

The Experience of Suffering

Philosophical, Cultural, and Social Dimensions

International Conference. Department of Philosophy and Austrian Science Fund
Innsbruck, June 22—23, 2017, Claudiana, Herzog-Friedrich-Straße 3, Claudiasaal

Organization: Noelia Bueno-Gómez and Anne Siegetsleitner



Ramón Muriedas, Mother of the Emigrant. Photo: Félix Amorín

The entire experience of suffering and the way in which we make sense of it is influenced by cultural and social patterns. Therefore, a phenomenon like suffering can only be understood from a holistic and an interdisciplinary approach. Suffering is at the same time a personal and a social experience. It affects people and their relationships at an existential, psychological, and physical level. Human suffering has always been treated through symbolical performances (rituals), narratives of meaning, religious explanations, and technical interventions in human cultures. A holistic approach to suffering should take into account all these dimensions in order to put them together and design a general interpretation of what causes suffering, of how it affects human beings (and also non-human animals) and of how they face it. The aim of this conference is to bring together experts from different research areas (particularly social and cultural philosophy, bioethics, anthropology, and biomedicine) who are working on the topic of suffering in order to stimulate an interdisciplinary discussion and an exchange of ideas. We will focus on the experience of suffering in its different dimensions, its perceptions, interpretations, expressions, and managements.

Questions

- ◆ How do cultural and social elements influence the experiences of suffering?
- ◆ What are the main contemporary resources for individuals in different societies in order to deal with suffering?
- ◆ How does techno-science determine the experience of suffering? Which resources and limitations does it entail?
- ◆ Is it desirable to abolish suffering?
- ◆ How does religion influence the management of suffering?
- ◆ What is the role of suffering in philosophical and moral theories?
- ◆ How do different philosophical approaches interpret suffering?
- ◆ What are the bioethical challenges of the current biomedical management of suffering?
- ◆ Suffering, self, and subjectivity
- ◆ Suffering and non-human animals
- ◆ Biopolitics and social suffering
- ◆ Suffering and the mind-body problem

Timetable

Thursday, June 22

- 9:00 Addresses of welcome
(University of Innsbruck)
- 9:15 **Silke Schicktanz**, Medical University of Göttingen
The Patients' Perspective in Bioethics. Normative and Methodological Considerations
- 10:15 **Gabriele Werner-Felmayer**, Medical University of Innsbruck
There Ain't no Cure: Biomedicine and the Persistence of Suffering
- 11:15 Coffee break
- 11:45 **Patrik Vandermeersch**, University of Groningen
The Ritual of Self-Flagellation: A Challenge for Interpretation
- 12:45 Lunch
- 14:00 **Noelia Bueno-Gómez**, University of Innsbruck
Teresa of Avila and the Mystic-Ascetic Christian Management of Suffering
- 14:30 Submitted paper session 1
Tine Van Osselaer, University of Antwerp
On Suffering and Compassion: Visiting Stigmatic Women in Europe, 19th and 20th Centuries
- 15:00 Submitted paper session 2
Maria Heidegger, University of Innsbruck
Expressing Emotional Pain in Early Tyrolean Psychiatry (1830–1850)
- 15:30 Coffee break
- 16:00 Submitted paper session 3
Christiane Vogel, University of Halle-Wittenberg
Self-Writing and Textual Embodiment in Breast Cancer Journals
- 16:30 Submitted paper session 4
Ilse Somavilla, University of Innsbruck
Wittgenstein's Sufferings in his Search for Personal and Philosophical Perfection
- 20:00 **Conference dinner at the Restaurant Dengg**
Riesengasse 13, Innsbruck

Friday, June 23

- 9:15 **Jayandra Soni**, University of Innsbruck
The Concept of Suffering in the Indian Philosophy
- 10:15 **Asunción Herrera-Guevara**, University of Oviedo
Suffering: A New Concept of Justice that Includes Nonhuman Animals
- 11:15 Coffee break
- 11:45 **Phil C. Langer**, International Psychoanalytic University Berlin
Narratives of Suffering and Notions of Solidarity among Young Women in Afghanistan
- 12:45 Lunch
- 14:00 Submitted paper session 5
Marina Acero, CIESAS (Mexico City)
Overflowing Modernity and Social Suffering: Self-Destructive Masculine Identities and Emotional Healing in San Cristóbal de las Casas
- 14:30 Submitted paper session 6
Florian Schmidtsberger, University of Vienna
The Body as the Medium of Emotional Suffering. A Phenomenology of Emotions and the Body
- 15:00 Submitted paper session 7
Dominik Koesling, University of Jena

Is Suffering a Bad Thing?

- 15:30 Coffee break
- 16:00 Submitted paper presentation 8
Başak Keki, İstanbul Gelişim University
Nietzsche and Levinas on Suffering
- 16:30 Submitted paper presentation 9
María Martín-Gómez, University of Salamanca
The Hermeneutics of Human Suffering. Faith and Agony in Spanish Philosophy
- 17:00 Submitted paper presentation 10
Esther Redolfi, University of Innsbruck
Simone de Beauvoir's Existentialistic Perspective on Life, Suffering, Death, and Fate
- 17:30 Closing

Contact

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Research Project

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