



## EDITORIAL

From July 8 to 11, 2024, the *IV International Congress of Phenomenology and Psychology* (IV CIFP) and the *VI Brazilian Congress of Psychology and Phenomenology* (VI CBPF) were held at PUCPR, in Curitiba, in an entirely in-person format, with the theme “Phenomenology, Humanities and Sciences”. The event, promoted by the Laboratory of Phenomenology and Subjectivity of UFPR (LabFeno) and the Association of Research in Phenomenology (APFeno) in partnership with the Postgraduate Program in Philosophy of PUCPR, with the Psychology Course of PUCPR, in addition to the Phenomenology WG of the National Association of Graduate Studies in Philosophy (ANPOF) and the WG of Phenomenology, Health and Psychological Processes of the National Association of Research and Graduate Studies in Psychology (ANPEPP) is already, in a consolidated way, a national and international landmark. Its main objective is to debate the theoretical and methodological contributions that Phenomenology brings to current discussions, in the historical and social context in which we are immersed, and to the construction of regional sciences that, through the rescue of the construction of the human, in the constitution of its intersubjective relations, allow us to revisit the meaning of the idea of Humanity.

Furthermore, added to this greater spirit that has always characterized this Congress, the **1st Merleau-Ponty Meeting in Perspective also took place: “Between the Visible and the Invisible: Behavior, Body and Flesh”** in the commemorative scenario of the aforementioned work by the French phenomenologist who, in 2024, had completed 60 years of publication.

In this sense, it is with great joy and satisfaction that we share with our PHS readers this Special Dossier, which concludes an issue that bring together, in large part, the texts presented at that Meeting. These are works that bring together specialists from different national and international institutions who approach, in particular, the reported work from different perspectives. Let us follow, in general terms, the reflective movement of each article.

The first article is entitled “The status of metaphor in Merleau-Ponty” and was written by Cristiano Perius. The author draws attention to the fact that in the chapter “Interrogation and Intuition” of *The Visible and the Invisible*, Merleau-Ponty recognizes a *sui generis* paradox in language: on the one hand, he prohibits coincidence, absolute sympathy with objects, since, if this language were possible, it would be mute, that is, reduced to silence; on the other hand, if it is true that there is no pure language, Adamic, diamond-like language, it is a fact that poets and writers discover, through metaphors, a language capable of speaking about the world. Under this prism, there is, within language itself, a role reserved for metaphor that operates the ironic meaning. In the *Notes on the course The Origin of Husserl's Geometry*, Perius shows that Merleau-Ponty insists on the concept of “difference” or “level deviation” (*écart*) in order to better articulate the phenomenology of expression and the ontology of the sensible. Language is then understood through the use of operative metaphors, that is, from the level deviation between spoken speech and speaking speech. It is, therefore, by briefly assessing these two textual registers that the conclusion of the article discusses the relationship between metaphor and indirect language.

The second article, entitled “Towards a literary phenomenology: Merleau-Ponty and the philosophy of the sensible as literature,” is written by Martin Buceta. The Argentine researcher indicates that there is a central line of thought of our phenomenologist that began to develop incipiently from the end of the 1940s, gaining strength and strengthening during the 1950s to the point of becoming – from that moment until his death in 1961 – the fundamental problem of his philosophy. In this journey, it is about exploring language, literature and their ability to express the sensitive world. Thus, for example, it is *The Visible and the Invisible* that would close a theory of truth found on a new ontology. Merleau-Ponty here draws inspiration from Husserlian formula regarding the possibility of leading silent experience to the mute expression of its own meaning through the literary use of language. The article ends by reconstructing this itinerary, by establishing the bases for literary phenomenology.

The third work is “Difference and individuation in Merleau-Ponty” by André Dias. The article deals with the broad relationship between perception and language in the philosopher’s work, based on a key reading: the distinction between animality and humanity. To this end, Dias starts from Merleau-Ponty’s descrip-



tion of perceptive and verbal forms (*Gestalten*) to think of them as products of internal processes of differentiation. Thus, at the first perceptive level, differentiation is based on distinctive valences within the field (in *hyleen* or sensory data that function in a diacritical way), without the need to stabilize a unique reference. This level extends to the totality of animal signs and codes. At the second linguistic level, differentiation operates in structural equivalences (already with diacritical signs), progressing towards the reference itself or, in phenomenological language, to the “thing itself”. The author of the article sees, at the limit, both unity and diversity among beings from these processes, bringing to light the specificity of the human being as a “reference animal”, without, however, cutting its deep connection with the totality of beings within the scope of a philosophy of the flesh.

The fourth article is entitled “Vibrating the contours of things: vision and creation in Merleau-Ponty”. Its author, Amauri Carboni Bitencourt, a philosopher and plastic artist, portrays, in an extraordinary way, the themes of vision and artistic creation in Merleau-Ponty’s work. For him, Bitencourt observes, there is something extraordinary in the experience of vision: perception is not a unilateral act, because as we perceive a landscape, it also looks at us. We recognize, then, that there is a reversibility of vision. Thus, at the same time that the seer sees things, he realizes that he is being looked at by them. Now, this ambiguous action of the look – seeing and being seen – is experienced as creation by the artist. In a broader radius of scope, we recognize here not only an experience of the painter, but also of the poet, the writer, the musician, the sculptor; in short, of each perception new, original perception, making the contours of things vibrate. Bitencourt then revisits both the writings of Merleau-Ponty, especially *The Visible and the Invisible*, as well as accounts by some artists in order to conclude that the creative experience allows us to perceive the reversibility of the look; a look that reveals itself as paradoxical, enigmatic and that never ceases to question our condition of being in the world.

In the fifth article, “Body and language in Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology,” Nilo Ribeiro Junior invites us to reflect on both themes under the angle of an incarnate phenomenology and ontology. To this end, the category of expression assumes a watershed in the horizon of the philosopher’s thought. It calls into question to associate body and language with the idea of mere representation. After presenting the fundamental terms that constellate around the category of the self-body, inseparable from an authentic carnal existence of speaking subjects, we will try to highlight the way in which Merleau-Ponty diagnoses the limits of common language in favor of the novelty of the diacritical character of language that, from then on, allows him to link indirect language to literary language and these to the new way of doing philosophy in contemporaneity.

In the sixth text, “Feeling the invisible: around the presentification of Life”, Josiana Hadlich seeks to delve deeper into the theme of invisibility and affectivity through a dialogue between Merleau-Ponty and Michel Henry. At this point, the aim is to understand how Henry’s notion of Life can be thought of in light of a reinterpretation of Merleau-Ponty’s theme of the chiasm between the visible and the invisible. Hadlich then focuses on the work of questioning an invisible that could be understood as an affective impulse; an impulse that manifests itself close to the passivity of consciousness. The author of the text suggests an alternative that does not jeopardize the originary relationship with the world or that loses the concrete apprehension of the subject, in order to establish a dialectical movement between immanence and transcendence. It is, therefore, this impulse coming from the invisible that affects us that, ultimately, gives meaning to Life itself.

The 7<sup>th</sup> text, Franciane Indianara Nolasco and Joanneliese de Lucas Freitas propose the seventh article entitled “A decolonial reading of *The Visible and the Invisible*: dialogues on concealment”. The authors put Merleau-Ponty’s work in dialogue with decolonial thought, aiming at a way of thinking about the conditions of possibility of existences recognized as peripheral to European modernity. This text, written by four hands, therefore suggests thinking alongside phenomenology and not from it, so that we can deconstruct already naturalized understandings and make visible existences that, despite often not appearing as phenomena to us, constitute our world of life. To this end, the work of Merleau-Ponty and, in particular, Dussel is compared in order to allow for weaving and reflections on the possible approximations and distances between Merleau-Ponty’s gesture of making the sensitive and the negative visible, as well as Dussel’s gesture of denouncing the concealment of the other.

In 8<sup>th</sup> position, “From the inalienability of others to the egological relapses in Merleau-Ponty” is written by philosopher and psychologist Marcos José Müller. In light of critical readings made by Lacanian psychoanalysis, this article highlights the way in which Merleau-Ponty describes the presentation of alterity through perceptive experience and dialogue. The question that arises in the reflections of the French phenomenologist is related to the Lacanian suspicion that, despite recognizing the inalienability of others, Merleau-Ponty remains trapped in the belief that there may be a kind of coincidence between alterity and the subject who perceives or interpellants it. Now, this would be a strategy to obscure the fact that, in his description of the carnality of the perceptive and dialogical experience, the author of *The Visible and the Invisible* continues to be guided by the idea of the primacy of a seer, which reenacts a type of subjectivism that not even psychoanalysis has forgiven.

The text 9 is: “Merleau-Ponty and the interdependence between the sensible and nature: a diagnosis of his last ontology”. In it, Eloísa Benvenutti de Andrade indicates that, in the posthumous writings that form *The Visible and the Invisible*, Merleau-Ponty is blunt about the problematic of the conception of the being-subject, stating that, just like the conception of the being-object, it does not constitute an alternative,



since the perceived world is below or beyond the antinomy. This results, on the part of the French thinker, in the emergence of a review of ontology. This review implies a deconstruction of the analysis of the sensible world and the natural world, the purpose of which is to explain, above all, how it envisages the rehabilitation of the idea of the sensible and of nature through the description of the flesh. She, the author, ends the text by evaluating the consequences of the foundation of the ontology of brute being in light of the commentators, its difficulties, its scope and structure and, consequently, the importance of its elaboration for philosophy and for contemporary phenomenology as an opening to the world.

The 10<sup>th</sup> text is “The disparity of experience and the paradox of incarnate subjectivity” by Erik Lind. The author examines how, in the first chapter of the *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty describes the living body of the perceiving subject as perceived. This question has in mind the structures of perception in the introductory chapter. Among these structures, the figure-ground distinction is undoubtedly the most important. According to this distinction, perceived bodies and objects gain unity and stability only against a backdrop of other bodies and surfaces. Merleau-Ponty, however, raises, crucially, the question of how this distinction applies to the perceived unity of one’s own body, suggesting that the living body should be considered as the “third term” of this distinction. The philosopher considers the body as a single *Gestalt*, not only as a whole irreducible to the sum of its parts, but as an existential unity defined by its situational spatiality, that is, by the “body schema”. This schema distinguishes the unity of the body, providing a framework for self-reflection and reversibility in actions such as touching or viewing one’s own body. From this perspective, it can ultimately be argued that, unlike Husserl, Merleau-Ponty lays the groundwork for understanding the body schema as a conceptual precursor to his later concept of “flesh”.

The 11<sup>th</sup> manuscript, “The real between carnal chiasm and temporal precession”, written by Renato Santos, addresses the issue of mythical time used by Merleau-Ponty in his latest texts. Santos proposes to think about this concept from the perspective of the notion of real, as formulated by Lacan through psychoanalysis. The notion of mythical time will allow Merleau-Ponty to glimpse a new horizon of meaning for the question of the experience of alterity and identity, from a dimension of chiasm and precession, carnality and temporality, concepts dear formulated mainly in the unfinished text *Le Visible et l’Invisible*.

Manuscript 12<sup>th</sup>, “The critical-ethical sense of the phenomenology of perception and attention,” by Danilo Saretta Veríssimo, is dedicated, in the context of the *Phenomenology of Perception*, to the theme of attention from the perspective of its critical-ethical developments. Veríssimo then notes that the critical-ethical sense of the phenomenology of perception involves the return of the look, of attention, to the generative aspects of perception. This even allows for the distinction of crystallized social modes that constitute habits of perception and action. In the descriptive-eidetic context and based mainly on the work of Merleau-Ponty, such research configures an incidence of the gaze capable of treating things according to their latency, their relations of meaning with the horizon of experience, which, strictly speaking, does not admit rigid circumscriptions. In the socio-historical and cultural field of perception and attention, issues related to the sharing of attention stand out through phenomenology. A *continuum* is found that can encompass responsible and oppressive forms of concern for the attention of others. At the macrosocial level, various technical agencies, enunciation arrangements and historical social practices can be distinguished, which configure concrete possibilities of perception. Finally, the author takes up the discussion of elements related to racism and what can be characterized as a scopic regime of aim.

Paper number 13, “Neuroarchitecture and phenomenology: *The Visible and the Invisible* in the sensory experience of the built environment,” is written by Lori Correa Crizel. He investigates the intersection between neuroarchitecture and phenomenology, focusing on the work of Merleau-Ponty, especially in *Le Visible et l’Invisible*. Neuroarchitecture, which combines neuroscience and architecture, examines how the built environment affects the brain and human behavior. In this sense, Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology, with its focus on intercorporeality and incarnate perception, offers a considerable theoretical basis for understanding the interactions between body, space, and sensory experience. The article discusses how the body shapes spatial perception and how the aesthetic experience in built space transcends mere visibility, involving a deep sensory-emotional interaction with the environment. This is greatly reflected in the practice of neuroarchitecture, as it considers space as an extension of the human being. In short, Crizel is committed to the idea of a more sensible architecture, which not only meets functional needs, but also improves quality of life, promoting human connection as an experience of being in the world.

Wanderley Cardoso de Oliveira is the author of the entitled “Children’s drawing and painting: intertwining from Maurice Merleau-Ponty”. Oliveira seeks to relate children’s drawing to issues related to painting, addressed by art history and, particularly, by phenomenology. He then begins with critique of the bad reputation of the image, which dates to Plato and continues into modernity. As time progresses, we see that the idea of painting as representation became hegemonic in the West after the invention of geometric perspective during the Renaissance. Now, beyond this scheme, it is necessary to try out a way of expressing the experience of the world that is entirely free from the constraints that the classical perspective model imposes on drawing and painting. From this experience, it is a question of approaching a way of seeing that does not imitate but expresses things. Children’s drawing can, from this perspective, be situated no longer in the order of imitation, but of expression, no longer in the order of representation, but of presentation. When we



move from representation to presentation, we finally abandon, both in painting and in children's drawing, the theme of imitation, of secondary nature, of copying a model, of "coming-after" by allowing us to view children's drawing as a genuine and creative way in which the child expresses the world in which he or she lives.

To closes, written by the American researcher Duane Davis, entitled "*The Visible and the Invisible: genesis and structure*". Davis takes stock of the general scope of *Le Visible et l' Invisible*, that is, he outlines, in this posthumous work, edited under the care of Claude Lefort in 1964, Merleau-Ponty's involvement in a new project, unfortunately interrupted by his premature death in 1961. The published text is composed of a few drafts of chapters and several pages of enigmatic working notes, given the peculiar fragmentary nature of this composition, since its author did not initially intend to publish it. Despite its incomplete status, this book is often heralded as the culmination of his work. Some see this material as the triumphant achievement of his lifelong phenomenological project, while others continue to see it as the inauguration of an important departure from this program. Rather than endorsing any particular interpretation and yet giving due credit to the role that Lefort played in this task of ordering the text, Duane, however, based on several years of archival research into Merleau-Ponty's notes and unpublished manuscripts, maintains that Lefort's presentation of Merleau-Ponty's final works is selective and biased.

The Dossier closes with the Translation section, in which the text "Body and Soul" by Carl Stumpf is made available to the Portuguese-speaking public. This is the Opening Address of the International Congress of Psychology held in Munich on August 4, 1896. Originally published in 1910 under the title "*Leib und Seele*" in *Philosophische Reden und Vorträge*, Leipzig, Verlag von Johann Ambrosius Barth, the essay receives from its translator Flávio Vieira Curvello a complete critical apparatus, accompanied by footnotes. The vernacular version is also compared with the French edition of 1896, in *La Revue Scientifique*. Finally, with this purposeful classic essay, the distinguished figure of Stumpf returns to the philosophical and psychological scene in the context of his experimental studies that would indelibly mark the phenomenological works that cover the first half of the last century.

With this volume, PHS offers its readers invaluable material on the most recent studies on Merleau-Ponty in a national and international research network; this is an emblematic figure in the phenomenological tradition. Furthermore, it also provides the national reader with essential classic texts for those who wish to delve into the labyrinths of good and healthy phenomenological debate within a multidisciplinary scope.

A salutary reading experiment!

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