

**SACRED LANGUAGES, CONVULSING BODIES:
EPILEPSY, BIBLICAL PHILOLOGY, AND NEUROPHOBIA
IN MEDICAL EDUCATION**

Renato Faria da Gama (UFF, UFRJ e FMC)

renatofgama@gmail.com

Prince Kazadi (UL)

princekazadi54@gmail.com

Marcos Weiss Bliacheris (AGU)

bliacheris@gmail.com

Crisóstomo Lima do Nascimento (UFF e UENF)

crisostomoln@gmail.com

Camila Castelo Branco Pupe (UFF)

cpupe@id.uff.br

This article offers a critical philological analysis of representations of epilepsy in the original languages of the Bible – Hebrew, Greek, and Latin – with the aim of understanding how these linguistic constructions have historically shaped the religious, medical, and social imagination regarding this neurological condition. This study employs a contemporary philological method that integrates textual criticism, genetic criticism, and the sociology of texts to examine canonical passages involving figures such as Saul, Ezekiel, the epileptic boy, and the apostle Paul. Terms such as רֵעָה רָעָה (evil spirit), σεληνιάζεται (to be moon-struck), and *stimulus carnis* (thorn in the flesh) reveal a symbolic framework in which epilepsy is conceived as a spiritual, social, or cosmological rupture. By contrasting these formulations with the foundations of modern neurology and classical medical works – especially the Hippocratic treatise *De Morbo Sacro* – the study proposes an ethical and integrative re-reading of these narratives. Finally, it addresses the persistence of these symbolic meanings in contemporary medical education, through the lens of the neurophobia phenomenon, suggesting interdisciplinary approaches for more humanized neurological care.

Keywords:

Epilepsy. Social Stigma. Medical Education.