

METÀ-HODÓS: FROM THE HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGY TO THE PSYCHOLOGY

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Resumo: Com este manuscrito pretendemos esclarecer como a ideia de método – como antecipação do caminho certo e reto de investigação de um tema, de modo que possamos conquistar certezas absolutas – obscureceu a noção mais originária de *metà-hodós*, que traz a ideia de que o caminho se faz ao caminhar. Passamos, então, a mostrar que esta noção foi primeiramente assumida por Husserl, em sua máxima de que devemos tomar o fenômeno tal como ele se dá em seu campo de mostração. Heidegger adiciona a esta noção a perspectiva hermenêutica. Por fim, mostraremos como a Psicologia pode se apropriar da fenomenologia hermenêutica de modo a deixar que o fenômeno de seu interesse possa aparecer em seu campo de aparição e, também, nos mostrar o caminho que nos conduz ao sentido do fenômeno. Com esse esclarecimento pretendemos encaminhar mais um modo de proceder nas pesquisas em Psicologia.

Palavras-chave: Método; Fenomenologia; Hermenêutica; Psicologia.

Abstract: In this manuscript we pretend to clarify how the idea of method, as anticipation of the right and straight way of the research toward absolute trues, obscured the more original notion of *metà-hodós*, according to which one finds the way by walking the way. To do so we show the notion that was assumed by Husserl in his maxim about the phenomenon that we should let it show itself. Heidegger adds to this notion the hermeneutic perspective. Lastly, we show the way the Psychology incorporates hermeneutic phenomenology so that the phenomenon shows itself, and thus shows us the way that leads us to the meaning of it. With this clarification we intend to bring another way to carry out research in Psychology.

Keywords: Method; Phenomenology; Hermeneutic; Psychology.

Resumen: Con este manuscrito queremos aclarar cómo la idea de método como anticipación del camino cierto y recto de investigación de una temática por lo que podemos obtener certeza absoluta, oscureció la noción de *metà-hodós*, que trae la idea de que el camino se hace al caminar. Pasamos, entonces, para mostrar que esa noción fue asumida primero por Husserl en su máxima que dice para tomarnos el fenómeno como él se muestra en su campo de mostración. Heidegger añade a esa noción la perspectiva hermenêutica. Por último, mostraremos cómo la psicología puede apropiarse de la hermenêutica fenomenológica para permitir que el fenómeno de interés pueda darse a ver en su campo de aparición y también nos indica el camino que nos lleva al sentido del fenómeno. Con esa aclaración se pretende avanzar de otra manera para llevar a cabo la investigación en Psicología.

Palabras-clave: Método; Fenomenología; Hermenêutica; Psicología.

Introduction

Fogel (1998) clarifies, concerning the method of Philosophy that “the ‘meta’ contained in ‘method’ (*meta-hodos*) says ‘according to’ or ‘next to’ the path” (p.29). There is no doubt that, whatever human activity, it will always be given to, according to something to do, by means of. But now we must ask why we have to think about method, since we are always together with, according to. Those who are inserted in the academic life, more and more, are being demanded to orient their thinking by the good use of reason. If they do not, they run the risk of being excluded from teaching. So if Plato, Machado de Assis, Chekhov, among others, were in the world today - since they did not make use of reason according to a rigorous method and therefore lacked methodology?

We can - as an example of method in the way of doing something - follow up how the exposition of each of the participants in Plato’s Symposium (2015) took place. This discursive activity was hosted by Agathon, who made the invitations and organized everything that would appear in the symposium: food, wine, music and dialogues. During the symposium, seven discourses were presented, whose theme was Eros, the god of love, uttered by Phaedrus, Pausanias, Eryximachus, Aristophanes, Agathon, Socrates and Alcibiades. The Symposium, from the idea of the meeting, through the organization and reaching the speeches, undoubtedly happened along a path where there was an anticipation that was traced along the way.

On the subject, each speaker presented his theses on Eros and each one did it in his own way. By accompanying each of these orators in their performances, we can see how they ordered their words, their arguments, their ironies, their counte-

rarguments, their disagreements in order to convince listeners of the truth of what they said about the god of love. The presentation of Socrates surprised all participants, as well as it surprises the reader by his style totally different from the others. Socrates began his presentation without saying anything; he wondered, asked, inquired, and finally questioned the truths that had been previously advocated. Socrates, in a subtle and insightful way, brought forth questions that deconstructed the truths set forth in previous discourses, and thus laid to rest all that had been established as ultimate truths about Eros. And he said that everything he had questioned, as well as the way he had done it, had been learned from a woman, Diotima, who, according to him, was wise in matters of love. Thus, Socrates says that he learned the method of questioning through experience, therefore, close to each subject he investigated. That is, the subject to be questioned went along with the question itself, and this way we have the *meta-hodos*.

Following the steps of Greek thinkers in gaining a method, we will continue to take the method as a place in which the path of inquiry belongs together with the subject investigated by that one who pursues the theme. We intend to conquer, thus, the space that we call more originary - that is, prior to any theoretical understanding - in which existence takes place. To speak of method as a possible way for investigation in Psychology, we will follow Heidegger's steps. He undertakes this same task by proceeding in his exercise of thought about existence in its facticity. But by affirming that we will follow the steps of philosophy, could we not fall in the serious criticism that are directed at the impossibility of carrying out such a transposition? To answer the proposed question, we will follow Stein (1983) about the relation of philosophy with human sciences.

For Stein (1983), philosophical investigations are currently developed in three directions that are inherent to philosophy, and these directions allow us to understand the relationship between philosophy and the human sciences, regarding the method: a) the analytic of language in its multiple variants; b) the school of critical theory and the various tendencies that aim to give a dialectical solution to the problem of the relation between theory and praxis; c) philosophical hermeneutics that seeks to show how understanding is not, first of all, a methodical element, but a form of exercise of social life, a life that is ultimately not a community of language.

Based on Stein's considerations, which point to the possibility of transposing the methods from Philosophy to Psychology, we continue to follow the *meta-hodos* with which Heidegger (1920-1921 / 2010, 1921-1922 / 1927/1998) develops his themes. First, we can see that in it, method and object are analyzed in a totalizing unit. Thus, in his analyzes of the history of philosophy, for example, Heidegger seeks to question the texts of the tradition so that the unthought in them can reveal itself, since the theme was presented in the modern tradition in a way that it was concealed in what was thought. Heidegger (1927/1998) begins his investigations

with the phenomenological destruction of the history of the ontology so that what was veiled could be unveiled. In *Being and Time*, the investigation of the sense of being already presents itself in this way with respect to the notion of subject, as we will show next. To speak of *meta-hodos* as appropriated by Heidegger in his works, and therefore, in the way he understands the question of method, we must pay attention to the fact that in *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1927/1998) he appropriates the phenomenology through the phenomenological destruction of the idea of subjectivity. And so, he begins by retaking the foundations of metaphysics in his existential analytic. He applies the phenomenological method, based on a binary model: veiling and unveiling - in which, by thinking meditatively about the Being that is veiled, the thinking is conducted in the direction of the unveiling of Being. And, finally, the philosopher characterizes the phenomenological method as speculative and totalizer, whose *modus operandi* is given by the question of the sense of Being.

Heidegger (1927/1988) shows us, just as Socrates showed the participants at the symposium, that before we utter truths as if they were irreducible, we must question them. In both Heidegger and Socrates we can see that he who, eloquently - whether by the strategy of oratory or the loquacity of science - postulates truths, does not think. Socrates used maieutic with his hearers, in order to destroy, ironically, the truths which had been postulated by the eloquent orators. Heidegger follows the same path of destruction of truths, as they were put forth by the history of ontology, through phenomenology. Phenomenology, for the German philosopher, is the proposal of a path of questioning of thought. It is a thought that lets the veiled come out just when the same thought withdraws. Phenomenology as a method of thought operates with the binomial veiling-unveiling. Stein (1983) states: "Being is a phenomenon, in the phenomenological sense, is therefore hidden" (p.24). In *Being and Time*, Heidegger (1927/1998) analyzes the etymology of the term phenomenology, so that we can situate ourselves in what made him take ownership of phenomenology as a way of clarification. Phenomenology derives from the Greek *phainomenon* and, also, refers to the verb *phanestai*. It is, therefore, simultaneously a discourse in which something is revealed as such and a show of things. Thus, we come to understand that phenomenon is all that is known, and that it is our interest in what is shown that leads us to interrogate the phenomenon. Heidegger makes it clear that Husserl's phenomenology attracted him by his maxim "to the things themselves", which he clarifies as follows:

The word phenomenology expresses a maxim that can be formulated in the expression the things in themselves! - as opposed to loose conceptions, accidental discoveries, admission of only apparently verified concepts; as opposed to pseudo-questions which often arise as problems over many generations (Heidegger, 1998, p.57).

Heidegger (1998) also says about phenomenology that: “The term phenomenology means, first and foremost, a concept of method. It does not characterize the quiddity of objects of philosophical inquiry, but their mode, as they are” (p.57). However, Heidegger does not dwell on this maxim of phenomenology; still, in *Being and Time* he points to the idea that *being-in* always already understands. And all understanding presents, in advance, a vision, a position and an understanding. We find, in this expression, the hermeneutical circularity. Each and every way of dealing with the things that come to us is already established by the historical horizon of determining meanings and significations. When we take phenomenology and hermeneutics as possible ways of investigating themes in Psychology, we consider that the phenomenological attitude allows us to go to the phenomenon as it appears, and that the hermeneutic element in itself is the condition of *Dasein* that already always understands itself in its Being. With this, we affirm the *meta-hodos*, also, as the most original way that in itself already entails a way of doing, investigating, at last conquering the meaning of that what, at the same time that shows itself, retracts.

In Psychology, a hermeneutic perspective for the investigation of a phenomenon can be realized when the existential way of articulation is sought, which is constituted in the midst of the spirit of its time. For this reason we can investigate and get to know how each epoch, in its general structure, takes the meaning of the phenomenon that we intend to investigate.

With the above clarifications, we can study the subject, not taking the modern perspective as the definitive truth. And thus, we can open up a space of inquiry to achieve what is at stake, letting the phenomenon appear in its phenomenal character. A phenomenological attitude, given the concrete experiences of the phenomenon that we are trying to investigate, is about being able to follow the experience and thus see what it has to say. By following phenomenologically the meaning that is found within a given experience, we must, at first, retreat before the interpretations of tradition, subtracting the moralizing connotation of the phenomenon in question. And thus, we accompany the internal vectors mobilizing the experience, so that the dynamics and the structure of the phenomenon itself are known.

However, there is something we need to ask: if *Dasein* previously understands, how can we explain that we men of science, in our own thinking, forget the possibility of apprehending the meaning of what appears as a phenomenon? Our argument about forgetfulness of our understanding possibility tries to cope with the obscuring of our meditative thought, which is accentuated by the project of control that started in modernity. The domain of thought that anticipates and calculates has made more and more scholars of different areas of knowledge concerned with the method and the consequent methodology. We know that the models of modern science describe nature as something that holds wi-

thin it a truth that can be achieved as long as we use the correct and safe method. Thus, we will unveil all its secrets and mysteries, so that we can become its masters. Science develops its methods and methodologies in order to be able to conquer and dominate all that may happen; that is a project present in the philosophy of subjectivity which leads us to different conceptions of method.

The Different Perspectives of Method

In ancient Greece, as we showed earlier in Plato's Symposium (2015), truth was treated as something in the order of discourse. And the discourse, in turn, was easily devoid of the very truth that had been established, as Socrates' speech had shown us. In the Middle Ages, truth is taken dogmatically. With the falling down of truth as established by dogmatism, the path of the metaphysics of subjectivity opens up, in which the method is taken as a way of achieving an essential determination of truth, fundamentally and exclusively conquered by reason. Still under the prism of the metaphysics of subjectivity, the dialectical-speculative method arises, idealized by Hegel, in order to reach the absolute spirit through the analysis of the history of humanity.

The scientific method was inaugurated by modern philosophy under Descartes' thinking. The Cartesian method is understood in its different stages by logical precepts and rules; Feijoo (2003) says that the rules are: evidence, analysis, synthesis and exhaustive classification. Truth can only be presupposed when it becomes evident; there is the decomposition of the whole, in all possible parts, so that the answers to the enigmas of nature can be reached. The synthesis of these parts makes it possible to attain the order of thought. By exhaustion, the belief is maintained that all nature will be under control. As Stein (1983) tells us, it is an ordered succession of several steps of reflection: demonstration, exposition and systematization of knowledge. The method was understood by modernity through the subject-object equation, in which the subject is that which positions the object and thus, through rational thought - that is, through thought representation, since to think is to represent -, the subject really conquers the real. According to Fogel (1998), “The real, the ‘thing’, is determined as an object, that is, as what is placed in opposition to the subject” (p.2). The method as systematized by Descartes will become fundamentally important for the methodology proper to the modern sciences. Modern physics is inserted in this project in search of the formula of the world. Through physics “The Being of the being was dissolved into the method of total calculability” (Stein, 1983, p. 18). And so, the method becomes submerged in the calculability. The method, as methodologically structured path for the purpose of anticipation and correction, is now appropriated by different scientific disciplines for research purposes. The method takes specific forms, depending on the sciences that use it - and all disciplines begin

to achieve the ideal of anticipation, certainty and control for the purpose of transforming reality.

In modernity, new paths are opened and metaphysics strives to achieve the essential determination of truth. The true becomes only the sure, the right, the represented. And to achieve truth, security and certainty, it is decisive that the subject is sure of itself. The proper method of philosophy and metaphysics is found in the essence of subjectivity and, therefore, centered on the subject. The procedure of this subject ensures and conquers the being as object for the subject.

In conclusion, we can observe that the question of the method gains completely different lines in the horizon of different epochs. In ancient Greece, a method like *meta-hodos* was about a way of doing something without any distance between the theoretical the practical attitudes. The way of doing and the doing itself constituted an inseparable unity. In Middle Ages, the predominant method was dogmatic, which proposed deductive relations that established the truth of everything that was on Earth. In the modern age, the imposition of the subject dominates, by becoming capable of representing all reality through thinking. It is noteworthy that both the Cartesian and speculative dialectical method of Hegel are in the tradition of the philosophies of subjectivity. For Heidegger (apud Stein, 1983), it is with Hegel that philosophy gains the fullness of method and thus also the fullness of the veiling of the question of Being and the consequent forgetting of the ontological difference. It is for this reason that Heidegger wants to retake the mode of thematizing the phenomenon in the most primordial sense, as the ancient Greeks did, that is, by the *aletheia*.

The Hermeneutic Phenomenological Method in the Heideggerian Investigations.

The method, in its different modulations, is an issue that can be found in several studies developed by Heidegger. About the way in which he proceeds to develop the theme of *The phenomenology of religious life*, it is said that the philosopher had been invited by the University of Freiburg to lecture on religion. For three to four months, however, Heidegger had only spoken in hermeneutics and the students complained about the fact that the course was not being discussed. That is why Heidegger, in the first part of his classes, makes methodological considerations and in the second part presents religious questions through the hermeneutics of the factual life of religious experience. In *Phenomenology of religious life*, Heidegger (1920-21/2010) clarifies how he hermeneutically investigates the faith of the apostle Paul. To begin his investigation, Heidegger starts presenting what he means by *introduction* and *factual life*.

Heidegger (2010) says that introducing a question does not mean that we are showing the means to an end. In order to describe an existential experience, no mediating instrument is necessary - thus to start a study directed at religious life, as he did

in the course on Religion, means to open oneself to the place where one already is, that is, to the factual life, where what one wants to investigate is always there. For Heidegger, both philosophy and science arise from the factual life. Heidegger (2010), then, in the investigation of Paul's factual life, calls into question the experience of faith. He affirms that in order to reach this experience it is imperative that the investigator is placed on the horizon where the phenomenon itself (faith) happens, without any mediation, that is, without saying what faith is beforehand.

The philosopher (Heidegger, 2010), showing how he proceeded in his investigation of Paul's faith, considers Paul's letters to the Thessalonians. He begins to clarify his method with the following question: *How is his material phenomenologically explained?* "Material" refers to what has a certain methodological meaning. The explanation of the phenomenon from the material takes place at determined levels as well. Since the fundamental problem of Heidegger's investigation of faith lies in the factual experience, it is necessary to clarify what he means by facticity. Facticity refers to our existing in a given situation. Since the structuring of existential space is temporal, the way in which each human being exists is temporal, since it always involves the idea of the existential field project. The professor concludes that, from a dialogue with the factual limits present in the temporality of what we want to investigate, we can cope with those entities in the present, because even that they happened in the past, they always come to us. Having clarified this point, Heidegger goes on to his second clarification. Since factual life is historically constituted, then the first to be determined pre-phenomenologically is that which is historical-objectively given, that is, the historical situation, its phenomenal connection, always starting from the phenomenologically given motifs. Heidegger (2010) says: "The objective-historical that stands out must be considered, so that it gets a tone of its own and, therefore, this tone must be fixed" (p.76). It is the factual life that brings the notion of history - therefore, in a phenomenological perspective it is necessary to describe the factual life in which we always find ourselves. In this regard, Heidegger (2010) clarifies that "phenomenology is philosophy and vice versa" (p.10).

Heidegger (1920-21/2010) continues to clarify that to investigate phenomenologically it is necessary an existential concretion, which cannot be done by means of a logical chain. Thus, he shows us how he proceeded in his investigation by refraining from such a chain.

In the Pauline Epistles, Heidegger proceeds to the phenomenological explication of the first Epistle to the Thessalonians. This is the material that has a certain methodological meaning. The phenomenological explanation of this phenomenon will be given, firstly, taking into account what Heidegger (2010) refers to in paragraph 23, "The methodological difficulties: What is the objective historical situation of Paul in writing this epistle?" (P.78). The situation is determined as follows: the epistle was

written in Corinth during his first missionary journey, which took him first to Philippi and thence, after three weeks, to Thessalonica. The opposition of the Jews to the Christians forced Paul to leave the city in secret, leaving for Athens, where Paul sent Timothy to return to Thessalonica. Paul meets Timothy again in Corinth. Paul writes the epistle immediately after his arrival in Corinth. Heidegger says: "If we expose this historically-objectively, Paul will appear as a missionary, who speaks like a common traveling preacher without anything very special to be considered" (p. 78), so we will have to move on to the second moment.

Obtaining the historical situation of the phenomenon - to obtain the historical realization of the phenomenon, we must characterize the plurality of what is in the situation, in such a way that we do not decide anything about its own complex - therefore, we have to face the articulation of the situational plurality. To do so, we must, first of all, achieve 'the situation to be emphasized' amidst the plurality; then, we must show the first or 'arctic' (dominant) sense of the situation to be exposed; and, finally, reach the phenomenon from the phenomenal complex and begin, from this complex, the consideration of the origin.

Heidegger (2010) presents, in the Epistle of Paul, the historical realization of the phenomenon, and then, he says that, at that moment, we begin to write the epistle with Paul. We do the writing ourselves, that is, we dictate it. In what way do we do this? Through the answers to the following questions: What is Paul's situation by writing the Epistle to the Thessalonians? How did he experience it? How is the *shared world* given to him in the situation of the writing of the epistle? This is linked to the question of how Paul finds himself in this shared world. "The *content* of the shared world must be seen in its determinability, in the context next to the how of *reference* with this shared world. "Therefore, the task here is to expose the fundamental determination of this reference" (p. 78).

Regarding the methodological difficulties that Heidegger (2010) referred earlier in his analysis of Paul's writings, he says that with them we come to the point of turning the historical-objective complex into the historical-original situation. They are: language, empathy and transposition.

Exposure through language is a difficulty, since the language of thematic consideration is not the original language. And the most original conceptual terminology in the factual experience of Paul's life is not the one with which we are accustomed. And, in addition, from the original terminology is derived the thematic conceptual terminology. This derivation brings problems. For these reasons, the radical shift from conceptual terminology to the originating terminology is imperative. However, we must bear in mind the impossibility of reaching the original terminology in its entirety. Heidegger (2010) concludes: "Every explained thing is not understandable until its complex of announced meaning has not been realized" (p. 76).

Empathy (*Einfühlung*) is present in the situa-

tion, since: "Empathy takes place in the factual experience of life - an original historical phenomenon that cannot be resolved without the phenomenon of tradition in the original sense - the surrounding world thus gains its meaning from the understanding of the situation" (p.77). Heidegger shows us that empathy occurs in the cadence of meaning presented in the situation, so when investigating the phenomenon in another time, empathy cannot be repeated. Empathy is not something we can produce by will, it is in a situation totally independent of the desire to empathize. Heidegger believes that by assuming a phenomenological attitude, the space of experience opens itself, in this case the space of the religious experience of Paul. In order to carry out his research, Heidegger dispensed with any effective presence, as well as any transcendence to the phenomenon itself. Only by the phenomenological attitude can we approach the *pathos* - after all, it is the *pathos* that binds us to each other and allows us to understand one another - but we cannot be in the same *pathos*.

Finally, the third difficulty concerns transposition. Heidegger refers to transposition as a methodological difficulty with regard to the Epistle of Paul: "We could say: it is impossible, that is, it is hardly possible to transpose the exact situation of Paul. Because we do not know his surrounding world" (Heidegger, 2010, p.78-79). All signification has an object, and concretization is the sense that ultimately determines the object - the pioneer situation involves many elements, but what provides these elements with unity and meaning? The being of the situation is his sense of being and it is this sense that Heidegger is seeking. And this sense is opened by phenomenological rather than empirical experience. Given that the experience is phenomenological, such a transposition reveals itself as possible.

Through the phenomenological explanation of the historical-objective situation and historical situation of the phenomenon, as well as considering the barriers encountered in the interpretation of Paul's situation, Heidegger - in his phenomenological description of the act of faith, through Paul's religious experience - concludes that one cannot think of faith without the element of transformation. Faith demands a transformation, from within itself, as it obtains concretization. The religious character depends on the intentional act, in this case, the act of faith, which opens the religious experience of Paul. And it is this experience that can be described phenomenologically. However, not only in Phenomenology of religious life does the philosopher refer to the question of method. Heidegger (1921-22 / 2011), in a lecture dated from 1921-1922 at the University of Freiburg, develops the introductory question about a main definition, that is, the formal indicative in order to explain the categories of the fundamental phenomenon of life, in the perspective of the determination of the facticity of life.

In 1927, in paragraph 7, in a provisional exposition, Heidegger (1927/1998) slightly discusses the method, explaining that phenomenology for him means a method of scientific philosophy in general.

Still in paragraph 7 of *Being and Time*, he clarifies how he appropriates the phenomenological method in his investigation of the Being of the being or the sense of Being in general. In this paragraph, the philosopher shows in a provisional way the path he took to try to overcome the modern philosophy method. The investigations of the philosophies of subjectivity proceeded in such a way as to promote the veiling of being, or rather, the oblivion of its meaning. Heidegger intended to reach the phenomenon that he wanted to investigate, beginning with the overcoming of the thought that takes as reference the subjectivity. In this same paragraph, Heidegger assumes his path through phenomenology in the sense of the unveiling of the history of being, where the question that prevails in the investigation of the content of the thing is not the what of the thing, but its how. Heidegger (2003) refers to the modern method of inquiry, in *Being and Time*, as follows: “A simple technique for the manipulation of objects” (p.51). Further, complete: “empty description of technique” (p.52).

Heidegger (1954 / 2012b), also, refers to the essential experience that points to the limitation of the sciences, which is that of not perceiving the inescapable as inaccessible. It is within the inescapable that Being is thought and said. The proper object of philosophy by its character of inescapability becomes inaccessible to the method of the sciences. In *Science and thought of meaning*, Heidegger (2012b) still clarifies that existence in its totality cannot be reached by any norm that transcends existence itself, that is, by a prescriptive normative criterion, positive and abstractly positioned. In his analytic, he developed his method of investigating the phenomena that are presented in the order of the uncontrollable. He intended, in his *meta-hodos*, to reach the mode of validity of the real, that is, the way of becoming vigorous, of unveiling of things. Heidegger (2012b) points to the inescapable character of the object of psychiatry, concluding that this area of knowledge can never reach the meaning of the phenomenon that it investigates. And that is so because it imposes contours to its object, but once the existence is removed from its temporal flow, it retracts itself. By analogy, we conclude that the same is true of psychology. Both Psychiatry and Psychology deal with the mental life in its manifestations of disease - always including health -, which are presented by and from what exists in the integration of body, soul, mind and spirit, constitutive of every human being. In what respects as a phenomenon of Psychiatry and Psychology, the already existing mode of being is presented and exposed each time. Thus, we start from the thesis that *ek-sistance* remains the essential of Psychiatry and Psychology - that is why we need to take up the *meta-hodos* in the investigation of what interests us. Finally, we conclude that in the unfolding of his different ways of walking alongside things, the philosopher appropriates, in a first moment, the phenomenology of Husserl to carry out his investigations. Thus, we can verify the presence of three constitutive moments of his analysis: the phenomenological reduction, the description of the

internal vectors to the phenomenon and the explicitness of the experiences, which for the philosopher are always historically constituted (Feijoo & Mattar, 2014). Heidegger appropriates the phenomenological mode of investigation, while considering that the phenomenon is constituted circularly in a certain historical horizon. By considering phenomenology and hermeneutics together, he names his method as phenomenological-hermeneutic.

In his later works, Heidegger is hardly concerned with phenomenology, actually he seems to dispense with any methodological discussion. However, within the development of his thought, method, object and thought are presented in a unitary way, which we can see in his 1954 text, *The Question Concerning Technology* - the philosopher will draw attention to two essential determinations of the constitution of the modern world: a) *Gestell*, in which nature goes down in a total obscuration of the dwelling of Being, that is, its historicity. That one who forgets their original element runs the risk of withdrawing the true. But where there is forgetfulness, there is also the possibility of recollection capable of responding to the appeals of what is most original to it, *Ereignis*. b) *Ereignis*, which is the Event that evokes the common belonging of human and Being that happen and are mutually appropriated. That is why Heidegger says that his path of inquiry is questioning. And to question what we are immersed in is to prepare for a freer relationship with what is presented (Heidegger, 1954/2012 a).

In accompanying Heidegger (Stein, 1983), we conclude that in order to investigate a phenomenon, we must bear in mind that it is not possible to promote a differentiation between the path of thought (method), what one intends to think (subject) and the act of thinking (thought). It should be emphasized that this triad in research constitutes an inseparable unit, without any mediation. And it is with this triad in mind that we will go through a rigorous path of investigation of the themes of interest in Psychology.

The Transposition of Hermeneutic Phenomenology to Psychology

In order to defend the transposition of the hermeneutic phenomenological method from Philosophy to Psychology, we will first try to remember and reflect on the atmosphere of criticism and skepticism that surrounds the researches and their respective methods in Psychology.

In 1956, when Psychology already believed that it had established its area of knowledge and the different strands had established themselves with its positioned object and its method, Georges Canguilhem put this discipline in question, when giving a conference in *Collège Philosophique*, published in 1958 in the *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, referring to the lack of definition of this area of study and also questioning the effectiveness of the psychologist (Canguilhem, 1999). Canguilhem (1958/1999) says that psychology, because of

its lack of definition, has a totally unfounded efficacy: “In fact, from many works of psychology, one has the impression that they mix a philosophy without rigor, an ethics without requirement and a medicine without control” (p.104). Therefore, Canguilhem postulates that in order for Psychology to conquer a space of recognition, it would be essential for it to be rigorously established, overcoming a “certain compositional empiricism, literally codified for teaching purposes” (Japiassú 1995, p.17). From the problematic raised by Canguilhem, the positions against and in favor of the attempt of positioning and defining the object of the Psychology proliferated, arising the debate about the necessity of a scientific theory that would support its practice. In Brazil, among the many texts in this respect, the publication of Garcia-Roza (1977) gained notoriety. He engages in a polemical controversy when he attacks the pretension of Psychology in the conquest of a unit as a field of scientific knowledge and concludes his thought defending the maintenance of the plurality of this field of knowledge.

Nowadays Rauter (1995) shares Garcia-Roza’s (1977) thesis, arguing that Psychology, in order to protect the paradoxical space of its function, should not have the pretensions of establishing a fixed identity for this area of knowledge. Coimbra (1995) argues radically against the movement of Psychology as an area of specialization, as well as against the psychologist as a specialist. Figueiredo (1995, 1996), faced with the crisis of the epistemological model, questions whether Psychology could, without this model, be justified theoretically and methodologically.

Firstly, we argue that in order to act in *meta-hodos*, we would have to do it without a positioned and delimited object of study. It is a path of investigation conditioned by a knowledge that requires prudence: the more the experience, the greater the achievement of this walk. There is no measure defined neither short nor beyond that way of being close to things. Is it a specific knowledge that is gained in the very act of walking? In order to answer this question, we first need to clarify how the emergence of subjectivity as an object of Psychology happened, as we will do next.

Philosophers focused on the philosophy of science, such as Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) and Auguste Comte (1798-1857), already referred to the impossibility of the constitution of Psychology as a scientific discipline. Kant constructs a transcendently based epistemology, so his questioning is not about the object, but for the possibility of knowing the object. Kant’s (1781/2001) arguments concerning the unsustainability of this area of knowledge as a scientific discipline were directed to the fact that the thematic object of that discipline -the soul- could be postulated in the practical realm but could not, objectively, be knowable. In this way, the soul cannot be taken as a scientific object. The concept of the soul that underlies rational and empirical psychology has no phenomenality. Therefore, it cannot be accessed phenomenally, concludes the philosopher, since the object of study of this area

of knowledge is not reachable. Comte (1830/1991) constructs a positive epistemology, questioning the way to describe the positivities of the empirical object. With its demand for the positivity inherent in the object of study, it totally rules out the possibility of constructing a theory directed toward the study of the psyche. The positivist argued that if the object of psychology had its basis in physiology, this area of study would be unnecessary, since biology was already devoted to it. If its object was social, this area of study was already being contemplated by sociology. Therefore, considering the arguments of Kant and Comte (both from the epistemology), from the perspective of the founding of the scientific disciplines, Psychology could not constitute itself as science, since it presented the problem of access by means of deduction of its specific object, or it did not possess an object for which to conduct his studies empirically. The first elaborates a transcendental epistemology, concerned with the condition of possibility of knowledge of the object. The second constructs a positive epistemology focused on empirical data. Thus, according to these two philosophers, Psychology as an area of knowledge would be totally unfeasible.

All attempts to circumscribe subjectivity, whether in the field of Philosophy or in the field of Psychology, are subject of criticisms directed at this way of proposing the problem. In the nineteenth century, the philosophies of subjectivity went into crisis. The question becomes how, once the subject and object split, we can move out of the scope of an interiority – subject – in order to truly access the object that lies outside. In this way, a forgery of the object can end up happening. The same misconception about access can be established with the object empirically given to make itself known by the subject. With this impasse, there is an urgent need for discernment of what happens in relation to access.

The attempt to constitute a positioned and limited object is precisely what puts psychologies under suspicion (Mattar, 2011). Husserl (1936/1989) draws attention to the need to go beyond the dichotomy subject and object, because it was this split the reason why the crisis of the philosophy of subjectivity was established. Following in parallel to the path taken by Husserl to overcome the crisis of universals, we argue that Psychology needs to discern that what it has been instituting as an object has no objectuality at all. For this reason, to think of a psychology in the path of phenomenology consists, in the first moment, in questioning the discourses of Psychology in relation to its objects. Considering that the requirement of positioning the object is what puts the theoretical discourses as well as the practices of Psychology in crisis, we must abandon the illusory need to operate with positioned and substantialized objects. Only in this way can we think in the midst of the intentional fields, therefore, without timeless determination and without spatially defined substantiality.

As we have seen so far, the question of the subject’s requirement to determine the subject in order to be considered a specific area of study is

a matter of debate among scholars of Philosophy and Psychology. After having followed this debate in part, we will - together with a certain philosophy that seeks to find something of the order of the more original than the relation subject and object - seek the originality from which appears what we call psychism. Thus, following these arguments, we intend to find a way of reflection that allows us to place the studies and field of practices in phenomenological-existential psychology in a space also more originating, that is, in the existence.

It is, precisely, the most original that Husserl's phenomenology (1910 / 2007b) will privilege as a theme that deserves to be thought. And yet, the phenomenologist says that Psychology should stick to the study of intentionality in order to remove any need to become an area of knowledge that positionally establishes its object. Heidegger (1927/1998), with the radicalization of intentionality to the historically constituted space, is that one who will point the way to think a knowledge in Psychology in which it becomes totally unnecessary to find a positioned object, delimited and substantialized.

Accompanying the phenomenology and the fundamental ontology in Husserl (1900 / 2007b) and Heidegger (1927/1998), respectively, we will begin to work out a possible way to propose a method in Psychology that totally disregards a positioned object. It is important to emphasize that we do not intend to have these philosophies as a direct application to Psychology. If this were so, we would be just replacing the theoretical foundations. We intend to follow only the margin (Campos, 2014) of the path taken by these philosophies, to appropriate autonomously a Psychology that seeks its basis in the very act of existing. We will, therefore, follow the argumentative steps of these philosophies to achieve our goals. What we are trying to defend as another possibility of investigation in Psychology is not yet exhausted with Husserl in his proposal of phenomenology, which he himself termed phenomenological psychology. Our proposal not only suspends the truths established by the theories in Psychology, which start from a view that presupposes a human nature, taken as object based on a substantiality, but also considers that non-substantiality makes possible a reconfiguration historically constituted. Intentional fields appear not only temporarily, but also as hermeneutically conditioned spaces. To take the path in the hermeneutical sense, we will follow, in the constitution of our psychology, the path through which Heidegger (1929/2006) directs us to in his hermeneutic phenomenology.

In order to investigate a phenomenon in the path of *meta-hodos*, we have to consider the intentional fields historically constituted, and, in this way, we can completely subtract the need to operate with an object proper to Psychology. Or rather, in so doing, we can take its object as totally devoid of reality, that which appears in the hermeneutic field: existence. We consider that it is necessary to articulate a proposal in Psychology in these bases, to describe the existential concretions conditioned by the historical sendings. In this sense, the Psychology

that we want to think of is not based on categorical objectivities but rather, as Heidegger (1920-1921 / 2010) proposes, on formal indicatives: "In the methodology we call a formal clue (Formale Anzeige) the phenomenological explanation. That what the formally indicated meaning brings up is the horizon on which the phenomena to be distinguished will be seen" (p. 52). This, however, without giving opinions, nor anything that brings presuppositions or prejudices about what is intended to analyze.

To follow the formal indicatives means to start from clues, form, that only gain materiality in existence or history. The Event (Ereignis) constitutes the identity-form that will conquer the difference with the historically constituted materiality, in order to fill the sense, which will always be epochal, that is, conquered in existence. To think of the world that is ours, which Heidegger calls the Era of technique, we understand that it is through the materiality, that is, through the determinations of this world that the cadence of what drives our way of being happens. Therefore, it is the determinations of the technique, such as: effectiveness, functionality, correction, that existentially fill the Event, which is ours.

In summary, in agreement with Stein (1983), we conclude that the phenomenological method is situated at the antipodes of subjectivity. It is along with phenomenology and hermeneutics that we find another way of investigating our themes in Existential Psychology. We start from the initial consideration that the hermeneutic in itself is the condition of *Dasein*, which is already always understood in its being. Therefore, we are always in an understanding of what comes to us.

To investigate a theme in Psychology, we are increasingly required a methodology, fully defined in its limits and in its effectiveness. We can, to achieve this objectivity, proceed with the planning of our investigations by means of three procedures that do not contradict at all the idea of objectivity and rigor. To reach our objectives, we will use the phenomenological-hermeneutic method, as used by Heidegger, that is, phenomenologically destroying established truths and constructing other possibilities of thinking about the phenomenon in question. To do so, we must first suspend any perspective in Psychology that takes for its studies an object defined in its properties and limited spatially. After this procedure, we will let that which constitutes the subject of study in Psychology appear in its field of appearance and show us the path that leads to the meaning of the phenomenon.

To conclude, we will show below a way of research that follows the phenomenological and hermeneutical determinations through methodological procedures that we can appropriate to carry out the investigations in Psychology:

1- Narrative review of literature: based on a narrative review of the literature, we proceed to locate, analyze, synthesize and interpret the critical investigations about the way in which Psychology, in particular, and the Human Sciences, in general, think the phenomenon that we intend to investiga-

te. To do so, we consulted the databases and virtual libraries, such as Google Scholar, Lilacs, Scielo, Mendeley, using the keywords of our interest. We located the published articles on the subject, indicating an interval of time in which they discussed, albeit indirectly, the same problem of our investigation. And, also, through the bibliographic research we chose the primary sources that we will use in the investigation in question.

2. Hermeneutic research: in a phenomenological and hermeneutic perspective, we consider that the way of being of human beings is constituted in the midst of the spirit of their time. That is why we need to know how each epoch has taken the phenomenon we intend to investigate so that we can understand what was at stake in that decision. With this clarification, we can study the subject so as not to take the modern perspective that vehemently affirms a single and definitive truth. This way we are able to open a space of investigation to reach what is at stake in what we investigated, and the phenomenon can appear in its phenomenal character.

3- Phenomenological accompaniment of the concrete experience of what one wants to investigate: in order to be able to follow the phenomenon that interests us, we proceed with our investigation accompanying the experience, so that we can let the very experience speak what it has to tell us. By accompanying phenomenologically the meaning that lies within the scope of the phenomenon, we need, in a first moment, to retreat before the current interpretations on the subject, subtracting the different connotations that circumscribe the phenomenon. After this methodological stance, we must follow the mobilizing internal vectors of the movement of the phenomenon - in order to attain the dynamics and structure of the phenomenon itself.

4- Finally, in order to obtain the historical situation of the phenomenon, as Heidegger did (1920-21 / 2010) in *The Phenomenology of religious life*, we must characterize the plurality of what is in the situation, in such a way that we do not interpret anything about its own complex. With this, we can reach the articulation of the situational plurality. We return to the factual life, that is, to the element by which the phenomenon manifests itself in different historical moments, just as it presents itself in the voice of those who experience the phenomenal situation. In this way, historically constituted voices present themselves as a condition of possibility for plural and singular discourses about the act to appear.

Final considerations

With the exposition in defense of hermeneutic phenomenology as a way of investigation in Psychology, we do not want to attribute a derogatory sense to other methods employed in science. What we want is to safeguard other possibilities of forwarding thought, since there is a strong tendency to use in our studies the methodology that prevails in the modern sciences and that is emphasized in

the philosophies of subjectivity. With the mastery of the method of the natural sciences, scholars and researchers may end up believing that this is the only and unquestionable way of doing science. And so, these method theorists can, in their impositions, ignore the limits that are within their procedures. And, once these scholars extrapolate in imposing their methodologies limits, they may end up imposing their path of inquiry to all other areas of study. We propose, therefore, to return to the original sense of method, that is to say, *meta-hodos*, which, apart from being the place from which all methods and methodology start to be methodologically constituted, is also the place that allows other possible ways of accompanying the events. What we defend is a walk alongside the phenomenon, so that we can see, hear and attend to what the phenomenon has to say, that is, even in part, without any theoretical or methodological mediation.

Accompanying the metaphor of the theme we set out to investigate, we begin by introducing ourselves to the question that opens us to this place. To do so, we have to place ourselves on the horizon where the phenomenon itself happens without putting anything, no mediation, between the experiment being investigated and the researcher.

We chose the *meta-hodos* as a possible and more original way of investigating the existential phenomena. This is because we consider that existence always presents itself in its inescapability, and, because when we try to imprison any existential element by contouring it or withdrawing it from its temporal character, that which shows itself immediately withdraws.

For the reasons listed above we continue to insist on proposing the *meta-hodos* as our research path. We know that by investigating in this way we run the risk of being banned from academia and from any possibility of gaining the *status* of scientist. On the other hand, if we act blindly, in the way the natural sciences propose, in addition to losing the opportunity to resist to what is imposed, opening space for other possibilities of thought, we will be totally divorced from what is our interest, i. e., the existence in its mystery and inescapability.

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