

Introduction to Monographic Section

Memory and Trauma: Philosophical Perspectives

Introducción a la Sección Monográfica

Memoria y trauma: Perspectivas filosóficas

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Traumatic experiences are widespread in today's world, as war affects several countries, as gender violence continues, and the global mental health crisis sharpens after the pandemic. In fact, trauma is originally an Ancient Greek concept that refers to an open physical wound, while psychological trauma is an idea introduced in the late 19th century. While some claim trauma to be a culturally-coerced phenomenon, others believe that our ancestors were not that different from us when it comes to psychological suffering, giving trauma a more universal aspect.

Nowadays, the notions of trauma, traumatic experiences and traumatic events are actually used in very heterogeneous ways. Traumatic experiences are a polysemy, sometimes involving a diagnosis (one of PTSD), sometimes involving particular ways of being (feeling stuck in time), sometimes involving the unliveability of a particular social life, and capturing much more.

While conceptual difficulties persist, it is evident that traumatic experiences have the potential to disturb one's memory, because of their negative emotional charge, for example, and the feeling that one's memory is no longer under one's control. Nonetheless,



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contemporary philosophers of memory have, to date, largely neglected connections between trauma and memory. Besides the question about the concept of trauma itself, there are many other questions that still remain unanswered: In what ways do traumatic experiences shape memory and the self? Is this shaping always for the worse? Does trauma involve transformative experiences? Does trauma produce epistemic harms? What is the relation between trauma and grief? And trauma and dreams?

These are some of the difficult but important questions that this special issue aims to address or critically examine. Michelle Maiese, one of the invited speakers of a previous online workshop we organized on the topic, opens the issue with her reflections on how trauma can affect one agent's authenticity. Next, Caroline Christoff focuses on the epistemic harms that can result from performing trauma narratives for material gain. Aisha Qadoos analyzes how the ambiguous loss experienced by those who are close to a primary victim of trauma can sometimes also be a transformative experience. Alberto Guerrero-Velazquez proposes that the notion of trauma should be better understood through postcausal theories of memory in order to diminish the significance of the traumatic episode. Clarita Bonamino, Sophie Boudrias and Melanie Rosen investigate how different types of dreams can either reinforce or alleviate trauma by involving prediction errors. The more theoretical part of the special issue is concluded by Gabriel Corda, who suggests post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a new criterion for attributing episodic memory to non-human animals.

The subsequent part of the issue presents more concrete examples of trauma. Germán Bonanni's essay reflects on his personal and his comrades' experiences after participating in the Malvinas war. María López Ríos, Christopher Jude McCarroll, and Paloma Muñoz Gómez elucidate how the defeat following Chile's constitutional plebiscite of September 2022 was experienced as grief by segments of the population. Finally, Sergio Daniel Rojas-Sierra and Tito Hernando Pérez Pérez explore the subjective recollections of individuals from the Antiguo Espacio Territorial de Capacitación y Reincorporación (AETCR) de Ponderes, who were deeply affected by Colombia's internal armed conflict.

In conclusion, we anticipate that this special issue will stimulate new avenues of exploration within the philosophy of memory. We extend our sincere gratitude to the authors for their valuable contributions, as well as to the reviewers whose feedback has enhanced the quality of the publications.

