**TITLES & ABSTRACTS**

**Istvan ARANYOSI**

**Agential Bovarism versus the Peripheral Mind**

In The Peripheral Mind (Aranyosi 2013) I put forward the hypothesis that sensory states, and maybe even conscious in general, are realized not only by the brain, but by aggregate CNS and PNS structures. Empirical studies on the temporal relations among the sense of agency, pre-motor  processing, motor action, and the content of judgments regarding effects of one's actions seem to point in the direction of a widespread illusion of conscious control of action and of mental causation. Our brain seems to be constantly tricking us into thinking that we are in control -- a hypothesis I call "agential bovarism". Libet-type and Wegner-type experiments, purporting to prove that consciousness merely registers unconscious decisions, and experiments showing the phenomenon of intentional temporal binding between motor action and its effects in the world are two of the most discussed such studies. In this essay I will offer a cost-benefit analysis comparing the peripheral mind hypothesis with some alternative interpretations of the above experimental data.

**Anita AVRAMIDES**

**Epiphenomenalism and Knowlegde of Other Minds.**

**Massimilliano CAPPUCCIO**

**Unreflective Action and the Choking Effect: The Power of Conscious and Non-conscious Skills**

Many believe that conscious control is highly detrimental to the performances of professional athletes. According to the dominant view in sport psychology (Beilock, Carr) choking is common during competitions because this is exactly when, under the pressure of anxiety, the expert athletes start to compulsively monitor the component processes of their own actions: therefore, the fluidity of the automatized motor routines is not disrupted by cognitive overload or distraction, but by the tendency to explicitly analyze one’s own movements into their component processes. This view nicely matches the theory of absorbed coping in philosophy of mind (Dreyfus, Kelly), which maintains that the mark of expertise is the capability to produce flexibly adaptive behaviors in an automatic, pre-reflective way, i.e. without conscious control. But, if conscious control is not necessary to expert performance, is it at least in some occasions possibly helpful to it? This presentation will review the conceptual and empirical validity of the dominant model of choking, discussing whether the cognitive underpinnings of expert motor skills are entirely pre-reflective in nature, or rather at least partially compatible with conscious awareness and attentive self-monitoring. This requires to address the role played by the “two ways of vision” (Goodale and Milner) and motor intentionality (Sinigaglia and Rizzolatti) in the definition of expert behavior. The paradox we have to face when we try to fully spell out this definition is a resilient one: on the one hand, an athlete performing with “automatic pilot” definitively cannot be blind to what goes on around and inside him; on the other hand, when his attention is awaken and focuses on his own movements the normal flux of his absorbed coping is disturbed.

**Axel CLEEREMANS**

**The Reach of the Unconscious**

A great conceptual pendulum oscillates, with a period of about 30 or 40 years, over our understanding of the relationships between conscious and unconscious information processing. Its path delineates the contours of the unconscious mind as well as its contents: Sometimes smart and defining the very fabric of the mind, the unconscious is at other times relegated to taking care of little more than our bodily functions. At this point in time, the pendulum finds itself hovering rather steadily on the side of those who think so many functions are served by the unconscious that they even question the very role that consciousness plays in shaping the human mind.

Here I will suggest that the pendulum has swung a little too far, and illustrate the argument with recent experimental findings that document how challenging it may be to arrive at a satisfactory conception of the relationships between conscious and unconscious information processing. I will focus on three recent studies. All are suggestive that the specific methods we use, as well as the manner in which we interpret the data, are of profound importance with respect to the conclusions we draw about the power of the unconscious.

In the first series of studies (Sandberg, Timmermans et al., 2010; Wierzchon et al., 2012, Szczepanowski et al, in pres), we strove to systematically compare, using psychophysical designs, different measures of awareness (including confidence ratings, post-decision wagering and the PAS scale) in different tasks (shape identification, articifical grammar learning, visual emotion). Our results are suggestive that different measures yield different relationships between performance and awareness — an conclusion which, unsurprising as it may be, nevertheless has important implications for inferences of unconscious cognition.

The second series of studies (Waroquier et al., 2009, 2010 ) was an attempt to replicate Dijksterhuis et al. (Science, 2006)'s finding that complex normative decisions (e.g., choosing a car or an apartment) are best made without conscious deliberation. This has led to the idea that "unconscious thought" not only exists, but also often results in superior information processing, specifically when the required decisions involve the processing of many attributes. We take issue both with the theoretical claims that underpin Dijksterhuis' "Unconscious Thought Theory" and with the relevant empirical findings. Based on five experiments (n = 529) inspired from the original design, we instead suggest that the superiority of decisions made after distraction results not from unconscious thought, but rather from the fact that conscious deliberation can deteriorate first impressions formed online during information acquisition. While not denying that complex unconscious information processing exists, we conclude that it is not as powerful as previously claimed and that there is in fact no evidence for the idea that one can "think" without awareness.

Finally, in the third study (Doyen et al., 2012), we report on two experiments aimed at replicating Bargh, Chen, and Burrows’ (1996) famous experiment, in which participants unwittingly exposed to the stereotype of age walked slower when exiting the laboratory. Despite the use of automated timing methods and a larger sample, our first experiment failed to show priming. Our second experiment was aimed at manipulating the beliefs of the experimenters: Half were led to think that participants would walk slower when primed congruently, and the other half was led to expect the opposite. Strikingly, we obtained a walking speed effect, but only when experimenters believed participants would indeed walk slower. This suggests that both priming and experimenters’ expectations are instrumental in explaining the walking speed effect. Further, debriefing was suggestive of awareness of the primes. I consider these findings in light of current theories of consciousness and conclude that unconscious behavioral priming, while real, involves mechanisms different from those typically assumed to cause the effect.

**Jonathan COLE**

**”Efforts of the cultivated mind;” Neurological Impairment and Attention to the Body**

**Shaun GALLAGHER**

**Why Non-Conscious Prenoetic Effects are not Extraneous to Judgment**   
  
Recent research on "extraneous effects" on judgment show how such non-conscious processes involving, e.g., hunger, affect judgment. From the perspective of embodied cognition these are not 'extraneous' at all but should be counted as part of the intrinsic background of cognition. I'll review empirical evidence to show how embodied, non-conscious, prenoetic effects shape the way that we experience the world.

**Patrick HAGGARD**

**Implicit Mechanisms Underlying Action Awareness**

Few ideas run as deep in our concept of the human mind as "conscious free will".  In this talk, I will report experimental data using mental chronometry to investigate the conscious experience of goal-directed action.  Our experience of such actions derives from an implicit mechanism that associates actions with the wider context of events.  This powerful, implicit mechanism is important in enabling a coherent experience of our interaction with the world.  We found some years ago that the experience of our own voluntary actions is temporally shifted towards the subsequent outcome of the action, while the experience of the outcome is temporally shifted towards the action that caused it.  This "intentional binding" powerfully promotes the experience that our actions are associated with outcomes - yet this mechanism operates essentially nonconsciously.  I will report a series of recent studies showing the flexibility of this mechanism.  On the one hand, an implicit optimisation process ensures a tight experience of agency under conditions of uncertainty.  On the other hand, a series of biasing factors ensure that our sense of agency is adjusted by relevant influences such as the emotional, hedonic, epistemic and even social value of an action.  We do have a conscious experience of what we do, but this experience seems to be filtered by a set of nonconscious cognitive mechanisms.

**Jacob HOHWY**

**The Power of Unconscious Inference**

**Miloš JUDAŠ**

**Default Networks**

**Jesse PRINZ**

**Unconscious Vision: What It Can and Cannot Accomplish**

It is sometimes suggested that consciousness and unconsciousness process different kinds of information.  This has led to the view that there are limits on what can be processed by the visual unconscious. Such limits, however, have proven elusive.  It seems that unconscious visual can do much of what can be done consciously.  Indeed, it can do much more: most of what goes on in vision is never conscious. Relevant research is reviewed.  It has also been suggested that unconscious vision can be modulated by attention.  Evidence for this claim is critically examined, and it is concluded that attention is one process that cannot take place unconsciously.  If that is correct, there is indeed a difference between conscious and unconscious vision, and that difference may help us understand the function of both.

**Zdravko RADMAN**

**INTRODUCTORY: Consciousness and the Nonconscious; Beyond Boundaries**

**Dan ZAHAVI**

**Phenomenology of the Unconscious?**

What, if anything, has phenomenology to say about the unconscious? After abrief presentation of Husserl's view on the significance of consciousness, I will explore what he and other likeminded phenomenologists (incl. Henry) have to say about the unconscious. In doing that, I will also briefly revisit the link to Brentano and Freud.