Ethical and Political Questions* (Bloomsbury, 2020), *Filosofia Como Modo de Vida: Ensaios Escolhidos* (Edições 70, 2022), and *Hadot and Foucault on Ancient Philosophy: Critical Assessments* (Brill, 2024).

"Philosophy as a Way of Life and Existential Choice"

(Eli Kramer & Matteo Stettler)

Despite being overall well received, Pierre Hadot's studies on philosophy as a way of life have not failed to attract also a considerable amount criticism in recent years for their reliance on the notion of 'choice of life.' Two related types of criticism can be distinguished. Some scholars (Renaud, Antonaccio, Flynn and Del Nido) have pointed out that Hadot's notion of 'choice of life,' and the priority that he ascribes to the latter over philosophical discourse, might be open to the charge of 'anti-intellectualism' or even 'irrationalism,' which reveals a problematic commitment to a form of 'voluntarism' or 'decisionism'; others, like Cooper, have preferred to

highlight that Hadot commits an anachronism, superimposing a contemporary – and, especially, an existentialist – conception of ‘choice of life’ and its primacy over the ancients. As we shall make the case, this criticisms of Hadot points us toward two different metaphilosophical predispositions, whose contrast we aim to explore: an analytical one whereby a philosophical guided ‘choice’ is reduceable to rational deliberation, and another, which Hadot himself follows, more attuned to psychological issues of temperament and habit, that admits the existence of a transactional or dynamic relation between doing and thinking in the choice of philosophy.

Eli Kramer is Associate Director of the Cassirer Center for International Scholarship and Cooperation and University Professor at the Institute of Philosophy, University of Wrocław. His work is devoted to developing PWL as a field and revitalizing enclaves for humane learning accross global higher education. He connects this work to his activities in the philosophy of culture and the philosophy of higher education. Alongside field leaders Matthew Sharpe and Michael Chase, he co-edits the Brill book series, “Philosophy as a Way of Life: Text and Studies,” which organizes new translations, as well as putting out new studies. Most recently they have edited and published two critical translations of one of the founding figures of the PWL field, Juliusz Domański: *Philosophy, Theory or Way of Life?* (Brill 2024), and *Erasmus and Philosophy* (Brill 2024). They also closely work with Marta Faustino on a number of projects to foster philosophy as a way of life research and practice inside and out of the academy. His first single authored monograph is on the nature and role of the associated philosophical life (as distinct from philosophy as a discipline): *Intercultural Modes of Philosophy, Volume One: Principles to Guide Philosophical Community* (Brill 2021). He has also co-edited and contributed to collections such as *Living According to Nature*, 2 vols (Brill, forthcoming), *Hadot and Foucault on Ancient Philosophy: Critical Assessments* (Brill, 2024), *Philosophy of Culture as Theory, Method, and Way of Life: Contemporary Reflections and Applications* (Brill, 2022), *Rorty and Beyond* (Lexington Books, 2020), and *Contemporary Philosophical Proposals for the University: Toward a Philosophy of Higher Education* (Palgrave Macmillan 2018). His work has appeared (or will appear) in journals such as *Metaphilosophy*, *Eidos. A Journal for Philosophy of Culture*, *Contemporary*

Pragmatism, Dewey Studies, Philosophy and Theory in Higher Education, Studies in Pedagogy, and Syndicate Philosophy.

Matteo Johannes Stettler is a Ph.D. candidate in Philosophy at Deakin University (Australia). He collaborates with the research groups “Philosophy as a Way of Life,” of the Pontificia Università Gregoriana of Rome, and “Forms of Life and Practices of Philosophy” (particularly the “Art of Living” line of research) of the NOVA Institute of Philosophy (IFILNOVA) of Lisbon, which he visited for a few months in 2022. In co-authoring with Prof. Matthew Sharpe, Stettler has published specialistic articles for *Classical Receptions* and *Philosophy Today*; his work has also appeared on *Aevum*, *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum*, and *Foucault Studies*. His latest publication, “Thoreau’s Stoicism in Letters to Various Persons: The Spiritual Direction of Harrison Blake” is forthcoming on *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*. Matteo is also an Adjunct Lecturer in Philosophy at the Lorenzo de’ Medici International Institute of Florence (Italy).

“Philosophy as a Way of Life, Spirituality and Religion”

(Gianfranco Ferraro)

The two greatest reference authors on philosophy as a way of life, Pierre Hadot and Michel Foucault, emphasize how the notion of spirituality is essential for understanding philosophy as a practice of existence both in antiquity and in modernity: while the former analyzes this notion through the expression “spiritual exercises,” chosen for its broad scope, the latter shows the connection between spirituality and the life techniques of the Ancients, as well as the philosophical, political, and artistic forms of life in modernity. Indeed, both demonstrate—contrary to the opinion of other interpreters of ancient philosophy such as J. Cooper—that Western spirituality cannot be simply identified with religious forms. On the contrary, a genealogical reading of Christian spiritual forms reveals the influence of spiritual practices already developed by ancient philosophy. Moreover, other interpreters of antiquity clarify that well before the birth of Christian practices, ancient philosophy had spiritual components, sometimes common to religious

practices (in Plato or the pre-Socratics, for example). More specifically, and following the analyses developed by Hadot and Foucault, it is possible to identify conversion as a characteristic phenomenon of spirituality, that is, as an element that encompasses the transformations of the self. It is through the different paradigms of conversion—return, rupture, conversion to oneself—that spirituality manifests as a connecting element between philosophy and life, as well as between religion and life. Therefore, while it is possible to imagine the existence of non-spiritual religious or philosophical forms—specifically those that are scholastic, academic, or dogmatic—it would not be possible to imagine religious or philosophical forms aimed at the transformation of the self without them being imbued with spirituality and without manifesting through a conversion of the self. Beyond analyzing these connections within the Western context, this paper will attempt to show how the notions of spirituality and conversion derived from the thoughts of Hadot and Foucault enable a comparative approach between the spiritual, including philosophical, forms inherent in the Western tradition and those of different traditions.

Gianfranco Ferraro was born in Messina, Italy. His current research focuses on forms of conversion, approached through several points of observation (philosophical, literary, theological, political), particularly through the studies of Michel Foucault and Pierre Hadot. On this topic he wrote several essays particularly concerning Foucault, Nietzsche, the history of utopian thought, and is also working on a theoretical volume. He is currently coordinating the research line on “Conversion, education and global pedagogical utopias” at the Center for Global Studies at the Universidade Aberta (Lisbon, Portugal), where he is also a PhD Candidate on Global Studies with a research project on the ancient roots and the modern influence of Ignatius of Loyola’s “Spiritual exercises”. Previously, he studied Philosophy in Italy (Pisa) and France (EPHE, Paris), where he obtained his PhD in Philosophy with a thesis on the notion of asceticism in Nietzsche, Weber and Foucault, and was FCT post-doc Fellow in Portugal. He is founder and editorial director of the international journal *Thomas Project: A Border Journal for Utopian Thoughts*. He co-edited (with Marta Faustino) the book *The Late Foucault. Ethical and Political Questions* (Bloomsbury, 2020) and (with António Caeiro) the volume *Formas de conversão. Filosofia, política, espiritualidade* (Abysmo, 2023). He is coordinating (with José Eduardo Franco) the *Global History of Utopias*. He

has also translated into Italian modern and contemporary works of the utopian tradition.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in Classical Antiquity”

(Annie Larivée)

The Hadotian paradigm of philosophy as a way of life seems adequate to describe the Hellenistic and Roman period. In any case, it was well received. For Classical Greece, it seems less clear; opinions are divided. The thesis I defend in my presentation reverses this assessment. I argue that in the Classical era, philosophy necessarily comes with a different (and socially contested) way of life, but that this will not be the case thereafter. Indeed, later, in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, philosophy became less a way of life than an art of living which could be integrated into many kinds of lives and situations. It will no longer require a particular, special way of life. This explains the success of schools like Stoicism, Epicureanism, and Skepticism, which allowed philosophy to become more ‘democratic’. The notion of an art of living is also present in philosophy in the Classical era. But not yet in a realized state, rather as an idea, a project. We first see it as an object of research, for Socrates, then as a project under development with Plato and Aristotle. My presentation, divided in three parts, describes the genesis of this ambitious philosophical project, that of an art of living, taking Socrates as a central figure. The first part is historical. It describes the cultural context in which the topic of different *bioi*, ways of life, became an object of philosophical inquiry in 5th-6th century Athens. This context was antagonistic and involved a battle for social recognition. In the second part, I start by defending my proposal to establish a stark conceptual distinction between ‘way of life’ and ‘art of life,’ using Socrates as an example. While Socrates struck the social imaginary through his unique way of life, *bios*, he is also responsible for launching the search for an art, *techne*, of the good human life. Far from being the same, these are separable. This is illustrated by the fact that, while some philosophical lineages understood their practice as an imitation of particular aspects of Socrates’ own *bios* (like the Cynics), others put the emphasis on Socrates’ intellectual search for the conditions of the good human life (like Plato and Aristotle). I then go on to identify the formal features of the Socratic project of an art of life. My paper’s final

part delineates the shape that the Socratic quest for an art of life takes in Plato and Aristotle's work: a practice of care for the soul which is essentially collective, political.

Annie Larivée discovered the work of Pierre Hadot and of the late Foucault on ancient philosophy as a way of life and care for the self while doing her MA in philosophy at Université de Montréal in the late 1990s. This intellectual encounter durably impacted her academic trajectory. In the early 2000's, she earned a PhD from the Sorbonne (Paris I, Panthéon-Sorbonne) with a dissertation titled *The Political Asclepios. Care for the Soul in Plato's Dialogues*. Since then, she has published extensively on related themes in ancient philosophy, particularly Plato, both in English and French. Her current research aims at refining our understanding of what philosophy was (and could still be, possibly) by distinguishing ancient conceptions of *philosophia* which are related but distinct such as 'philosophy as a way of life,' 'philosophy as an art of life,' 'philosophy as therapy,' 'philosophy as care for the soul/self,' and 'philosophy as contemplation'. She has served two terms as Chair of the Philosophy Department at Carleton University, in Ottawa (Canada), where she lives and teaches.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in the Hellenistic Schools”

(William Desmond)

The Hellenistic “Schools” of Cynicism, Stoicism, Epicureanism, and Pyrrhonism all came to privilege ethics over logic, physics and other branches of philosophy, and so each offered its distinctive ethical outlook as *the* way of life—the true path by which its followers could attain virtue and happiness. Individual excellence and well-being remain the avowed ends or goals of all the schools, yet despite this surface agreement, they are given often markedly different content—and appropriately diverse means to attain them. The first part of this paper offers a survey of Cynic, Stoic, Epicurean, and Pyrrhonist “ways of life,” aiming to construct a composite picture of each—one that is adequate to their major exponents, while also providing some highlights about historical development and controversies

internal to each school. In its second half, the paper turns more explicitly to the web of relations between the four outlooks—their commonalities, differences, borrowings, and rivalries. Here the very plurality of Hellenistic *haireseis* or “options” highlights their common assumption that the individual is free and must make “choices” in a complex and dangerous world. This matrix of considerations (individualism, freedom, uncertainty, chance) has made each of the schools interesting for various modern readers (e.g. Nietzsche, Sloterdijk, Hadot), and in contemporary times has inspired a kind of Neo-Stoic revival—testimony to some inner resonances between Hellenistic and modern cultures.

William Desmond holds a joint PhD in classics and philosophy from Yale University and is currently associate professor in the Department of Ancient Classics in Maynooth University, Ireland. His interests focus on Greek literature and culture, the history of philosophy, and modern receptions of the classics. Along with articles and book chapters, he has published several monographs: *The Greek Praise of Poverty* (Notre Dame, 2006), *Cynics* (Acumen, 2008), *Philosopher-Kings of Antiquity* (Bloomsbury, 2012), *Hegel's Antiquity* (Oxford, 2020), and *Ancient Greece in 30 Hours* (Kindle Publishing, 2024).

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in Neoplatonism”

(Marc-Antoine Gavrav)

The paradigm of ‘philosophy as a way of life,’ as Pierre Hadot himself stated, was the fruit of his disillusionment with Plotinus’ ‘mysticism’ and a desire to find a strand of Ancient philosophy compatible with what he considered to be real, ordinary, lived life. Hadot later, however, sought to show that even amongst the Neoplatonists, philosophy was considered to be a way of life. This paper will argue that Hadot’s initial sense of an opposition between Neoplatonism and our real, lived life, was correct and belies his later reading of this philosophical movement. Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Proclus and their followers did indeed treat philosophy as a way of life and even took spiritual direction from such texts as Epictetus’ *Manuel* and the *Golden Verses*. Yet, the life to which

these texts served as a guide, the life ‘here below (*entautha*),’ was held by the later Platonists to be anything but our real life. Our real, ordinary life was, for them, the life ‘there above (*ekei*),’ the noetic life of the soul after philosophy and beyond the material world. The Neoplatonists therefore offer an eloquent example of the limits of the paradigm of ‘philosophy as a way of life’.

Marc-Antoine Gavray studied Philosophy and Classics in Liège and Paris. His work has taken him to both sides of Antiquity, focusing at times on Plato and the Sophists, and at others on the late Neoplatonists (Damascius, Philopon and Simplicius), with a few forays into the intervening period. His current research bears witness to this ‘double duality’, as he is preparing a translation with commentary of Plato’s *Hippias*, as well as an edition with translation and notes of the Neoplatonic Commentaries on Plato’s *Phaedo* (in collaboration with Pieter d’Hoine, KULeuven). For some years now, he has also been interested in the questions raised by the concept of philosophy as a way of life. Marc-Antoine Gavray is involved in several collective research ventures: he is a member of the MéThéor research centre (co-director from 2016 to 2018), a founding member and secretary of the contact group “La tradition platonicienne dans l’Antiquité”, and co-organiser with Thomas Bénatouïl (Lille) and Sylvain Delcomminette (ULB) of the LilLiBru seminar.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in Early Christianity”

(Caleb Cohoe)

In this talk I consider the ways in which key early Christian thinkers present Christianity as the true way of life and critique pagan schools. I begin with the Jewish scholar Philo of Alexandria, the first major thinker to employ ideas from Greek philosophy in the context of interpreting the Hebrew scriptures. Philo offers an influential allegorical method of reading scripture and identifies the life of moral and intellectual virtue with the spiritual life, allowing for the possibility of integrating the goals of philosophy with those of Judaism or Christianity. We then see early Christian figures such as Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria present Christianity as the true philosophy. Contra Enlightenment myths, we do not find

fideism or any outright condemnation of reason, even when thinkers such as Tertullian critique the wisdom of Athens. Drawing on figures from the late ancient period in both the Latin west (Ambrose, Augustine, and Boethius) and Greek East (Origen and the Cappadocian fathers), I then outline key differences between Christianity and philosophical schools as well as points on which their approaches to developing and practicing virtues overlap.

Caleb Cohoe is Professor and Chair of the Department of Philosophy at Metropolitan State University of Denver. Since receiving his doctorate in 2012 from Princeton University's Program in Classical Philosophy, he has published on ancient Greek and Roman philosophy, medieval philosophy, and philosophy of religion in journals including *Apeiron*, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion*, *Philosophical Quarterly*, and *Phronesis*. Cohoe is the editor of *Aristotle's On the Soul: A Critical Guide* (Cambridge University Press, 2022). He has served as one of the Lead Faculty Advisors for the Philosophy as a Way of Life Project, co-authored two articles with Stephen R. Grimm on living philosophically, and defended Augustine's otherworldly approach to happiness in an *Oxford Studies in Medieval Philosophy* article. Cohoe has ongoing projects on Aristotle's theory of understanding and Augustine's views on philosophical and religious ways of life.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in the Middle Ages”

(John Marenbon)

After examining why medieval philosophy has usually been excluded from treatments of philosophy as a way of life, I shall discuss from this point of view the ninth-century philosopher John Scottus Eriugena, and Abelard, William of Conches and Alan of Lille in the twelfth century. I shall then consider the role of the universities in restricting the idea of philosophy as a way of life, but also, arguably, through the ideas developed by some of the Arts Masters in Paris in the 1260s and 1270s, in promoting it. This will lead to a philosopher closely connected to them, and central to the topic, Dante, and then to a consideration of philosophy

as a way of life outside the universities, looking on the one hand at the use of Boethius's *Consolation* (Chaucer, Christine de Pizan), and on the other hand at so-called mystics (especially Marguerite Porete, glancing back to Richard of St Victor and Bonaventure).

John Marenbon is a Senior Research Fellow at Trinity College, Cambridge, and a Visiting Professor at the Università della Svizzera Italiana. He was born in 1955 and educated at Westminster School and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he took his BA in 1976 and his PhD in 1981. In 2005 he became a Senior Research Fellow of Trinity and, in 2010, Honorary Professor of Medieval Philosophy in the University of Cambridge. In 2009 he was elected as a Fellow of the British Academy. From 2020 he has been a Visiting Professor at the Università della Svizzera Italiana. His major books include *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard* (Cambridge University Press, 1997); *Boethius* (Oxford University Press, 2003); *Le temps, la prescience et les futurs contingents – de Boèce à Thomas d'Aquin* (Vrin, 2005); *Medieval Philosophy: an historical and philosophical Introduction* (Routledge, 2007); *Abelard in Four Dimensions. A twelfth-century philosopher in his context and ours* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2013); and *Pagans and Philosophers. The problem of paganism from Augustine to Leibniz* (Princeton University Press, 2015). His main areas of work at present are: early medieval Latin philosophy, from c. 400 – c. 1100; philosophy outside the universities in the later Middle Ages and Philosophy as a Way of Life in the Middle Ages; metaphysical themes in medieval philosophy (especially modality, relations, states of affairs and matter); the social history of logic; methodology of the history of philosophy.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in Renaissance Humanism”

(John Sellars)

Humanists in both Italy and northern Europe from Petrarch onwards have not always been taken seriously as philosophers, especially in the Anglophone world, because they were less interested in – and often openly hostile to – the ongoing scholastic philosophical tradition. That hostility has sometimes been interpreted

as a rejection of philosophy as such. This paper argues that these humanist thinkers were in fact deeply committed to philosophy – to a conception of philosophy that they developed as an explicit alternative to the scholastic model, inspired by the figure of Socrates and by ideas from the Hellenistic schools transmitted by Cicero and Seneca. The first part of the paper focuses on Italian humanists active in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, while the second part focuses on humanists in northern Europe.

John Sellars is Reader in the History of Philosophy at Royal Holloway, University of London, Associate Editor for the Ancient Commentators on Aristotle project at King's College London, and a Member of Common Room at Wolfson College, Oxford (where he is a member of Wolfson's Ancient World Research Cluster). He is a founder member of two non-profit organizations aimed at bringing the ancient philosophy of Stoicism to a wider audience, Modern Stoicism and The Aurelius Foundation, and he is currently Chair of Modern Stoicism. He is the author of *The Art of Living: The Stoics on the Nature and Function of Philosophy* (2003; 2nd edn 2009), *Stoicism* (2006), *Hellenistic Philosophy* (2018), *Lessons in Stoicism* (2019), *Marcus Aurelius* (2020), *The Fourfold Remedy* (2021), *Barlaam of Seminara on Stoic Ethics* (2022, with C. R. Hogg), and *Aristotle: Understanding the World's Greatest Philosopher* (2023). He has recently edited *The Cambridge Companion to Marcus Aurelius' Meditations* (in press). Alongside Stoicism, his current focus is re-evaluating philosophy in the Renaissance in the light of idea of philosophy as a way of life. Recent publications on this include: "Renaissance Humanism and Philosophy as a Way of Life" (*Metaphilosophy* 51/2-3, 2020, 226-43), and "Renaissance Consolations: Philosophical Remedies for Fate and Fortune" (in O. Akopyan, ed., *Fate and Fortune in European Thought, ca. 1400-1650*, Leiden: Brill, 2021, 13-36).

"Philosophy as a Way of Life in Early Modern Philosophy"

(Simone D'Agostino)

Early Modern Philosophy (EMP) is commonly held to be a period of crisis or darkening of Philosophy as a Way of Life (PWL). The general intent of my paper

will therefore be to bring evidence that shows on the contrary the liveliness of the PWL tradition in the EMP. Mine will generally be a ‘continuist’ rather than ‘discontinuist’ approach. At a more particular level, I would like to show that the PWL tradition in the EMP takes a specific bent in line with the needs of the time. This line is that of “reforming of the mind.” It is a process that, as Foucault (1981-82) already pointed out, is part of the broader sphere of procedures for the transformation of the subject in its search for truth, re-delineating the relationship between asceticism and truth — already classical for PWL. More particularly still, my thesis will be that the reform of the mind will be wrought by some of the major philosophers of the EMP primarily along the lines of the “reform of logic”, which in turn takes the form of a refoundation of philosophical method. After an Introduction in which I outline the question of EMP within PWL, and offer a brief overview of the emergence of the question of method and the reform of logic in Humanism (mostly Agricola, Melanchthon and Ramus), I will have three paragraphs, dealing respectively with three pairs of main authors: 1. Bacon and Descartes; 2. Spinoza and Tschirnhaus; 3. Malebranche and Locke.

Simone D’Agostino is Full Professor of History of Early Modern Philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Gregorian University, Rome. Among the books he published, two are the works on early-modern philosophy, *Sistemi filosofici moderni: Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Hume* (Pisa: ETS, 2013) and *Spiritual Exercises and Early Modern Philosophy: Bacon, Descartes, Spinoza* (Leiden: Brill 2023). The central topic of his current research is “mapping” PWL in early-modern time. He leads a research group at the Gregorian University dedicated to PWL with a thematic focus on attention (2021-2025).

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in the Enlightenment”

(Laura Anna Macor)

Philosophy as a way of life is a key feature of the Enlightenment, and this applies to both its most well-known variants, i.e., the French and the German. As a matter of fact, both vindicate a very precise conception of philosophy, which explicitly

makes recourse to classical antiquity, and prioritizes life and practice over empty theory. In addition, several spiritual exercises are suggested to, and expected from, readers engaging in philosophy, who are considered to be individuals requiring guidance with the process of perfecting themselves, rather than pupils who need to augment their knowledge. Yet, this by no way means that innovations cannot be found in the very way Enlightenment thinkers consider philosophy as a mode of life, nor that complete homogeneity can be observed in modern authors belonging to different contexts. So, comparing the French and the German Enlightenment will contribute to reaching the three following objectives: first, detecting the continuities in the ancient and the modern ways of considering philosophy as a way of life; second, ascertaining the discontinuities in the ancient and the modern ways of considering philosophy as a way of life; third, discovering the differences between two particular modern ways of considering philosophy as a way of life. This presentation aims to chart this territory, a surprisingly neglected one, and in order to do so, it will provide a preliminary overview of the relevant aspects in three prominent figures of both variants of the Enlightenment, namely, Voltaire, D. Diderot and J.-J. Rousseau on the one hand, J.J. Spalding, G.E. Lessing and I. Kant on the other.

Laura Anna Macor is Associate Professor of History of Philosophy at the University of Verona (Italy). She studied at the Scuola Normale Superiore and the University of Pisa (1999-2003), and earned her PhD in Philosophy from the University of Padua (2007). Over the years she has received prestigious individual awards, including an Alexander von Humboldt-Fellowship at the Katholische Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt and a Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowship at the University of Oxford. She is interested in early-modern philosophy, with a special focus on the Enlightenment and eighteenth-century German thought, which she deals with from an interdisciplinary perspective open particularly to literature, theology and the history of language. More recently she has developed a lively interest in Philosophy as a Way of Life, which she is currently applying to the late German Enlightenment up to Kant. She is the author of five scholarly monographs and several essays/chapters, including the following: *Die Bestimmung des Menschen (1748-1800). Eine Begriffsgeschichte* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 2013); *Il mestiere di uomo. La concezione pratica della filosofia nel tardo illuminismo tedesco* (Brescia 2023).

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in 19th Century Existential Philosophy”

(Bartholomew Ryan)

This talk presents the emergence of nineteenth century existential philosophy for philosophy as a way of life, most specifically via the writings of Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. The nineteenth century is a transformative period in Europe which radically affected the way of doing and expressing philosophy. It is the age of being between revolutions (1789-1848), and the age of industrialisation and imperialism. The century witnessed the impact of Hegel on a new generation of thinkers who approached philosophy for collective transformation (Marx); and for individual transformation (Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche). As a way of life, nineteenth century existential philosophy is critically analysed in this presentation, through new approaches to truth as subjectivity rather than objectivity; the importance of paradox, passion and suffering; ‘giving style to one’s character’ and writing output; ‘will’, ‘faith’ and ‘experimentation’ as a critique of the enlightenment and the limits of reason; the dissolving of boundaries between one’s ideas and one’s own personal existence; the importance of the *how* rather than the *what* in one’s life; and the inclusion of a profound psychology in the treatment of despair, anxiety, death and self-overcoming as crucial to a flourishing human existence. These three existential thinkers reveal the different sides of philosophy as an art of living to produce and inspire new pathways in pessimism, radical Christianity, and yea-saying perspectives in the journey and process (rather than progress) in becoming a self.

Bartholomew Ryan is a philosopher and musician, and researcher at IFILNOVA, Universidade Nova de Lisboa. He is the coordinator of the research group “Forms of Life and Practices of Philosophy”. He has published various books and essays interpenetrating philosophy and literature, the most recent book being *Fernando Pessoa and Philosophy: Countless Lives Inhabit Us* (co-editor, 2021); and he is the author of *Kierkegaard Indirect Politics: Interludes with Lukács, Schmitt, Benjamin and Adorno* (Brill, 2014). He has taught at universities in Brazil, Berlin, Oxford, Aarhus, Dublin, Lisbon and Bishkek. He is currently writing a book called *James Joyce: The Unfolding Art of Flourishing and Decay* which will be published

by Oxford University Press. In music, he released a solo album called “Jabuti” (under the name Loafing Hero) in 2022; leads the international band The Loafing Heroes (six albums released in 2009-2019); and is a member of the experimental audio formation Headfoot.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in Phenomenology and 20th Century Existential Philosophy”

(Hélder Telo)

Phenomenology and 20th-century existential philosophy are mentioned by Pierre Hadot as cases of modern reactivation of the ancient understanding of philosophy, although he also acknowledges that authors such as Husserl, Heidegger or Merleau-Ponty develop a philosophical discourse in the context of the university, sharing many traits of academic and purely theoretical philosophy. However, this ambiguity makes them a particularly interesting instance of philosophy as a way of life (PWL), as this talk will show. I will start by exploring three points concerning the way phenomenology and existential philosophy involve a transformation of one’s way of living: 1) phenomenology’s emphasis on intuition and description (as opposed to theoretic abstraction), as well as on personal attitude and rigorous discipline, which involves a deep change in one’s perception of the world and corresponds to a modality of contemplation that closely resembles aesthetic contemplation; 2) the idea developed by Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Simone de Beauvoir that freedom and engagement (as well as the tension with life’s constraints) are essential conditions not only of our life in general, but also of philosophical practice; 3) the role that emotions play in philosophical practice and how they help transform our being according to Scheler, Heidegger and Sartre. Based on this, I will discuss how phenomenology and existential philosophy offer a model of PWL that can become paradigmatic in the field, insofar as it combines a concern with rigorous discourse and academic research with a deep transformation of one’s way of perceiving the world and existing in it.

Hélder Telo is an appointed research fellow at PRAXIS – Center for Philosophy, Politics and Culture (University of Beira Interior, Portugal) and a member of the

team working on the FCT exploratory project “Mapping Philosophy as a Way of Life: An Ancient Model, A Contemporary Approach” (Nova University of Lisbon). His research primarily focuses on topics such as the desire for truth, care, and emotions in both ancient and contemporary philosophy (especially Plato, Aristotle, Stoicism, and Heidegger). Hélder Telo is co-editor of the book *Hadot and Foucault on Ancient Philosophy: Critical Assessments* (Brill, 2024) and the book collection *Filosofia & Valores* (Edições 70). His recent publications also include “Plato’s Philosophical Mimesis: On the Pedagogical and Protreptic Value of Imperfection” (*Schole*, 2022) and “The Care of Others in Marcus Aurelius’ Meditations” (in *Philosophy of Care*, Springer, 2021).

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in American Transcendentalism”

(Douglas Anderson)

During their lifetimes, Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, and Henry Thoreau were discounted as philosophers, and, later, study of their work was relegated to literature programs. They were neither overt system makers, nor logicians, nor analysts of language. As thinkers and writers, they focused on how we humans conduct our lives. Thoreau noted in *Walden* that there were many professors of philosophy but few philosophers; philosophers, he suggested, attempt to live with wisdom. These three resisted maintaining dogmas from previous generations and set out to consider how to create their own versions of living philosophically. In this paper I intend to focus on one aspect of each of their outlooks on human life. They all believed that philosophy involved trying to find some elements of wisdom that might bear on the conduct of life. With Emerson, I will focus on his idea of the mid-world where experience works in the region that includes both theoretical knowledge and practical wisdom of the everyday. Fuller began her writing career as an erudite romantic but, in light of her experiences in a man’s world, she came to consider how women in the 19th century ought to live to maintain fruitful, interesting, and ultimately happier lives. Finally, Henry Thoreau challenged us to find ways to simplify our lives such that we are not burdened by the things we own or do. These three thinkers, like the ancient Greeks, took the primary philosophical

task to be to find ways of *living* philosophically, of conducting our lives in the light of a love of wisdom.

Douglas Anderson taught philosophy at four different universities over the course of his career. He retired as Chair of Philosophy and Religion at the University of North Texas. Presently he teaches both undergraduate and graduate courses at Southern Illinois University Carbondale on a part time basis. He is the author of five books and editor of seven more. He has published numerous articles and book chapters and has lectured around the world including universities in Finland, Colombia, China, and Germany. Anderson, under the nickname Ol' Moose, has also performed Americana music for over fifty years and has recorded four cd's. He presently lives in Makanda, Illinois where he works part-time as a carpenter along with teaching occasional courses and playing music at a variety of local venues.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in Pragmatism”

(Richard Shusterman)

After briefly noting the background of pragmatist approaches to PWL in earlier American thinkers, the paper will explore how both classical pragmatists and neopragmatists have handled the idea of philosophy as an art of living, even when they do not explicitly thematize and describe it in precisely those terms and when they privileged other ideals of philosophy. For classical pragmatism, primary attention will go to Peirce, James, and Dewey, exploring how the idea of PWL found expression in their lives as much as their writings. The discussion of neopragmatism's treatment of PWL will focus on Richard Rorty's advocacy of the aesthetic life of self-transformation and self-creation through new vocabularies, and critically contrast it to another neopragmatist aesthetic approach – that of somaesthetics. Explicitly aligning itself with the tradition of PWL, somaesthetics insists that PWL should involve robust embodiment in actions and experiences beyond those of reading and writing. The paper will situate somaesthetic PWL to the important approaches to PWL of Hadot and Foucault by comparing the three approaches in terms of embodiment, aesthetics, freedom, and distinction.

Richard Shusterman is the Dorothy F. Schmidt Eminent Scholar in the Humanities, Professor of Philosophy and English, and Director of the Center for Body, Mind, and Culture at Florida Atlantic University. Educated at Jerusalem and Oxford, he chaired the Temple University Philosophy Department before coming to FAU in 2005. He has held academic appointments in Paris, Berlin, Hiroshima, Rome, Oslo, Vienna, Hong Kong, and Shanghai and was awarded senior Fulbright and NEH fellowships. His widely translated research covers many topics in the human sciences with particular emphasis on questions of philosophy, aesthetics, culture, language, identity, and embodiment. Authored books include *T.S. Eliot and the Philosophy of Criticism* (Columbia 1988), *Practicing Philosophy: Pragmatism and the Philosophical Life* (Routledge 1997), *Performing Live* (Cornell 2000), *Surface and Depth* (Cornell 2002), and *Pragmatist Aesthetics* (Blackwell 1992, 2nd ed. Rowman & Littlefield 2000, and translated into 14 languages). His recent work in somaesthetics includes three books with Cambridge University Press: *Body Consciousness* (2008), *Thinking through the Body* (2012), and *Ars Erotica: Sex and Somaesthetics in the Classical Arts of Love* (2021), and a bilingual graphic novella, *The Adventures of the Man in Gold*, based on his work in performance art. Most recently he authored *Philosophy and the Art of Writing* (Routledge, 2022).

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in Hindu Philosophy”

(Pawel Odyniec)

Recent global reception of the ground-breaking scholarship on Greco-Roman philosophy by the French classicist and philosopher Pierre Hadot (1922-2010) has rekindled metaphilosophical questions concerning the nature of philosophy, its proper function, and its relation to other areas of learning in a powerful and quite unexpected manner. In a nutshell, Hadot argued that philosophy in Greco-Roman antiquity was foremostly a way of life (*manière de vivre*) that entailed engaging in rational philosophical discourse as well as in a set of spiritual exercises in order to achieve wisdom (*sophia*), which brought peace of mind (*ataraxia*), inner freedom (*autarkeia*) and cosmic consciousness (*conscience cosmique*). In fleshing out this pivotal claim, Hadot drew attention to the dichotomy between theory and praxis,

arguing that philosophic theory or philosophic discourse was invariably put by all the major schools of Greco-Roman philosophy in the service of practice, and was ultimately subordinated to a way of life that was distinctively philosophic in that it was oriented towards the transformation of the self and the attainment of wisdom. What does classical Indian philosophy have to say concerning this metaphilosophic claim of Greco-Roman philosophy as it was retrieved by Pierre Hadot? In what ways is it similar to, or different from, the claim of the Greco-Roman PWL concerning philosophic theory and philosophic practice? The aim of this paper is to contribute to the emerging field of intercultural PWL by outlining a number of distinctive outlooks concerning the intersection between philosophic theory and spiritual, transformative practice that were endorsed by different “schools” of classical Indian philosophy with Brahmanical, Hindu background. More specifically, I will address here the manner in which theory (*jñāna*), spiritual practice (*sādhana*), soteriological goal (*mokṣa*, *kaivalya*, *apavarga*) and their intersection were discussed and conceived in the seminal texts of Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Advaita Vedānta and Pratyabhijñā schools of Brahmanical philosophy. In addition, I will highlight the distinctive manner in which these schools of Indian philosophy understood themselves to be therapeutic.

Pawel Odyniec is a lecturer (universitetsadjunkt) in Religious Studies at Karlstad University, Sweden. He holds a PhD in Indology (JU) and three MA degrees in Philosophy (UAB), History of Religion (UAB) and Indian Philosophy and Religion (BHU). His research interest covers the area of Classical Indian philosophy in Sanskrit, particularly Advaita Vedānta and Kashmir Śaivism, Modern Indian philosophy in English and Hindi, as well as South Asian religions. He is also interested in cross-cultural approach to philosophy as a way of life (PWL). Pawel is the author of *Engaging Advaita: Conceptualising liberating knowledge in the face of Western modernity* (2018) and “Rethinking Advaita Within the Colonial Predicament: the ‘Confrontative’ Philosophy of K. C. Bhattacharyya (1875-1949)” (2018).

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in Jewish Philosophy”

(Michael Fagenblat)

The traditions, rituals and scriptures that constitute Jewish life are not founded on philosophical reflection; philosophy only enters Judaism by accommodating to its way of life. But in accommodating to Jewish life, philosophy also transforms it. Philosophy as a Jewish way of life is thus marked by a double movement. On the one hand, it becomes a way of experiencing Jewish life in accordance with the autonomous claims of philosophical reflection. In this way, the kinds of spiritual exercises associated with philosophy as a way of life—meditation, *askesis*, contemplation, rationalization, demythologization, self-transformation, self-transcendence—take the form of traditional Jewish praxes such as prayer, Torah study, or *tshuva* (usually translated as ‘repentance’). On the other hand, the grounding of Jewish life in the pre-philosophical lifeworld of Judaism provides a way for Jewish philosophers to explore the limits of the methods of philosophy. Jewish philosophy as a way of life thus often includes a critique of the limits of reason, including the aspiration for transparency, systematicity, and universality. Drawing on salient examples such as Philo, Saadia, Halevi, Maimonides, Rosenzweig, and Levinas, this talk examines the double movement of Jewish philosophy as a way of life as it both rationalizes its own and subjects reason to critique.

Michael Fagenblat works at the intersection of Jewish thought and western philosophy. His research focuses on the phenomenological and ontological aspects of Jewish thought and their implications for post-secular approaches to contemporary moral and political life. His works include *A Covenant of Creatures: Levinas’s Philosophy of Judaism* (Standard UP 2010), *Negative Theology as Jewish Modernity* (Indiana UP, 2017), and numerous articles on the theopolitical aspects of phenomenological thinkers such as Heidegger and Levinas. His interest in philosophy as a way of life stems from the hermeneutical, exegetical, pragmatic and ancient Greek features of Jewish thought.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in Daoist Philosophy”

(Lisa Raphals)

This presentation examines philosophy as a way of life (PWL) in Daoist philosophy. It focuses on the third-century BCE Daoist classic the *Zhuangzi* because of the richness of this text for PWL. It begins with a brief introduction to early Daoist contexts for PWL in three major texts: the *Daode jing* (sometimes known as the *Laozi*), the *Guanzi*, and the *Zhuangzi*, the focus of the paper. The next section addresses several key themes in the *Zhuangzi* that are centrally relevant to PWL: the theme of wandering, and modes of freedom associated with it; the “skill” stories in the *Zhuangzi*, including how or whether skill mastery contributes to PWL, and considerations of “flow” associated with skill mastery; Zhuangist attitudes toward death and change; Zhuangist attitudes toward social hierarchies and the problem of “self-preservation”; Zhuangist attitudes toward written texts and textual traditions; and the issue of great and small perspectives. The next section turns to philosophical controversies about the *Zhuangzi* that are relevant to PWL: the status of ethics in the *Zhuangzi*; debates about Zhuangist skepticism and/or relativism; the problem of the *Zhuangzi*’s apparent lack of engagement with political life; attitudes toward disability in the *Zhuangzi*.

Lisa Raphals (瑞麗) is Distinguished Professor in the Graduate Division at the University of California Riverside. She studies the cultures of early China and Classical Greece, with research and teaching interests across several areas: comparative philosophy, religion, and history of science, with other interests in gender and science fiction studies. She is the author of four books: *Knowing Words: Wisdom and Cunning in the Classical Traditions of China and Greece* (Cornell, 1992), *Sharing the Light: Representations of Women and Virtue in Early China* (SUNY, 1998), *Divination and Prediction in Early China and Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, 2013), and *A Tripartite Self: Body, Mind and Spirit in Early China* (Oxford, 2023); and co-editor of *Old Society, New Belief: Religious transformation of China and Rome, ca. 1st-6th Centuries* (Oxford, 2017), and *Skill and Ethics: The Legacy of China, Greece and Rome* (Bloomsbury, 2021); and author of many shorter studies. From 2021 to 2023 she served as the president of the International Society for Chinese Philosophy, and she is an affiliate of the Harvard Center for Hellenic Studies.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in Confucian Philosophy”

(Stephen Angle)

This paper argues that applying a “philosophy as a way of life” lens to Confucian philosophy is valuable for three distinct reasons. Most basically, it calls attention to key aspects of Confucian thought and helps us to understand the relation between concrete teachings and more abstract theorizing. Second, it helps us to clarify the sense in which Confucian philosophy is “philosophy,” responding to debates in both Anglophone and Sinophone scholarly communities. Finally, it pushes us to think about “philosophy as a way of life” expansively, which in turn has constructive effects on debates around how to understand “philosophy as a way of life” itself. In particular, the paper shows that however one evaluates John Cooper’s well-known criticisms of Pierre Hadot, Cooper’s proposal that “philosophy as a way of life” must be understood as narrowly centered on “reason” is more clearly problematic when we bring Confucian philosophy into the conversation. Throughout the paper I adopt an inclusive approach to the Confucian tradition itself, drawing on texts from across two millennia, though acknowledging that on matters of (sometimes very significant) detail, there are many important debates and differences. As a result of this broad scope, the paper offers a general framework that is meant to catalyze further investigations and more specific cross-tradition conversations.

Stephen C. Angle is Mansfield Freeman Professor of East Asian Studies and Professor of Philosophy at Wesleyan University. Angle specializes in Confucianism and comparative philosophy, and his research focuses on philosophy’s role in human rights, politics, and ethics both in East Asia and globally. Angle is the author of five books and co-editor of two others, including *Growing Moral: A Confucian Guide to Life* (Oxford, 2022). He is also co-creator of the undergraduate course “Living a Good Life”.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in Buddhist Philosophy”

(Marc-Henri Deroche)

This presentation intends to elucidate the application of the model of Philosophy as a Way of Life in the historical and philological study of Buddhist sources and traditions, and the constitution of a Buddhist philosophy *per se*, in response to contemporary issues, and equally conceived as a way of life. The first part reviews the field of Buddhist studies, starting with the question of the tension between logical discourse and meditative experience in Indian Buddhist schools (Schmithausen). Then, it assesses the introduction of the thought of Pierre Hadot in the methodology of this academic discipline (Kapstein, Eltschinger, Apple) by discussing especially its connection with the Buddhist threefold quest of wisdom, according to study, reflection, and meditation (Fiordalis, Deroche, Anālayo). In a second part, this wisdom paradigm that articulates the epistemic sources of tradition, reason, and intuition, serves to frame a historical overview of major Buddhist schools, from India to Japan. In particular, it shows how the lively literature of “spiritual instructions,” theories and manuals of meditation, has attempted to resolve the dialectical relationship between these different sources of valid knowledge. The third part examines more closely the concept of mindfulness (Pāli: *sati*, Sanskrit: *smṛti*) as being the very thread that connects these elements on the path toward wisdom. Moreover, its continual cultivation defines the Buddhist ethos of mindful awareness, self-examination, and carefulness. Proposing thus the idea of “Buddhist philosophy as mindful living,” or “mindful exercise,” this article concludes by envisioning future research directions and practical applications.

Marc-Henri Deroche is an Associate Professor at Kyoto University, Japan, where he teaches Buddhist and Tibetan studies, and supervises the transdisciplinary Mindful Living Research Group, at the crossroads of religious studies, philosophy, and psychology. His research investigates mindfulness according to theories and manuals of meditation with a specialization in Dzogchen texts and traditions. He obtained his PhD in East Asian Studies at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (Paris). His publications include a monograph, *Une quête tibétaine de la sagesse: Prajñāraśmi (1518–1584) et les sources de l’attitude impartiale (ris med)* (Brepols, 2023), an edited special issue of the journal *Religions on Study, Reflection, and*

Cultivation: Integrative Paths to Wisdom from Buddhist and Comparative Perspectives (2023), a co-edited special issue of the journal *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie on Tibetan Studies in Japan: Approaching the High Plateau from the Archipelago* (2024), and articles appearing in journals such as *Revue d'Études Tibétaines*, *Bulletin of Tibetology*, *Asian Philosophy*, *Philosophy East and West*, *Eidos*, *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, and others. He has also trained as a teacher in Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy with the University of Oxford's Mindfulness Research Centre and Oxford Mindfulness Foundation, and is a fellow of the Mind and Life Institute (USA). He has been living in Kyoto since 2008, and has traveled extensively in the Tibetan and Himalayan cultural world.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life in African Philosophy”

(Jaco Louw)

African philosophy, emerging from what one might call the systematic era (1920s), has been marred by *perverse dialogues/discussions* regarding the authenticity and legitimacy of voices speaking and philosophising from the African continent (and diaspora). The result was often a *talking about*, rather than *living* and *practicing*, African philosophy. Recently, however, focus has shifted from exclusively meta-philosophical issues to weaving phenomenological considerations into the discourse, especially by exploring what it means to be practicing philosophy from an African context. This renewed interest in questions emerging from and responding to the very lifeworld of its participants has emphasised the conversational and relational aspects of African philosophy (e.g., *ubuntu* and *conversationalism*). However, these important and praxis-focused discussions are mostly held in academic spaces, precluding them from immediately being identified as dispositions or philosophical modes of living. In adopting a PWL lens, which I do in this talk, transformative and practical life can be breathed into these often-theoretical discussions – moving from theory (philosophical discourse/discussions) to *theoria* (philosophy/PWL). Specifically, this lens affords me to identify various practical dispositions found in African philosophy, firmly grounded in its own (but often excluded and erased) history and its (sometimes problematic) contact with other histories/traditions. Of importance

for this talk will be an organic appropriation and indigenisation, a cultural filtration and fertilisation, creative struggles, and *arumarustics* (conversational dialectics). These dispositions, read as philosophical modes of living, emphasise the adaptable, relational, and collaborative aspects of adopting African philosophy as a PWL, reinstating and re-rooting it in the *agora* or philosophical village. Additionally, I will argue that applying the PWL lens in this context simultaneously transforms and expands the scope of the lens itself, thereby incorporating the bi-directional/relational aspect of philosophising, and the co-cultivation of alternative ways of living from and in the terms of African philosophers themselves.

Jaco Louw is currently a PhD candidate at Stellenbosch University, where he is also a part-time lecturer. His main research interest centres on meta-philosophical issues of philosophical counselling, with a particular interest on how contemporary African philosophy can be a viable philosophical way of living. His doctoral research explores the contributions of African philosophy in philosophical counselling. Here, the radical African hermeneutic philosophy of Tsenay Serequeberhan and the conversational philosophy of Jonathan Chimakonam are explored to inform, expand, and transform the contemporary philosophical counselling discourse.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life and Education”

(Laura Mueller)

PWL’s focus on philosophical education as a transformative, spiritual, process emerges in a variety of philosophers throughout our history, especially in their critiques of their contemporary academic philosophical practices – notably, universities as servants of the State. Contrasting heteronomous ends and discourse with *philosophia*, we see in such critiques a vision of education as a pursuit of wisdom, in which knowledge is knowledge of how to *be*. Contemporary scholars, such as Brandon Absher, Matthew Sharpe, and Eli Kramer, now focus on the neoliberal paradigm rather than the State, but the critiques are similar in nature: “education” is now subservient to the production of workers and the spiritual, existential dimension of philosophical education is lost. The resurgence

of PWL scholarship, particularly as applied to education, gives us a lens not only to examine institutions and pedagogies of the past, but provides a way forward. Looking at ancient institutions and practices – the schools and their pedagogies – we cast our own situation in sharp relief. From Hadot’s landmark *What is Ancient Philosophy?* to the University of Notre Dame’s Philosophy as a Way of Life Project to the *AAPT Studies in Pedagogy* special issue, “Teaching Philosophy as a Way of Life,” we find a framework with which we can critique and improve the state of contemporary education – a state rife with faculty burnout and general student disengagement, in which the humanities as a whole are valued solely in terms of economic output – from what we teach, how we teach, why we teach, and the communities in which we teach.

Laura J. Mueller is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at West Texas A&M University. Her research interests include Philosophy of Education, Philosophy of Culture, and Philosophy as a Way of Life (PWL). Dr. Mueller’s research presents education as a process that both creates and sustains culture, as well as a process of self-cultivation – including moral cultivation. As such, she focuses on the relationship between pedagogy and personhood, and education, community, and cultural values. She explores various theories and practices that embrace education as a fundamentally transformative process, as part of PWL. Trained in the history of philosophy, her interests largely veer towards Modern philosophy and pragmatism. In addition to pedagogical interests, she also focuses on ways in which institutions (such as neoliberal universities) are obstacles to ethical development and PWL. She has contributed to collections such as *Philosophy of Culture as Theory, Method, and Way of Life* (Brill, 2022), *The Cultural Power of Personal Objects: Traditional Accounts and New Perspectives* (SUNY, 2021), and *The Person at the Crossroads: A Philosophical Approach* (Vernon, 2020). As part of her research in PWL, she is a certified Logic-Based Therapy and Consultation Practitioner, through the Logic-Based Therapy and Consultation Institute. She is also an editor for *Eidos: A Journal for Philosophy of Culture*, and a Fellow of the American Institute for Philosophical and Cultural Thought.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life and Environmental Ethics”

(Pablo Lamberti)

As Hadot stressed on multiple occasions, Philosophy as a Way of Life (PWL) is a mode of living that seeks to live in harmony with Nature (e.g. Hadot 1995, pp. 210-2; 1998, p. 173; 2011, pp. 137, 167; 2023, pp. 42-8, 72). The ancients tried to achieve this through the cultivation of what Hadot called a “cosmic consciousness”. The present existential dangers of widespread species extinction and climate upheaval, stress the urgency to explore PWL in general, and the meaning of cosmic consciousness more specifically, for its ecologically transformative potential. Drawing from the discipline of environmental ethics, this paper attempts to develop an environmental and intercultural approach to spiritual exercises in general, and the cultivation of cosmic consciousness more specifically. I begin by establishing a connection between environmental ethics and cosmic consciousness through the relational ontology of Nāgārjuna, particularly his Middle Way philosophy centered on emptiness (*śūnyatā*) and codependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*). This epistemological foundation supports both environmental ethics and PWL. The final section examines *maitrī* (or *mettā*), as a potential concrete spiritual exercise aimed at cultivating cosmic consciousness.

Pablo M. Lamberti holds a PhD in philosophy from the University of Amsterdam. As an interdisciplinary and intercultural researcher, writer, and teacher Pablo specialises in the emerging academic movement known as Philosophy as a Way of Life (PWL). Using a qualitative historiographic-hermeneutical approach, his main philosophical interest is to investigate existential philosophical practices in ancient Greco-Roman and Asian cultures, as well as adapt, revitalise, and redesign these practices to facilitate convergence with contemporary existential contexts. Topics he has studied and published about include education, martial arts, ecology, and artificial (general) intelligence. In 2023, he was a 6-month visiting scholar at Rikkyo University in Tokyo. Besides his dissertation, *Befriending the Ears. The Transformative Power of Listening*, Pablo published an intercultural philosophy book in the Dutch language about PWL and Zen Buddhism entitled *The Way of the Warrior – On the Track of Socrates, Seneca and the Samurai* (2021), and another book (also in the Dutch language) focusing on the different

categories of spiritual exercises in the works of Plato, Epicurus, the Stoics, and Plutarch entitled *An Exercise in Living. Philosophy as a Craft* (2024).

“Philosophy as a Way of Life and Management Studies”

(Jennifer Baker)

In this presentation I suggest four ways in which leadership, including management, and research in management studies could be related to a person attempting to invoke Pierre Hadot's recommendations in *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*. For one, the practical knowledge needed for leadership and management can eradicate the false beliefs and misleading fears that Hadot thinks befall those who do not use philosophy as a tool for living their lives. For two, understanding the principles of leadership can encourage what Hadot recommends in terms of a focus on the present. For three, our research on management can contribute to our gaining a wide perspective as well as awareness of the limits of our time. And for four, I will argue that more means than Hadot details, when it comes to understanding our collective nature and the requirements of our lives together, are possible through a focus on effective, and philosophical, management of others.

Jennifer Baker graduated from Brown University and earned her PhD from University of Arizona, began teaching at Duke and UNC, and is now a professor at the College of Charleston in Charleston, South Carolina. She works up updating ancient virtues for use today. Her upcoming book project is on how practical the Stoic concepts of moral indifferents can be. She has written in philosophy of economics, moral psychology, and ethical theory. Some of her publications include, “Who’s Afraid of a Final End?”, “Aristotle and Ainslie: Behavioral Science on Virtue”, and “Virtue Ethics and Practical Guidance”, “Virtue Ethics and the Work Ethic” and an entry in the *Oxford Handbook on Ethics and Economics*. She co-edited *Economics and the Virtues: Building a New Moral Foundation* with Mark D. White for OUP. She serves on the medical ethics committee at her state hospital, worked with local law enforcement to bring about improvements in Charleston

County's jail. She sits on the board for South Carolina for Criminal Justice Reform and My Community's Keeper Mentor Group.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life and Feminism”

(Simone Webb)

This paper identifies some key issues at the intersection of Philosophy as a Way of Life (PWL) and feminist thought. It focuses on PWL as set out by Pierre Hadot across his writing. The first section provides a feminist critique and analysis of PWL. It addresses PWL as a transformed existence, the specific spiritual exercises advocated by Hadot, the view from above and the fight against injustice. The main argument is that Hadot's version of PWL is systematically insensitive to experiences and perspectives generally associated with women, particularly as regards the view from above. The second section considers the possibility of a feminist PWL. It focuses on the upheaval of values offered by PWL, the relationship between PWL and consciousness-raising, and feminist versions of key spiritual exercises. The paper also takes a reflexive approach. It was written while the author was on maternity leave caring for their first child, providing an ideal opportunity to consider the possibilities for philosophical practice in such a gendered situation. Overall, the author would like to argue that PWL must necessarily account for gender, given that gender's structuring effect on our lives.

Simone Webb studied for their undergraduate and Master's degrees at the University of Oxford, and completed their PhD at University College London. Their thesis established a dialogue between the early modern feminist philosopher Mary Astell and the late Foucault, aiming at the same time to make a contribution to current feminist discourse. They currently work at the University of Sussex as an Academic Success Advisor.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life and Global Political Challenges”

(Daniel Wyche)

The notion of philosophy as a way of life is most typically and most naturally associated with ethics, variously understood, though almost always in the sense of the ethical self-formation of the individual. However, this formulation almost immediately raises political questions, especially those concerning the status and transformation of material conditions, systemic and institutional structures, and plural, collective life which determine and co-constitute the ethical lives of individuals. How does philosophical life intersect with the transformation of material and systemic political life? How, conversely, can the necessarily collective work of political action upon such conditions be understood as a form of philosophical activity? How can we articulate and practice a genuinely collective form of philosophical life, one that moves beyond historic discursive practices like dialogue, critique, and so on? How can we understand practices of solidarity and collective struggle as a form of philosophical life, and how can such views recursively inform more familiar forms of philosophy as a way of life? How can such perspectives help us radically expand the archive of who and what counts as “philosophy” in general, and philosophical forms of life more specifically? This paper will place foundational figures in this area like Pierre Hadot, Michel Foucault, and ancient sources into dialogue with figures and events from the history of modern liberation movements. Specifically, I investigate the ways that “philosophy as a way of life” can inform and be informed by questions that arise in the case of mass-organizing, mass-protest, and activism on larger scales. How can and how might PWL help us understand struggles for climate justice, refugee communities and the right of return for displaced peoples, decolonization, or struggles against mass-incarceration, over-policing, and the like? Such cases begin to demonstrate just how political work and action is at once informed by philosophical reflection and constitutes a kind of lived philosophical practice itself.

Daniel Louis Wyche received his PhD from the University of Chicago Divinity School in 2020. His research focuses on the political content and consequences of philosophical notions of “spiritual exercises,” “the care of the self,” philosophy as a form of life, or what may be generally called ethical practices of self-change. His first book, *The Care of the Self and the Care of the Other* (forthcoming from

Columbia University Press) investigates the question of how, from what perspective, and under what conditions, might forms of the care of the self be coterminous in practice with the care of the other, the care of the community, and the care of the city. Alongside Niki Kasumi Clements, Daniel is co-organizer of the Foucault and the Study of Religion seminar at the American Academy of Religion. Daniel has also been active as a musician, curator, and programmer with a number of organizations within the world of experimental and improvised music and related arts for over a decade, and is especially interested in the relationship between improvisation and forms of philosophical life.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life and Psychotherapy”

(Guy du Plessis)

This presentation, divided into three main parts, explores the historical and ongoing relationship between Pierre Hadot's concept of philosophy as a way of life (PWL) and modern psychotherapy. Hadot noted that many ancient philosophical schools, such as the Epicureans, Sceptics, and Stoics, viewed philosophy as “the art of living,” focusing on practical exercises to transform one’s way of being. Scholars like Martha Nussbaum and Michel Foucault have also highlighted ancient philosophy’s therapeutic practices, known as *therapeia tēs psuchēs*, or “cure of the soul.” The first part discusses how these ancient practices align with the goals of modern psychotherapy. The second part examines how modern philosophers such as Arthur Schopenhauer and Friedrich Nietzsche sought to revive the Graeco-Roman model of philosophy as therapy. Hadot notes that Schopenhauer and Nietzsche’s philosophies invite radical life transformations. Philosophy, as Schopenhauer conceives it, seeks to explain and overcome the suffering we experience as willing, passionate creatures. Nietzsche drew on Cynic, Epicurean, and Stoic practices, seeking to restore the ancient figure of the philosophical physician, diagnosing the illnesses of modern culture and experimenting with ancient philosophical therapies to sketch potential cures. Philosophy clearly predates psychotherapy as a means of addressing human problems, and many psychotherapeutic approaches are influenced by philosophical writings, which is substantive and well-documented. However, there

is a distinction, though not a clear demarcation, between the influence of philosophy on psychotherapy and the notion of “philosophy as therapy.” The final part of the presentation focuses on current forms of psychotherapy that promote the notion of PWL or that are explicitly philosophical, such as Logic-based Therapy (a philosophical version of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy), Viktor Frankl’s Logotherapy, Medard Boss’ Daseinsanalysis, and Otto Rank’s Will Therapy. It also briefly examines how psychotherapy can inform current articulations of PWL, and explores how PWL can inform contemporary psychotherapy, in the sense of it promoting a way of being aligned with PWL principles, rather than merely informing therapeutic techniques.

Guy du Plessis is a South African addiction specialist, philosophical practitioner, academic, and author. He studied psychology at the University of South Africa and philosophy at the University of Cape Town, and was a visiting scholar at KU Leuven at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, and the Research Center for Phenomenology and Continental Philosophy, Institute of Philosophy. He is a researcher and instructor at the I-System Institute for Transdisciplinary Studies, Utah State University, and an adjunct professor at the Institute for Advanced Psychotherapy, Loyola University Chicago, and is the director of the South African Logic-based Therapy and Consulting Institute. He has published in various journals, including *Addiction* and *International Journal of Applied Philosophy*, in the fields of addiction treatment and studies, theoretical psychology and applied philosophy. He is the author and co-author of six books, including *An Integral Foundation for Addiction Treatment* (Integral Publishers), and *Building Recovery Resilience* (Cambridge University Press), and a contributor to several edited volumes, including *Opioids in South Africa: Towards a Policy of Harm Reduction* (Human Sciences Research Council Press). His next book *Recovery Resilience Program Facilitator’s Guide* will be published Cambridge University Press.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life and Contemplative Studies”

(Michael Chase)

This paper speculates on neurophysiological correlates of some of the “spiritual exercises” (SEs) which Pierre Hadot held to be at the basis of Greco-Roman philosophy and PWL in general. Although, to my knowledge, no hard research has been carried out in this field – for instance, measuring cerebral activity in subjects while they are engaged in practicing SEs – some basis for speculation can be sought in the numerous parallels that can be observed between some SEs and certain practices of Zen or Mindfulness Meditation, which have been extensively studied by various scientific methods. After a brief account of some of the more striking parallels between SEs and these meditative practices, I propose possible neurophysiological correlates for some of these SEs. Since specific health benefits have been found to result from these meditative practices, I discuss some potential long-term health benefits of the SEs that constitute the background of PWL as described by Hadot. I conclude by outlining some promising orientations for future research.

Michael Chase (PhD EPHE Paris, 2000) is a Researcher at the CNRS Centre Jean Pépin/ENS, PSL Research University, Paris, and a Visiting Scholar at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin. Trained as a Classical scholar, he has published widely in the history of Greek, Latin, and Islamic philosophy and their relations to contemporary science. As a student of Pierre Hadot, he has translated six of Hadot’s books into English, most *recently Don’t Forget to Live. Goethe and the Tradition of Spiritual Exercises* (U. of Chicago Press, 2023), and was co-editor, with S. R. L. Clark, and M. McGhee, of *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Ancient and Moderns. Essays in Honor of Pierre Hadot* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2013). With M. Sharpe and E. Kramer, he is co-founder and co-director of the Brill series “Philosophy as a Way of Life: Texts and Studies”. In addition to numerous online presentations, he has been invited to teach or lecture on PWL as a Visiting Professor in Mexico, Brazil, Japan, and Italy, among others.