

Thomas Metzinger

Body Representation and Self-Consciousness
From Embodiment to Minimal Phenomenal Selfhood

As a philosopher, I am interested in the relationship between body representation and the deep structure of self-consciousness. My epistemic goal in this lecture will be the *simplest* form of phenomenal self-consciousness: What exactly are the essential non-conceptual, pre-reflexive layers in conscious self-representation? What *constitutes* a minimal phenomenal self? Conceptually, I will defend the claim that agency is not part of the metaphysically necessary supervenience-basis for bodily self-consciousness. Empirically, I will draw on recent research focusing on out-of-body experiences (OBEs) and full-body illusions (FBIs). I will then proceed to sketch a new research program and advertise a new research target: "Minimal Phenomenal Selfhood", ending with an informal argument for the thesis that agency or "global control", phenomenologically as well as functionally, is *not* a necessary condition for self-consciousness.