

*9th Dauphine Philosophy Workshop (DPW)<sup>1</sup>*

# Negative Ontologies of Time:

**Within or Beyond the Happening of Organizing?**



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Université Paris Dauphine-PSL & London School of Economics (LSE)

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<sup>1</sup> The DPW 2024 will be part of the 15<sup>th</sup> OAP workshop hosted by LSE this year. It will be its pre-event.

## Description

The Dauphine Philosophy Workshop (DPW) (formerly known as the Dauphine Phenomenology Workshop) is an annual event on organization & organizing that has taken place in Paris since its inception. The DPW seeks to enable and nurture an intellectual space, curious about methodology, politics & art. Focusing on philosophical debates, the workshop is interested in bringing philosophical concepts and thoughts into conversation with moments and events at the heart of today's organizationality of experience. Experience and ontologies are core dimensions and perspectives in our discussions, involving both organization and management scholars, anthropologists, sociologists, philosophers, historians, artists, among others.

This year's session will focus on **negative ontologies of time**. From the perspective of process philosophy, organization and organizing are a matter of happenings, events, duration. Companies, associations, cooperatives are not stable entities. Instead, they are both continuous and discontinuous processes.

More and more voices are either expanding or challenging this ontology of time and temporality.

Beyond the horizontal time of most process views, some scholars invite MOS to explore verticality and moments as temporal voids (Helin, 2023; Helin et al, 2024; Charbonneau, 2024). Drawing on Bachelard's philosophy, they see most experiences as nonchalant moments of waiting, suspended reveries. New forms of writing and art-based research could be a way to plunge into this forgotten universe. Managers and managerial practices could also recognize and integrate this Bachelard dialectic.

In a similar vein, other researchers have emphasized the importance of mysteries and absences in the presence pushed by the happenings of the world. Absences, nothingnesses, voids, obviously matter in organizations (Giovannoni and Quattrone, 2018). Invisibilities, immaterialities, performativities contribute to the happening of the world (Quattrone et al., 2021). They are chiasms in the process of society and organizations (Merleau-Ponty, 1961). The very spacing and the process and the emplacement of the organization need the emptiness of some spaces and places.

Paradoxically, process philosophy also contains a forgotten or neglected negativity. For Whitehead (1929, 1938), both events and non-events of the past, present, and future are propositional. They open possibilities for other events and their becoming. Almost events, failures, missed opportunities, not-yet events (as part of a project), lack, impatience, frustration, are all part of our experience of organization (de Vaujany and Aroles, 2019; de Vaujany, 2022; Pulk, 2022; de Vaujany, 2024; Pignot and Thompson, 2024). They are not absences, empty spaces, or spaces deprived of the presence of something. They are non-events and generative incompleteness within the continuous happening of our present (ibid). With a more hermeneutic stance, Ricoeur (1985, 1998) also emphasized the importance of "unaccomplished events" of the past and their re-exploration in historical work (see de Vaujany, 2022). For him, this search for the incompleteness of historical events and their continuous becoming is likely to open up new possibilities in the present and for the future (e.g., for taking responsibility or creating organizations).

Both the emphasis on verticality, absences and non-events or the necessary incompleteness of events are promising perspectives that we would like to discuss in the context of this 9th DPW. They are likely to lead either to an alternative to ongoing discussions about process in organizations or to an extension of process perspectives in MOS. This new DPW aims in particular at discussing:

The importance of verticality in renewing the description and experience of processes;

- Negative topologies of organizing as voids, emptiness, and the non-existence of time-space in organizing;
- The generative power of incompleteness in events or incompleting events;
- Paradoxical relations between presence and absence as part of chiasms and the complex field of co-presence;
- Events and non-events as both propositional in the happening and becoming of organizing;
- The importance of moments, instants, flânerie, and drift in organizing and organizational creation;
- The unity of a process perspective that includes both verticality, absences, and non-events in the constitution of new process ontologies;
- The institutional implications of a negative ontology for MOS;
- The paradoxical nature of negative ontology;
- The possible contributions of new modes of writing and art-based research to a negative ontology;
- The necessary renewal of methodologies to explore voids, emptiness, absences, verticality, and non-events;
- Uchronia, fictions and ethnographies of what has not happened, what has not yet happened;
- Relationships between negative ontologies and (post-)phenomenologies, pragmatism, Marxism (especially Marxist dialectics) and critical philosophies;
- The potential of negative ontologies to discuss and address grand challenges differently;
- Methodological implications of negative ontologies of time.

Much like the previous sessions, **papers discussing broader issues around philosophy, ontologies and organizational** will also be welcomed.

Extended abstracts (max 1000 words) should be submitted at [dauphinephenomenology@gmail.com](mailto:dauphinephenomenology@gmail.com) before February 10<sup>th</sup> 2025 midnight CET.

**Scientific committee :**

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