

## Details – Anthropology and Philosophy

Paris, May 24-25, 2019

Workshop co-organized by the Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociale at the Collège de France, and the Center for Contemporary Philosophy, ISJPS, at Université Panthéon Sorbonne

The workshop is also sponsored by:

Institut Universitaire de France

IRN - CNRS Forms of Life

Plateforme « Violence et sortie de la violence », FMSH

Registration : <https://forms.gle/2FvyUKTjufNWrwYV9>

In his acclaimed *Blue Book*, Wittgenstein suggests paying greater attention to ordinary details, and as an antidote avoiding the “craving for generality.” In a related gesture, Stanley Cavell describes Veena Das’ recognition that “in the gender-determined division of the work of mourning the results of violence, the role of women is to attend, in a torn world, to the details of everyday life that allow a household to function” (2006). Attention to detail, and to details, is thus central to the so called « anthropological turn » in philosophy *and* to any anthropological method founded in thorough ethnographical descriptions. When they scrutinize everyday life interactions, when they try to identify the connection between individual existence and forms of life, or when they tackle the multimodality of ritual organizations, anthropologists cannot but take into account the many kinds of details in the diverse order of facts (material culture, linguistic phenomena, narratives, political institutions, expressivity of the body, and so on). How may the consideration of details in perception, and in the exchange of words, make interactions or social organizations more intelligible? On what types of perceptions and intellectual operations is this process of clarification and elucidation by detail grounded – be it conducted by actors and/or observers seeking to understand a human reality?

In order to answer these questions, this workshop will bring together philosophers and anthropologists interested in exploring how taking account of details opens up possibilities for a more felicitous understanding of human societies, and of the human mind. Approaches focused on ordinary language philosophy, moral anthropology, ritual pragmatics, and the analysis and description of ordinary life will obviously be well represented, but several others will also be presented. Through the examination of philosophical examples and ethnographical cases, this collective reflection aims at elaborating a first typology of the kindred perceptual and conceptual operations engaged in the analysis of details. Special attention will be paid to the issue raised by the contextualisation of details (indexicality, translation, plurimodality, etc.) to the diversity of techniques (memotechnic, ritual, visual, sound) used to make perceptible and significant details that may remain unperceived, neglected, unseen especially during investigations or in everyday situations. In doing so, we wish to highlight the diversity of analytical and hermeneutical functions in the treatment of details in both philosophy and anthropology.

**Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 9h30-13h00**  
**Collège de France, Amphithéâtre Budé**  
**11 place Marcelin Berthelot, Paris 5<sup>e</sup>**

*Welcome by the organizers Sandra Laugier and Perig Pitrou*

**I. 9h45-11h30 Detail as Method**

Perig Pitrou, CNRS - Collège de France - Université PSL, *When Details Reveal the Presence of Non-Human Agents*

Frédérique Ildefonse, CNRS - ENS, *The Patience of the Detail*  
Marco Motta, Johns Hopkins University, *Details in a Minor Key*  
*11h30 Short break*

**II. 11h45-13h00 The Politics of Details**

Estelle Ferrarese, Université de Picardie-Jules Verne, CURAPP, *Adorno's Micrological Gaze*  
Emily Apter, *Micropolitics of Safety*/salut public: *Thinking and Living with Philosophical Untranslatables*

**Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 14h00-18h00**

**III. 14h00-15h45 Ordinary Details**

Sandra Laugier, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, *Details of Language and Details of the Mind*  
Bhri Gupta Singh, Brown University, *Detail as a Bridge between Everyday and Metaphysical Shores*  
Albert Ogien, CNRS - EHESS, *Awareness of Details*  
*15h45 Short break*

**16h00-17h30 Chair : Claude Imbert, ENS**

Carlo Severi, CNRS - EHESS, *Wittgenstein, Political Discourse and the Anthropology of Communication*  
Veena Das, Johns Hopkins University, *On Absence: The Mutual Vulnerability of Concepts and Experience*

**17h30-18h00 Discussion Baptiste Cornardeau, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne**

Yves Erard, Université de Lausanne, Paola Marrati, John Hopkins University

**18h00 Cocktail, Lunch Seminar Room** (Compulsory registration)

**Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 9h30-13h30**

**Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne**

**12 place du Panthéon, 75005 Paris, salle 216, 2<sup>e</sup> étage**

**V. 9h30-11h15 Details of Dying – and of Living**

Fabien Provost, Université Paris Nanterre, *(Anatomic) Details-In-Use: Obscure Autopsies and the Classification of Deaths in India*  
Anne M. Lovell, INSERM - CERMES, *Endings*  
Lotte Buch Segal, University of Edinburgh, *Details of an Ordinary Grief*  
*11h15 Short break*

**VI. 11h30-12h45 Experiencing Details**

Andrew Brandel, Harvard University, *Detail in our Dreams: Some Thoughts on Animism from Borges, Le Guin and Cavell*  
Claire Brunet, ENS Saclay, *The Visual Experience of the Details*

**12h45 General Discussion**