

From Being-Toward-Death and Chiasm to Digital “Entities”: Existential Transformations in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

ARGYRO G. MARINOPOULOU, School of Philosophy, Department of Philosophy
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

MARIA K. CHORIANOPOULOU, School of Philosophy, Department of Philosophy
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

MARINOPOULOU, A. G. – CHORIANOPOULOU, M. K.: From
Being-Toward-Death and Chiasm to Digital “Entities”: Existential
Transformations in the Age of Artificial Intelligence
FILOZOFIA, 81, 2026, No 4, pp. 428 – 441



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International Public License.

This paper examines the ontological and phenomenological implications of digital “entities” – digital simulations of the deceased – through the combined lens of Martin Heidegger’s ontology of death and Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology and ontology of corporeality. It explores the ontological status of these “entities” and the way in which they reshape the relation of the living to death and to corporeality. The digital deceased cannot be understood simply as new tools of mourning. Rather, they introduce a deeper ontological and phenomenological disruption, because they simulate personal existence without sharing the existential and embodied conditions through which personal existence acquires meaning. Unlike existing Heideggerian analyses of digital mourning, this paper brings his ontology of death into a systematic dialogue with Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology and ontology of corporeality.

Keywords: digital “entities” – Martin Heidegger – Maurice Merleau-Ponty – death – corporeality – phenomenology – ontology

Introduction

The rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is redefining the way persons perceive life, death and existence. Beyond its integration into social and scientific processes, one of its most radical effects is the production of posthumous representations, which may seem to extend personal presence beyond biological death through digital simulation. Applications such as Project December, Eter9, StoryFile and others complicate the understanding of death. These platforms offer users the ability to create digital simulations of themselves or of lost loved ones – the digital deceased – trained on their speech patterns, videos, social media and behaviors. After a person's biological death, these Large Language Model-powered digital "entities" – the so-called thanabots, otherwise known as deathbots, griefbots or postmortem avatars – may continue to interact with the living. In lieu of merely reading old social media messages or looking at photos, the mourner has the option to engage in discourse with the digital deceased, who responds in a manner reminiscent of the deceased. The encounter with the deceased assumes the form of a responsive engagement that unfolds in the present (Puzio 2023; Rodríguez Reséndiz – Rodríguez Reséndiz 2024; Hollanek – Nowaczyk-Basińska 2024; Zhang – Dou – Liu 2025).

The recent literature on these "entities" has focused primarily on analyzing how such technologies reshape the experience of mourning, and particularly its temporality. They are approached as technologies that intervene in the disrupted time of loss, either by offering a temporary sense of continuity and emotional support to the mourner or, conversely, by slowing down, simplifying, or disrupting the complex temporal work of mourning (Stendera 2026; Fabry 2026). Furthermore, the phenomenological discussions inspired by Maurice Merleau-Ponty have focused primarily on the phenomenology of grief (Ratcliffe 2019; Hughes 2024). This paper takes this line of thought into consideration but shifts the discussion to a different level. While Heidegger's framework has already been mobilized in analyses of digital mourning (Stendera 2026), the present article's contribution lies in bringing Heidegger's existential ontology of death into a systematic dialogue with Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology and ontology of corporeality.

The article is therefore structured in two main sections. The first focuses on Martin Heidegger and begins with the understanding of death as *Dasein's* unsurpassable possibility. It argues that the digital deceased disrupt the relation of the living to mortality, as they may obscure the possibility of authentic existence as "being-toward-death." The section then explores the

ontological status of the digital deceased, before turning to Heidegger's critique of technology in order to show that these "entities" reveal a broader transformation in the understanding of death and existence. The second section turns to Maurice Merleau-Ponty. It moves from a phenomenological perspective to an ontological one, as it examines how digital "entities" can be experienced as present, and then whether such felt presence can genuinely be considered presence. In light of Merleau-Ponty's ontology, the section argues that digital "entities" cannot constitute genuine presence, as they do not participate in the common world and the mutual bodily exposure through which the other becomes truly present. Ultimately, digital "entities" reshape the way persons understand these two fundamental elements of existence – death and corporeality.

I. Martin Heidegger: "Being-Toward-Death" and the Ontological Void of the Digital "Entities"

To evaluate the phenomenon of digital "entities," it is necessary to examine the fundamental ontological disruption they introduce. Persons tend to see death as a future event that does not directly concern them, thereby avoiding its recognition as a fundamental dimension of their existence. For Heidegger, this attitude is an inauthentic relation to mortality. In *Being and Time* (1927), *Da-sein* (being-here, existence) (Thomson 2024, 10 – 15), as the particular being that is open to itself, to others and to the world (Dastur 1996, 42 – 43), is cast into a world that it has neither chosen nor helped form. It is thus characterized by its "being-in-the-world" (*In-der-Welt-sein*) (Heidegger 1962, 88, 138 – 144) and its "being-with" (*Mitsein*) (Heidegger 1962, 149 – 163). In this given state, *Dasein* is involved with the concerns and activities of everyday life, immersed in a web of meaning that precedes its own existence (Dahlstrom 2012; Dastur 2012).

The understanding of its own conditions and possibilities is provided to *Dasein* by the "they" (*das Man*), an anonymous, collective mindset that shapes the public meaning of the world (Heidegger 1962, 149). This pre-existing understanding is offered to *Dasein* as a given and pushes it to accept it, thereby absorbing it into everyday life and often preventing it from authentically confronting its own finitude (Heidegger 1962, 303). It functions almost like a "veil" that obscures a confrontation with death. In the context of the digital "entities," this "veil" is realized technologically. The digital "entity" functions as an interactive technological extension of the "they," offering something resembling a presence and attempting to distract the attention of *Dasein* from the finality of death. However powerful this effect

may be, it is not absolute; it cannot completely prevent *Dasein* from living authentically (Heidegger 1962, 223).

For Heidegger, death is not merely a biological event. It is the possibility that is most "ownmost," "non-relational," and "not to be outstripped" (*unüberholbare*), in the sense that no one can experience it instead of me; it is the ultimate form of individuation and gives meaning and structure to our existence (Heidegger 1962, 294). However, in the case of digital "entities," this "ownmost" possibility is bypassed. The unique individuation that death provides is diluted into data. The digital "entity" distorts the non-relational character of death, offering a "relational" presence that masks the anxiety of death. The ontological structure of *Dasein* is inextricably linked to "temporality" (*Zeitlichkeit*). Temporality, according to Heidegger, is not merely a succession of moments, but the very existential structure of *Dasein* (Heidegger 1962, 38), which always lives oriented towards the future while bearing its past and experiencing the present. The digital "entities" disrupt this authentic temporality, as they exist in a state devoid of a future, since death is not a possibility for them. Consequently, the interaction with them may also prevent the living from experiencing a future-oriented "being-toward-death." The digital entity presents a pseudo-state that, while utilizing fragmentary elements from the past, does not determine either the present or the future, since none of these elements constitute a temporality oriented toward death.

The authentic experience of time is revealed in the awareness of death, as *Dasein* is "being-toward-death," thus defining its existence through the possibility of impermanence (Heidegger 1962, 278, 351, 378, 399). In everyday life, however, temporality falls into an impersonal flow of events, absorbing *Dasein* into the practical concerns of world-time (*Weltzeit*) (Heidegger 1962, 464 – 472). In this state, time is progressively reduced to a succession of "nows" (Stendera 2026; Fabry 2026), an impersonal time, temporarily obscuring *Dasein*'s capacity for an authentic understanding of its own nature (Heidegger 1962, 472–480). However, authenticity does not constitute a detachment from the anonymous crowd. As Heidegger argues, "authentic being-one's-self is an existentiell modification of the 'they' – of the 'they' as an essential existentiale" (Heidegger 1962, 168). It is a conscious commitment to exist responsibly, within the structure of the "they," without passively submitting to it. *Dasein* becomes authentic when it chooses its possibilities with an awareness of its uniqueness (Heidegger 1962, 343 – 344; Dreyfus 1991, 192 – 194).

"Being-toward-death," as a fundamental determination of the truth of *Dasein* (Heidegger 1999, 198), refers not merely to the fact that *Dasein* will die,

but to its existential attitude towards its mortality. Its being is grounded in the actualization, rather than in the actuality of death (Dastur 1996, 58), as death is its fundamental-ontological possibility (Heidegger 1999, 199). Existential temporality is structured by a past that has already shaped the person, a present in which the person exists, a future disclosed as possibility, and death as the final horizon. The digital deceased do not possess existential temporality, as they only produce a series of functional “nows.” They belong to a modern technological form of *das Man* in which they invite the living into a transformed relation to death. The danger is not that the living use such technologies, but that they may believe that the deceased can remain present forever (Stokes 2021, 144 – 145). An authentic relationship with death requires resistance to passive absorption by technology and to the reinterpretation of personal existence through death.

From a Heideggerian perspective, this suspension of the sense of loss leads to a state of inauthenticity, as it divests the person of their fundamental connection to mortality. Heidegger uses the term “presence-at-hand” (*Vorhandenheit*) to describe the way in which something reveals itself to us as an object; as something that is merely “there,” independent of us and ready for theoretical observation or analysis (Heidegger 1962, 26, 48, 107, 268). At the same time, he introduces the term “readiness-to-hand” (*Zuhandenheit*), which also suggests a mode of revealing, referring to what we do not perceive as merely present, but rather as useful means integrated into the action and the complex context of our world (Heidegger 1962, 98, 107, 137). The digital deceased are neither purely *Vorhanden* (present objects) nor purely *Zuhanden* (tools), because they are not merely objects, like stones; they create the illusion of a *Dasein*. They are not exactly tools (*Zuhanden*), because interacting with them differs from handling objects; they seem to “speak” and “react.” They appear as an intermediary and problematic type of “being.” They can be treated as “tools of memory” (*Zuhandenheit*) for mourning, as part of a broader cultural mourning machine (Krueger – Osler 2022, 236 – 240; Henrickson 2023; Stendera 2026). Yet at the same time, they become *Vorhanden* when we become aware of their absence from real existence. Therefore, the digital deceased seem to oscillate between instrumental utilization and a pseudo-existence. From an ontological perspective, however, they neither attain nor assume authentic existence. They constitute a form of “non-being” that persists between memory and absence.

Technology has shaped new forms of preserving the memory of the deceased, from funerary monuments and portraits to photographs and digital

archives. Although any such practice was initially met with resistance or ambivalence, over time it became integrated into the social web (O'Neill 1999). This phenomenon unveils a recurring cultural pattern in which technologies of remembrance transition to a state of normalized ritual, yet they never fully dissipate the unease surrounding death itself. However, the digital deceased are not merely technological imprints of memory. Heidegger's analysis of the "uncanny" (*Unheimlich*) is crucial, as it orients the discussion to its radical existential dimension. It transposes the concept of the "uncanny" to a fundamental ontological anxiety. This is not merely another case of Masahiro Mori's "uncanny valley" or a variation thereof, that is, an aesthetic and perceptual anxiety caused by almost human artificial forms (Mori 2012). In Heidegger, it is an ontological discomfort due to ontological ambiguity. Despite the prevalence of technology, it does not signify a resolution of the underlying anguish. Heidegger's "uncanny" means "not-being-at-home" (*das Nicht-zuhause-sein*) (Heidegger 1962, 233), the sense persons have of not being at home in the world (Dreyfus 1991, xii). When *Dasein* experiences its existential "anxiety" (*Angst*) (Heidegger 1962, 227 – 233; Dreyfus 1991, 176 – 182), it becomes aware of its risky nature (*Geworfenheit*, thrownness) (Heidegger 1962, 330; Dreyfus 1991, 173 – 174) and of its finitude.

This produces a feeling of "non-familiarity" (*Unheimlichkeit*) or "not-being-at-home," in which the familiar world appears strange, revealing at the same time that there is no stable foundation for existence, only a continuous process of becoming. Precisely when *Dasein* is confronted with the reality of death, it feels strange because it realizes that its existence is not anchored to something permanent (Heidegger 1962, 310, 325, 333, 394; Dreyfus 1991, 37, 45, 179; Thomson 2024, 39 – 41). What evokes a sense of the uncanny, then, is not merely the artificiality of digital "entities," but the way in which they conceal the irrevocable nature of death beneath an illusion of "familiarity." Such careless uses and conceptualizations of these digital technologies may contribute to the instrumentalization of both ourselves and others (Buben 2015; Buben 2025). The living are confronted with a figure whom they can still address as "you," even though this "you" (Henrickson 2023) no longer exists as *Dasein*, since it does not dwell in the world and in time as a "being-toward-death." The digital deceased, therefore, increase anxiety by leaving the living unable to feel "at home" with either death or presence.

Cultural familiarity with technology does not negate its profound existential consequences. The ontological anxiety surrounding their nature and our relation to them persists. Technology necessitates a profound critical

understanding (Heidegger 1977, 4). For Heidegger, technology is “a way of revealing” (Heidegger 1977, 12), “where *alētheia*, truth, happens” (Heidegger 1977, 13). Authenticity entails more than a mere superficial manifestation of one’s personality; it is an ongoing existential undertaking, an understanding of the self that is uninterruptedly heading toward death. The digital deceased, irrespective of their advanced algorithmic capabilities, are incapable of experiencing time, decay, and death. Consequently, they cannot be said to exist authentically. Indeed, these digital “entities” reveal a truth about death and, at the same time, shed light on the way the world is revealed through them. This world seems to develop a strange relationship with the deceased, which probably reveals the way persons see themselves; it seems that persons abhor their finite nature and that, indeed, technology is the moment where “truth happens.” Technology is not just a set of tools; it is a way of seeing the world. Should we be careless, technology may in fact lead us to see everything, including ourselves, as resources to be managed rather than beings to be valued – an insight encapsulated in Heidegger’s term “standing-reserve” (*Bestand*) (Heidegger 1977, 17 – 18; Stendera 2026).

Instead of engaging in the acceptance of loss, individuals resort to a superficial facade of presence. By doing so, they effectively displace the existential demand of finitude, replacing the work of death with a curated continuity that resists transformation. The unconditional adoption of these technologies indicates a shift in the understanding of personal existence, moving away from corporeality. Since the body is an integral part of our identity and experience of our presence in the world, the gradual shift of existence towards the digital dimension may weaken the deeper existential meaning of mortality. Authentic existence is inextricably linked to the experience of living as an embodied and mortal being. Therefore, the question arises as to whether the technological representation of existence without a physical body can be considered a form of presence that resembles the deceased and preserves the embodied and relational dimensions through which personal existence is constituted. On this point, Maurice Merleau-Ponty is illuminating.

II. Maurice Merleau-Ponty: The Phenomenology of Corporeality, the Ontology of the Flesh and the Digital “Entities”

It is crucial to acknowledge the inextricable link between the personal experience of mortality and the body. The concept of absence evolves, as the traditional tangible signifier of absence – the body – is substituted by a non-

material simulation. The dead body's resemblance to the deceased simultaneously conceals and presents an absence. The experience of loss seems to be embodied, and we encounter the contradiction of presence and absence in the dead body. The body is not merely the material entity undergoing decomposition; it is a lived body, defined by perceptual experience, and engaged with the world (Dastur 1996, 47; Csordas 1999). The digital deceased appear to be a consensual hallucination comprising personal memories and experiences that persist beyond the bodies from which they originated. This phenomenon enables an understanding of death as a transitional phase, leading to a new environment for the preservation of some form of prior existence (Stokes 2012). The presence of the deceased does not depend primarily on whether we perceive a visual or auditory likeness of the person; it is not a matter of realism. Rather, the fact that we feel the deceased as present is connected to something deeper, namely that they reappear to us as bearers of interpersonal possibilities, as someone who once again opens a horizon of relation. I can sense the deceased, not because I see them, but because they seem to be someone to whom I can relate. That is why these "entities" can evoke a sense of presence (Fuchs 2018; Køster 2021; Stokes 2026).

The notion of a dead body as a person persists in an ambiguous sense, lingering as a source of remembrance for those left behind. This phenomenon suggests that the identity of the deceased continues to have value beyond biological death (Stokes 2019; Stokes 2021); it underscores the persistent nature of the self and the enduring nature of memory (Ratcliffe 2016). The dead body serves as irrefutable testimony of perishability. The digital deceased subvert this dynamic, eliminating mortality's physical evidence. Consequently, their presence is not merely a state of being present and then not present; rather, it is an absence that negates its own absence. Nevertheless, the possibilities that the living can experience through interaction with the deceased are not sufficient in themselves to constitute a presence.

In his seminal works *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945) and *The Visible and the Invisible* (1964), Merleau-Ponty underscores the notion that the body is not merely an object; it is flesh through which we are perceived by the world and, concomitantly, perceive it (Simanke 2016). The world, therefore, is not simply a collection of objects, but something that appears to us through our embodied experience. In this sense, reality is always embodied (Merleau-Ponty 2002, 77 – 83; Simanke 2016). The body is not just a tool equipped for perception; it is perception itself (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 130 – 150; Dillon 1988, 171). The concept of perception is intricately linked to the concept of vulnerability, as the ability

to perceive is contingent upon the body's susceptibility to external influences. This susceptibility, in turn, can lead to alterations in perception, as the body may be affected by the external stimuli it encounters. This suggests that meaning is not derived from distant knowledge but rather from a lived engagement in which the body is inherently implicated.

Merleau-Ponty's concept of the "phantom limb" offers a compelling example of how experience is constructed through our engagement with the world. Amputees, for instance, continue to "inhabit" their former bodily world, illustrating how our perception of the world is shaped by our bodily experiences. This phenomenon can be likened to the tendency to avoid acknowledging the death of a loved one, where we continue to live as if they are still present. This in-between state, where something is both present and absent, is characteristic of bodily experience (Merleau-Ponty 2002, 84 – 102). The body is a pre-reflective condition for perceiving the world, including death. It is "the measurant of the things" (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 152), where invisible experiences are embodied in the visible body. As with the sensation experienced by a person who has lost a limb, the digital deceased create the illusion of continued presence for the living. This phenomenon can be referred to as a *phantom presence*, indicating that digital continuity does not represent a continuation of self, but rather a form of imperfect memory.

Yet, this *phantom presence* is not enough to ground embodied presence, although the phenomenon of the "phantom limb" suggests that the body continues to inhabit a world of meaning for persons and to reactivate older forms of relation. The insistence on orienting ourselves toward our once-embodied beloved cannot be equated with the presence of the other as an embodied subject, even if we feel their presence in some way. The experience of the other's presence is grounded in a fundamental trust in perception and in the shared world (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 3). The problem with digital "entities" concerns the kind of world in which one can appear as present. This is precisely where Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology opens onto ontology. He notes that the world is indeed what we see, but we must also learn how to see (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 3 – 5). And it is at this point that the unique relation with our body is revealed. The whole body participates in how the world appears, as it is the specific place from which the world becomes present (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 9 – 10). The lack of a body, then, in digital "entities" is not merely a deficiency but concerns the condition of the appearance of presence and, in this specific case, the non-appearance of presence. Others surround me as I see them existing around me. I do not enter directly into their world, but we communicate

through the shared world, projecting our own distinct horizons, which simultaneously intersect (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 11; Dillon 1988, 166). Digital "entities" stimulate already existing expectations without inhabiting this shared sensory world.

The presence of a person is not simply the production of responses, nor is it exhausted by what the person says or shows me. The person has "background worlds" and is a body that interacts with a world that transcends it, as Merleau-Ponty mentions (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 68). Others are present, but their presence is never fully available. They are always different precisely because their uniqueness cannot be exhausted and cannot be fully made accessible. Being is an "abyss" (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 77; Dillon 1988, 159 – 160). The problem with digital "entities" is precisely that they are immediately available. Genuine presence is not complete availability, nor can it be characterized by a "pure vision," that is, by the perception that I can stand before the world as someone who sees reality from a distance, without engaging with the body. We are often led into the illusion that we can feel the other without the depth of the body, that is, without the effort of coexistence. Such a presence, however, is a distortion and not the presence of the other, as it lacks the body that struggles to live in a world in which the world itself struggles to know the other (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 77 – 78, 83). It is this embodied and relational depth that Merleau-Ponty designates as flesh. The flesh is the common ontological element in which I, the world and the other exist (Simanke 2016). It is the carnal relation in the sense that the other and the world become my second nature, as I exist there as the seer and the visible, as the toucher and the one touched (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 84–88; Dillon 1988, 164 – 165; Dastur 2000, 34 – 35). Presence presupposes this participation in the flesh of the world (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 84, 123, 144), and digital "entities" do not participate in it. In the case of the digital "entities," I may experience a presence, but the "entities" are unable to feel my own presence, as the worlds in which we live and act are completely different.

The real world is always defined by place and time, giving the presence of the other a rhythm within the world. The other can ask, in Paul Claudel's words as cited by Merleau-Ponty: "Where am I? What time is it?" (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 103). Precisely because these questions can only emerge from an embodied person inhabiting the world, the relation with the other is founded as a bodily experience of place and time (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 104). Digital "entities" disrupt this structure, because they are outside these bodily modes of presence. These questions have no meaning for digital "entities," since they

only have value to someone who lives within the world and is connected to it in the flesh (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 105 – 121). The seeing already belongs to the same field as the visible. What I see is revealed to me as a relation of proximity, yet without my identifying with it. The body becomes the place where the self and the world become entangled in a carnal connection, and the person becomes present within the world that both affects them and is affected by them (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 130 – 143; Dillon 1988, 135, 139). This carnal connection is absent from digital “entities,” as they do not “see me” as “I see” them, nor are they visible as I am; they cannot be both the seer and the visible and, therefore, cannot participate in the flesh of the world.

The relation between one body and another body reveals that corporeality is the generative force of the relation. The world takes on flesh not only because I understand it, but also because the other gives it a different corporeal perspective (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 143 – 155; Dillon 1988, 146 – 147). Therefore, the world is common, because it is characterized by “intercorporeity,” that is, by the corporeal involvement in the same field of being (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 141, 168, 172). At this point, then, the “chiasm” appears, which shows that I myself on the one hand and the world on the other are not two separate realities that are necessarily connected afterward. There is a *chiasmic relation* between us, not in the sense of absolute identification, but in the sense of a relation that is open to change. The invisible of the visible appears, as the other is never exhausted in what I see before me. The other’s subjectivity is not like a visible object among others, but neither is it something completely outside the world. This inexhaustible depth of the other, that is, the invisible, is what makes the visible carry within itself an inexhaustible depth of presence (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 130 – 155, 214 – 215; Dastur 2000, 36 – 37).

Digital “entities” can never develop this *chiasmic relation*. Presence presupposes that we belong to the same sensible world, in which one is exposed to the other, in which there is a mutual possibility of influencing one another, and in which the world itself acts with us and shapes us. It is true that I can sense others even when they no longer live, precisely because I have become accustomed to them as a corporeal presence in the world. That is why a certain sense of presence can emerge (Krueger – Osler 2022, 228 – 230). However, this experience primarily expresses my own corporeal predisposition; it does not constitute a relation, and this is because the carnal encounter, that is, that exposure in which one can be simultaneously present to the other and receptive to the presence of the other, is absent.

Conclusion

This article argues that digital "entities" reshape the understanding of two fundamental elements of personal existence, death and corporeality. Taken together, Heidegger's ontology of death and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of corporeality and ontology of the flesh highlight that the digital deceased cannot be understood simply as new tools of mourning. Rather, they introduce a deeper ontological and phenomenological disruption, because they simulate existence without sharing the existential and embodied conditions through which personal existence acquires meaning. The digital deceased and the living are involved in an ontological tension. Since the former tend to conceal death, the latter do not have the chance to confront loss and mortality. At the same time, this tension is phenomenological and ontological in Merleau-Ponty's thought, as the digital deceased cannot participate in the mutual conditions through which presence becomes possible. The significance of these "entities" cannot be exhausted by psychological, sociological, or even ethical analyses alone. What is at stake is a more fundamental anthropological shift in the way in which persons now understand mortality and their relationship not only to the deceased, but also to the living.

Bibliography

- BUBEN, A. (2015): Technology of the Dead: Objects of Loving Remembrance or Replaceable Resources? *Philosophical Papers*, 44 (1), 15 – 37.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/05568641.2015.1014538>
- BUBEN, A. (2025): Digital Replacement of the Dead: A Legitimate Worry? *Philosophy & Technology*, 38, Article 90. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13347-025-00913-5>
- CSORDAS, T. J. (1999): Embodiment and Cultural Phenomenology. In: Weiss, G. – Haber, H. F. (eds.): *Perspectives on Embodiment: The Intersections of Nature and Culture*. New York: Routledge, 143 – 162.
- DAHLSTROM, D. (2012): Martin Heidegger. In: Luft, S. – Overgaard, S. (eds.): *The Routledge Companion to Phenomenology*, 1st ed. London and New York: Routledge, 50 – 61.
- DASTUR, F. (1996): *Death: An Essay on Finitude*. Trans. by J. Llewelyn. London and Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: The Athlone Press.
- DASTUR, F. (2000): World, Flesh, Vision. In: Evans, F. – Lawlor, L. (eds.): *Chiasms: Merleau-Ponty's Notion of Flesh*. Albany, New York: State University of New York, 23 – 49.
- DASTUR, F. (2012): Dasein. In: Luft, S. – Overgaard, S. (eds.): *The Routledge Companion to Phenomenology*, 1st ed. London and New York: Routledge, 318 – 326.
- DREYFUS, H. L. (1991): *Being-in-the-world: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I*. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press.
- DILLON, M. C. (1988): *Merleau-Ponty's Ontology*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

- FABRY, R. E. (2026): The Disruption of Grief in the Technological Niche: The Case of Deathbots. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, 25, 523 – 545. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11097-025-10083-6>
- FUCHS, T. (2018): Presence in Absence. The Ambiguous Phenomenology of Grief. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, 17, 43 – 63. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11097-017-9506-2>
- HEIDEGGER, M. (1962): *Being and Time*. Trans. by J. Macquarrie – E. Robinson. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- HEIDEGGER, M. (1977): The Question Concerning Technology. In: *The Question Concerning Technology, and Other Essays*. Trans. by W. Lovitt. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 3 – 35.
- HEIDEGGER, M. (1999): *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*. Trans. by P. Emad – K. Maly. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- HENRICKSON, L. (2023): Chatting with the Dead: The Hermeneutics of Thanabots. *Media, Culture & Society*, 45 (5), 949 – 966. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437221147626>
- HOLLANEK, T. – NOWACZYK-BASIŃSKA, K. (2024): Griefbots, Deadbots, Postmortem Avatars: on Responsible Applications of Generative AI in the Digital Afterlife Industry. *Philosophy & Technology*, 37, Article 63. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13347-024-00744-w>
- HUGHES, E. (2024): The Timeless Time of the Dead: at the Limits of Temporal Experience in Grief. *Angelaki – Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 29 (5), 37 – 51. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0969725X.2024.2405300>
- KØSTER, A. (2021): The Felt Sense of the Other: Contours of a Sensorium. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, 20 (1), 57 – 73. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11097-020-09657-3>
- KRUEGER, J. – OSLER, L. (2022): Communing with the Dead Online: Chatbots, Grief, and Continuing Bonds. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 29 (9 – 10), 222 – 252. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53765/20512201.29.9.222>
- MERLEAU-PONTY, M. (1968): *The Visible and the Invisible*. Trans. by A. Lingis. Ed. by C. Lefort. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- MERLEAU-PONTY, M. (2002): *Phenomenology of Perception*. Trans. by C. Smith. London and New York: Routledge Classics.
- MORI, M. (2012): The Uncanny Valley [From the Field]. Trans. by K. MacDorman – N. Kageki. *IEEE Robotics & Automation Magazine*, 19 (2), 98 – 100. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1109/MRA.2012.2192811>
- O'NEILL, K. (1999): Disciplining the Dead. In: Weiss, G. – Haber, H. F. (eds.): *Perspectives on Embodiment: The Intersections of Nature and Culture*. New York: Routledge, 213 – 231.
- PUZIO, A. (2023): When the Digital Continues After Death: Ethical Perspectives on Death Tech and the Digital Afterlife. *Communicatio Socialis*, 56 (3), 427 – 436. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5771/0010-3497-2023-3-427>
- RATCLIFFE, M. (2016): Relating to the Dead: Social Cognition and the Phenomenology of Grief. In: Szanto, T. – Moran, D. (eds.): *Routledge Research in Phenomenology*, vol. 3: *Phenomenology of Sociality: Discovering the 'We'*. New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 202 – 215.

- RATCLIFFE, M. (2019): Towards a Phenomenology of Grief: Insights from Merleau-Ponty. *European Journal of Philosophy*, 28 (3), 657 – 669. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejop.12513>
- RODRÍGUEZ RESÉNDIZ, H. – RODRÍGUEZ RESÉNDIZ, J. (2024): Digital Resurrection: Challenging the Boundary between Life and Death with Artificial Intelligence. *Philosophies*, 9 (3), Article 71. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/philosophies9030071>
- SIMANKE, R. T. (2016): Flesh and Matter: Merleau-Ponty's Late Ontology as a Materialist Philosophy. *HUMANA.MENTE Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 9 (31), 117 – 133. Available at: <https://www.humanamente.eu/index.php/HM/article/view/47>
- STENDERA, M. (2026): Marking Time: Griefbots, World-Time, and the Phenomenology of Bereavement. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, 25, 547 – 567. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11097-025-10099-y>
- STOKES, P. (2012): Ghosts in the Machine: Do the Dead Live on in Facebook? *Philosophy and Technology*, 25 (3), 363 – 379. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13347-011-0050-7>
- STOKES, P. (2019): Are there Dead Persons? *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 49 (6), 755 – 775. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00455091.2018.1442402>
- STOKES, P. (2021): *Digital Souls: A Philosophy of Online Death*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- STOKES, P. (2026): Sensing Presence: Deathbots and Bereavement Hallucination. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, 25, 485 – 503. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11097-025-10064-9>
- THOMSON, I. D. (2024): *Rethinking Death in and after Heidegger*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ZHANG, Z. – DOU, D. – LIU, X. (2025): Co-construction with Deathbots: A Form of Existentialist Practice. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 12, Article 537. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-025-04876-y>

Argyro G. Marinopoulou
School of Philosophy
Department of Philosophy
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
University Campus, 15703 Zografou, Attiki, Greece
e-mail: argyromar@philosophy.uoa.gr
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-9641-2860>

Maria K. Chorianopoulou
School of Philosophy
Department of Philosophy
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
University Campus, 15703 Zografou, Attiki, Greece
e-mail: mchorian@philosophy.uoa.gr
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5720-1194>