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ARTICLE

Contribuições para uma psicopatologia fenomenológico-hermenêutica da anorexia nervosa

Graco Silva Macedocouto
Adriano César Cutrim Costa
Lucas Pinto Fonseca

Abstract

This article aims to establish the possibility of a phenomenological-hermeneutic psychopathology of anorexia nervosa based on Martin Heidegger's thought. To this end, it uses a narrative review methodology to articulate an understanding of the Phenomenological Psychopathology of this pathology, the problem of corporeality in Phenomenology and the Heideggerian perspective on corporeality, and the interrelationships between the technology age, anorexia nervosa and the body lived in the first person. It should be emphasized that the current model of descriptive psychopathology of signs and symptoms, as well as the cognitivist views that explain anorexia as an alteration of beliefs and body image, are insufficient to highlight the profound transformations that occur in the lived body (Leib) of the anorexic experience. This corporeality is experienced as a source of concern, constant measurement, the search to acquire a new identity, closure to otherness and alienation. A panorama of possible articulations of the temporality, spatiality and corporeality of such suffering is then established. In addition, based on the Heideggerian approach, which emphasizes the mundanity of the experience of the body, it is possible to establish a link between corporeality as an intermediary phenomenon and the world of technology, which emphasizes modes of relationship focused on control, manipulation, representation and objectification.

Keywords: Phenomenological psychopathology; Anorexia nervosa; Phenomenology-hermeneutics; Corporeality.

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Graco Silva Macedocouto

Possui graduação em Psicologia pela Universidade Federal do Maranhão. Mestrado em Psicologia pela Universidade Federal do Maranhão. Atualmente é professor da Universidade Ceuma.

Contato: gracomacedo@msn.com

Adriano César Cutrim Costa

Possui graduação em Psicologia pela Faculdade Maurício de Nassau. Mestrando em Psicologia pelo Programa de Pós-Graduação em Psicologia (PPGPSI) na Universidade Federal do Maranhão, na Linha de Pesquisa Trabalho, Saúde e Subjetividade. É integrante do Tibira - Grupo de Estudo e Pesquisa em Subjetividade, Lutas Sociais, Opressões, Gênero e Sexualidades;

Contato: acutrim.90@gmail.com

Lucas Pinto Fonseca

Possui graduação em psicologia - Bacharelado pela Faculdade Pitágoras. É especialista em psicologia escolar e educacional pelo Conselho Regional de Psicologia. É psicólogo clínico autônomo e também palestrante nas diversas áreas da psicologia, mas principalmente na educação.

Contato: fonseca.lp@gmail.com

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Resumo

Este artigo intenciona estabelecer a possibilidade de uma psicopatologia de natureza fenomenológico-hermenêutica da anorexia nervosa, com base no pensamento de Martin Heidegger. Para tal, estabelece como metodologia uma revisão narrativa que visa articular a compreensão da Psicopatologia Fenomenológica nessa patologia, a problemática da corporeidade na Fenomenologia e a perspectiva heideggeriana da corporeidade. Destacam-se as inter-relações entre a era da técnica, anorexia nervosa e corpo vivido em primeira pessoa. Ressalta-se que o modelo atual da psicopatologia descritiva de sinais e sintomas, assim como as visões cognitivistas que explicam a anorexia como alteração de crenças e da imagem corporal, são insuficientes para ressaltar as profundas transformações ocorridas no corpo vivido (*Leib*) da experiência anoréxica. Essa corporeidade é experienciada como fonte de preocupação, mensuração constante, busca de aquisição de nova identidade, fechamento à alteridade e alienação. Estabelece-se, então, um panorama de possíveis articulações entre a temporalidade, espacialidade e corporeidade de tal padecimento. A partir do aporte heideggeriano que privilegia a mundaneidade da experiência de corpo, é possível estabelecer uma ligação entre corporeidade enquanto fenômeno intermediário e mundo da técnica, o qual privilegia modos de relação voltados ao controle, manipulação, representação e objetificação.

Palavras-chave: Psicopatologia fenomenológica; Anorexia nervosa; Fenomenologia-hermenêutica; Corporeidade.

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Contato: gracomacedo@msn.com

Adriano César Cutrim Costa

Possui graduação em Psicologia pela Faculdade Maurício de Nassau. Mestrando em Psicologia pelo Programa de Pós-Graduação em Psicologia (PPGPSI) na Universidade Federal do Maranhão, na Linha de Pesquisa Trabalho, Saúde e Subjetividade. É integrante do Tibira - Grupo de Estudo e Pesquisa em Subjetividade, Lutas Sociais, Opressões, Gênero e Sexualidades;

Contato: acutrim.90@gmail.com

Lucas Pinto Fonseca

Possui graduação em psicologia - Bacharelado pela Faculdade Pitágoras. É especialista em psicologia escolar e educacional pelo Conselho Regional de Psicologia. É psicólogo clínico autônomo e também palestrante nas diversas áreas da psicologia, mas principalmente na educação.

Contato: fonseca.lp@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Within current classificatory systems in psychopathology, anorexia nervosa is understood as a restriction of caloric intake leading to low body weight in relation to age, gender, and developmental trajectory. Such restriction is associated with an intense fear of gaining weight, even when weight indicators are substantially below what would be expected. There is also an alteration in the perception and self-evaluation of body shape despite the severity that low weight may have for the maintenance of biological functions (APA, 2014). From this set of signs and symptoms, one can perceive the centrality of the body itself as a source of fear and concern, as well as the principal vessel of psychopathological alterations in the experience under discussion.

If, on the one hand, such nosological descriptions allow greater generality in identifying a set of signs and symptoms, on the other hand they may lose the specificity of the senses and meanings underlying lived experience from a first-person perspective, that is, from the standpoint of the person who suffers. According to Tamelini and Messas (2022), the fields of contemporary psychiatry and psychology are marked by the presence of a neopositivist and neurobiological model that generates research paradigms and clinical-therapeutic parameters traversed by weaknesses, including issues of validity and reliability, and that may tend toward reductionism.

With the aim of recovering the structure of meaning that underpins psychopathological suffering, while emphasizing both the singularity of the person who suffers and the conditions of possibility of lived experience, what emerged in 1922—following presentations by Eugene Minkowski and Ludwig Binswanger at the 63rd Meeting of the Swiss Psychiatric Society—was Phenomenological Psychopathology. This advent marks the transition from a descriptive approach, as proposed by Jaspers in his General Psychopathology, to a transcendental perspective concerned with alterations of constituting consciousness rather than of constituted consciousness (Dastur & Cabestan, 2015). For Tatossian (2006), the relationship between Phenomenology and Psychopathology would be one of implication rather than application. More precisely, it would be appropriate to speak of an unveiling of the structures of existence and/or consciousness, whose alterations disclose how experiences of becoming ill coalesce in the very ways they appear.

In this sense, the present article asks how the experience of corporeality is

constituted in anorexia nervosa from a phenomenological perspective, taking Heideggerian hermeneutic phenomenology as its inspiration and drawing on its considerations of corporeality as the bodying forth of the body (Heidegger, 1992, 2001, 2007, 2015, 2021). The theme of corporeality has been present in phenomenology since its foundation by the philosopher and mathematician Edmund Husserl, who, in his later works, distinguished between Körper, understood here as physical body (body as-object), and Leib, as lived body (human lived bodily experience, body as-subject). Husserl (2000) considers corporeality (Leib) to be an organ of perception which would necessarily be implicated in a perceived whole. Perceptual apprehension would therefore presuppose sensory contents enabling the constitution of the appearing of the things themselves.

Moreover, corporeality would be the bearer of the zero-point of orientation and the notion of here and now, from which the Pure Ego would constitute space in its notions of near and far, large and small, as well as totality in the world of sensations. Thus, all perception would always refer back to the body, and things would appear, for example, more to the left or to the right of where the observer stands. Likewise, this living body would possess a free motility to express human will, distinguishing it from natural objects that move automatically. It can be perceived that, through a pre-reflective conjunction of perceptions and sensations, the integration of a living body belonging to an 'I' would thus occur. The living body would therefore not be a mere object mechanically possessed, but the very body that one is.

Having acknowledged Husserl's pioneering role and insight in unveiling this phenomenon, subsequent considerations by Heidegger (2001, 2007, 2015, 2021) allow us to approach the phenomenon of corporeality from a new perspective. According to Casanova (2014, 2021), this occurs because Edmund Husserl, in critiquing the view of the human being as representational subjectivity, repositions the importance of the subject in the constitution of knowledge based on an intentionality of consciousness. Therefore, instead of dealings mediated by representations, consciousness is always alongside the intended object and ends up retaining the previous positions of modern thought. The main hypostatization that Heidegger seeks to challenge is the centrality of the subject as a transcendental ego within the very possibility of opening the field of phenomenologization of phenomena.

A conceptual shift can be perceived in the understanding of phenomena that shifts toward the concept of the hermeneutic circle (Casanova, 2014), since the founder of

Phenomenology himself is unable to suspend the prior interpretive structures of modernity through an act of will. Armed with this reflection, Heidegger (2015) points out that the essence of the human being is existence1 and takes his master's idea of intentionality to its ultimate consequences, understanding it as bound not only to consciousness but to our entire being in its relationship with a web of meaning and significance sedimented in the historical world, based on the existential structure of Being-in-the-world[2].

These clarifications become important insofar as, for Heidegger (2001, p. 123), "Bodying forth (Das leiben) always co-belongs to being-in-the-world, being-open, having-a-world." In the Zollikon Seminars, therefore, the first person lived body appears as a mode of being that co-belongs to existence and participates in the understanding disclosure of the world, which allows Dasein to relate to entities in general. Thus, corporeality is a constitutive element that occurs at an ontic-ontological level[3] and points, in its scope, to a critique of traditional conceptions of the human being. These conceptions present a dichotomous structure between body and reason that is insufficient for grasping human Dasein as an understanding of Being (Costa, 2018).

It is precisely with the aim of understanding corporeality as a mode of being-in-the-world—which, in being, possesses no atemporal substantiality, but is a co-participant in our

1 Here, existence is understood from the etymons ek (out, outside) and the verb histemi (to stand, to place oneself, to be) (Casanova, 2021). Heidegger (2015), in his fundamental work Being and Time, presents the essence of our mode of being as existence based on the terms Dasein or Being-there. The adoption of such terminology aims to suspend the categorial and substantial determinations of the tradition that conceptualize the human being as a rational animal. More specifically, what characterizes us is not an atemporal and categorial substantiality, but—as is patent from the beginning of the work and better explicated in section nine—an understanding of Being; that is, an understanding of Being in general that allows not only for the reading of a basic infrastructure for interpreting things in the diversity of their modes of being (equipment, other existents, animals, artworks, fields of science, etc.), but also guides our behavior in general. Beyond this element, in existing, Dasein is understood from its possibilities of being, possessing no foundation beyond what it establishes itself, but rather as a project that unfolds from its already being-thrown into a world of historically sedimented meanings that removes it from its indeterminacy. Thus, what the German philosopher accomplishes in his existential analytic is rather a description of the fundamental structure of our existing, enunciating not categories, but existentials—which are the condition of possibility for us to exist in the manner that we exist.

2 By Being-in-the-world, what is understood here is the fundamental *a priori* Heideggerian constitution articulated in *Being and Time*—which pushes Husserlian intentionality of consciousness to its ultimate consequences, not as tied to a subject of reflective consciousness, but as a tacit adherence of our entire being to a specific constellation of senses and meanings that have historically become sedimented, and which we inhabit out of a certain familiarity capable of offering stability and orientation for our being (Heidegger, 2015). The hyphen itself implies a non-dichotomy between our being and the world; that is, the constellation of senses and meanings permeates from the very beginning 'through the seven pores of our being' (Casanova, 2021)—or to put it more explicitly, world is a world that we are and in which we exist (Borges-Duarte, 2015).

3 Here, ontic is understood as relating to the entity, and ontological as relating to Being. To say that corporeality in Heidegger (2001, 2014, 2015, 2021) appears as ontic-ontological is to maintain that his view addresses not only the fact that our body possesses a material dimension, but is a co-participant in our modes of being.

own movements, perceptions, and understandings, always traversed by a historical world—that the term bodying forth is coined, pointing to the character of Being of this body as a task actualized in each mode of being-in-the-world, in a historicized manner (Casanova, 2021).

This study proposes a narrative review which, according to Vosgerau and Romanowski (2014), aims to establish connections with previous works, identifying recurring themes, and, above all, generating new perspectives based on the aforementioned premises. Given the scarcity of literature regarding the phenomenological psychopathology of anorexia nervosa, this article drew from Heidegger's concept of corporeality and used as inclusion criteria articles addressing the topic across the SciELO, Google Scholar, and BVS-Psi databases, published over a thirty-year period (between 1994 and 2024), in Portuguese, English, and Spanish.

Among the keywords used in the search were: anorexia nervosa and Phenomenological Psychopathology, and anorexia nervosa and Heidegger, as well as their equivalents in English and Spanish. The search yielded 1,910 results. Duplicated articles, a lack of correlation with the fields of psychology, psychiatry, and the humanities, and alignment with other psychological approaches and traditions were utilized as exclusion criteria. Conversely, the inclusion criteria sought to select articles that directly engage with Heideggerian hermeneutic phenomenology and address the correlation between corporeality and anorexia nervosa. Based on these inclusion and exclusion criteria, only 10 articles were selected.

In addition, classical works of Heideggerian phenomenology were used, including Being and Time, Zollikon Seminars, Letter on Humanism, The Question Concerning Technology, and The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic, as well as works exploring the phenomenological psychopathology of anorexia in dialogue with the theme of Heideggerian corporeality. For this reason, The Oxford Handbook of Phenomenological Psychopathology was included. The remaining works were used to clarify subtopics contained within the aforementioned books.

As a guiding question, this study seeks to answer how it is possible to articulate a hermeneutic-phenomenological psychopathology of anorexia based on an understanding of corporeality as a mode of being-in-the-world traversed by a given historical conjuncture. To this end, this exposition is subdivided into: the lived world of eating disorders and anorexia; Heideggerian reflections on the body throughout his work; and, finally,

possibilities for considering the interrelation between the horizon of the historical world and the body to unveil anorexia as a mode of bodying forth in contemporaneity.

The lived world of eating disorders and anorexia nervosa

This section discusses the lived world of eating disorders in its broadest sense to subsequently delve into the specificity of anorexia. This approach is important because, as Castellini and Rica (2019a) point out, a dimensional approach offers greater coherence than a categorial one within a phenomenological perspective, – allowing for a more complex description of the symptomatology of eating disorders. Such a choice attests not only to the temporal instability of psychiatric diagnoses but also to the overlapping of symptoms among various eating disorders. The aim, therefore, is to comprehend the broad existential dimensions affected in eating disorders, such as anorexia.

Castellini and Rica (2019b) further note that the development of eating disorders arises from a decoupling of nourishment from its physiological meaning. Food loses its value of life-sustenance and pleasure, acquiring negative and dangerous overtones. Consequently, the organism's energy supply is no longer regulated by visceral feelings of hunger and satiety, but is qualitatively and quantitatively based on arbitrary parameters, such as rigid rules and beliefs associated with control, leading the subject to ignore these internal cues and rigidly adhere to a specific diet.

The authors therefore argue that, since body image disturbance is a transdiagnostic feature that traverses a range of disorders, it is necessary to consider the core psychopathology with which the patient's subjective world is associated. In addition, regarding potential diagnostic complexities, Fuchs (2021) argues that although the emergence of eating disorders is often understood as stemming from dysfunctional beliefs and erroneous cognitions about the body and its current state, such perspectives overlook the profound changes in bodily awareness experienced by these patients. These transformations are grounded in a specific relation to the lived body in its most tacit and pre-reflective existential dimension, as well as the way it is articulated with self-perception, spatiality, and temporality.

In general, these existential transformations are based on the fact that, while the vast majority of people evaluate and define themselves through a variety of vital areas—such as the quality of their relationships, work performance, parenthood, athletic abilities, and other broader aspects—individuals with eating disorders judge themselves

predominantly by their body shape, eating habits, and weight-control abilities. Thus, an entire range of actions and projects focuses on physical shape and weight to the detriment of other possibilities (Castellini & Rica, 2019b).

The sharp focus on bodily aspects via the transformation of lived corporeality is correlated with the fact that, in eating disorders, there is a disproportion in the salience of the gaze of the other as an element of self-validation. Identity becomes reified and reduced to external appearance insofar as the other ceases to be a partner in an intersubjective relationship and becomes the one who validates one's very existence. The alteration in the relationship with the other is accompanied by a change in the experience of spatiality, wherein space perceptually becomes smaller in relation to the body, as the body seemingly fails to fit into clothing or takes up too much space in a room.

Finally, a spatial alteration is conjoined with a temporal alteration, which is experienced through bodily experiences and eating behaviors that promote a disruption in the sense of bodily continuity of the one who suffers from such disorders. The feeling that the body can continuously change, to the point that certain parts are perceived as more swollen within a matter of days or hours, reduces time to the mere function of controlling or losing control over weight and eating, an act that becomes metonymic of the control or loss of control over one's very existence (Castellini & Rica, 2019a, 2019b; Neuman, 2019).

There emerges then, regarding the specificity of anorexia, the need to understand the meaning that sustains the fact that, generally, young women (Fuchs, 2021; Castellini & Rica, 2019b) avoid certain foods and compulsively check their bodies. The reference to the female gender and age is not coincidental, given that, according to Fuchs (2021), regarding the specificity of anorexia, 90% to 92% of individuals with this disorder are female and its onset occurs during puberty.

From a Sartrean reading, wherein the gaze of the other transforms the one who is looked at from a being-for-itself, free, conscious, and autonomous, into a being-in-itself, objectified, lacking consciousness and freedom, Fuchs (2021) highlights the moment of puberty and the bodily transformations of this period in the female body as a major accentuator of the ambiguous character of our own corporeality: being a lived body (Leib) and having a physical body (Körper); being autonomous and, at the same time, dependent on the limitations of a physical body; being a subject, yet being passive to objectification by the gaze of the other.

It is precisely during puberty that the rapid development of the female body can

engender feelings of insecurity and maladaptation. The unfolding of sexuality can be experienced as promising or threatening; simultaneously, these changes allow this body to become a "body-for-others" as an object of comparison, evaluation, and judgment. Adolescence is the historically and socially sedimented condition in which body image gains greater salience, insofar as it can be the source of feelings of pride, embarrassment, shame, or self-sufficiency.

A brief analysis of the phenomenon of shame, drawing from Sartre's contributions, indicates that it is a highly pervasive feeling in adolescence, capable of revealing the extent to which the condition of being-for-the-other is defining for the constitution of the for-itself. In his words: "I need the Other in order to fully realize the structures of my being. The For-itself refers to the For-others" (Sartre, 2010, p. 222). Shame, posited as a mode of consciousness, is a structure of the self; however, it is not constructed *per se* through a reflective solipsism isolated within the subject. This phenomenon requires the gaze of the other to be realized.

From the Sartrean perspective, it thus becomes clear how the body's freedom is curtailed by judgments:

> A judgment is the transcendental act of a free being. Therefore, being-seen constitutes me as a defenseless being before a freedom that is not my own freedom. It is in this sense that we can consider ourselves as "slaves." Insofar as I am the object of values that qualify me, without my very being capable of acting upon this qualification or even knowing it, I find myself enslaved (Sartre, 2010, p. 267).

It is precisely against this reifying experience of the other's gaze that the anorexic individual struggles. For Fuchs (2021), although exposure to the prevailing ideals of beauty originating from the media and body-centric marketing can mediate an objectifying relationship of young adolescents with themselves, a radicalization and reversal of this process occurs in the subsequent course of the illness. In other words, the reification of the other's gaze transforms into self-reification through the constant internalization of an evaluative gaze over oneself, reducing one's identity to the body and its control.

Still for the same author, the hidden agenda of anorexia, which allows for differentiation from a mere effort to match the ideal of thinness, is that of a desexualized body that refuses the feminization of adulthood; since, in many situations, the forms culturally associated with the female sex and gender disappear, menstruation ceases, and desire and libido are lost. The anorexic individual would therefore seek the subjugation of the libidinous, instinctive, and carnal body, which manifests both in sexuality and in hunger.

The process described above culminates in the experiencing of the anorexic identity

based on a negation of alterity, which would render her independent of all food, love, and the gaze of the other. Nourishment could thus represent any kind of foreign intrusion that violates her autonomy (Fuchs, 2021). One perceives a modulation in the way alterity appears to the anorexic individual, given that, in eating disorders in general, the perception of the other is highly significant and occupies a central role in self-evaluation, whereas in anorexia specifically, this significance is reaffirmed through an attempt at the radical negation of alterity—resulting in feelings of self-sufficiency and control over not only the body, but existence in its entirety.

For Castellini and Rica (2019b), anorexic individuals may explain their eating behaviors as a tool for acquiring a new identity, which corroborates Bowden's (2013) view that many anorexic patients identify with their disorder. A similar finding can be observed in Neuman (2019), wherein the illness is viewed ambiguously by some patients—at times as a friend and ally, and at others as an enemy. Gooldin (2008), in turn, asserts that the experience of enduring hunger is transformed into feelings of self-efficacy, power, and achievement, creating a sort of heroic narrative of the self. In this sense, for Otoch and Felice Neto (2022), what often appears to the clinician as a symptom is experienced by the patient as the solution to an existential question. Thus, it becomes standard to experience anorexia as ego-syntonic; that is, as something consistent with one's existential projects rather than as suffering.

At the culmination of the process of objectifying one's own body as an allegedly autonomous way out of objectification by the gaze of the other, the various phenomenologically based articles found on the topic (Bowden, 2013; Castellini & Rica, 2019a, 2019b; Fuchs, 2021; Neuman, 2019; Otoch & Felice Neto, 2022) unanimously describe an experience of alienation from one's own body. The body is targeted within a field of hyper-reflexivity and as a constant center—not as a lived body (Leib), but as an object body (Körper). Many patients no longer feel at home in their bodies, describing feelings of numbness, blunting, and rigidity, as if their bodies had become inanimate objects (Fuchs, 2021). The experience of alexithymia—that is, the difficulty in recognizing and expressing emotions—is not uncommon (Fuchs, 2021; Neuman, 2019; Otoch & Felice Neto, 2022).

For Otoch and Felice Neto (2022), alexithymia would be the expression of this bodily alienation, primarily through the attempt to suppress a corporeal emotional resonance, since it is through the subject-body that affective experiences occur. Thus, the potential

threat of experiencing painful emotions is replaced by a rigid concentration on their bodies as objects, generating difficulty in experiencing emotions in general. Fuchs (2019) states that the feeling of bodily control can lead to an experience of euphoria, wherein states of weightlessness are bound to ideals of purity, clarity, and transparency—echoing Platonic or religious ascetic ideals of the body as the 'prison of the soul'.

This experience can be radically exemplified in the paradigmatic case of Ellen West, as described by Binswanger (1957, p. 61):

> Ellen West desires to be *delicate* and *ethereal*, as are the *friends* chosen by her. By virtue of this wish the *ethereal world*, as we shall call it from now on in keeping with Ellen's own terminology, casts its spell not only on the around-world (Umwelt) and the shared world (Mitwelt), but also on that sphere of the inner self-world (Eigenwelt) which must oppose *etherialization* in the most drastic way possible and, precisely, through mundane weight, solidity, the *compact* filling of the environment—that is, through density and resistance: the bodily sphere.

Heideggerian considerations on corporeality, sexuality, and gender

The question of corporeality as a phenomenological problem also traverses a dialogue between Sartre and Heidegger, since the latter does not develop corporeality clearly enough in the existential analytic carried out in *Being and Time* —offering only a few lines of commentary on the phenomenon of Dasein's spatiality, which would co-determine corporeality (Heidegger, 2015). At this initial moment, corporeality pertains to a tendency to existentially approximate certain equipment within everyday occupations and dealings (de-distancing), and to orient oneself (directionality) based on what the German thinker calls a region—the place of instrumental belonging. It is, therefore, the place where, familiarly, each piece of equipment finds a context that sustains its appearance as meaningful and enables the appearance of the place-for the realization of given activities. In this way, both the spatial understanding of a 'there', alongside everyday dealings, and of a 'here', imply corporeality.

This brief appearance of corporeality did not seem sufficient for French thinkers, such as Paul Ricoeur (2007), for whom a discussion regarding the interrelations among corporeality, flesh, and desire was lacking. For Sartre—to whom Heidegger (2001) responds—the alleged "mistreatment" of the body, understood as its thematic neglect, for which he is accused, had two reasons: the impossibility of treating bodily phenomena without a sufficient explicitation of the fundamental traits of being-in-the-world; and the nonexistence of a description of corporeality that views it from the standpoint of being-in-the-world. For Pessoa (2021), this alleged absence of an explicit discussion regarding the

body in Heidegger is far more a meditative silencing than an intentional denial or refusal aimed at transforming Dasein into a sort of disembodied, anxious angel.

Quite on the contrary, what seems to be at issue, as Pessoa (2021) rightly points out, is the maintenance of a tensioning within the problem of the body, given that the dominance exercised by Greek ontology would obstruct ontological access to Dasein and to lived corporeality as such. In other words, the idea of constant presence and substantiality that, in the West, brings about the oblivion of Being is central to conceptions of the human being as a soul—the substantial seat of identity—and would also permeate the concept of the body as the space in which passions and animality are expressed. In this way, it would also be necessary to rid oneself of the historical sedimentations tied to corporeality, especially the idea that the human being is a rational animal composed of soul and body, with the latter being negatively valued in relation to the reflective rational element. Ciocan (2010) observes that, throughout the history of the philosophical tradition, based on such understandings, the body is considered a phenomenon inferior in theoretical dignity and importance.

Another possible historical sedimentation of a more recent chronological order, to which Heidegger (1973) opposes, is that of biologism. In a letter to Jean Beaufret and in response to Sartre's positions, he seeks to maintain the specificity of the human body in its modes of being, contending that human corporeality is essentially different from the animal organism. From this it follows that the fact that chemistry or physiology 'can examine man from the perspective of the Natural Sciences is no proof that in this "organic" element, that is, in the scientifically explained body, resides the essence of man' (Heidegger, 1973, p. 353). This position is reaffirmed in the *Zollikon Seminars*, where the physiological is presented as a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for understanding the essence of the modes of behavior of human Dasein (Heidegger, 2001).

This specificity could only be found in the indissociable relationship between Dasein and the clearing of Being. For the German thinker, the most originary element sustaining bodying forth is understanding Being and responding to its call. This is expressed in the fact that, while in Being and Time spatiality is more originary and foundational to corporeality, in his later thought Dasein is already retained within the clearing of Being, which guards its spatiality and grants the lived body its spatial unfolding (Heidegger, 2021)—as well as the notions of right, left, above, below, and how each place correlates with the other.

From this, it is concluded that corporeality is profoundly marked by worldhood, through which the world is initially opened and a corresponding bodying forth emerges from it—that is, to the 'man of letters,' the 'man of the countryside,' the 'man of business,'—to each of these worlds corresponds a mode of bodying forth. Thus, 'familiarity with surrounding entities reverberates in the way each Dasein bodies forth its worldhood' (Pessoa, 2021, p. 58).

Such an articulation dismantles the dichotomous language that sustains, for instance, a separation of the body's passions from the thoughts of reason or soul. Thinking, after all, would also involve corporeality and the totality of Dasein as being-in-the-world. Heidegger (2001) exemplifies this aspect through the possibility of being 'body and soul' alongside the topic of a lecture. For such a situation to occur, Dasein must be seated and attentive, which would not be the case for the most part if it were running through the space in which the lecture is taking place. Thus, bodying forth occurs not only through the sensory modalities of seeing and hearing, but also by thematic presentifying of phenomena, whether by following a line of reasoning, remembering, reflecting, imagining, and so forth. Both sensoriality and the presentifying of phenomena in their multiplicity of modes of being presuppose an understanding disclosure of Being and imply corporeality.

Accordingly, Fogel (2010) asserts that we cannot conceive the bodying forth of the body as a fixed thing, but as a flowing and a reshaping, given that existing occurs as a verb, experience, and activity. The body existentially understood would be 'no thing at all, but a mode of being determined by mood, affect, experience, a mode of being that would still be a concretization, realization, self-exposure, or manifestation' (Fogel, 2010, p. 175). It is precisely because corporeality here takes on the contours of our modes of being-in-the-world, and because the physical body is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the existence of Dasein, that the possibilities of bodying forth are not restricted to biological aspects. A biologically male person can experience the bodying forth of a female body, an elderly person can deny their age and body forth the experience of a young person (Pessoa, 2021), just as an anorexic individual can have the bodily experience of an obese body despite her starvation and extreme thinness.

In alignment with what was set forth above, Heidegger's (2001) effort in the *Zollikon Seminars* is noticeable, as he sought to enable his interlocutors—coming from a medical tradition that understands the body through a Cartesian lens, that is, as materially present-at-hand coordinates—to gain access to the understanding of the bodily phenomenon, which

is not necessarily demarcated by the boundaries of the skin. Regarding this, Heidegger (2001, p. 114) states:

> Where is the boundary of my body? [...] In any case, the body is not a thing, some physical body, but rather the whole body, that is, the body as body is mine in each case [...]. The bodying forth of the body is thus a mode of Da-sein. [...], therefore, bodying forth is co-determined by the sense of my being-a-human-being in the sense of ek-static abiding in the midst of the illuminated entity. The boundary of bodying forth (the body only is: body insofar as it bodies forth) is the horizon of Being in which I abide. For this reason, the boundary of bodying forth changes constantly through the change in the reach of my abiding. The boundary of the physical body, on the contrary, generally does not change, except perhaps through gaining or losing weight. But thinness is also not a phenomenon of the physical body, but rather of the body. The thinned body can naturally be measured as a physical body with respect to its weight. The volume of the physical body (the body has no volume) has become smaller.

Since the bodying forth of the body is thus a mode of being-in-the-world, whose boundaries are grounded in the abiding alongside the clearing of Being, and since Dasein is an indeterminate entity that, at the same time, comports itself toward the historical sedimentation of meanings and significances in the world—an element that draws it out of such indeterminacy—we agree with Pessoa (2021) that what can be understood as a thin, fat, beautiful, ugly, old, young, desired, and undesired body is traversed by the way each factical historical world understands such determinations. With this, it is also possible to understand the perspectives of sex and gender—elements that are extremely important from the standpoint of the epidemiological demographic profile of the pathology in question. In this sense, it becomes necessary to address the understanding of the body not as an ontological existential of Dasein, since, for the author to assert it as such, our existence would have to be reduced to a phantasmagoric vapor. Rather, it is a matter of affirming the body as an intermediary phenomenon, a crossing and a 'third bank,' simultaneously ontic and ontological.

The idea of an intermediary phenomenon emerges in Reis (2014, 2016, 2018) from an interpretation of what Heidegger (2015) says regarding the possibility of an ontology of life—which ought to be accomplished through a privative examination of the ontology of Dasein, and form part of the totality of our modes of being. Thus, the mode of being of life would be illuminated by and conditioned upon the mode of being of existence and the project of a fundamental ontology, but not the reverse.

Based on the reflections of Pessoa (2021), it is possible to affirm that one cannot conceive of a Dasein without a body, but rather of a body without Dasein—for instance, in the context of a clinical vegetative state. Thus, the understanding of the body as an intermediary phenomenon enables us to consider the occurrence of phenomena that possess the mode of being of life—such as the irruption of an illness due to biological

causes or even death—which would be interpreted existentially and concomitantly, that is, within the constellation of meanings and significances of the historical world.

For Reis (2018), both corporeality and sexuality can be understood as intermediary phenomena, that is, phenomena in which there is a determination of the mode of being of existence and that derive from the mode of being of life. This interpretation is in agreement with Heidegger's (2007a), since Dasein, in its sexuality, must be ontologically neutral; otherwise, there would be one existential structure for male Dasein and another for female Dasein. Thus, Dasein is born neither man nor woman, but becomes a man or a woman through the social practices that take place in its factical world (Pessoa, 2021).

Consequently, Heidegger (2007a) reiterates the use of the term Dasein—which, in the German language, is a word of neuter gender not by accident, but to indicate the particularity of a neutrality concerning Dasein. Considering that the existential analytic must point to the structures of our Being prior to any factual concreteness, it cannot belong, initially, to either of the two sexes. This initial neutrality would be the source from which the concrete determinations of our sexual possibilities spring. Nevertheless, the German philosopher maintains that it belongs to the essence of Dasein to already be dispersed in a corporeality and sexuality of a given factical concreteness. This dispersion, in turn, would be grounded in the character of thrownness and attunements. When attuned—that is, each time opening oneself to the world through an affective tonality—we would already be dispersed in a sexuality.

Another very important existential for understanding sexuality would be Being-with, which manifests itself, in a factical manner and ever anew, in the bodily being-there of each individual in relation to other existents (Heidegger, 2007a). Insofar as it is constitutive of us to already inhabit a shared world, it is the structure of Being-with that enables and illuminates the possibility of a sexuality. In this sense, it is possible to affirm that Heideggerian thought maintains that both sexuality, as an intermediary phenomenon, and gender, as a historical reading of the expressions of sexuality, articulate, simultaneously, body, affect, and the other into a unitary phenomenon. This understanding not only throws light upon the self-reification carried out in the course of the anorexic illness, but also upon the anorexic individual's search for a desexualized body on more originary ontological grounds. The anorexic person thus seeks to evade the negative affects that the other would evoke in them through a regimen of self-objectification and bodily control.

However, if corporeality in Heidegger (2001, 2021) is sustained by the clearing of

Being and is radically permeated by the constellation of meanings of a historical world, it can be argued that, in Heidegger's later thought, there will be a modulation in the presentation of the sense of world through the concept of the binding measure. For Casanova (2002), the binding measure roots all comportments of Dasein in the same epochal parameter. This sole measure is what Heidegger (2007b) terms Gestell, in asserting that the anthropological definition of technology as neutral, and as a means to an end, conceals the fact that modern technology is a mode of revealing truth that challenges all of nature—including ourselves—as a standing-reserve, extraction, storage, and ordering.

It is precisely from such a historical horizon that the criteria of efficiency, efficacy, machination, and performance come to gain emphasis in our daily life and also become guiding elements of contemporary suffering (Feijoo, 2017). Therefore, it becomes important to consider how, historically, the bodying-forth–world articulation took place in other periods and how, in contemporary times, such a sole measure of validity—which is also articulated with corporeality—can restrict meanings and associate itself with anorexia nervosa.

Entanglements between bodying forth and the historical world, and anorexia nervosa as a mode of bodying forth the body in the world of technology

The entanglements between corporeality and the historical world exhibit a polysemy that spans a diversity of conceptions, which are drawn from the meanings and understandings of each period. It is possible, however, to affirm that these historical projects do not remain in the past, but ultimately sediment conceptions that continue to hold sway without contemporary times necessarily losing their specificity. As an example, one can cite the Greek ideal of the body, which still casts a shadow over Western understanding of the body. In it, the body is taken as an instrument of combat, trained and perfected for the proper exercise of the interests of the State, but also shaped for display and aesthetic idealization, radicalized in the idea of perfection. Thus, the idealized image would correspond to the concept of the citizen, who ought to attempt to realize it by shaping and producing their body through exercises and meditations (Barbosa, Matos, & Costa, 2011).

From the Middle Ages onward, the body meets faith and, under the influence of the Catholic Church, comes to be seen as a source of sin—that is, as 'pagan.' Christianity

(Barbosa et al., 2011) presents an idea of the mortification of the body, relating to its interpretation and transformation in an ever-reticent manner. Cunha (2015, p. 22) highlights that 'it is the crucified and glorified body that is received in communion by Christians. Techniques of coercion applied to the body—such as public punishments, executions, and self-flagellation—mark the Middle Ages.'

From the seventh century onward, the Catholic Church consolidated its influence, which extended until the end of the Middle Ages. The medieval body is extremely rigid and restricted, forming part of the soul-body dichotomy—with the former considered superior. The latter, on the other hand, by being associated with what is earthly and material, becomes its symbol and, above all, the prison of the soul (Cunha, 2004).

For Le Breton (2012, p. 26), at the beginning of the seventeenth century, 'the dismantling of medieval values was necessary, with the first anatomical dissections distinguishing man from the body, the body itself becoming an object of revelation of flesh in indifference.' Man separated himself from God and the cosmos, and with this, an anatomy and a physiology were born, concerned with explaining the body.

He also separated himself from himself and from others, pointing toward an increasingly individualistic society capable of severing man from his limbs through physiological and biomedical knowledge (Le Breton, 2012). The body comes to be traversed by science and becomes a machine, an object of investigation. It is in this century that Medicine finds support in the dualist philosophy of Descartes, which places the body at the service of reason, as a machine that this substantial self possesses (Cunha, 2004).

Concomitant with these intellectual transformations, society observed the growth and expansion of capitalism—a mode of production that drastically changes labor relations, and which would draw upon the notion of the body as a machine to bring it to a position of the oppressed and manipulable (Barbosa et al., 2011). The secularized body is now, as Foucault (1979) demarcated, subjected to coercion and disciplinary control, becoming a productive body. It is under capitalism that a distorted vision of freedom emerges, for, according to Cunha (2004), this body must be disciplined for production yet encouraged for consumption. The instrumentalization of the body is also demonstrated through illness, especially among the working classes, 'for it deprives members of this social stratum of the possibility of making habitual and familiar use of the body (above all, professionally)' (Le Breton, 2012, p. 82).

In this sense, one can conceive of the instrumentalization and machination of the

body as tied to the sole binding measure of the world of technology, where all of nature, including our corporeality, is an energetic resource subject to exploitation, storage, and ordering (Heidegger, 2007b). The criteria of functionality, productivity, and efficiency become hegemonic elements organizing our facticity. In harmony with this argument, Zegers (2015) questions the relationship between anorexia nervosa and postmodernity, given that this phenomenon becomes specifically accentuated in late modernity and at the beginning of the era in which we live.

In agreement with Zegers (2015), Fuchs (2021) asserts that the psychiatric 'discovery' of anorexia in the nineteenth century refers specifically to the medicalization of a behavior that had previously been restricted to the religious context of purifications and mortifications—and which takes on a different contour within the contemporary constellation of the world of technology.

Pertaining to the danger already enunciated by Heidegger regarding the possibility of finding ourselves masters of technology—and, in the end, being controlled by it—Zegers (2015) points out that the characteristic element of modernity is the transformation of reality into representation, which is accomplished in the anorexic's attempt to transform an image into reality. For Pessoa (2021), the characteristic of modernity that is amplified in the world of technology is precisely the idea that the true entity is the entity as mathematically represented. Thus, the pursuit of a volume-less body would be the very transformation of the body, through its control, into an object at the service of an image.

For Zegers (2015), in the anorexic individual, the body becomes a thing separate from the self, which ceases to be an embodied subject. The body is reified and acquires the character of a mere object whose total value resides in the appearance of its design, as though it were an equipment to be dimensioned and ordered for the public image. The anorexic person suffers an alienation from the first-person lived body, for they experience it not only as inappropriate, but also as an alienated body, a body-other, external to their personal dimension. It is a body that places their intimacy within reach of the humiliating and annihilating gaze of the other. This is what leads them to establish continuous control over this enemy body, as well as a mode of alterity that denies any possibility of exchange—as noted by Fuchs (2021).

Finally, it can be affirmed that, just as postmodernity has manipulated reality through technology to the point of rendering it almost artificial, the anorexic individual attempts to construct a volume-less body—a body that is also, in a certain sense, virtual; a

body that occupies no space and does not even live out its instincts. The anorexic individual believes that if they manage to control their body—especially their appetite—they will be strong enough to control everything else. In this manner, they endanger their very life in the illusory effort to make their body-object disappear and transform themselves into pure spirit (Zegers, 2015).

Ultimately, this movement re-enacts a mortification of the body—in a manner similar to the medieval body, now under the guise of control and the pursuit of efficiency and self-efficacy. It is, therefore, a relation to the world that denies not only hunger and one's own affects, but, above all, alterity.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In his last novella published during his lifetime, the writer Franz Kafka narrated the story of a man who was world-famous for his public performances, whose main attraction was his long periods of fasting. The short story, 'A Hunger Artist', published in 1922, presents a protagonist with a precarious mode of being, whose final words, in response to an inspector's questioning about his reasons for being, are: '[...] I couldn't find the food I like. If I had found it, believe me, I wouldn't have made any fuss and would have stuffed myself like you and everyone else.' (Kafka, 2007, p. 18). There is something in the anguish experienced by the Kafkaesque character that also permeates the subject of this research.

The experience of enduring hunger, at times transformed into feelings of power and a false autonomy over one's existence, also appears as a symptom in the pathology of anorexia nervosa. The process of gradual decay of the anorexic person's biological conditions, resulting from authoritarian practices regarding their own nourishment, indicates that food for this Dasein is no longer a source of energy, but rather an imprisonment of its corporeality in relation to the historical world and the judgments arising from it. It can be affirmed that, in this context, an inauthentic mode of bodying forth takes place, one that seeks to establish its limits not within the horizon of openness of the clearing of Being itself and of the various entities that can address Dasein, but through measurement, quantification, and objectification of a body that becomes increasingly alienated.

People with eating disorders—especially anorexia—have their projects, actions, and habits centered around physical shape and weight. Furthermore, self-validation has as its principal element the weight of the gaze of the other. Their external appearance reifies

their identity, and the other confirms their existence: a body-for-others. It is precisely against this experience that the anorexic individual struggles in her most fundamental stance.

The anorexic person's identity, because it develops through the denial of alterity, results in behaviors of self-control and self-sufficiency mediated by the physical body, which hinders their own access to this relation as something negative for themselves. Their identification with the disorder presents itself as a 'choice' of this mode-of-being, coherent with their existential projects—not being, therefore, in a first approach, experienced as a source of suffering.

This study aimed to develop a theoretical reading, based on a phenomenological-hermeneutic framework, of the psychopathological phenomenon of anorexia, with the objective of thematizing the dimension of corporeality as its condition of possibility. To this end, an effort was made to emphasize the potential limitations that certain scientific currents imbued with traditional Psychiatry or cognitive Psychology exhibit in their formulations. The text does not intend to disqualify the hypotheses upheld by these scientific models, but rather to seek, through the contributions of authors in Phenomenology—with an emphasis on Heideggerian-based Phenomenology—an understanding of a possible hidden agenda of the symptoms of anorexia nervosa that eludes the aforementioned methods.

In the effort to understand the structures that reveal themselves in the body affected by this disorder, the aim was to lay the groundwork for a psychopathological understanding of anorexia alongside the entities entangled in this conflict—rather than distancing oneself from approaches that abstract human suffering from its historically sedimented webs of meaning.

Based on the dialogue among Husserl, Sartre, Heidegger, and commentators on their works, the theme of corporeality comes to the fore as a possibility for apprehending the phenomenon of anorexia through its appearance in entities. Initially, the space in Martin Heidegger's seminal work, Being and Time, that deals with the implications relevant to the body of Dasein is interrogated, while preparing his considerations in later works, such as the Zollikon Seminars. In opposition to an assumption of the body as present in classical Greek ontology, or the one assumed by biologism, corporeality from a phenomenological-hermeneutic perspective assumes the contours of our modes of Being-in-the-world—the physical body being a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for existence

in the manner of Dasein, since the possibilities of bodying forth are not limited to biological aspects.

Emphasis was also placed on an interpretation of the phenomena of bodying forth and sexuality as intermediary phenomena that traverse the mode of being of existence, acting as instances that organize and articulate the meanings of phenomena that possess the mode of being of life (Reis, 2014, 2016, 2018).

In dealing with the necessary constructions of meaning entangled in our historical horizon, the vulnerability of the female body to this condition of suffering was emphasized, given that women's bodies are constantly objectified across the most varied spaces and historical worlds. This sustains the prevalence of anorexia nervosa in this population. In a society governed by the capitalist mode of production and its indelible marks of patriarchy, the production of bodies as commodities is a factor inseparable from becoming ill with eating disorders.

The instrumentalization of powers and knowledges through the ontological constitution of man mediated by *techné*—which positions the entity as a standing-reserve and ordering, consolidating the oblivion of Being—is a significant part of the difficulty regarding modern perceptions of this disorder, among others. The contributions of this research seek to join the theoretical efforts of other works supported by a phenomenological-hermeneutic perspective on the topic. Furthermore, this study proposes to conceive the field of Heideggerian-based phenomenological-hermeneutic Psychopathology from a more originary ontological foundation, consistent with the existential analytic and with the possibility of articulating spatial-temporal-bodily modes and disordered modes-of-being (Casanova, 2021).

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