

Editorial [ENG]

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Phenomenology and/of Illness

One of the main features of contemporary phenomenology, established in dialogue with the empirical sciences, is the assumption that certain findings may be capable of informing or even correcting philosophical approaches to experience. Phenomenological descriptions of embodiment, selfhood, temporality, affectivity, and so on may thus undergo an inflection based on the results of these same sciences.

In this context, the interaction between phenomenological philosophy and the health sciences plays a dual role of mutual enlightenment (Gallagher, 1997): on the one hand, it is accepted that the description of pathological states may influence or even correct classical phenomenological descriptions taken as immutable and necessary; on the other hand, phenomenological descriptions of ill experience are viewed in light of their potential impact on medical and caregiving practice, by providing not only theoretical tools for the analysis and description of these phenomena, but also by promoting a series of practical impacts in the diagnostic, nosological, and even therapeutic domains of certain conditions.

One of the main outcomes of this interaction also consists in the formulation of a research program dedicated to the description and understanding of the phenomena of health and illness from a phenomenological perspective. Represented by names such as Drew Leder, Kay Toombs, Havi Carel, Fredrik Svenaeus, among others, while also drawing inspiration from classical phenomenologists such as Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, the phenomenological

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approach to illness has been gaining importance not only in the philosophy of medicine and bioethics, but also in applied fields such as qualitative health research, nursing, psychiatry, and so on.

In Latin America, and especially in Brazil, the interaction between phenomenology and the field of health has historically made a rich contribution (See Holanda, 2016). Groups such as the Instituto de Psicologia Fenomenológico-Existencial do Rio de Janeiro (IFEN), the Sociedade Brasileira de Psicopatologia Fenômeno-Estrutural (SBPFE), the Associação Brasileira de Daseinsanalyse (ABD), and the Instituto Dasein de Psicologia Fenomenológica e Hermenêutica, for example, address—under different phenomenological perspectives—problems located in the field of mental health. Also widely consolidated is phenomenologically based training and qualitative research that have been developed in several Schools of Nursing in Brazil.

More recently, the phenomenological approach to illness has been standing out and developing in important directions, such as the formation and consolidation of the *Rede de Pesquisa em Fenomenologia Naturalizada, Hermenêutica e Teorias da Enfermidade* (Research Network in Naturalized Phenomenology, Hermeneutics, and Theories of Illness), bringing together researchers in Latin America and Spain. In this regard, there is already a solid bibliographical production contributing to the establishment of important aspects of the field, such as the elucidation of the object of investigation of the phenomenology of illness (Reis, 2016), the phenomenology of suffering and childhood cancer (Reis, 2022; 2024), the phenomenology of psychiatric disorders (Lopes, 2024; 2025) and their treatment (Lopes & Messas, 2023), the importance of illness for philosophical investigation (Contreras; Båk, 2024), and the theoretical and practical interrelation of the humanities in the health sciences (Morales, Navarrete, Cabrera, 2025).

It is within this general framework of a rapidly developing field of research that we invite the readers of *Revista Ekstasis* to investigate the relationship between phenomenology and illness. Through the 14 articles that make up our dossier *Phenomenology and/of Illness*, readers will find at their disposal a broad spectrum of approaches to the field under investigation, from different theoretical perspectives and across different thematic areas.

Throughout the dossier, readers will find, for example, contributions stemming from classical and contemporary phenomenology (Giacomini & Aloraldo; Pegden), hermeneutic phenomenology (Pires), medical anthropology (Sanz), phenomenological psychopathology (Marangoni & Bocchi; Tamura & Messas; Mendes), hermeneutics (Davis), studies on addiction (Rodrigues & Cordeiro), Daseinsanalysis (Moreira Soares), bioethics (Catoggio), existentialism (Silva), phenomenological sociology (Muhl), and philosophy of pain (Luca-Noronha & Campos).

In addition to the 14 articles that compose our issue, we also highlight our interview with Havi Carel, professor at the University of Bristol and one of the leading voices in the field of phenomenology of illness. In *Illness and Experience: An Interview with Havi Carel*, Carel shares details of her academic and personal trajectory, her relationship with phenomenology, and her own experience of illness, in addition to discussing some of her main concepts and future directions in the field.

We close our dossier with the translation of the text by Ludwig Binswanger, *Die Bedeutung der Daseinsanalytik Martin Heideggers für das Selbstverständnis der Psychiatrie*. Published in 1949 in the collection *Martin Heideggers Einfluss auf die Wissenschaften*, on the occasion of Heidegger's sixtieth birthday, the text demonstrates a practical unfolding of existential analytics, as well as an attempt at an epistemic-ontological grounding of psychiatry as a science.

The last two sections present the list of reviewers who collaborated in evaluating the texts that make up the present dossier, as well as the editorial information of the issue, which contains its technical details.

We hope that the texts presented here may provide readers with at least an overview of the potential for interaction between phenomenological philosophy and the health sciences. This potential, we believe, still remains to a great extent to be explored and developed in different directions and from different approaches. The present dossier is only a first and important step in that direction.

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