

Editorial [ENG]

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Special Issue

New Perspectives on Phenomenology

From now on, honorable guests, I wish to be considered silenced and erased, and you yourselves must come forward and stand in my place. From now on, everything which is to be thought in this assembly should be thought and be true only to the extent that you yourselves have thought it and seen it to be true.

J. G. Fichte,
The Science of Knowledge
Second Lecture of 1804

In a famous passage from the introductory essay of *A l'École de la Phénoménologie*, Paul Ricœur claims that phenomenology is nothing more than the sum of Husserl's work and its heresies (RICŒUR, 2004, p. 9). Far from expressing a controversial view regarding the history and destiny of phenomenology, this statement accurately reflects the virtuous movement of its formation as an eminent form of philosophical thought. Contrary to philosophy's traditional tendency to formulate a closed and total system of thought, phenomenology is characterized by the structural openness of its research, thereby allowing its continuous reformulation and refoundation. As Ricœur remarks, the vast project started by Husserl is not limited to a capital work or a set of specific works; rather, one must recognize in phenomenology less a doctrine than a method capable of multiple incarnations, in relation to which Husserl explored only a limited number of possibilities. This special issue of *Ekstasis: Journal of Hermeneutics and Phenomenology* takes Ricœur's insight as its central motif for presenting a collection of essays on the new perspectives of phenomenology. Thus, the main idea running through the essays in the present issue lies less in the historical reconstruction of the thought of prominent figures

of the phenomenological tradition than in the exposition of several philosophical projects whose ultimate intention is the current renewal of phenomenological thought in the context of contemporary philosophy, which aims at recovering the experimental spirit that has guided it since its foundation.

The reasons for this collection of new perspectives are not extrinsic to the history of phenomenology itself. On the contrary, one can say that the underlying idea of this special issue is embedded in the very nature of the philosophical project inaugurated with the publication of the *Logical Investigations* at the turn of the last century. For Husserl, phenomenology should be conceived as an “infinite program”, which necessarily comprises the intersubjective and intergenerational work of a community of researchers and transcends, by definition, its identification with the work of a single author (Hua I, p. 178). More concretely, the infinite character of phenomenology lies in two correlated aspects of its exercise:

First, the phenomenological motto of getting back to the things themselves, i.e., of rigorously undertaking the analysis of the different intentional operations and horizons of the life of consciousness, posits evidence obtained in the givenness of phenomena as the sole criterion of philosophical practice. This means, in the first place, that the access to phenomena provided by the phenomenological reduction and its subsequent intentional analysis excludes from the outset the recourse to an established system of thought, with its respective grammar and set of doctrines, and requires each time the renewed work aimed at elucidating the intentional contents in question. In other words, if the history of phenomenology (and of philosophy in general) undoubtedly offers problems to be solved and a conceptual framework for theoretical activity, the primacy of the phenomenon implies the potential and the need for a continuous re-appropriation and re-foundation of phenomenology beyond the philosophemes transmitted by the philosophical tradition. Thus, it would not be unjustified to link the Husserlian idea of an “infinite program” to another of his fundamental convictions, namely, that phenomenological philosophy is, above all, an *Arbeitsphilosophie* (Hua VI, p. 104), a philosophy in the making, whose merits do not lie in formulating grand projects, but rather in the detailed work of analyzing concrete problems. Accordingly, it is only through such work that it becomes possible to grasp the ultimate meaning of this philosophical program and envisage how the main questions of philosophical tradition can be addressed. Phenomenology’s infinite horizon,

subject to continuous determination and revision, and its essentially open architecture thus foreshadow the intergenerational renewal of phenomenological research, whose contemporary form is documented in this special issue.

A further dimension also belongs to the essential openness of the “thing itself”, one that is linked to the subjectivity that accomplishes the work on the phenomenon. Phenomenology is organized around an ethical-philosophical imperative that Husserl frequently called self-responsibility (*Selbstverantwortung*) (Hua I, p. 47). This principle of responsibility for oneself is one of the most explicit expressions of philosophy’s radical spirit, according to which the phenomenologist must refrain from all natural and theoretical preconceptions and ground his claims on experiences based on ultimate evidence. Thus, the criterion of phenomenological research does not lie merely in the logical consistency of arguments but in the evidence provided by intentional analysis, evidence that can never be delegated to someone other than the phenomenologist himself. As Merleau-Ponty (1945, p. xv) noticed, phenomenology’s most important acquisition is “to have united extreme subjectivism with extreme objectivism”, and, precisely confirming this observation, Husserl says in his later remarks on the transcendental reduction that “to be a phenomenologist is something that only the phenomenologist can experience or know” (Hua XXXIV, p. 317). Therefore, this commitment to self-responsibility means that the phenomenological path must be followed each time by the phenomenologist himself – even if that implies the conflict with past generations and their respective attempts – so that the new perspectives presented here can be seen as multiple expressions of this principle of responsibility that requires from phenomenological philosophy a constant reformulation and refoundation.

It is possible to ascertain here an *ambivalence* or an *essential paradox* that runs through the idea of phenomenology as an infinite project. On the one hand, phenomenology presents itself as a formation of meaning that is a concrete part of the lifeworld, incorporated into a constellation of works and manuscripts, i.e., into the form of a ready-made and sedimented formation, inscribed in the world through the work of generations, and presently found as a document among others of culture’s history. From this perspective, phenomenology is also a “piece of the world”, submitted to a particular process of transmission and which is at our disposal. Like every transcendental and like every ideality, phenomenology also has its “worldliness”, its entrance into the world, and

presents itself to us at first as a *factum* (Hua XV, p. 161). On the other hand, if external tradition and heritage characterize the mundane and alienated form of culture in which phenomenology *must* initially present itself, the worldly presence of such a historical formation does not yet constitute phenomenology as such, or, better said, it only represents its *constituted* form. To undertake phenomenology in its *constituting* form means rather transgressing this alienated fixation in the ready-made and sedimented historical form, thereby transposing oneself to the phenomenological attitude in which the formations of historical meaning are constituted. In this entryway to philosophy, every historical being has its genesis and becoming restored; this operation, which can only be accomplished by myself while revealing myself as the transcendental subject constituting meaning, returns phenomenology to its own life and element, and, above all, places it in continuous tension with the rigidity of its inherited figures.

For this reason, the ambivalence of phenomenology, which is nothing more than the life of meaning in its movement of alienation and reappropriation, requires the continuous establishment of new perspectives and unveils this intergenerational work at once as a transgression and a renewal of its history. Thus, one must acknowledge that phenomenology's appeal to the "beginning" and the "origins", its drive always to initiate once again – frequently expressed by Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty, to mention here only these "founding fathers" of phenomenology – is not a sign of incompleteness or incapacity to reach its end but corresponds to the inner movement that each phenomenologist must perform in order to set in motion the history of phenomenology as such. The new perspectives presented in this special issue can be seen as projects of transgression and appropriation of the idea of phenomenology. They are a new chapter of the heresies that constitute the openness of the phenomenological tradition and attest its vitality in present times.

The special issue is divided into four sections. In the first one, we present fourteen articles building a mosaic of the multiple contemporary perspectives of phenomenology. In the second section, we have the honor of publishing an interview with Professor Róbson Ramos dos Reis, one of the leading researchers in the field of hermeneutic phenomenology, where he reflects on his philosophical path and the future possibilities of phenomenological philosophy. The third section brings the translation of five texts written by leading researchers of the contemporary phenomenological movement, in

which the reader will find a panorama of the new paths taken by phenomenology in the 21st century. The last section of this issue contains the review of Alice Holzhey-Kunz's recently translated "Emotional Truth: Philosophical Content of Emotional Experiences" by Susiane Kreibich.

The **first section** of the special issue starts with the article *Jocelyn Benoist at the limits of phenomenology: Perception, gift, reality*, by André Dias de Andrade. By reconstructing Benoist's critique of phenomenology, the paper analysis the work of one of the most prolific authors of contemporary French phenomenology and shows that his philosophical project is in tension with a main aspect of the phenomenological tradition, namely, the relation between perception and reality and the equivalence between the sensible and the appearance.

In the essay *Fragmentation, speed, and domination: Corporeality and violence in contemporaneity*, Marco Antonio Casanova elaborates on one of the fundamental concepts of phenomenology, the living body, and presents the essential traits of an original philosophical program in dialogue with Dilthey, Gadamer, Heidegger, Nietzsche, and others. Following the motif of corporeality from a phenomenological, hermeneutic, and existential perspective, Casanova develops a phenomenological topology of the multiple body and considers the body in its various dimensions as the living body, the historical body in a specific mode of organization and its relations to power in different relational constellations. As Casanova delves into the many aspects of corporeality, he also undertakes a critical analysis of the contemporary body as characterized by fragmentation without unity.

The limits of phenomenology are also the topic of Anna Luiza Coli's considerations in *Eugen Fink's critique of Husserl's phenomenology and its reformulation based on the concept of ontological experience*. Coli assesses in this text the underlying motif that connects Fink's criticism of Husserl's phenomenology and the later developments of his own phenomenological philosophy, culminating in an original project still to be explored by the literature, which is characterized by the change of the phenomenological research's focus back to the ontological problem.

In *Husserl and Sellars on the problem of epistemic and categorial givenness*, Daniel Guilhermino presents the phenomenological concept of givenness from the perspective of the contemporary debate on the myth of the given inaugurated by Wilfrid Sellars. By questioning whether phenomenology's concept of givenness is an instance of the epistemic or the categorial given, Guilhermino argues that this objection does not apply to the different aspects of Husserl's theory of givenness. Particularly regarding the categorial givenness, he shows how it must be understood in phenomenology as a mediated and articulated synthetic process, subject to revision, which cannot be framed as one of the variants of the myth of a last being of reality.

In *Max Scheler's phenomenology of feelings in the indication of the constitution of the "all-human" (Allmensch)*, Roberto Saraiva Kahlmeyer-Mertens and Willian Carlos Kuhn delve into the constitution of feelings at the intersection with philosophical anthropology and show how Max Scheler expanded the understanding of the human mind by shifting the focus from the traditional conception of the human as a rational animal to its emotional reality. The authors show in this text that Scheler's formulation of a phenomenology of feelings leads to an anthropological conception in which the feeling of love plays a totalizing role for human beings, opening the way to conceive the ideal of "total human existence".

The critical relationship between phenomenology and deconstruction is the topic of Ching Lam Janice Law's article entitled *Derrida, originary violence and metaphysics of presence*. The author argues here that the theme of violence crosses Derrida's entire work and follows the developments of this topic in the essay "Violence and Metaphysics". According to Law, in his reading of Husserl, Heidegger, and Levinas, Derrida understands that the very notion of philosophy, considered as a metaphysics of presence, is a specific modality of violence, which can be called violence of *logos*.

The special issue presents yet another perspective of the controversies within phenomenology's classical project in *Reflections on Emmanuel Levinas' appropriations of Husserl's phenomenology* by Deodato Rafael Nunes Libanio. In this text, the author reconstructs the Levinasian program of ethics as first philosophy in "Totality and Infinity" and "Otherwise than Being, or Beyond Essence", while confronting Husserl's transcendental phenomenology and Heidegger's fundamental ontology. Libanio argues that if Levinas undertakes an ethical shift that has the phenomenology of the face as its

starting point, it is also necessary to consider to what extent phenomenology remains inscribed in the themes and structures of his ethics.

The classic debate between Husserl and Heidegger – which constitutes, in many points, the inaugural caesura of phenomenology – is revisited by Celso Marques Junior in *Heidegger: phenomenological reduction and existential analytic*. The author analyzes one of the main aspects of Heidegger's formative decade, focusing particularly on the critique of phenomenological reduction and epoché, to show how the confrontation with Husserlian phenomenology leads Heidegger to the philosophical project that culminates in "Being and Time".

In *Psychology and Phenomenology: a political approach in face of vulnerability*, Jailton Bezerra Melo draws upon the ideas of Martin Heidegger and Hannah Arendt to consider the phenomenological-existential foundations of psychology. As he explores the phenomena of vulnerability and risk situations as fundamental aspects of human existence, the author argues that phenomenology can provide the foundations of contemporary psychology and psychological practice and overcome positivist epistemologies. Thus, the main goal of this foundation is to establish a psychological science that is embedded in a humanitarian *ethos*.

The relation of Heideggerian phenomenology with one of today's most discussed philosophical movements is discussed by Tim Miechels' in his essay *A Heideggerian Perspective on Speculative Realism*. As Miechels considers Graham Harman's definition of "real realism", according to which the criterion of the realist position consists in taking all relations as equally real, he discusses Heidegger's problematic relation with realism. Based on this definition of realism, the author analyzes the obstacles presented by the Heideggerian notion of care (*Sorge*) to satisfying this realist criterion, particularly the idea that *Dasein* is the only being that has a relation of involvement to its surrounding world. Drawing upon Hans Jonas's philosophy of biology, Miechels calls into question such exceptionality of *Dasein* and the exclusion of animal beings from having a relation to the surrounding world.

Mario Ariel González Porta presents a systematic account of Richard Höningwald's philosophy in *Prinzip und Tatsache (Richard Höningwald: his place in the Psychologismstreit and his actuality)*. On the one hand, Porta's text aims to introduce Höningwald's thought to the Latin American public, expanding its reception beyond the

strict circle of specialists in his work. On the other hand, this systematic presentation also reveals the contemporary relevance of Hönigswald by showing how his philosophy questions the absolute separation between the empirical and the transcendental that characterizes neo-Kantianism and, to a certain extent, phenomenology. After expounding Hönigswald's fundamental theses, Porta clarifies his position in the controversy surrounding psychologism (*Psychologismusstreit*) and evaluates its differences vis-à-vis Natorp's Neo-Kantianism and Husserl's phenomenology.

In *Psychopathology of freedom and disorders of the ability-to-be: existential suffering and mental illness in hermeneutical phenomenology and phenomenological psychiatry*, Fernando Rodrigues discusses one of the fundamental questions of the convergence between hermeneutic phenomenology and psychopathology, namely, the conditions of possibility of mental and existential illness. Departing from Thomas Fuchs' thesis that threats to mental and existential health are possible by virtue of human beings' anthropological and existential vulnerability, the author locates the source of this vulnerability in Heidegger's notion of freedom to Being. Based on that, Rodrigues shows how the phenomenological psychiatry of the Heidelberg School represented by Fuchs, extremely relevant today, remains linked to a Heideggerian heritage that comes from Wolfgang Blankenburg's influence on it. The author further illustrates his arguments about vulnerability by analyzing Ingmar Bergman's movie "Persona".

The hermeneutic phenomenology of Martin Heidegger remains at the center of the special issue in *Phenomenology according to Martin Heidegger's Philosophy* by Manuela Saadeh. In this text, the author revisits the fundamental features of Heidegger's conception of phenomenology, providing an analysis that comprises the convergence of phenomenology and ontology presented in "Being and Time" and the critical moment of Heidegger's philosophy, namely, the destruction of the history of ontology, according to which Western philosophical tradition has been determined at least since Aristotle by an average understanding of Being.

The special issue also presents a detailed study of the notion of fantasy and daydreaming in Husserl's phenomenology. In *The productive character of daydreaming: a phenomenological study*, Marcus Sacrini clarifies the productivity of consciousness from a phenomenological point of view. Departing from Husserl's notion of presentification, the author undertakes a phenomenological study of one of its central

modalities, fantasy, to elucidate the specific character of the free play of fantasy. After that, the author turns to daydreaming experiences to show how this phenomenon presents a particular type of productivity of consciousness, in which forms of association productively organize our experience of presentification without any sensory stimulus coming from the environment in which we are situated.

The first part of the special issue concludes with the article by Ángel Xolocotzi Yáñez, entitled *Heidegger and the affective character of metaphysics*. Focusing on Heidegger's philosophy from "Being and Time" to "Contributions to Philosophy", the author analyzes the various aspects of the notion of affectivity in Heidegger's thought. The author contends that the notion of affective disposition plays a central role in "Being and Time" insofar as it gains the autonomous status of an ontological openness of existence, which cannot be reduced to the derivative modification of neutral theoretical positions. As for the texts from the 1930s produced in the context of the *Kehre*, Yáñez shows how affectivity becomes linked to the historical or onto-historical thinking of Being, unveiling the possibilities of the "first beginning" and the "other beginning" of thought.

We are pleased to bring in the **second section** of the special issue the interview with Professor Róbson Ramos dos Reis, a leading scholar in the field of hermeneutic phenomenology and the studies on Martin Heidegger, in which he reflects on his philosophical trajectory and the contemporary perspectives of phenomenology. The interview presents an overview of the main topics addressed by Reis in his philosophical work, such as the theory of modalities and the existential sense of possibility, explored in his book "Aspects of Modality: The Notion of Possibility in Hermeneutic Phenomenology" (2014), the possibilities and limits of naturalization in phenomenology, phenomenology's contributions to experimental developmental psychology, the relationship between philosophy and health sciences, which is the topic of his recent research, and the phenomena of illness and suffering, analyzed in his new book, "Childhood Cancer, Suffering and Transformation" (2022).

In the **third section** of this special issue, we are delighted to present the first Portuguese translation of five texts by leading researchers in the new perspectives of phenomenology. Our aim here is to introduce to the reader the different contemporary horizons of the refoundation of the phenomenological movement.

The third section opens with Daniele De Santis's essay *Contra Neutralitatem: An Opinionated Introduction to the Problem of Metaphysics in Husserl's Phenomenology*. The author provides a new insight into a classic problem of phenomenological literature: the relation between Husserlian phenomenology and metaphysics. However, for De Santis, this relation was so far either disregarded due to the alleged "metaphysical neutrality" of phenomenology or considered almost exclusively in terms that are extrinsic to what Husserl himself understood as metaphysics. De Santis argues against these two tendencies and shows that Husserl's philosophical program not only presents its own concept of metaphysics, which is developed in parallel to his conception of phenomenology, but that this program also needs to be grasped as an attempt to provide a new and scientific foundation for metaphysics. To substantiate his argument, the author explores the different facets of Husserl's understanding of metaphysics, covering the period from before the "Logical Investigations" to Husserl's later reflections on the topic.

In *Intuition, Phenomenon, Space: Phenomenological Considerations*, Günter Figal revisits two fundamental notions of Husserl's phenomenology, intuition and phenomenon, delving into the canonical "principle of all principles" exposed in "Ideas I" and its appropriation in Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology. Figal considers here the meaning of "intuition" in Husserl's and Heidegger's philosophy and what makes it a *phenomenological* intuition. As he delves into such notions, the author also introduces his reflections on space, arguing that the conditions for the appearance of something as something are determined by the spatiality that makes it possible. Figal presents thereby one of the main aspects of his own phenomenological program, namely, the primacy of space in determining the phenomenality of phenomena, which the author systematically developed in his book "Unscheinbarkeit: Der Raum der Phänomenologie" (Inconspicuousness: The space of phenomenology), published in 2015, and, more recently, in texts on aesthetic experience and architecture, such as "Ästhetik der Architektur" (Aesthetics of Architecture), published in 2021.

The possibility and necessity of phenomenology's relation with empirical sciences is the topic of Thomas Fuchs' essay, *Exits from the Ego Tunnel: On the Contemporary Meaning of Phenomenology*. In this text, the author provides a diagnosis of the current paradigm shift in empirical sciences and shows how phenomenology is crucial for this transformation, locating its contemporary significance in the productive dialogue with the

science. According to Fuchs, in distinct areas such as philosophy of mind, psychology, and social sciences, there is a growing critique of the dominant paradigm of naturalism and physicalism, which, by advocating a division between body and mind, relegates subjectivity to an “ego tunnel” that attributes to consciousness only a virtual model of the world. Fuchs shows how the notion of the living body plays an essential role in the critique and transformation of this paradigm, making it possible to integrate phenomenology’s first-person perspective and the non-reductionist model of enactivism. This complementary relationship is then analyzed in three areas of science: cognitive neuroscience, the social sciences, and psychiatry.

In the essay *The Text of Phenomenology*, Inga Römer provides a new perspective on the question that also guides this special issue – what is phenomenology? Römer’s first step here is to notice a seeming paradox: if phenomenology is constituted in its intellectual history as a movement of return to the “things themselves”, how to explain that contemporary phenomenology is exercised through the reading and interpretation of texts that document its tradition? Is it not the same as forgetting the meaning of phenomenology itself when, instead of looking, listening, and touching the things themselves, the phenomenologist tacitly converts it into a hermeneutics of texts? To face this apparent contradiction, Römer argues that the hermeneutics of texts is a crucial step for a phenomenology that remains coherent with its critical attitude. Thus, it is necessary to develop the idea of a critical-hermeneutic phenomenology, in which interpretation plays a crucial role, but the experience of things themselves is not dissolved in mere textuality and interpretation. For Römer, a truly critical phenomenology needs to acknowledge two fundamental moments: on the one hand, there is a resistance in the meaning of experience vis-à-vis its linguistic expression, which causes the “thing itself” to always have to be reappropriated; on the other hand, it is precisely the interpretation of texts that allows us to confront the meaning of experience with other constellations of concepts and figures of thought that extrapolate our time and context, constituting the critical moment par excellence of phenomenology.

Finally, the special issue features Alexander Schnell’s essay, *Fundamental Perspectives on “The Vibrations of Being”*, in which the author presents the main ideas of his book “Seinsschwingungen: Zur Frage nach dem Sein in der transzendentalen Phänomenologie” (Vibrations of Being: On the question of Being in transcendental

phenomenology), published in 2020. Schnell starts by asking to what extent transcendental phenomenology is able to encompass ontology, leading the author to expand the framework of the generative phenomenology developed by him in his previous book, “Wirklichkeitsbilder” (Images of Reality), published in 2015. As he analyzes the classic phenomenology of Husserl and Heidegger and the recent developments of French phenomenology, Schnell focuses here on phenomenology’s frontier problems, thereby seeking to clarify the essence and nature of the phenomenological field itself and the notion of the transcendental. According to him, the main contribution of generative phenomenology lies in the attempt to elucidate the basic dimensions of pre-phenomenality or pre-immanence. This radical questioning of pre-immanence poses difficult methodological questions to phenomenology since this sphere not only lies beyond the descriptive and phenomenal scope thematized by classic phenomenology but also enables the very transcendental structures that organize the phenomenological field.

Finally, the **fourth section** of the special issue presents Susiane Kreibich’s review of the book “Emotional Truth: The Philosophical Content of Emotional Experiences”, by Alice Holzhey-Kunz, published in 2021 in its first Portuguese translation by Via Verita.

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