

**SSPPP 2025**

***Ca' Foscari University Venice***

**ABSTRACTS OF THE SEMINARS**

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***Husserl and the Phenomenology of Narrative Art***

While some scholars argue that Husserl's phenomenology—originally developed to address the foundations of mathematics and logic—lacks the tools to engage with cultural phenomena like literature (Colette 2004), his late work *The Origin of Geometry* introduces a provocative notion: the “broadest concept of literature.” This expansive category, Husserl suggests, included “a whole class of spiritual products of the cultural world, to which not only all scientific constructions and the sciences themselves belong but also, for example, the formations of fine literature” (Hua VI: 368). Yet Husserl himself never systematically explored the constitutive structures of literary art, focusing instead on its parallels with scientific thought (as seen already in the *Prolegomena*). Nevertheless, his work abounds with untapped resources for such an analysis.

This lecture narrows its focus to literature as fine art, employing Husserl's transcendental framework. We begin by situating literature within his broader category of “spiritual products,” isolating those constituted through linguistic and scriptural intentionality. From there, we examine how fine art—which Husserl explicitly define as “the domain of phantasy given form” (*das Reich gestalteter Phantasie*)—arises from a distinctive mode of imaginative intentionality. Literary phenomena, we argue, belong to a specific subtype of this formative phantasy: reproductive phantasy (Hua XXIII, 514). Central to our inquiry is, finally, the notion of narrative intentionality, which dwells on the structures of time-consciousness. But is “fine literature” ultimately synonymous with “narrative art”? By applying key Husserlian concepts—“attitude”, “phantasy”, “fiction”, “variation”, “temporal constitution”, and “history”—we aim to provide a phenomenology of narrative art, testing its limits through concrete examples.

In closing, we will gesture toward the broader question of literary genres, demonstrating how Husserl's insights might reframe traditional classifications.

## Reading list

— On the constitution of the spiritual formations:

Husserl, E. (1952). *Husserliana IV. Ideen zur einer reinen Phenomenologie und phenomenologischen Philosophie. Zweites Buch: Phenomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution*. Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff.

— On art and reproductive phantasy:

Husserl, E. (1980). *Husserliana XXIII. Phantasie, Bildbewusstsein, Erinnerung. Zur Phenomenologie der anschaulichen Vergegenwärtigungen. Texte aus dem Nachlass (1898-1925)*. Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff

— On variation and phantasy:

Husserl, E. (1939). *Erfahrung und Urteil. Untersuchung zur Genealogie der Logik*. Ed. L. Landgrebe. Prague: Academia Verlagsbuchhandlung.

— Some post-Husserlian phenomenologies of literature:

Ingarden, R. (1973). *The Literary Work of Art*. Ed. G. G. Grabowicz, Northwestern University Press, Evanston.

Sartre, J-P. (1948). *Qu'est-ce que la littérature ?* Paris : Gallimard.

— Further readings:

Colette, J. (2004). "Veiller sur le sens absent. Littérature et phénoménologie". *Critique*, 2004/10, 819-837.

Majolino, C., Djian, A. (2021), "Phénoménologies 'de' la littérature—phénomène, imagination, fictions littéraires", *Phainomenon*, 32, 15-68

**Nicolas de Warren (Pennsylvania State University)**

### ***Such Stuff as Dreams Are Made Of. Narrativity and the Oneiric Imagination***

Dreams are often experienced as immersive stories or narrated situations in which we find ourselves at the mercy of their obscure, yet somehow orchestrated significance. In this session, we will confront and contrast different phenomenological and psychoanalytic accounts of dreaming, each of which, in different ways, grapples with understanding the way in which narrativity plays, or does not play, a salient function in the experience of dreaming. Are dreams inherently narrative or is their narrative texture *ex post facto* a function of remembrance? Does a dream only become narrative in form when communicated to another?

What, indeed, does it mean "to interpret" or "understand" a dream? Do dreams speak to us, and if, so, in what language, and by whom? Are dreams the unstoried remains of the day? Is the dream a text? Is the experience "realness" of dreams created by its storytelling? Is narrativity the stuff of which

dreams are made, or do we make too much of dreams when thinking that they hold the secret story of our lives, much to do about nothing?

Texts:

Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Chapter VI, The Dream-Work and Chapter VII, The Psychology of the Dream Process)

Sartre, *The Imaginary*

Binswanger, *Dream and Existence*

Jung, “The Practical Use of Dream Analysis”

Fink, “Vergegenwärtigung und Bild”

Boss, *The Analysis of Dreams and “I Dreamt Last Night ...”*

**Daniele De Santis & Daniele Nuccilli (Charles University, Prague)**

### ***Wilhelm Schapp from Phenomenology to the Hermeneutics of Histories/Stories***

Wilhelm Schapp can be considered one of the fathers of the philosophy of histories/stories. In our presentation, we will try to provide an account of how Schapp develops his concept of *Geschichte*, thus his hermeneutics of histories/stories from within his early phenomenological apprenticeship.

In the first part of the presentation, Daniele Nuccilli will briefly introduce Wilhelm Schapp, focusing on his intellectual background and major philosophical contributions. He will then pursue two main goals. The first is to show in what sense Schapp’s philosophy of stories consists in a narrative re-interpretation of some core concepts of classical phenomenology. Central to his approach is the idea that we are always already entangled in stories—and therefore unable to perform the *bracketing* of our empirical subjectivity required by the classical phenomenological method. The second consists in focusing on a more theoretical interpretation of stories as a critical tool for accessing the lifeworld, revisiting three notable interpretations of Schapp’s narrative approach, namely those by Marquard, Lübbe, and Fellmann.

In the second part of the presentation, Daniele De Santis will make the case Schapp’s conception of *Geschichte* as attempt at developing further the classical phenomenological notion of state of affairs. He will analyze the way in which Schapp generally frames the Sachverhalt-Geschichte relation, and he will then propose an overview of the function that the concept of “state of affairs” in early phenomenology. Finally, the presentation will tackle Schapp’s concept of *Geschichte* in order to show in what sense it is meant to offer a solution for the aporias into which classical phenomenology falls.

### **Reading list**

D. De Santis, D. Nuccilli (Eds.), *The Philosophy of Wilhelm Schapp. From Phenomenology to Jurisprudence and the Hermeneutics of Stories*, London, Bloomsbury 2024

H. Lübke, "Das Ende des phänomenologischen Platonismus. Eine kritische Betrachtung aus Anlass eines neuen Buches," *Tijdschrift voor Philosophie*, 1954, 16 (4): 639–666  
W. Schapp, *In Geschichten verstrickt*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann 1953  
W. Schapp, *Philosophie der Geschichten*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann 1959  
W. Schapp, *Philosophischer Nachlass. Auf dem Weg einer Philosophie der Geschichten*, Freiburg/München: Karl Alber 2016-2017.

**Maren Wehrle (Erasmus University Rotterdam)**

***'There is f(r)iction in the space between'\* On the difference between social and intersubjective normality***

Often, the term 'normal' is used to express what is socially acceptable within a given cultural or social context. While an established *social normality* presents itself as a timeless and self-evident truth, it grows out of a contingent and fragile state, where norms have not yet been established. This dynamic state is a precondition of established social norms, so this paper argues, and can be phenomenologically described as *intersubjective normality*. Lived intersubjective normality is understood as an interactive and ongoing process of making and (un-)making of normality, which is characterized by an experienced friction between different 'normalities'.

In a first step, the paper describes the genetic dimension of lived normality, that is, how something becomes normal on an individual level. In a second step, the paper analyses how normality is made and unmade intersubjectively. It thereby distinguishes between a social and an intersubjective normality. Whereas social normality situates and shapes every individual experience, intersubjective normality refers to the actual encounter between subjects. Such a *space between* is a source of normative *friction*, but also the place where one can stop clinging to old *fictions*, and begin to perceive the world and others anew, do things differently, and tell better stories.

We will first examine Husserl's theory of normality, and therein the need of 'frictions', that is, 'discordances' within individual and intersubjective normality. We then will illustrate the inherent normalizing tendency in experience and narration on the basis of examples from critical phenomenology and critically discuss its consequences and possible counterstrategies.

Inspired by Tracy Chapmans song *Telling Stories*, this session will inquire the possibly limiting or dangerous aspects of personal narration or group narratives and discuss to what extent 'fiction' limits one's responsivity or openness to the world and others by avoiding frictions in the 'space between', 'me and you', 'you and everyone.'

**Reading list**

Husserl on normality

-Edmund Husserl: *Cartesian Meditations V* (see especially, p. 154)

-Edmund Husserl: *The Crisis of the European Sciences* (pp. 143ff, 161ff., 306ff, 343ff.

-Edmund Husserl: *Die Lebenswelt*, Hua XXXIX (pp. 154-178; 204ff., Text Nr. 55/56/57/58, pp. 637-673)

- Edmund Husserl: *Vorlesungen zur Intersubjektivität I*, Hua XII (pp. 364–366)
- Edmund Husserl: *Vorlesungen zur Intersubjektivität II*, Hua XIV (Nr. 3,16, 36, Beilage XIII, XIV, XXIX, LXV)
- Edmund Husserl: *Vorlesungen zur Intersubjektivität III*, Hua XV (Nr. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 14, 27, 30, 35 Beilagen I, II, IV, VII, XIII, XXIV, XXVI, XLVII)

### Critical Applications

- Ahmed S (2007) A Phenomenology of Whiteness. *Feminist Theory* 8 (2): 149-168
- Fanon F (1986) *Black Skin, White Masks*. Pluto Press, London
- Hedges T (2024) Expectation and Judgment: Towards a Phenomenology of Discrimination. *Continental Philosophy Review*: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11007-023-09624-0>.
- Hedges T (2022) The Abnormality of Discrimination. A Phenomenological Perspective. *Genealogy + Critique*, 8(1): 1-22
- Ngo H (2016) Racist Habits: A Phenomenological Analysis of Racism and the Habitual Body. *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 42 (9): 847–72
- Puwar N (2004) *Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place*. Berg, Oxford
- Yancy G (2008) Elevators, social spaces and racism: A philosophical analysis. *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 34 (8): 843–876

### **Emiliano Trizio (Ca' Foscari University Venice)**

#### ***Phenomenology of ludicrous worlds***

In this seminar, I will approach Italo Calvino's *Cosmicomics* from a phenomenological standpoint. I will not try to suggest an interpretation according to which Calvino's work recalls this or that aspect of the phenomenological tradition. It is plausible that such an operation would have seemed quite unnatural to Calvino himself, given the influence post-World War II structuralism had on him. Instead, I will attempt to formulate a definition of the cosmicomic genre invented by Calvino on the basis of a phenomenological characterization of the narrative environment it presupposes, which I call the *comic cosmos*. Such characterization will draw on some standard and untechnical resources of Husserlian phenomenology. To this end, transcendental phenomenology can come to the rescue precisely because the relationship between any subjectivity whatever and any world whatever, whether possible or impossible, lies at the heart of its field of research. This approach will also make it possible to clarify why this genre cannot in any way be equated with science fiction. This general analysis will be followed by a close phenomenological reading of some of Calvino's tails.

#### **Reading list**

- Calvino, I.  
2014 *The Complete Cosmicomics*, Mariner Books, Boston.
- Meillassoux, Q.  
2013 *Métaphysique et fiction des mondes hors science*, Les Éditions aux forges de Vulcain, Parigi.

Trizio, E.

2022 *Una passeggiata in mondi e semi-mondi possibili*, in “Odradek”, Vol. VIII, n. 2, pp. 183-216.

Trizio, E.

2025 *Note fenomenologiche sui cosmi comici di Calvino*, forthcoming in “Quaderni d’itinerari” a cura di A. Ardovino, G. Baggio, L. Illetterati, G. Strummiello.

### **Giulia Lanzirotti (University of Padua)**

#### ***Workshop on a text***

During one of the scheduled debate sessions, Giulia Lanzirotti will briefly present a text focusing on some central aspects of the Summer School’s theme. The text will be sent in advance to all participants. After the presentation, students will work in groups on the text for about an hour, and will formulate comments and criticisms. Such comments and criticisms will then provide the basis for a final open debate.