

Pari, Italy — May 9-12, 2025

UNBREAKING THE WORLD

AWAKENING FROM THE MEANING CRISIS
AND THE RETURN OF THE SACRED

With **John Vervaeke**
Curated/Chaired by **Àlex Gómez-Marín**



Pari Center
25th Anniversary

UNBREAKING THE WORLD

Dates

May 9-12, 2025

Location

Pari, Tuscany, Italy

Speaker

John Vervaeke

Curated and
chaired by

Àlex Gómez-Marín

Event

The event will start on Friday May 9 at 16:00 and end on Monday May 12 after lunch

Fee

725,00 euros, which includes:

- a 3-night stay in private accommodation
- breakfast, lunch and dinner at the local restaurant featuring locally sourced produce and traditional dishes
- water, wine, and coffee provided with lunch and dinner
- programmed activities and materials

The event

Unbreaking the World invites us to pause and think about the cluster of crises we are globally facing. John argues that these problems aren't just about the media, politics, or even the economy... the roots of this malaise are problems that are deeply historical, cultural, and cognitive. It's what he calls the **Meaning Crisis**. Yet the word 'crisis,' etymologically means 'decision.'

During this weekend we will trace the history of what led to the contemporary malaise which leaves us cut off from our past, disconnected from ourselves in the present, and incapable of reimagining a viable future. We will examine the anxiety, alienation and absurdity of our age, and seek a deep transformation of our modes of knowing and being.

This transformation is not only urgent but indeed possible. John will be our guide tapping into a rich well of resources—from Socrates to Jung, from cognitive psychology to neuroscience, from mystical experiences to artificial intelligence. He will offer a coherent and clear approach that integrates scientific and philosophical threads with spiritual practice to ensure the development of the transformative wisdom necessary to cultivate a meaningful life.

Participating in an event at the Pari Center means living for a week in a medieval village, mingling with the tiny local population, eating local dishes and drinking local wines, appreciating the beauty of the surrounding countryside, and participating in a very gentle way of life far from the frenzy of work and city living. David Peat compared Pari to an alchemical vessel—a place where transformation can come about—as well as an opportunity to pause for a moment and re-assess one's life. It's a unique opportunity open to everyone.

Schedule

In addition to his lectures, John will offer meditation, contemplation, tai chi and dialogical practices.

Part I: Introduction

Session 1 (Friday afternoon): The Current Meta-Crisis and Trust in a Post-Truth World

Part II: Awakening From the Meaning Crisis

Session 2 (Saturday morning): Part I: Origins

Session 3 (Saturday afternoon): Part II: Structure and Function of Meaning

Part III: The Advent of the Sacred

Session 4 (Sunday morning): Unbreaking the Spell of Modernity

Session 5 (Sunday afternoon): Mentoring the Machines: Wisdom in the Age of AI

Part IV: The Philosophical Silk Road

Session 6 (Monday morning): A Pilgrimage to Lost Ways of Knowing

Our Speaker

JOHN VERVAEKE, an award-winning professor of psychology, cognitive science, and Buddhist psychology at the University of Toronto, brings a wealth of academic expertise to his courses.

With a PhD in Philosophy from the University of Toronto, Dr Vervaeke served as the former Director of Cognitive Science and holds the position of Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology.

He has won and been nominated for several teaching awards and has published articles on relevance realization, general intelligence, mindfulness, flow, metaphor, and wisdom.

With expertise in both Eastern and Western philosophy, Dr Vervaeke guides learners through a transformative journey, integrating ancient wisdom with modern scientific insights.

Dr Vervaeke's courses are a captivating blend of theoretical knowledge and practical wisdom, and his dynamic teaching style engages students in exploring the depths of the mind and its implications for personal growth and societal change, illuminating the path to a deeper understanding of oneself and the world.

What a typical day looks like

8:30 - 9:30	breakfast
10:00 - 13:00	formal presentation (including a half-hour break)
13:00	lunch
16:00 - 19:00	presentation or interactive/workshop session
20:00	dinner
21:00	free time (retire to your accommodation for quiet time, engage in informal discussions, or, if there is a village event such as music in the piazza, join in)

For those seeking opportunities for interaction between participants and presenters (ratio around one to four!), these occur not just in the more formal presentations—which will allow time for discussion and Q&A—but also at the workshops, mealtimes, and during the free time.



‘The future has an ancient heart.’

CARLO LEVI

Our founder David Peat compared Pari to an alchemical vessel—a place where transformation can come about—as well as an opportunity to pause for a moment and re-assess one’s life. Participating in an event at the Pari Center means not only meeting with scholars and experts but living for a week in a medieval village, mingling with the local population, eating local dishes and drinking local wines. It also means being able to view the beauty of the surrounding countryside, and participating in a very gentle way of life far from the frenzy of work and city living.

Pari today continues in a remarkable state of preservation. In the 1950s Pari’s population began to drop from 1500 to the present 100 as people left to find work in the cities. The Pari Center maintains a close relationship with the village people and supports the local economy by renting accommodation—furnished apartments—on behalf of our participants, by having the local restaurant provide meals, and by supporting the local businesses.

Pari is located a few kilometers from the main superstrada that connects Siena to Grosseto. The nearest airports are Rome, Florence and Pisa. Once you have arranged your flight, we can guide you on the best means of travelling to the village.



The Pari Center
58045 Pari (GR), Italy

email: info@paricenter.com
website: www.paricenter.com



Pari Center