

# Heidegger's phenomenology of embodiment in the *Zollikon Seminars*

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**Abstract** In this article, I focus on the problem of body as it is developed in Heidegger's *Zollikon Seminars*, in contrast with its enigmatic concealment in *Being and Time*. In the first part, I emphasize the implicit connection of Heidegger's approach of body with Husserl's problematic of *Leib* and *Körper*, and with his phenomenological analyses of tactility. In the second part, I focus on Heidegger's distinction between the limits of the lived body and the limits of the corresponding corporeal thing, opening to an ontological understanding of the ecstatic bodying forth of the body. In the third part, I analyse this ecstatic bodiliness in relation to the problem of spatiality, exploring the tension between the *here* and the *over there* in the experience of the embodiment. Heidegger not only refuses to understand the space starting from the *here* of the body, but he also refuses to understand the body starting from the *here* of the space. Thus, there are two interconnected inversions that Heidegger operates in relation to Husserl: In the topic of spatiality, he rejects the pre-eminence of the *here*; in relation to the body, he contests the primacy of tactility. Finally, the conclusion stresses that, even if the bodying forth penetrates almost all behaviour of *Dasein* in the world, there is however a limit of embodiment, an unreachable frontier beyond any possibility of the bodying forth, namely the understanding of being. This also implies that the problem of body needs be understood in the context of the ontological difference.

**Keywords** Body · Space · Tactility · *Leib–Körper* distinction · Ontological difference

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## 1 Introduction

It is well known that the phenomenon of body is somehow missing, in a quite strange way, from the project of the analytic of *Dasein* in Heidegger's *Being and Time*.<sup>1</sup> Of course, many readers of this treatise have seen this lack as being highly problematic. Already in the early times, Jean-Paul Sartre expressed in a few cases his astonishment in the front of this inexplicable gap in the fundamental ontology.<sup>2</sup> More recently, other scholars, such as Jean Greisch, have said that the body is simply a failure of *Sein und Zeit*,<sup>3</sup> and we must admit it as such, while other interpreters, such as Michel Haar,<sup>4</sup> have tried to defend Heidegger, by suggesting, for example, that the ontological place of embodiment is somehow covered by the existential of *Befindlichkeit*.

My questioning here is, however, differently oriented. I will try to approach this difficulty—namely, if the problem of body *is or is not* a failure in Heidegger's analytic—starting from a different angle. I will focus on the *Zollikon Seminars*, a volume that records several meetings Heidegger had in the '60s with Medard Boss and a few dozen medical doctors near Zürich. What is important for us, in this context, is that, during these meetings, Heidegger had approached a few times the phenomenon of body,<sup>5</sup> precisely that phenomenon he “neglected” three decades earlier in *Being and Time*.

Thus, we might ask: How can we interpret this *contrast* between the lack of body in *Sein und Zeit* and its presence in the *Zollikon Seminars*? Is there a contradiction between the two texts? Or, should we see here only a *subtle continuation*? Should we consider that what becomes explicit in the *Zollikon Seminars* is in fact hidden, but not really absent, in *Sein und Zeit*? Are the *Zollikon Seminars* really able to shed some light upon that enigmatic concealment of embodiment in the fundamental ontology? Can they explain the nature of the difficulty Heidegger had encountered, with this special problem, in the core of the analytic of *Dasein*?

We must emphasize that these *Seminars* have a quite special place in the Heideggerian corpus, since they are one of the very few contexts in which we see Heidegger discussing philosophical questions with *non-philosophical* interlocutors. Heidegger's partners of dialogue here, in *Zollikon*, are physicians and psychotherapists: They were not philosophy students, neither university professors in philosophy, nor well-trained philosophy scholars. Their understanding was exclusively determined by the optic of natural sciences. This is precisely why this encounter is very interesting, because Heidegger confronts here a whole range of scientific presuppositions that he needs to deconstruct, in order to be able to open for his interlocutors a new way of approaching the subject matter.

And one of the most *disturbing* topics for his audience, as Heidegger sees it explicitly, is precisely the problem of body. In front of this disturbing character of

<sup>1</sup> See Cerbone (2000), Ciocan (2008) and Aho (2009).

<sup>2</sup> See the echoes in Heidegger (1987, pp. 202, 292; 2001, pp. 157, 231).

<sup>3</sup> Greisch (1994).

<sup>4</sup> Haar (1985, p. 81 *sq.*).

<sup>5</sup> See Benoist (1994) and Gros-Azorin (1998).

the *Leibproblematik*, Heidegger says that he wants in fact to *increase* it, and not to eliminate it<sup>6</sup>: He wants to aggravate this difficulty, this *Beunruhigung*, and not to ease it, because—we read between the lines—only through a shock, through a suspension of tranquillity is it possible for a new understanding of body to arise. For someone strictly determined by the natural sciences, and who understands the body as a physical biological organism and nothing more, only a *perturbation* can make possible an awakening of a new philosophical understanding of this phenomenon. Thus, the preliminary level for entering into a phenomenological way of understanding the body seems to be precisely this *disturbance* of the well-known things and well-established ideas. And Heidegger disturbs his scientific audience first of all by deconstructing the wide-accepted difference between the somatic realm (understood as “what is measurable”) and the psychic realm (which is not measurable, but is accessible only through the so-called empathy). In front of his audience, he invokes some phenomena that are essentially related to the body, but are not at all measurable, such as blushing with shame, tears in sadness, bodily pain, and also gesture.

The most dense interrogations regarding the body appear in two seminars (from a total of eleven meetings recorded in the *Zollikon Seminars*), namely in the seventh and in the eighth seminar, which were held in May and July 1965. The problem of body also appears in several private discussions between Heidegger and Medard Boss, some time before these seminars, and are published in the second part of this book. For example, during a meeting from 29th January 1964, Heidegger relates the problem of body precisely to the specificity of the *medical* work. He says here: “the phenomenon of the body [*Leibphänomen*] as such is especially concealed [*am stärksten zugedeckt*] to physicians because they are concerned merely with body as a corporeal thing [*Leib-Körper*]. They reinterpret [the body] as corporeal function [*als körperliche Funktion uminterpretieren*].”<sup>7</sup> However, in another context, Heidegger states that “I cannot determine the phenomenon of the body in relation to its corporeality [*ich kann das Leibphänomen nicht in der Relation zum Körper bestimmen*],”<sup>8</sup> since “the body is not a thing, is not a corporeal thing [*der Leib ist jedenfalls kein Ding, kein Körper*].”<sup>9</sup> We can easily see from these fragments that Heidegger's discussion of embodiment is tacitly related to the Husserlian distinction between *Leib* and *Körper*, between the so-called “lived, experienced body” and the “physical body understood as corporeal entity.” Even if Heidegger does not invoke very often the name of his master Husserl, it is not at all difficult to discern that his discussion has this precise background, neither to detect the contexts in which Heidegger seems to remain faithful to this perspective, or when he takes some distance from it.

<sup>6</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 99; 2001, p. 76).

<sup>7</sup> Heidegger (1987, pp. 232–233; 2001, p. 186).

<sup>8</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 112; 2001, p. 86).

<sup>9</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 113; 2001, p. 86).

## 2 Heidegger on the footsteps of the Husserlian phenomenology of body

In fact, what is a little bit striking is that Heidegger's very first considerations on the problem of body, namely those of the seminar from May 11, 1965, seem to be *effectively extracted* from the Husserlian phenomenology. Since the cases in which Heidegger is in agreement with Husserl are quite rare, I will insist a little upon this aspect. We have, for example, a first context where Heidegger discusses the difference between sight and tactility, between seeing and touching, between the perceptual fields of the eye and of the hand. Heidegger gives an example (of a standard Husserlian type) of taking a glass in my hand, and simultaneously seeing the glass *and* my hand. He emphasizes here that "I cannot see my eye and my seeing, and by no means am I able to grasp them [*mein Auge und mein Sehen kann ich nicht sehen und schon gar nicht greifen*]." <sup>10</sup> Further on, he also says that "in seeing, the eye itself is not seen [*wird beim Sehen das Auge selbst nicht gesehen*], whereas the hand, when grasping, cannot only be seen, but I can grasp it with my other hand [*die Hand dagegen sieht man beim Greifen nicht nur, ich kann sie sogar mit meiner ändern Hand greifen*]." <sup>11</sup>

It is not difficult to see that these ideas are taken as such from Husserl, even if, strangely enough, he is not at all mentioned in this context. As we all know, Husserl insists many times upon the phenomenological signification of the fact that one hand touches the other, and that this reversibility of tactility is impossible in the case of the act of seeing. Long before being explored by Merleau-Ponty in the *Visible and the Invisible*, <sup>12</sup> the example of "my right hand touching my left hand" appears already in the course of 1907 *Ding und Raum*, <sup>13</sup> being reprised afterwards in *Ideen II* <sup>14</sup> and in the *Cartesian Meditations*. <sup>15</sup> When my right hand touches my left hand, I can feel in my left hand my right hand (that is: I feel the hand that *is touching*), but I can also feel (simultaneously) with my right hand my left hand, that is: I feel the hand that *is touched*. Through this double touch, I can have access to the original phenomenon of body as "touching touched": What-is-touching is on its turn touched, and what-is-touched becomes simultaneously that-what-is-touching. But a similar phenomenon cannot be obtained in the case of seeing: because I cannot see my right eye with my left eye and, furthermore, I cannot see the seeing, as I can feel, in a tactile way, in my left hand, the tactile touch exercised from my right hand. It is precisely this aspect that is emphasized by Husserl in *Ideen II*: "I do not see myself, my body, the way I touch myself. What I call the seen body is not something seeing which is seen [*gesehenes Sehendes*], the way my body as touched body is something touching which is touched [*getastetes Tastendes*]." <sup>16</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 108; 2001, p. 82).

<sup>11</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 108; 2001, p. 83).

<sup>12</sup> Merleau-Ponty (1964, pp. 24, 183, 191–192).

<sup>13</sup> Husserl (1973a, p. 162).

<sup>14</sup> Husserl (1952, p. 145).

<sup>15</sup> Husserl (1991, p. 128).

<sup>16</sup> Husserl (1952, p. 148; 1989, p. 155).

We also know that for Husserl the relation between the tactile and the visual has an essential role for the constitution of one's own bodily nature. The main criterion of demarcation between the two perceptive fields consists in the fact that the eye that sees can *never* be itself seen in an originary way (“*das Auge erscheint nicht visuell*”<sup>17</sup>), while the hand that touches can *always* be itself touched. The Husserlian phenomenology of the body shows here an evident pre-eminence of tactility in relation to the visual field. We remember that Husserl says in *Ideen II* that “the body as such can be constituted originally only in tactility [*der Leib kann sich als solcher ursprünglich nur konstituieren in der Taktualität*],” that “a subject whose only sense was the sense of vision [*ein bloß augenhaftes Subjekt*] could not at all have an appearing body [*konnte gar keinen erscheinenden Leib haben*],” because the “subject who only sees (*der nur Sehende*)” could not see his own body, since “its specific distinctive feature as body [*die spezifische Auszeichnung als Leib*] would be lacking him.”<sup>18</sup> Thus, the reversibility of activity and passivity that the touching of one's own body fully manifests (the body as *getastetes Tastendes, touchant-touché*), this reversibility is determined as “double apprehension” (*Doppelauffassung*) or “double sensation” (*Doppelempfindung*), being the originary phenomenon of the constitution of one's own *Leiblichkeit*.

This Husserlian idea of the “double sensation” also appears in the *Zollikon Seminars*, but in a slightly different sense. Heidegger says here: “when I grasp the glass, then I feel the glass and my hand. That is the so-called double sensation [*Doppelempfindung*], namely, the sensation of what is touched and the sensation of my hand. In the act of seeing, I do not sense my eye in this manner.”<sup>19</sup> I said that this is a slightly different meaning of *Doppelempfindung*. Why? Because, for Husserl, these two concepts—*Doppelempfindung* and *Doppelauffassung*—seem to refer *only* to the way in which *a part of the body itself* feels and is felt. In exchange, for Heidegger the *Doppelempfindung* seems to imply, beside the feeling of my own hand, also the sensing of *an entity different from one's own body*, the glass for example. But for Husserl, what is at stake *is not* the feeling of *another* entity (the glass), which can be added (as a distinctive apperceptive stratum) to the feeling of one's own body, but only the special circumstance of the self-feeling, the situation in which one's own body is simultaneously agent and object (without being affected by something else than itself). The following passage from the *Ideen II* highlights precisely this aspect: “in the case in which a part of the body becomes equally an external object of another part, we have the double sensations [*Doppelempfindungen*] (each part has its own sensations) and the double apprehension [*Doppelauffassung*] as feature of the one or of the other bodily part as a physical object.”<sup>20</sup> Husserl insists upon the fact that *we have nothing comparable* in the case of a purely

<sup>17</sup> Husserl (1952, p. 147; 1989, p. 155).

<sup>18</sup> Husserl (1952, p. 150; 1989, p. 158).

<sup>19</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 108; 2001, p. 83): “Wenn ich das Glas greife, so spüre ich das Glas und meine Hand. Das ist die sogenannte Doppelempfindung, nämlich das Empfinden des Getasteten und das Spüren meiner Hand. Beim Sehen spüre ich nicht mein Auge in dieser Weise.”

<sup>20</sup> Husserl (1952, p. 147; 1989, p. 155). See a similar passage, Husserl (1989, p. 154): “In the case of one hand touching the other, it is again the same, only more complicated, for we have then two sensations, and each is apprehendable or experienceable in a double way.”

visually constituted object. That is, the double sensation and the double apprehension are possible *only in the case of the touch* (of the tactile field), but *never in the case of the seeing* and visual field.

Heidegger's analysis in *Zollikon* continues a little more in the same Husserlian tonality, invoking for example the way in which one can act in a tactile way directly upon the eye: "The eye does not touch. On the other hand, there are sensations of pressure in my eye when someone hits it. Yet that is an entirely different phenomenon."<sup>21</sup> A similar idea can be found as well in Husserl, who, in the *Cartesian Meditations* says the same thing: "I 'can' perceive [...] an eye by means of a hand, and so forth—a procedure in which the functioning organ must become an object, and the object a functioning organ."<sup>22</sup> The organ of sight can "act upon" the tactile organ (I see the hand "with" my eye); in the same way, the tactile organ can "act upon" the visual organ (I touch my eye with my hand). But, while in the first case the functionality of the tactile organ is *not* affected by the action exerted upon it by the organ of sight (the hand touches further on, unhindered, even if "the eye" sees it), in exchange, in the second case, the action of the tactile organ upon the visual organ fatally affects the functioning of the latter. If I perceive my eye with my own hand, if I touch it by putting effectively my finger on the eyelid or on the eyeball, the perceptive field is obstructed, being blocked precisely by this tactile perception that the hand exerts upon it. Therefore, we cannot feel in a tactile way the visual perceptive organ, while the latter would continue at the same time unobstructed its visual-perceptive activity, because the tactile organ, in its intrinsic materiality, hinders the visual organ.

In the same fragment, Heidegger mentions in passing the movement of the eye (*Bewegung des Auges*), as in the situation when, for example, one looks askance or obliquely,<sup>23</sup> an idea that can be very well related to the Husserlian theme of kinesthesia. Then, Heidegger also mentions that the hand, as one's *own* hand, as *proper* hand, is perceived "from the inside" (*von innen*), and asks whether this aspect would be a sufficient reason for considering the *Leib* as something internal (*etwas Inneres*). In this lapidary mention, we can also detect an allusion to Husserl, who, in *Ideen II*, distinguishes two ways of considering the body: On the one hand, we have the body as *seen from inside* (*von "innen" her gesehen—in "Inneneinstellung"*), as that through which the subject experiences the world (body as "freely moving organ [*frei bewegliches Organ*]" and "bearer of sensations [*Träger der Empfindungen*]"); on the other hand, the body can be considered from outside (*von außen betrachtet—in der "Außeneinstellung"*), in which case it can be described as "material thing of special modes of appearance."<sup>24</sup>

Thus, we can see that, at least in some initial passages, the Heideggerian exploration of the phenomenon of body sounds ... quite Husserlian. But this is, of course, only one side of the problematic, and we will see that, after this preparatory

<sup>21</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 108; 2001, p. 83).

<sup>22</sup> Husserl (1991, p. 128; 1960, p. 97).

<sup>23</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 108; 2001, p. 83).

<sup>24</sup> Husserl (1952, p. 161; 1989, pp. 168–169).

approach, Heidegger will develop a quite new and original phenomenology of body, pretty different from its Husserlian version.

### 3 Bodying forth as the being of body

In any case, let's not forget that the context of this dialogue requires that the phenomenology of body sketched here, in the *Zollikon Seminars*, would help the medical doctors to *discover* a hidden richness of this phenomenon, which is otherwise obliterated in the traditional medical theory and practice. The purpose here is not to develop a phenomenology of body for the sake of philosophers or phenomenologists questioning this topic, but for the medical doctors; of course, these are precisely the doctors that aim to approach philosophically and—why not—phenomenologically the problematic sphere of their domain. Heidegger emphasizes that “there is the highest need for doctors who *think* [*denkende Ärzte*] and who do not wish to leave the field entirely to scientific technicians.”<sup>25</sup>

In a fragment quoted earlier, Heidegger said however that medicine has no access to the *Leibphänomen*, but only to the *Leib-Körper* interpreted as *körperliche Funktion*. What blocks in a fatal way the access of a medical doctor of the phenomenon of body (*Leib*) is the exclusive orientation upon the corporeal entity (*Körper*) understood as what is measurable and quantifiable, upon what can be objectified as corporeal functions, upon the functionality of the organism understood as a living machine, interpreted through the strictly causal explanations. Still, Heidegger warns us that “the phenomenon of the body is wholly unique and irreducible to something else [*ganz einzigartig, unreduzierbar auf etwas anderes*], for instance, irreducible to mechanistic systems.”<sup>26</sup> But the medicine, due to the fact that it always engages causal explanations, misses from the very beginning the phenomenon of *Leib*, and focuses only on the *Körper* understood as organism. Following the principle of causality, the medicine transforms this *Leib*, which is in itself “something unique and irreducible,” in a purely inertial entity, reducing it to something simply present, related to the order of *Vorhandenheit*. Or, it is precisely against this danger that Heidegger warns his fellow friend Medard Boss, by telling him that “the human being's bodily being [*das Leibliche des Menschen*] can never, fundamentally never, be considered merely as something present-at-hand [*etwas bloß Vorhandenes*] if one wants to consider it in an appropriate way. If I postulate human bodily being as something present-at-hand, I have already beforehand destroyed the body as body [*habe ich es zum vorhinein schon als Leib zerstört*].”<sup>27</sup>

We have here several *negative* delimitations related to the body, since Heidegger explains how we should *not* consider the *Leiblichkeit*. But what can we say in an *affirmative* way? How can we consider the *Leib*, after accepting that we should avoid the reification of the *Vorhandenheit*, that we should reject the objectivation of a mechanism and of a corporeal entity? What can be said *positively* about the body?

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<sup>25</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 134; 2001, p. 103).

<sup>26</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 233; 2001, p. 186).

<sup>27</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 215; 2001, p. 170).

Heidegger advises that “one must be able to accept the phenomenon of the body as such in its intact being [*man muß das Leibphänomen als solches unversehrte akzeptieren können*].”<sup>28</sup> But isn’t this recommendation somehow... too vague? How can we make more explicit this “as such” of the body? How can we determine this enigmatic “intact being” of the *Leibphänomen*? And how should we effectively differentiate between the *Leib* and the *Körper*?

Heidegger suggests that we should firstly focus on the *problem of limit*, and distinguish between the limits of *Leib* and the limits of *Körper*. During a conversation, Heidegger asks his audience: “Where are the limits of the body [*Grenzen des Leibes*]? Where does the body stop?” And a participant at the seminar answers: “It does not stop at any point.” Then Heidegger asks again: “Does that mean it has unlimited extension [*grenzenlose Ausdehnung*]?”<sup>29</sup> In any case, if the corporeal limits (*Körpergrenze*) are given by the epidermis, by the skin, in exchange, the limits of the body (*Leibgrenze*) are to be understood in a radically different way. Heidegger says that “the bodily limit and the corporeal limit are not quantitatively but rather qualitatively different from each other.”<sup>30</sup> This means that the *Körpergrenze* are not to be understood as *leiblich* (they are not related to our bodiliness), and conversely the *Leibgrenze* are not to be understood as *körperlich* (they are not reducible to something corporeal). Heidegger explicitly states that “*der Körper kann als Körper eine solche Grenze wie der Leib gar nicht haben*/the corporeal thing, as corporeal, cannot have a limit which is similar to the body at all.”<sup>31</sup>

Well, we can easily understand that the skin is the limit of the *Körper*. But how to determine the limits of the body understood in its *Leiblichkeit*? Heidegger uses a simple example, and says that “when pointing with my finger toward the crossbar of the window over there, I do not end at my fingertips.”<sup>32</sup> My *Leib* does not end where my *Körper* ends. Heidegger comes here with a brand new idea, and says that the limits of the body, these *Leibgrenze* we talk about, are configured by “the horizon of being within which I sojourn [*der Seinshorizont, in dem ich mich aufhalte*].”<sup>33</sup> In this way, we are invited to think the *Leiblichkeit* starting from some ontological ideas, such as *Seinshorizont* and *Aufenthalt*. These are, as we know it already, ontological structures of the existence of *Dasein*. This also means that, while the *Körpergrenze* have only an *ontical* relevance, the *Leibgrenze* are intertwined in the *ontology* of *Dasein*, in the existential constitution of this entity.

We can differentiate the two further on. While a *Körper* has a volume, the *Leib* has no volume.<sup>34</sup> While the *Körper* is measurable, the *Leib* resists measurability and is reluctant or refractory to it.<sup>35</sup> While the *Körpergrenze* are more or less fixed

<sup>28</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 233; 2001, p. 186).

<sup>29</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 110; 2001, p. 85).

<sup>30</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 113; 2001, p. 86).

<sup>31</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 112; 2001, p. 86).

<sup>32</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 113; 2001, p. 86).

<sup>33</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 113; 2001, p. 87).

<sup>34</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 113; 2001, p. 87).

<sup>35</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 132; 2001, p. 102).



(usually they don't vary), the *Leibgrenze* are dynamic: They transform themselves constantly, says Heidegger, "through the change in the reach of my sojourn [*durch die Wandlung der Reichweite meines Aufenthaltes*]." <sup>36</sup> Thus, the *Leib* is not an innerworldly entity, as the *Körper* is always by the very fact that we can see it "from outside." On the contrary, the *Leib* configures the conditions of possibility for encountering innerworldly entities.

In this way, in order to discern an existential–ontological meaning of body, one should start from the ontological constitution of the entity that I am, and primarily starting from the idea of mineness, of *Jemeinigkeit*: "If the body as body is always my body [*wenn der Leib als Leib je mein Leib ist*], then this is my own way of being [*ist diese Seinsweise die meinige*]." <sup>37</sup> Therefore, the body has a special relation with the self, with the *Selbst*, which is the core of *Dasein*'s analytic. But, when the body is understood as mine, and starting from the specific constitution of my being, then it is no longer thought as an entity, as a *Seiendes*, but as a way of being, as a *Seinsweise*. In this case, the difference between the corporeal body and the lived or experienced body seems to reflect in some way the ontological difference itself, as a difference between *ein Seiendes* and *eine Seinsweise*, between an entity (the *Körper*) and a way of being (the *Leib*). And precisely because the *Leib* must be interpreted as a "way to be," Heidegger uses here a special term: a verbalisation of the noun *Leib*, namely *leiben*, <sup>38</sup> translated as "bodying forth." He uses the formula *das Leib leibt* ("the body is bodying forth"), on the pattern of his other famous verbalisations, such as *die Welt weltet*, *das Nichts nichtet*, *das Ding dingt*, *die Ereignis eignet sich*, etc. But he also forges a conceptualisation of this verbal form, in a recurrent way: *das Leiben des Leibes* (the bodying forth of the body <sup>39</sup>), in order to indicate an essential way of being of the body, emphasizing the ontological dimension of being-a-body, in contrast with the ontical side of just "having-a-body."

It is of course obvious that this "bodying forth" is essentially distinct from the corporeal thing we encounter in its corporeality, which is reducible at a mechanism, at a biological organism, and finally at a simply present-at-hand entity. In another conversation, Heidegger says that "natural science cannot comprehend the *how* of bodying forth [*das Wie des Leibens*]." <sup>40</sup> What is at stake is not "having a body," but "being a body," body as a way of being, as bodying forth. Thus, at stake is not an isolated element of *Dasein*'s constitution, an ordinary fragment that we can perceive separately in relation to other fragments. That would inevitably mean falling into the traditional view of man as a whole composed of parts (body, soul,

<sup>36</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 113; 2001, p. 87).

<sup>37</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 113; 2001, p. 87).

<sup>38</sup> This idea appears already in the Nietzsche lectures, see Heidegger (1996, pp. 100, 106, 195, 295, 508–512, 514). See, for an extended discussion, D'Angelo (2012). Husserl uses the verb *leiben* for a few times, but not as a noun, *Leiben*. I thank Betsy Behnke for making me aware of these occurrences. See Husserl (1973b, p. 287): "Als leibliches Ich, als Ich das in der Welt leibt und lebt [...]"; Husserl (1973b, p. 294: "[...] als leiblich seiend, als leibend-lebend"; Husserl (2008, pp. 459–460): "[...] Menschen, der leiblich in der Welt ist und als Person-Ich in der Welt leibt und lebt [...]."

<sup>39</sup> Heidegger (1987, pp. 113, 118, 122).

<sup>40</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 245; 2001, p. 197).

spirit), a vision that Heidegger rejects on principle. Then, this bodying forth of the body (*Leiben des Leibes*) should be understood in a completely different way than in the logic of the whole and its parts. The *Leiben*, the bodying forth must be originary understood in relation to the being of *Dasein*, as an entity which is being-in-the-world.

What can we say about this dynamics of embodiment which Heidegger sees in the verbal character of its being, as *das Leiben des Leibes*? Heidegger provides an explanation that seems to be somewhat circular. First, he says: *das Leiben des Leibes*, this bodying forth co-determines the human's being-in-the-world as a whole (*alles In-der-Welt-sein des Menschen mitbestimmt*).<sup>41</sup> But he also says that *das Leiben ist mitbestimmt durch mein Menschsein*: The bodying forth is co-determined by my being-human.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, on the one hand, *das Leiben* is co-determined by the being of *Dasein* (or *Menschsein*),<sup>43</sup> but on the other hand *das Leiben* determines itself the being of *Dasein* (or being-in-the-world). I will not insist here upon the hermeneutical significance of circularity in Heidegger's thought. In any case, what is interesting in this passage is that Heidegger understands the *Menschsein* as "ecstatic sojourn amidst the beings in the clearing," being-human *im Sinne des ekstatischen Aufenthaltes inmitten des gelichteten Seienden*.<sup>44</sup> The idea of *Aufenthalt* (sojourn) was already mentioned when I discussed about the difference between *Körpergrenze* and *Leibgrenze*, in the context in which Heidegger said that the limits of the body are coextensive with "the horizon of being within which I sojourn."<sup>45</sup> Heidegger also states about the "limits of the bodying forth" that they are constantly changing "through the change in the reach of my sojourn" "[*durch die Wandlung der Reichweite meines Aufenthaltes*]."<sup>46</sup>

The ontological dimension of body is deepened through the emphasizing of its ecstatic dimension. Indeed, if *Dasein's* sojourn in the middle of the beings is essentially "ecstatic," we see now that even this "bodying forth" also has an ecstatic character. Indeed, Heidegger speaks twice about the ecstatic bodiliness (*ekstatische Leiblichkeit*), a bodying forth whose ecstatic character is attested by the "phantom limb pains" (*Phantomschmerzen*),<sup>47</sup> but also, for example, by blushing.<sup>48</sup> But how can we understand, more precisely, this "ecstatic" character of the body? Can the body or the bodying forth be characterised as something "outside-of-itself"? If the body is to be understood as "ecstatic," this would mean that it is not the mark of *immanence*, but, fundamentally and essentially, it belongs to the existential *transcendence* of *Dasein*. This also means that the body and its essential

<sup>41</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 122; 2001, p. 93).

<sup>42</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 113; 2001, p. 87).

<sup>43</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 113; 2001, pp. 86–87): "*Das Leiben des Leibes* (the bodying forth of the body) *bestimmt sich aus der Weise meines Seins* (is determined by the way of my being). *Das Leiben des Leibes ist somit eine Weise des Da-seins* (the bodying forth of body, therefore, is a way of *Da-sein's* being)."

<sup>44</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 113; 2001, p. 87).

<sup>45</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 113; 2001, p. 87).

<sup>46</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 113; 2001, p. 87).

<sup>47</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 278; 2001, p. 221).

<sup>48</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 118; 2001, p. 91).

bodying forth, in order to be primordially ecstatic, does not belong first of all to a “here,” but to a “there.” And, as we will see, this tension between *here* and *there* is precisely the core of Heidegger's dispute against Husserl on the topic of spatiality and, as well, on the relation between body and space.

#### 4 The body's spatiality: Here or over there

We all know that, for Husserl, the *Leib* is the absolute “*here*” against which we fix everything considered as “*there*,” being it near or far. The body is the zero-point of orientation from which I measure distances, being thus the principle of the constitution of space. And it is precisely this aspect that Heidegger wants to reverse: He wishes to determine the meaning of the body from the existential spatiality, which is articulated in the ecstatic being-in-the-world. It is not only that Heidegger refuses to understand the space starting from the *here* of the body, but he also refuses to understand the body starting from the *here* of the space.

The bone of contention is obviously the typically Husserlian pre-eminence of “the here” in relation with “the over there.” We remember that, already from the time of *Sein und Zeit*, by proposing the concept of *Ent-fernung* (*de-severance* according to Macquarie/Robinson, *de-distancing* according to Stambaugh), Heidegger suggests that we should not understand the *over there* starting from the *here*, but, on the contrary, we should understand the *here* starting from the *over there* of one's concern: “*Dasein* is initially never here, but over there. From this over there it comes back to its here.”<sup>49</sup> *Dasein* always understands its *here* starting from the *over there* of the surrounding world. Thus, it is not the *here* of the body which is essential for the constitution of the space, but *Dasein* exists spatially by ecstatically opening a world, towards which it is, always *over there*, in the mode of concern. We remember the examples Heidegger gives in *Sein und Zeit*, which shows that, in the concern, we *go beyond* that which is “closest” to us. When I walk on the street, the street that I touch with my feet is not existentially closer to me, but the friend I see on the other side of the street. Even though my glasses touch my nose, closer to me is the book I read, or the picture I look. And even if the telephone receiver touches my ear, closer to me is the voice that I hear. All these examples aim to undermine the Husserlian pre-eminence of the here (a here for which the main principle is the perceptual body), but also to reverse the primacy of touch in the originary *Leibkonstitution*.

Thus, there are two inversions that Heidegger operates in relation to Husserl: In *Sein und Zeit*, in the topic of spatiality, Heidegger rejects the pre-eminence of the *here*; in the *Zollikon Seminars*, in relation to the body, Heidegger contests the primacy of tactility. The two movements are actually correlated. And it's a little surprising to see that, in these contexts in which Heidegger challenges the Husserlian point of view, his interlocutors in *Zollikon* spontaneously assume precisely that Husserlian position. For example, when Heidegger asks: “what role does the body play in this being-here [*Hiersein*]? Where is the here?”—the answer of a participant is ... typically Husserlian. He says: “here is where my body is [*Hier*

<sup>49</sup> Heidegger (1986, p. 107).

ist, wo ist mein Leib].” To this, Heidegger’s reply sounds as follows: “But my body is not identical with the here [*aber mein Leib ist nicht das Hier*].”<sup>50</sup> And when Heidegger asks: “how does bodiliness [*das Leibliche*] relate to space,” another typically Husserlian response arises: “the body is nearest to us in space [*das Nächste im Raum*]”; to this, Heidegger replies that, on the contrary, “it is the most distant [*das Fernste*].”<sup>51</sup>

This kind of replicas might have sound quite strange to the audience, who seems to be more willing to spontaneously accept a Husserlian perspective, perhaps closer to the common sense. Of course, it is not at all easy to accept the idea of ontologizing the body, in a verbal sense (as bodying forth), neither the notion of an *ecstatic* body, out-of-itself, one that seems to operate the transcendence towards the world. However, Heidegger still insists, saying that “the being-here of my body [*das Hiersein des Leibes*] [...] is essentially always already a being-there at something [*ein Dortsein bei etwas*].”<sup>52</sup> It is not only that the existential *here* is closely related to the *over there* of concern, but, says Heidegger, the *here* is precisely the *there*: “*Das Hiersein als existierender Mensch ist immer in eins und in sich ein Dortsein.*”<sup>53</sup>

This ecstatic openness of the body is also determined by a new concept: that of reach, of *Reichweite*. The body has a reach, a *Reichweite des Leibes*, a reach that would be proper to the body. Heidegger asks: “from where and how does the body have a reach?” The fact that the body has a reach, a *Reichweite*, an opening scope, is an essential character of the bodying forth. This is of course not limited to the tactile reach of the body, to the grasping area of the body. This “reach of the body” (*Reichweite des Leibes*) is not, of course, to be compared with “a rocket on a launching pad,”<sup>54</sup> but it should be understood only from the perspective of the ontology of *Dasein*. The reach of the body is configured by all the ways of being-in-the-world, and is co-originary with all of them. Heidegger says explicitly that “we must characterize all comportment of the human being as being-in-the-world, determined by the bodying forth of the body.”<sup>55</sup> This means that not a single behaviour of *Dasein* in its world is exempted of this bodying forth: “Bodying forth [*Leiben*] always belongs to being-in-the-world. It always codetermines being-in-the-world, openness, and the having of a world.”<sup>56</sup>

For example, Heidegger emphasizes that hearing (*Hören*) is a mode of this bodying forth of the body (*Leiben des Leibes*).<sup>57</sup> Also, we can consider the seeing (*Sehen*) as being co-determined by the bodying forth. We can say the same thing even about *Sprechen*, because the verbal articulation (*Verlautbarung*) is always

<sup>50</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 110; 2001, p. 84).

<sup>51</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 109; 2001, pp. 83–84).

<sup>52</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 127; 2001, p. 97).

<sup>53</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 141; 2001, p. 108), my emphasis.

<sup>54</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 111; 2001, p. 85).

<sup>55</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 118; 2001, p. 90–91).

<sup>56</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 126; 2001, p. 97).

<sup>57</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 126; 2001, pp. 96–97).

already present, more or less implicitly, in all kind of discourse.<sup>58</sup> Heidegger goes further and suggests that even the making-present (*Vergegenwärtigung*) and imagination (*Einbildung*) are co-determined by the bodying forth of the body. Because even if I make present the railway station from Zürich, my bodily vision is at stake,<sup>59</sup> as it is in play if I imagine a trip to Africa, or when a painter is painting his work.<sup>60</sup> But all these—*Hören, Sehen, Sprechen*—are constitutive ontological moments of the being-in-the-world. And we remember that the analytic in *Sein und Zeit* has thoroughly examined these structural moments of *Dasein*'s being in terms of existentiality. Now, the same structures appear in the *Zollikon Seminars* in their bodily dimension, in their “carnal light,” precisely that dimension the ontology of *Dasein* was concealing. And the question is if, following the same pattern, we can have now a new bodily reading of the existential analytic as a whole.

## 5 Conclusion: The unreachable character of bodying forth

Thus, the core of Heidegger's *Leibphänomenologie* consists in the idea that the bodying forth penetrates almost all behaviour of *Dasein* in the world, and that the phenomenological significance of body is not reducible to a corporeal entity, or to an organism, but it should be seen in its ontological operative movement, a bodily deployment, in what Heidegger calls “the bodying forth,” an essential *Leiben* that is involved in almost all comportment of *Dasein* in its world. However, we must say “almost all” comportment, because there seems to be a certain limit to this all-encompassing bodying forth that co-determines, on its multiple strata, our existence in the world. Even if the bodying forth *belongs* to the being-in-the-world, infiltrating most of all the ways of being of *Dasein*, however, there is a certain sphere that seems to be *beyond* the bodying forth. This means that being-in-the-world is *not exhausted* in the bodying forth, even if the bodiliness floods almost all levels of the being of *Dasein*: “Being-in-the-world as such is a bodying forth, but not *only* a bodying forth.”<sup>61</sup>

What exactly implies this limitation, this “not only”? Which sphere of *Dasein*'s being is *beyond* our bodying forth of the body? Which level of our existence is out of body's reach? The answer is not surprising: What is beyond this *Leiben des Leibes* is precisely the understanding of being. The *Seinsverständnis*, says Heidegger, includes “the understanding of the fact that I am standing in the clearing of being [*das Verstehen dessen, daß ich in der Lichtung des Seins stehe*],” and also “the particular understanding of being, that is, of how being is determined in the understanding [*das jeweilige Verständnis des Seins, dessen, wie Sein im Verständnis bestimmt ist*].”<sup>62</sup> Therefore, does the body have any role in relation to the horizon of the understanding of being? Heidegger's answer is firmly negative:

<sup>58</sup> Heidegger (1987, pp. 126, 272).

<sup>59</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 110; 2001, p. 84).

<sup>60</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 245; 2001, p. 197).

<sup>61</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 248; 2001, p. 199).

<sup>62</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 244; 2001, p. 196).

“Bodying forth does not occur here [namely: in the understanding of being: *Hierbei geschieht kein Leiben*].”<sup>63</sup> That is, it seems that we have a gap between the horizon of the understanding of being (*der Horizont des Seins-Verständnisses*) and the bodying forth of the body (*Leiben des Leibes*). It seems that the bodying forth—which is effective in any hearing, seeing, speaking, remembering, imagining, or making-present—simply does not interfere with the *Seinsverständnis*. We have here a kind of limit of the bodying forth, a level of *Dasein* that remains inaccessible for the body.

However, we recall a fragment in which Heidegger just said that “the limit of the *bodying forth* (...) is the *horizon of being* within which I sojourn [*Grenze des Leibens* (...) *ist der Seinshorizont, in dem ich mich aufhalte*].”<sup>64</sup> This fragments explicitly says that the *horizon of being* constitutes the limits of the bodying forth; and, of course, we cannot ignore that the *Seinshorizont* can be accessible as such only in a *Seinsverständnis*, in a certain understanding of being. Then, there should be some link between this *Seinshorizont*, *Seinsverständnis* and the *Leiben des Leibes*. But the other fragment I have previously quoted indicates precisely that the bodying forth *does not occur* in the understanding of being.

So, it seems we have here a dilemma: Either the bodying of the body *does not occur* in the understanding of being, or the bodying forth *is indeed configured* by the horizon of being (and, inevitably, by a certain understanding of being). Is there a simple contradiction between the two ideas? Or is this contradiction only apparent, and we should understand *otherwise* the relation between the *Seinsverständnis* and *das Leiben*? For example, we might suggest that at stake there is only a *unilateral* limitation, but not a reciprocal limitation. That is, we can accept that the bodying forth does not determine in any way the understanding of being, but this does not automatically mean that the understanding of being, at its turn, does not determine at all the bodying forth of the body. Even if the understanding of being *is indeed* the limit of the phenomenon of body, maybe the phenomenon of body cannot limit the understanding of being itself. Thus, the apparent ambiguity could be somewhat solved if we assume the idea that, one the one hand, the bodying forth of the body does not infiltrate the understanding of being, but on the other hand the understanding of being does indeed penetrate the bodying forth of the body.

We can also refer here to another fragment in which Heidegger explains the relation between the bodying forth and the understanding of being: “In [my] pointing to the window’s crossbar, the horizon of bodying forth extends to what can be perceived and seen. But in bodying forth itself alone, I cannot experience the significance of any window crossbar as such. For me, to be able to say ‘crossbar’ at all already presupposes an understanding of being. Thereby, bodying forth is the gesture of pointing to what I perceived, to what can be reached by my seeing. Bodying forth occurs wherever the senses are involved, but here the primordial understanding of being is always already involved too.”<sup>65</sup> This rather long quote suggests that, even if the bodying forth co-determines any behaviour that is *related*

<sup>63</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 244; 2001, p. 197).

<sup>64</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 113; 2001, p. 87).

<sup>65</sup> Heidegger (1987, pp. 244–245; 2001, pp. 196–197).

to an entity, even if any access to *das Seiende* is mediated through the body in its bodying forth, however the “jurisdiction” of the bodying forth stops when the being (*das Sein*) is at stake. The bodying forth co-determines indeed the access to the entity, to *Seiendes* as such, but not the access to the *being* of the entity, to *das Sein des Seiendes*.

Thus, we cannot avoid involving the bodying forth when the entity (*das Seiende*) is at stake, but the bodying forth is no longer operative when the being of this entity (*das Sein des Seiendes*) is at stake. Here, only the primordial *Seinsverständnis* operates, in its absolute independence for any bodying forth. And not only being as such is not related to the body, but also the aprioric categories and ontological structures of thinking.<sup>66</sup> One of these is, in Heidegger's view, the “presencing” (*Anwesen*). Is the “coming into presence” the work of the body, or the bodying forth enters into play *only after* the horizon of being is *already opened*, only after the primordial *Seinsverständnis* already operates the coming of the presence of the entity in its being? It is obvious that Heidegger's answer supports the latter hypothesis. Let's allow him to speak one more time: “Bodying forth belongs to being-in-the-world, which is primarily the understanding-of-being. Therefore, this [understanding-of-being] is not just something still added to bodying forth. A bodying forth always co-participates [*mitbeteiligt*] in the experience of what is present [*Erfahrung des Anwesenden*]. However, presencing itself [*Anwesen selbst*] is not a bodying forth.”<sup>67</sup>

Here, in the tension between the *Seinsfrage* and the *Leibproblem*, is, maybe, the most challenging and the most difficult matter of Heidegger's phenomenology of body in the *Zollikon Seminars*. And maybe this is precisely the difficulty that, three decades before, obstructed Heidegger in putting explicitly the problem of body in the core of *Dasein's* analytic. We remember the famous line in which Heidegger said in *Sein und Zeit* that the *Leiblichkeit* “hides a whole problematic of its own [*eine eigene Problematik in sich birgt*]” which is “not to be dealt with here [*hier nicht zu behandelnde*].”<sup>68</sup> And the question on everybody's lips was, of course, “why?”—why is not to be dealt with here? Why is the body avoided in the fundamental ontology? Is the phenomenon of body of such little importance for the highest ontological interrogation of *Dasein's* analytic? Indeed, the omission of the body in *Sein und Zeit* could sound somehow arrogant, as if the *Dasein's* bodily nature would not be considered “ontologically worthy enough” for the Heideggerian project. But the *Zollikon Seminars* show, three decades after, that the situation was quite different. Avoiding the analysis of body in *Sein und Zeit* is not a sign of an

<sup>66</sup> Heidegger states that it is impossible for us to understand phenomenologically how the brain is bodily involved in thinking, how thinking is embodied. Here, there is another fragment that may be of interest for scholars that link the phenomenological approach with the brain studies. How can we link the understanding of being, the body and the brain? Heidegger says: “If one says that bodying forth is involved in the understanding of being as well, and if this means that physiological processes in the brain are also involved in this understanding, then one puts body [*Leib*] in place of the corporeal thing [*Körper*]. We have no possibility at all for knowing how the brain is bodying forth in thinking [*wie das Gehirn beim Denken leibt*].” Heidegger (1987, p. 245; 2001, p. 197).

<sup>67</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 248; 2001, p. 199).

<sup>68</sup> Heidegger (1986, p. 108).

ontological arrogance, but the signal of a *humble* acknowledgment of a difficulty. The difficulty consists precisely in the fact that the body requires a rigorous ontological approach, one essentially related to the ontological constitution of *Dasein*'s being. And maybe that's why Heidegger admits at the end of his life, that "the bodily [*das Leibliche*] is the most difficult to understand [*das Schwierigste*]." <sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Heidegger (1987, p. 292; 2001, p. 231).