

SSPPP2016

Ca' Foscari University Venice

ABSTRACTS OF THE SEMINARS

Nicolas de Warren (Husserl Archives at KU Leuven)

Husserl at War

This lecture takes its cue from Paul Ricoeur's insight that "it was the tragedy of history that first led Husserl to think historically" in examining Husserl's relationship to the First World War. I shall propose a double-reading of Husserl's engagement, both public and private, through an examination of Husserl's war-time lectures on Fichte's Ideal of Humanity as well as his private letters during the years 1914-1919. What emerges from this binocular vision of Husserl at war is a complex picture of a philosopher to whom history arrives in the form of "crisis" and "tragedy." Both of these themes will be situated within the broader canvas of German *Kriegsphilosophie* as well as within the development of Husserl's ethical thought. I conclude this lecture by showing how Husserl's conception of ethics as based on absolute values is forged in the crucible of his war-time engagement with Fichte and the aftermath of his own self-questioning. Unlike his compatriots, Husserl displaces the concept of crisis from the terrain of culture to the terrain of science; likewise, the concept of tragedy is displaced from the clash of cultures to the clash of absolute ethical values.

Matteo Giannasi (Ca' Foscari University Venice)

Is Historicism a Form of Naturalism? Husserl on Historical Processes and Ideals

In *Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft*, as well as in other publications and series of university lectures, Husserl criticises a number of philosophical assumptions and scientific positions, which he considers both theoretically incorrect and culturally dangerous. Most of these positions involve some form of naturalism of the kind Husserl is busy diagnosing and demolishing, while developing

his phenomenological alternative to it: the view that all questions that can be answered at all, including those asked by traditional logic, epistemology, ethics and aesthetics, should be answered using empirical/inductive generalisations, and that the status of the principles investigated in such disciplines should be regarded as contingent or anyway merely factual.

Our focus will be on Husserl's interpretation of the relation between Historicism and Naturalism understood in these terms, especially in *Philosophie als Strenge Wissenschaft*, but also in lecture series and later published texts.

More specifically, the lecture shall address the relation between history and value in Husserl's phenomenology, an issue which is particularly relevant to understand subsequent developments of the phenomenological movement.

Reading list

E. Husserl, *Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft*. "Philosophy as Rigorous Science." Translated by Quentin Lauer. McCormick, Peter and Elliston, Frederick A. eds. *Husserl: Shorter Works*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981, 166-97.

Burt Hopkins (Seattle University)

Jacob Klein and the History of Science

Edmund Husserl's turn to the phenomenon of history in his late writings (gathered together in the text *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*), presents the philosophical challenge of bringing together concepts that are seemingly opposite and presumably mutually exclusive. On the one hand, there is transcendently pure phenomenology. On the other, history. To achieve methodological access to transcendently pure phenomena, one requirement of Husserl's phenomenology is to bracket and subject to the phenomenological *epoché* all empirical and therefore contingent reality. Because history, so it seems, is both empirical and contingent, it therefore would have to be subject to the *epoché*. Husserl, in fact did just this in the early developmental stages of his phenomenology. In what possible *phenomenological* sense, then, does Husserl think that his phenomenology can possibly be brought together with history?

The seminar will focus on the first, unjustly overlooked in my opinion, discussion in the literature to provide an answer to this question, Jacob Klein's "Phenomenology and the History of Science," first published in Marvin Farber's 1940 memorial volume on the occasion of Husserl's death. Klein there advanced two remarkable theses connected with Husserl's late turn to history.

One, the problem of the phenomenological origin of history is not a historical problem. Two, Husserl's late turn to history, to the a priori phenomenon of the transcendental constitution of the the historicity of the *formal* sense (*Sinn*) of the exact sciences, is the logically *consistent* result of his phenomenology's animating concern from its inception with the *ρίζώματα πάντων*, the "roots of all things." My seminar will both defend Klein's two theses and argue on the basis of this defence that the subsequent, post WW II attempts to reconcile or otherwise argue for the need to supplement Husserl's transcendently pure phenomenology with historical facticity are fundamentally misguided.

Reading list

Burt C. Hopkins, *The Origin of the Logic of Symbolic Mathematics. Edmund Husserl and Jacob Klein* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), Part I.

Edmund Husserl, "Die Frage nach dem Ursprung der Geometrie als intentional-historisches Problem," *Revue internationale de Philosophie* I (1939). Edited by Eugen Fink, 203–225. English translation, "The Origin of Geometry," in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. David Carr (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1970). Fink's typescript of Husserl's original, and significantly different, 1936 text (which is the text translated by Carr) was published as Beilage III in *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*, ed. Walter Biemel, Husserliana VI (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1954, 1976).

Jacob Klein, "Phenomenology and the History of Science." In Marvin Farber (ed.), *Philosophical Essays in Memory of Edmund Husserl*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1940), 143–163. Reprinted in *Klein, Lectures and Essays*, Edited by Robert B. Williamson and Elliott Zuckerman (Annapolis, Md.: St. John's Press, 1985), 43–52.

Arun Iyer (Seattle University)

History as a Challenge to Transcendental Philosophy: On some Parallels in the Work of Heidegger and Foucault

It is not disputed that Heidegger and Foucault marshal the notion of history to challenge what they see as transcendental philosophy, which for them also includes its latest phenomenological iteration. It should also be clear that their challenge to transcendental philosophy goes hand in hand with their rejection of humanism and of any recourse whatsoever to anthropology and anthropological universals of the Gadamerian and the Ricoeurian kind. However, what is less known is how their departure from transcendental philosophy takes on a similar trajectory as they refine the concept of historicity in their own way.

The focus of this lecture will be this similarity in the trajectory of their thought as it seeks a path beyond transcendental philosophy through a refinement of the concept of historicity. By placing a small number of key passages from Heidegger's works through the late 20s and early 30s to the late 30s to early 40s alongside passages from Foucault's works through the 50s to the 60s, this lecture will sketch the parallels in the development of their thought despite the radical dissimilarity in their theoretical frameworks. There is a parallel in the way Heidegger moves from the concept of the historicity (*Geschichtlichkeit*) of the human being to the history of being (*Seynsgeschichte*) and Foucault moves from a rehabilitation of the notion of expression and conscious acts of expression to the development of an archaeology of discourse.

Without engaging with any specific work in its entirety, this lecture seeks to convey that the similarity between these thinkers lies not in the specific ideas found in any of their works, but rather in the development and in the movement of their views across a time period. For this purpose, the lecture will elicit a small number of passages from several of their works. In so doing, it will provide the auditor with a key to understanding some of the major works of these thinkers written over an extended period of time.

Reading list

Heidegger, Martin. *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1973.

- . Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, trans. Richard Taft. 5th ed. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997.
- . *Logik als die Frage nach dem Wesen der Sprache*, ed. Günter Seubold. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1998.
- . *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Hermann. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1989.
- Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowing), trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1999.
- . *Besinnung*, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Hermann. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1997.
- . *Geschichte des Seyns*, ed. Peter Trawny. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1998.
- . *Das Ereignis*, ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Hermann. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2009.
- Foucault, Michel, *Les mots et les choses*. Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1966.
- . The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences. New York: Vintage Books, 1994.
- . *L' Archeology du Savoir*. Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1969.
- . *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. Sheridan A. M. Smith. New York: Pantheon Books, 1972
- . Introduction to Kant's Anthropology, trans. Robert Nigro and Kate Briggs. Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2008.
- , *Dream, Imagination and Existence: Introduction to Dream and Existence*, by Ludwig Binswanger, trans. Forrest Williams, ed. Keith Hoeller. 31-80. New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1993.

Niall Keane (MIC, University of Limerick)

The Emergence and Development of History in Heidegger's Phenomenology

This seminar introduces students to the development of Heidegger's reflections on history in the mid-1920s and 1930s. These reflections on history exhibit an apparent antinomy between continuity and fracture, yet in reality overlap, giving shape to a thought-model which is both distinct from and indebted to the tradition on which it stands. This distinctness emerges in the form of a jolt or transition, which for Heidegger is a leaping over the metaphysical history of being by recovering what is ontologically always already the case in metaphysics. What changes in this leap is simply the manner of relating to historicity (*Geschichtlichkeit*)

by counter-posing it to historiography (*Historie*), *geschichtlich* as opposed to merely *historisch*. This seminar will assess the seeds of this move in *Being and Time*, where *Geschichte*, the problem of grounding being historically, is distinguished from *Historie*, understood as *historia rerum gestarum*. Thus, in *Being and Time*, historiography is not only a derivative mode of relating to history, but also what allows us to bring to light the relationship that exists between the authentic historical character of Dasein and its factual objectification. Thus, in 1927, historiography is radicalized and transformed into a science of the possible that seeks to understand existence in terms of historical concreteness, openness and possibility.

However, if for Heidegger the human being is not as yet historical, but only limited to merely having a history and relating to that history, then the human being determines itself exclusively from within the dominion of historiography, which is that form of knowing that adjudicates on the past according to the objectifying and representative modalities of the present, reducing the past to an object that can be produced, classified and ranked. Moreover, for Heidegger, in confronting the past, historiography does not aim to capture the movement of history in order to preserve it, but rather to eternalize the present and gain dominion over it (GA 65, 493/388). This seminar will conclude with an exploration of how for the Heidegger of the 1930s rendering the present eternal is not only a fleeing from history, but rather the withdrawal of that history understood as an event.

Reading List

M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*. 17th ed. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1993. Translated as *Being and Time*. Trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1962.

-----, *Beiträge zur Philosophie (vom Ereignis)*. Gesamtausgabe, vol. 65. Ed. Friedrich Wilhelm von Herrmann, 1994. Translated as *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*. Trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012.

Hélène Leblanc (University of Geneva)

“The Origin of Geometry”: phenomenological history from the linguistic point of view

The main focus of this class will be Husserl’s study on the “The Origin of Geometry”, one of the most illuminating texts about the phenomenological problem of history. Needless to say, this task imposes some serious restrictions. More specifically, in order to keep close to Husserl’s views, we will neither put the idea of “origin of geometry” within the broader context of 19th century’s abstract geometry, nor discuss the famous and extensive commentary of

Derrida. We will rather insist on the following two preliminary questions: what is the point of Husserl's late "historical meditations on modern philosophy"? And how did he manage to elaborate a general conception of history by contrasting historical inquiry and original sense?

Now, even the most internal reading requires a specific angle. Husserl's shift from (historical) origin to original *sense* is supported by a set of linguistic issues: the relationship between language and objectivity, the connection between logic and language, the possibility of a universal language, the role of written symbols and the limitations of historical languages. So, in some sense, language operates in this text as a guiding thread providing a certain unity to Husserl's reflection. Moreover, and this will be my point, language appears to be the perfect vantage point to address the question of history in philosophy and ultimately define the phenomenological way to be an historian.

Reading list

Primary Literature

Husserl, Edmund (1976), "Die Frage nach dem Ursprung der Geometrie als intentionalthistorisches Problem", in *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*, W. Biemel (ed.), 2. Auflage, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, *Beilage III, zu § 9a*, pp. 365-386.

----- (1970), *Appendix VI: [The Origin of Geometry]*, in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, tr. D. Carr, Northwestern University Press: Evanston, pp. 353-378.

Secondary Literature

Dodd, James (2004), *Crisis and Reflection. An Essay on Husserl's Crisis of the European Sciences*, Kluwer Academic Publishers: New-York, Boston, Dordrecht, London, Moscow, pp. 109-147.

Majolino, Claudio and De Gandt, François (ed.) (2008), *Lectures de la Krisis de Husserl*, Vrin: Paris.

Mohanty, Jitendra Nath (2011), "Origin of Geometry and Husserl's Final Philosophy of History", in *Edmund Husserl's. The Freiberg Years. 1916-1938*, Yale University Press: New Haven & London, pp. 420-434.

Moran, Dermot (2012), *Husserl's Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge & New-York.

Claudio Majolino (University of Lille) & Emiliano Trizio (Seattle University)

History of the Crisis and the Crisis of History

The theoretical insufficiency of Western sciences is more than just a constant theme in Husserl's work. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to claim that the gradual development of the concepts required to account for this insufficiency and to find a remedy to it is tantamount to the development of Husserl's philosophy as such. This is a necessary premise to understand Husserl's late and sparse use of the term "crisis", especially when referred to scientific disciplines. Accordingly, the first part of this lecture will explore how this lexical and conceptual novelty allows Husserl to connect his life-long concern for the insufficient, inauthentic character of Western sciences to a historical narrative portraying the rise of the guiding ideal of a rational humanity in Greece, its modern revival, and its gradual betrayal. The notion of "crisis", thus, exerts a twofold function: on the one hand it reshapes the notion of the theoretical insufficiency of sciences into a dynamic concept accounting for their inner historicity, and, on the other hand, it highlights the link between the shortcomings of scientific rationality and the illness of Western civilization in its entirety. At the end of the first part, the following general definition of what it means for a science to experience a crisis will be introduced and explained: the crisis of a science consists in the fact that the *sense of being* of its object of investigation has become obscure. The second part of the lecture will, instead, consist of an exploration of how this general definition can be applied to that particular Western science that history itself is. In what sense the activity of contemporary historians can be said to undergo a crisis? Husserl, while giving precious indications as to how such a question could be answered, never developed in-depth foundational analyses concerning history analogous to the ones we find in the domains of the formal and natural sciences. Following the previously outlined definition of crisis, the attempt will be made to understand if and to what extent it might be said that historians ignore the sense of being of their own subject-matter and how transcendental phenomenology could elucidate that sense and provide a clear account of what history as a science is ultimately about. Additionally, having first expounded Husserl's general concept of "crisis" qua crisis of reason, and subsequently examined the idea of a specific "crisis" of history qua positive science, it should finally be possible to address the third aspect of Husserl's diagnosis and reconsider from a phenomenological point of view Nietzsche's qualms about the "uses and disadvantages of history for life."

Reading list:

Husserl, Edmund. Hua XXXII, *Natur und Geist: Vorlesungen Sommersemester*, ed. M. Weiler, Kluwer Dordrecht 2001, §§ 15 and 16.

----- . 1970. *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*.

David Carr (Trans.). Evanston: Northwestern University Press. Especially §§ 1-7.

Langrebe, Ludwig. "A Meditation on Husserl's Statement: 'History is the grand fact of the Absolute Being'". *The Southwestern Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 5, No. 3, HUSSERL ISSUE (FALL, 1974), pp. 111-125.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1997. "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life", in *Untimely Meditations*. R. J. Hollingdale (Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 57-123.

Darian Meacham (UWE, Bristol)

Life History and Technological Evolution

Human experience of temporality is technologically mediated. The phenomenology of history would then seem to be subsequent to a phenomenology of technology. At the same time, it has been suggested that a better understanding of the origins of life might be gained from a study of the genesis and evolution of the technical object. These two propositions form complementary approaches to the question of the phenomenological relation between history and technology: we have first a contention that there is not just continuity, but a structural kinship between the history of life and human history; and second that this kinship can be analysed via a phenomenology of technology.

We will explore these two propositions primarily through an examination of Gilbert Simondon's *On the mode of existence of technical objects* (1958). Why read Simondon as a phenomenologist? First, Simondon's *On the mode of existence of technical objects* aimed at developing a phenomenology of the technological object. Second, Simondon occupies a pivotal place in the development of twentieth-century French thought: "One can at least consider Simondon as a decisive transition between Bergson/Bachelard/Merleau-Ponty – his three major sources [...]"

and Deleuze/Morin/Stiegler.”¹ Moreover, Simondon’s place between Merleau-Ponty and Canguilhem make his thought a kind of hinge between the phenomenology and “French epistemology.” Our question vis-à-vis Simondon is then to what extent his phenomenology of technology can help us to better understand the relation between nature, technology and history.

Dermot Moran (University College Dublin)

History, Historicity and the Historical A Priori in Husserl, Gadamer and Foucault

This seminar will examine Husserl’s approaches to history and historicity in his earlier and later work and will also examine his influence on Heidegger, Foucault and Gadamer. Understanding the meaning of history is central to the *Crisis* project and central to Husserl’s mature conception of transcendental phenomenology. Husserl himself, in his Preface to the *Philosophia* publication, describes the *Crisis* as a ‘teleological historical reflection’ (*Crisis*, p. 3; Hua VI xiv n. 3) that involves an intellectual ‘reconstruction’ and ‘backwards questioning’ (*Rückfragen*) of the history of western culture (specifically the development of modern philosophy and natural science). Husserl is not interested in ‘external’ history, he wants to explore what he calls ‘inner history’ (*innere Historie*, Hua VI 386) and its ‘inner historicity’ (Hua XXIX 417) in contrast to ‘factual history’ (*Tatsachenhistorie*). What emerges is a reflective consideration or treatment of history (*Geschichtsbetrachtung*, *Crisis*, p. 58; VI 59), which is at the same time a ‘critique of history’ (*ibid.*).

Hans-Georg Gadamer’s manner of engaging with sedimented *historical meaning* and with the binding yet elusive character of *tradition* began during his early studies in Marburg, inspired primarily by Martin Heidegger and Husserl. Husserl left a deeper mark on Gadamer than has been generally acknowledged, especially with the concepts of the ‘life-world’, ‘horizon’, finitude and the ‘historicity’ of human existence.

Michel Foucault borrows the expression ‘historical a priori’ from Husserl’s *Origin of Geometry* text, and there are continuities, but also significant and ultimately irreconcilable differences, between their conceptions. Both are looking for ‘conditions of possibility’, forms of ‘institution’ or

¹ BARTHÉLÉMY, Jean-Hugues; ILIADIS, Andrew. Gilbert Simondon and the Philosophy of Information: An Interview with Jean-Hugues Barthélémy. *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy*, [S.l.], v. 23, n. 1, p. 102-112, aug. 2015. ISSN 2155-1162. Available at: <<http://jffp.org/ojs/index.php/jffp/article/view/679/679>>. Date accessed: 10 apr. 2016. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.5195/jffp.2015.679>.

instauration, and patterns of transformation (breakthroughs, disruptions), for scientific knowledge. Foucault, on the other hand, is less interested in the Kantian inquiry into the limits or legitimization of knowledge than in the relation between knowledge and power. Foucault rejects the idea of universal and necessary a priori structures and denies that the structure of the conceptual framework ('episteme') governing an era can be fully determined. Foucault misconstrues Husserl's transcendental phenomenology as a form of 'absolute subjectivity' against which his 'archaeological' method reacts. In fact, Foucault's own conception of the historical a priori is ambiguous and fails to have explanatory value precisely because it misunderstands the need for the a priori to be both universal and necessary, and offers no account of the 'a priori of historicity' which, for Husserl, is essential to human cultural life.

Reading list

Foucault, Michel 1972. *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith. New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, Michel 1970. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage.

Husserl, Edmund. 1970. *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. David Carr (Trans.). Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Han-Pile, Béatrice. 2005. Analytic of finitude and the history of subjectivity. In *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*, ed. Gary Gutting. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heidegger, Martin. 1985. *History of the concept of time. Prolegomena* (trans: Theodore Kisiel). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Moran, Dermot. 2016. "Sinnboden der Geschichte: Husserl's Mature Reflections on the Structural A Priori of History," Husserl and Foucault on the Historical Apriori Special Issue, *Continental Philosophy Review*, vol. 49 2016. DOI: 10.1007/s11007-015-9353-1.

Moran, Dermot. 2014. "'The Ego as Substrate of Habitualities': Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology

of the Habitual Self,” *Phenomenology and Mind*, vol. 6 (July 2014), pp. 27–47.

[http://www.phenomenologyandmind.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/02_Moran.pdf]

Moran, Dermot. 2013. “*Die verborgene Einheit intentionaler Innerlichkeit*”: Husserl on History, Life and Tradition’, Special Issue on *La Vie*, *Revue de phénoménologie ALTER*, no. 21 (2013), pp. 117–134.

Moran, Dermot. 2012. *Husserl’s Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction*. Cambridge Introductions to Key Philosophical Texts Series. Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter on History.

Moran, Dermot. 2011. “‘Even the Papuan is a Man and Not a Beast’: Husserl on Universalism and the Relativity of Cultures,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* vol. 49 no. 4 (October 2011), pp. 463–94. http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_the_history_of_philosophy/v049/49.4.moran.html

Moran, Dermot. 2011a. “Gadamer and Husserl on Horizon, Intersubjectivity, and the Life-World,” in Andrzej Wiercinski, ed., *Gadamer’s Hermeneutics and the Art of Conversation, International Studies in Hermeneutics and Phenomenology* volume 2. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2011, pp. 73–94.