

Regional Scientific Conference

Belgrade, September 26-27, 2025

New Directions in Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science

Organized by the

Institute of Social Sciences in Belgrade (with the support of the Institute of Philosophy, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade and the Association for Philosophy and History of Science
Episteme)

What is the human mind, what is consciousness, and what is the relationship between the body and the mind? Are our experiences subjective and is there a place for subjectivity in a world governed by the laws of nature? These are questions that philosophers have been interested in for centuries and have long tried to answer from the comfort of their theoretical armchairs without the empirical help of science. On the other hand, since the mid-twentieth century, cognitive science, based on the findings and insights of psychology, linguistics, computer modeling, and neuroscience, has been addressing these issues empirically. In recent decades, however, analytical philosophy of mind has increasingly interacted with empirical sciences of consciousness. In addition to the analytical tradition, phenomenology, as a philosophical discipline about consciousness and its contents from a continental perspective, is increasingly complementing its findings with those of cognitive science in order to shed more light on the nature of the subjective experience of humans. The research program of enactivism, according to which consciousness and cognition are extend beyond the boundaries of the skull and the human body, has contributed greatly to the connection between cognitive science and phenomenology.

How are we to understand these controversial claims about the nature of consciousness? Can they be tested empirically or are they just the wild unscientific fantasies of philosophers? How to connect the methodology and theories of philosophy with the sciences of consciousness and cognition? Will new discoveries in neuroscience bring a final answer to the mystery of the origin of consciousness? Is the use of computational models an adequate methodology for understanding of the human brain and mind, and if so, which computational models? Can the integration of theories of philosophy and science contribute to a safe passage between the Scylla and Charybdis of materialism and dualism? Our conference will provide an environment that will enable a discussion of these topics and the possible provision of some answers to these problems from the perspective of contemporary philosophy of mind and cognitive science. The conference will last two days and will bring together scientists and philosophers from the region. The organizers intend to produce an edited volume from the conference papers.

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