



**DFG** Deutsche  
Forschungsgemeinschaft

**Deutsch-Italienische Zusammenarbeit in den Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften**  
**Cooperazione Italo-Tedesca nel campo delle Scienze Umane e Sociali**

Memory – Embodiment – Imagination:  
Towards a new Anthropological Aesthetic

09/05/2018 – 12/05/2018

Programme

**Day 1: Wednesday, May 9, 2018**

- 16.30-17.00 Vittorio Gallese & Dorothee Kimmich: Welcoming Address  
17.00-18.00 Vittorio Gallese: *Self Identity, Memory, Imagination and Embodied Simulation*  
Introduction and Discussion: Dorothee Kimmich
- ☞ 19.00 *Aperitif* ☞
- ☞ 19.30-21.30 *Dinner* ☞

**Day 2: Thursday, May 10, 2018**

- ☞ 8.00-9.00 *Breakfast* ☞
- 10.00-11.00 Michele Cometa: *Towards a Topic of Imagination: From Hiatus to Liberated Embodied Simulation*  
Introduction & Discussion: Quintus Immisch
- ☞ 11.00-11.30 *Coffee Break* ☞
- 11.30-12:30 Siri Hustvedt: *“The artist has his problems and he thinks as he works, but ...”*  
Introduction & Discussion: Andreas Gehrlach
- ☞ 12.30-14.30 *Lunch Break (Lunch: 13.00)* ☞
- 14.30-15.30 Dirk Wildgruber: *“Inner voices”: Decoding of Nonverbal Emotional Cues Described in Literary Texts*  
Introduction & Discussion: Lukas Häberle, Anne Martinelli
- 15.30-16.30 Carlo Severi: *Memory and Imagination: The Case of Native American Picture-Writing*  
Introduction & Discussion: Martina Ardizzi

☞ 16.30-17.00 *Coffee Break* ☞

17.00-18.00 Hannah Chapelle Wojciehowski: *The Work of Art and the Work of Memory in the Age of Nanobiotechnological Reproduction*

Introduction & Discussion: Sara Bangert

☞ 19.30-21.30 *Dinner* ☞

### **Day 3: Friday, May 11, 2018**

☞ 8.00-9.00 *Breakfast* ☞

10.00-11.00 Andreas Heinz: *Passions are not Addictions – what Neuroscience and Philosophical Anthropology Can Contribute to Limit Normative Pressures*

Introduction & Discussion: Anna Kolesnikova

☞ 11.00-11.30 *Coffee Break* ☞

11.30-12.30 Sabine Döring: *Expressing Emotions in Fiction*

Introduction & Discussion: Martin Sinn

☞ 12.30-14.30 *Lunch Break (Lunch: 13.00)* ☞

14.30-15.30 Stefano Micali: *Between Here and There*

Introduction & Discussion: Lucrezia Compiani

☞ 15.30-16.00 *Coffee Break* ☞

16.00-17.30 Final Discussion: Embodied memory – imagined Bodies? New perspectives.

Chair: Dorothee Kimmich

☞ 19.30-21.30 *Dinner* ☞

### **Day 4: Saturday, May 12, 2018**

☞ 8.00-9.00 *Breakfast* ☞

Check out

## Speakers

Cometa, Michele  
Döring, Sabine  
Gallese, Vittorio  
Heinz, Andreas  
Hustvedt, Siri  
Kimmich, Dorothee  
Micali, Stefano  
Severi, Carlo  
Wildgruber, Dirk  
Wojciehowski, Hannah

## Discussants

Ardizzi, Martina  
Bangert, Sara  
Compiani, Lucrezia  
Gehrlach, Andreas  
Häberle, Lukas  
Immisch, Quintus  
Kolesnikova, Anna  
Martinelli, Anne  
Sinn, Martin

## Abstracts

*Prof. Dr Michele Cometa (University of Palermo) – Toward a Topic of Imagination: From Hiatus to Liberated Embodied Simulation*

If we accept that “writing fiction is like remembering what never happened” (Hustvedt), we must consequently ask which is the peculiar topic of this imaginative act. Capitalizing on the long tradition of philosophical anthropology (from Herder to Gehlen) and poetics (from Calvino to Hustvedt), I will try to define a conceptual history of a topic of imagination, from Gehlen’s hiatus to Gallese and Wojciehowski’s liberated embodied simulation.

*Prof. Dr Sabine Döring (University of Tübingen) – Expressing Emotions in Fiction*

Starting from the assumption that emotions motivate action, I distinguish between two different kinds of emotional action: instrumental and expressive action. I argue that expressive action allows rational explanation (“rationalisation”), while rejecting the view that it is means-end reasoning which moves agents to express their emotions. To “express” an emotion rather means to show how you see the world under the influence of the relevant emotion, thereby enabling others to share your point of view. This becomes particularly clear in fiction, where emotion reaches its most sophisticated expression. I develop this view on the basis of Robert Musil’s still fascinating theory on the relation between emotion and literature.

*Prof. Dr Vittorio Gallese (University of Parma) – Self Identity, Memory, Imagination and Embodied Simulation.*

There is very little we can tell about the Self without implying the Other. As George Herbert Mead wrote, ‘When a self does appear it always involves an experience of another; there could not be an experience of a self simply by itself. [...] this other does appear in the experience of the human animal in the presence of that sort of stimulation in the cooperative activity which arouses in the individual himself the same response it arouses in the other’ (1934). In my talk I will address the relationship between Self identity, social cognition, memory and imagination, by discussing the notion of embodied simulation and its neural basis. I will show how sensorimotor and affective bodily states and their underpinning neural mechanisms not only provide the architectural background texture enabling the making of any historical self, but also enable the identity externalization characterizing the impersonation of another self as in the case of fiction narratives.

*Prof. Dr Andreas Heinz – Passions are not addictions – what Neuroscience and Philosophical Anthropology can contribute to limit normative pressures*

Key symptoms of addictive behavior include i) a strong desire (craving) to consume the drug of abuse or perform the addictive behavior (e.g. gambling) and ii) reduced control over this behavior. However, Philosophical Anthropology suggests that uncontrollable desires characterize a wide range of phenomena, from passionate work to romantic love, and claims that in an open society, the value generally attributed to a certain activity is no useful criterion to distinguish between passions and addictions. Neurobiological studies of reward-related learning distinguish between desires and hedonic pleasure and suggest to take unphysiologically strong effects of drugs and behavioral addictions into account, which can induce counteradaptations that result in tolerance development and withdrawal symptoms upon ceasing drug intake. In this view, computational accounts of reinforcement learning provide a tool to describe both observable behavior and its embodied correlates. Competing parallel computations may help to explain diversity of human behavior.

*Dr Siri Hustvedt – “The artist has his problems and he thinks as he works, but...”*

“The artist has his problems and he thinks as he works, but his thought is more immediately embodied in the object.” (John Dewey)

Unlike the space and time of argument or mathematical formula that can exist in a discursive or symbolic nowhere, every autobiographical memory, fantasy of the future, or full-blown fiction is grounded in a space and time, which, however fanciful, is different from the space and time of the subject’s immediate perception. This double reality of the here and now and there and then describes remembering, fantasizing, and the act of making fiction. Art, however, creates what Dilthey via Hegel called objectiver Geist, a tangible thing. Drawing on my earlier thoughts about fiction, its relation to memory, imagination, and its roots in rhythmic, emotionally vital preverbal self-other dialogues, I will explore the role of embodied narrative as a concrete vehicle in the navigation toward an imaginary other.

*Prof. Dr Stefano Micali (Husserl Archives, Leuven) – Between Here and There*

In my talk, I will focus on the notion of presentification (Vergegenwärtigung) from a phenomenological point of view. In all different cases of presentification (such as recollection or imagination), there is a detachment from our actual perceptual horizon. We project ourselves in another “experiential situation” that is different from our given perceptual surroundings. This situation can appear as past (in the recollection), as pure possibility in terms of as-if (in the imagination), or as future in case of anticipation. The basic structure of ego-split with two radical different scenes is common to all these different experiences that Husserl recognizes as presentifications. In my paper, I intend to analyze the peculiar form of ego-split in two different phenomena: involuntary memory and déjà vu.

*Prof. Dr Carlo Severi (EHESS and CNRS, Paris) – Memory and Imagination: The Case of Native American Picture-Writing*

Why do we simply call the traditions of peoples who lack the use of writing “oral”? Many ethnographers today reveal that, in many cases, these traditions are iconographic just as much as oral; they are founded on images as much as on words. In truth, the opposition between oral and written traditions is not only unrealistic—in that it pays scant attention to intermediary situations in which graphic techniques complete the exercise of speech but do not substitute for it—but it furthermore rests upon a fallacious symmetry. The fact is that there are numerous cultures in which, although the social memory seems to be based solely on spoken words, the role of images is part and parcel of the process of transmitting knowledge. A combination of words and images that forms a memory technique, particularly within the context of ritual discourse, constitutes the alternative that, in many societies, has prevailed over the practice of writing. In my paper, I’ll try to show how this approach can provide for a new interpretation of Native American Picture-Writing.

*Prof. Dr Dirk Wildgruber (University of Tübingen): “Inner voices”: Decoding of Nonverbal Emotional Cues Described in Literary Texts*

Nonverbal emotional cues may not only serve as a valuable guide in day-to-day social interaction, but their role may also translate to the world of literature and storytelling. In a series of experiments, the similarities between real life perception of social cues and imagery during reading of their verbal descriptions were evaluated. To this end the decoding of verbally described vocal and facial cues was studied using behavioral (subjective ratings), psychophysiological (skin conductance response) and neurobiological (fMRI) measures. Observations of a vivid, modality-specific mental imagery evoked during reading suggest that readers emulate perceptual experiences associated with actually seeing or hearing similar affective social cues during everyday life. This assumption is

further corroborated by the observations of emotion-modulated changes in skin conductance responses elicited during reading suggesting that mental representations formed in the process may also comprise bodily representations of the emotional states associated with the depicted affective cues beyond the visual or auditory impressions. Moreover, striking similarities regarding the activation of voice sensitive brain regions (temporal voice area) were observed between processing of actual acoustic voice cues and their literary descriptions.

*Prof. Dr Hannab Chapelle Wojciebowski (University of Texas at Austin) – The Work of Art and the Work of Memory in the Age of Nanobiotechnological Reproduction*

Today we stand at the threshold of a new era: the age of nanobiotechnological reproduction. In this talk, I shall delimit some of its features, many still inchoate, that make this era a fully unique one in human history—full of revolutionary promise, as well as the potential for destruction or cataclysm. Focusing on the recent history of synthetic DNA and its uses for data storage and computing, I shall explore some of the implications of nanobiotechnology for our understanding of art and of memory. Drawing on Walter Benjamin's concept of the aura, which he articulated in his 1936 manifesto "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," I propose that, far from having disappeared, auras in the Benjaminian sense have been reinvented, reconfigured, and reinvested with the power of capital, universities, and—marginally—the state. I shall conclude with a theorization of the roles that artists, humanists, and scientists can and should perform when confronting the J-curve of exponential change, with a new charge from the field of memory studies.