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Lecture:
“The Phenomenology of the Inapparent”


I will explore in this paper the significations of the expression, “The Phenomenology of the Inapparent,” which was characterized by Heidegger in a late seminar as the most authentic sense of phenomenology. Phenomenology has traditionally been considered to be a thought of presence, assigned to a phenomenon that is identified with the present being, or with an object for consciousness: the very term “phenomenon” has its roots in the Greek verb phainestai, which means “to appear,” “to show itself.” However, I will suggest that phenomenology is inhabited by the presence of a certain unappearing dimension, to which it belongs, whether it knows it or not. I will first show in what sense the “inapparent” plays in phenomenality and in phenomenology, through the work of Martin Heidegger. I will then envisage the inapparent in Emmanuel Levinas’s corpus in terms of the invisibility of the face, revealing its ethical import. I will in closing engage Derrida’s radicalization of what he calls a “secret” in experience. Ultimately, I will argue that the presence of such inapparent transforms the very concept of phenomenology.

October 16th, 2019
1:00 pm
Harriman Hall 214