



# Being a body and having a body. The twofold temporality of embodied intentionality

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## Abstract

The body is both the subject and object of intentionality: qua *Leib*, it experiences worldly things and qua *Körper*, it is experienced as a thing in the world. This phenomenological differentiation forms the basis for Helmuth Plessner's anthropological theory of the mediated or eccentric nature of human embodiment, that is, simultaneously we both *are* a body and *have* a body. Here, I want to focus on the extent to which this double aspect of embodiment (qua *Leib* and *Körper*) relates to our experience of temporality. Indeed, to question, does this double bodily relation correspond to a *twofold temporality* of embodied intentionality? In the first part of this paper, I differentiate between the *intentional temporality of being a body* and the *temporal experience of having a body*. To further my argument, in the second part, I present examples of specific pathologies, as well as liminal cases of bodily experiences, wherein these temporal dimensions, which otherwise go hand-in-hand, become dissociated. Phenomenologically, I want to argue that Husserl's differentiation between *Leib* and *Körper* corresponds to two genetic forms of intentionality – operative and act (or object) intentionality – and that these are, in turn, characterized by different temporalities. Anthropologically, I want to argue that *having* a body – what occurs as an inherent break to human embodiment – is the presupposition for the experience of a stable and object-like time. I will conclude that the double aspect of human embodiment and in particular the thematic experience of *having* a body enables both the experience of a past, which is remembered, and a future that is planned.

**Keywords** Phenomenology · Philosophical Anthropology · Embodiment · Time · Intentionality · Husserl · Merleau-Ponty · Plessner · Psychopathology

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*The same Body which serves me as means for all my perception obstructs me in the perception of itself and is a remarkably imperfectly construed thing (Husserl 1989, 167)*

In this famous quote, Husserl concisely summarizes the twofold structure of embodiment. The body is what allows us to perceive, and it is in this sense the subject of perception, while at the same time the body is a perceived object, even though it can only be imperfectly perceived by oneself. Helmuth Plessner takes this distinction as a starting point to describe the double aspect of human embodiment (Plessner 1975). “[A] human being always and conjointly is a living body and has this living body as his physical thing” (Plessner 1970, 34). For Plessner, as for Husserl, our embodiment is thus inherently twofold: it is lived as well as material (i.e. extended and physical), subject as well as object, of experience.

Precisely because we are never merely objects, but simultaneously living subjects – sensing, moving and experiencing – our materiality makes us open and vulnerable to the world. The crucial point here is that we are not passively located, affected, moved or moulded from the outside as if we were an indifferent object; but, we subjectively feel any external affect from the inside and thus have to somehow relate to it. In turn, we are not only actively directed towards the world and able to tactually or visually explore it, but *feel* when we are touched and are *aware* that we are seen. This is the meaning behind Husserl’s concept of human embodiment as simultaneously living-and-felt *Leib* and material *Körper*; or, in other words, as a material object that possess sensations and kinaesthetic abilities. He illustrates this with the well-known example of *double sensation*: when you touch your right hand with your left hand, you can either attend to the sensations that represent the ‘objective’ characteristics of the right hand, like smoothness or shape, or you attend to the subjective ‘sensings’ in the left hand (Husserl 1989, 152ff.). These subject- and object-related sensations, the lived and physical aspect of the body, can neither fuse nor are they a matter of the same sensations transferred back and forth; rather, it is a doubling of sensation, something “localized in two sites of the lived body” (Al Saij 2010, 22). It is indeed, a “felt two-ness”.

It is this *pre-objective* way of feeling one’s sensations (*sensings*) as in the example of the double sensation that is the precondition for our ability to explicitly address or thematise ourselves as an object: As bodily beings we are not merely a physical, external and sensing body, but can experience ourselves *as* a body, to wit, that we both *are* and *have* this body. Moreover, through attending to ourselves as objects, we can achieve a further reflective insight into our twofold constitution, which gives reason for our ability to suddenly understand – as in the double sensation – that we were always already a feeling and sensing subject.

In differentiating between *Leib* and *Körper*, Husserl highlights two related but ultimately different aspects of human embodiment. First, in response to a popular Cartesian dualism, he emphasized the aspect of a lived, sensing and moving body (*Leib*) in contrast to the mere extended body. Against such dualism, he emphasizes the necessary conjunction of the lived and physical aspects of embodiment by using the combined term ‘Leibkörper’. Husserl does thus not deny that subjects are embodied, and thus necessarily physical and external, but he intends to show how the subjective lived aspects are interrelated with the material ones. Indeed, the notion of the ‘lived

body' (and thus also of *being* a body) necessarily involves that we are physical and external, otherwise we could neither sense nor be sensed. Secondly, and even more importantly, Husserl stresses our ability to address ourselves thematically in terms of a physical object or *Körper*. The crucial point in Husserl's differentiation that is taken over by Plessner is not the difference between the non-material and the material, the internal or external, but rather the difference between a non-thematic (operative) bodily being or subjectivity and the body as thematic, explicit or intended object – that is, as Plessner puts it, the sense of *having* a body. Depending on one's attention and given circumstances, we are more or less aware of our body as such. 'Being' and 'having' a body can thus be understood as two poles (cf. Breyer 2017) within lived human embodiment that can be descriptively differentiated as two aspects of embodiment<sup>1</sup>: While *being a body* refers to both being a lived and material body, *having a body* represents the fact that we can address ourselves as *Körper*.<sup>2</sup> It is this second aspect of Husserl's differentiation between *Leib* and *Körper*, which is crucial for the argument of this paper.

In the following, then, I want to argue that this double aspect of embodiment corresponds to a twofold *temporality* of embodied intentionality. In doing so, I seek to phenomenologically ground and describe this twofold experience of time. I will differentiate in this regard between: (i) the *intentional temporality* of *being* a body; and (ii) the *temporal experience* of *having* a body.

The paper is composed of three parts. After setting the scene by means of a short explanation of Plessner's theory and argument concerning a twofold embodiment (1), I will investigate the theoretical and descriptive phenomenological fundamentals of this difference (2). This second part will be taken in two steps: Firstly, in section (2.1), I will analyze the transcendental relation between time consciousness, intentionality, and the body. To do so, I link Husserl's theory of inner-time consciousness to his theory of intentionality. By doing this, I intend to build upon Dan Zahavi's thesis of time consciousness as the pre-reflective self-awareness inherent to every intentional act. The next step (2.2) relates these Husserlian insights directly to what Thomas Fuchs defines as implicit and explicit temporality. In what follows, then, I argue that time consciousness as such is concretely expressed via an operative or bodily form of temporal intentionality, which corresponds to the anthropological level of *being* a body.

The third part (3) comprises a concrete illustration of this dual temporality. I will present examples of specific pathologies, as well as liminal cases of bodily experiences, whereby these two temporal dimensions, which otherwise go hand in hand, become dissociated.

To this methodological end, I pose both a phenomenological and anthropological argument. Phenomenologically, I want to show that Husserl's differentiation between *Leib* and *Körper* corresponds to two genetic forms of intentionality, operative and act-

<sup>1</sup> These two aspects are not separate dimensions of experience, rather they must be thought of as two relational poles of one continuum; As Breyer has shown, these poles may be distinguished on the level of description, but not necessarily by means of *normal* experience (Breyer 2016).

<sup>2</sup> However, to be able to address one's body as intentional object is not limited to the body as physical thing, as the above citation of Plessner might suggest. According to Husserl we are not only able to experience our bodies as physical objects, but also as feeling subjects (see double sensation), i.e. as physical *Körper* and sentient *Leib*. This is characteristic for both, the transcendental perspective (Husserl) and the ex-centric positionality (Plessner).

or object intentionality, which are characterized through their different temporality. Anthropologically, I want to argue that having a body, i.e. the inherent break within human embodiment, might be the presupposition for the experience of a stable and object-like time, in that it allows us to have a past to be remembered and a future to be planned.

## 1 Setting the scene: Plessner's theory of the double aspect of human embodiment

According to Plessner, every form of life can be defined according to the relation one has towards their own 'borders' [*Grenzen*]. While the border of a non-living object refers merely to its spatial boundaries, the borders of living beings are a part of those beings themselves. In this regard, their boundaries are not spatially fixed, but have to be dynamically realized by the organism in relation to her environment.<sup>3</sup> With regard to the process of realization, the living form of plants can be distinguished from that of animals: while the living functions of plants are open to and ultimately intertwined with their environment, animals and humans are characterized by their independence and ability to close themselves off from their surroundings. As non-open but closed and centralized forms of organization, they are not fully embedded within their environment, but must actively seek out a relation to their environment, as well as themselves. Because of the environmental distance and relative independence of the organism, a notable distinction thus looms between a lived interior and an experienced exterior. As such, all their interactions with their environment are mediated by a 'center' (that is, in the biological sense of a central organ, such as, the brain for most mammals) that lies within their bodies. Plessner calls this particular organization one's 'centralized positionality' (Plessner 1975, 129). This center may only be physically a small part of our bodies, but it often functions as if it was the center of everything as it effectively steers and controls the body. In this sense, a *duplication* of the body takes place: we *are* a body, but at the same time, it is something we *have* (Plessner 1975, 159).

What makes human life unique is our reflective capacity on this mediation. While animals act out from this center, and sometimes towards this center, by establishing a relation towards their environment and themselves, humans *live* as a center; in other words, they can relate to this relation (Plessner 1975, 288).<sup>4</sup> One could summarize this as follows: plants merely live, whereas animals and humans undergo experiences; humans in contrast to animals, however, can also experience their experiences (cf. De Mul 2018). This means that, as humans, we are *doubly mediated*. Not only do we have a first-person perspective, in which we are oriented towards the world and implicitly towards ourselves,

<sup>3</sup> Within the scope of this paper, I cannot go into the philosophical and biological details of Plessner's argumentation and descriptions. Nonetheless, I want to indicate that Plessner's definition of life (that is inspired by Aristoteles) is compatible with autopoietic approaches of life, cf. Varela and Maturana 1980, Varela et al. 1991, Thompson 2007. Life as autopoietic is characterized by its circular self-generating organization: it remains its identity with reference to a changing environment (criterion of identity); at the same time life stands out with reference to his environment and interacts with it, thereby the individual structures this very environment according to his needs, preferences and valences (criterion of sense-making).

<sup>4</sup> „Das Tier lebt aus der Mitte heraus, in seine Mitte hinein, aber es lebt nicht als Mitte.“ (Plessner 1975, 288); Humans thus have a relation towards themselves as living beings, that means they found out about themselves, „das lebendige Ding ist jetzt wirklich hinter sich gekommen“ (291).

but we also perceive ourselves from without, that is, we have an “ex-centric positionality” (Plessner 1975, 325). This additional point of reference or ex-centric positionality is the reason why humans do not only have an inherent self-relation, but also relate to their body explicitly, that is to say, we are able to look upon ourselves as physical objects in the world: “[a] human being always and conjointly is a living body and has this living body as his physical thing” (Plessner 1970, 34).

This anthropological difference has fundamental implications on our experience of temporality, as Plessner merely briefly mentions in his descriptions of the lifeforms. For Plessner, all lifeforms have an inherent temporality, including plants, that is to say that they change with time, as well as preserve and integrate these changes. Starting from a centralized form of bodily organization, however, temporality becomes more distinct. For example, animals are able to correct their actions according to past experiences and thus constitute a habitual memory. But, these behavioral adjustments are associatively informed by the past and, as such, must be embedded within a concrete situation. In this regard, I would like to argue, that time operates *implicitly*, thereby functioning as what Plessner calls (drawing on a term by the German Biologist Hans Driesch) a historical basis for reaction (Plessner 1975, 277). It is only due to their ex-centric positionality, and the distance and experience of mediation involved, that humans can speak of an explicit relation to one self and, in turn, an *explicit* temporality. However, this does not imply that humans have only an explicit experience of time. As ex-centric, they are both centered and de-centered, meaning, we can experience time both implicitly and explicitly. In the same sense that humans can never be merely a subject nor an object, as they constantly have to manage the tension between these two ‘poles’ (i.e. between being and having a body), one may assume that this holds true for the human relation to time.

## 2 The two temporalities of human embodiment

### 2.1 Inner time consciousness, intentionality and embodiment

From an anthropological perspective (i.e. the third-person perspective, as proposed by Plessner), the fact of both, being a body and having a body is tantamount to human embodiment – this is the basis of our double aspectivity. However, from a phenomenological perspective, *being* a body, i.e. the subjective and living body, is more fundamental and thus deemed primary. This arises from the premise that before one can perceive or attend to one’s body as an object, one has to be a living body that experiences and perceives.

This becomes clear when one takes a closer look at what experience amounts to. As Husserl points out, whenever I attentively or reflectively direct myself towards something, this something must have already been there within my lived experience, i.e. it was *experienced* so to speak. This for Husserl means that every experience is ‘conscious’, but this consciousness is not necessarily thematically experienced or yet to be characterized as a singled out object consciousness in the strict sense. Put in Plessnerian terms, this would mean that before one can *have* one’s body as an object, one must already *be* a body; the body exists as lived or operative, lingering in the background of our consciousness remaining immanent as a potentially perceivable object. As Zahavi has famously shown, this also implies that there must be a pre-reflective, non-thematic

or passive form of self-awareness or self-affection within living experience that can motivate such an explicit thematization of my body: “I can thematize myself, because I am already passively self-aware; I can grasp myself, because I am already affected by myself” (Zahavi 2003, 163). To understand the necessity of such a passive and inherent self-relation that grounds every thematic relation (as in having a body), one has to turn to Husserl’s genetic analysis of how objects are constituted as temporal.

In his genetic phenomenology, Husserl did not only make a ‘static’ (or spatial) distinction between background and foreground consciousness, and between noticed and unnoticed regions or ‘objects’, but in addition to this, he attempts to describe how such stable and identifiable ‘objects’ are (or must be) temporally constituted in inner time consciousness. With his well-known example of the melody, Husserl shows that we would not be able to hear a melody or tune, which is a temporal continuity of tones, if we experienced the sounds as only an unconnected series of sensual input or points (cf. Husserl 1991). Temporally-extended objects can never appear if lived purely in the present, in the ‘here and now’ so to speak. Rather, this experience of here and now, which Husserl calls ‘primal impression’ (e.g. as expressed in the tone of a melody), must be embedded in a temporal horizon or field. This implies that every incoming tone is retained in consciousness (as retention  $x^1$  of the formerly primary impression of the tone  $x$ ), and thereby gradually modified: with every new tone, the retention of the former tone sinks deeper in the background of consciousness, losing its liveliness and clarity; the former perceived tone thus gets part of a continuity of momentary gradated retentions. In turn, every incoming tone must also be part of a horizon of upcoming or anticipated tones, a horizon of the protention of “constantly gradated coming” (Husserl 1968, 202; cf. Zahavi 2003, 165).

According to Husserl, this passive syntheses of inner time consciousness provides us with a temporal experience that is continuous. It passively synthesizes the incoming sensual input into a stable object with a fixed localization in objective time. This passive constitution in lived experience thus makes the reproduction of a formerly perceived situation, person or thing possible as an object of memory. We can only *remember* events or time passed, that effectively is reproducing a once perceived object, because it was temporally constituted as a stable and permanent object with a fixed position in time. This retention, which Husserl misleadingly named ‘primal memory’, is thus not memory in and of itself, but a part of the present temporal constituting of an object that, then, can be identified repeatedly as the same ‘again and again’ (Husserl 1932, Ms. C16 59a).

And yet, what is this inner time consciousness, along with its quasi-temporal structure of retention-impression-protention? Is this constituting something that is itself temporal, i.e. that has an inherent duration? How can we be aware of the very acts that constitute temporal objects? To avoid an infinite regress, whereby every constituted object (i.e. also the constituting consciousness as object of current reflection) again asks for a deeper and more primary constituting consciousness, Dan Zahavi suggested the following solution:

Instead of making a difference between the intentional acts and time consciousness itself, one must understand the latter (i.e. the dimension of *constituting time*) as “the pre-reflective self-awareness” inherent in every act: “It is called inner time consciousness because it belongs intrinsically to the innermost structure of the act itself” (Zahavi 2003, 168). The intentional act is not simply conscious of something, they do not only



permit the manifestation of something other than the ego ('hetero-manifestation'), but at the same time it literally manifests itself. Although one can distinguish this constituting part of time, this does not mean that inner time consciousness or self-awareness exists separately from external experience. As Zahavi puts it, there is no "pure or empty field of self-manifestation upon which the concrete experiences subsequently make their entry" (170). Rather, one could say that this 'minimal self', as Zahavi defines it in later texts (cf. Zahavi 2017), only exists in correlation with the manifestation of an object (other than oneself, i.e. 'hetero-manifestation').

Time consciousness with its inherent self-awareness thus passively constitutes a temporal continuity by qualifying all sensual input as my subsequent experience. With respect to Husserl's example of the melody, Zahavi summarizes this as follows: "The tone is not only given as having-just-been, but as having-just-been experienced [by someone, auth. amendment]" (Zahavi 2003, 172). The retentive modification of every input hence allows us not only to experience an enduring temporal object, nor does it merely enable the "constitution of the identity of the object in a manifold of temporal phases" (an object that can later and repeatedly be reproduced as a whole, i.e. as the melody I heard at a concert or music festival), but these retentive modifications also provide us with a pre-reflective and inherent temporal self-awareness (cf. Zahavi 2003, 170). Therefore, what Zahavi emphasizes is that there is not only a thematic self-awareness in the mode of an object-relation, but the very structure of temporal experiencing and being itself must comprise an inherent and pre-reflective self-relation. Indeed, this inherent self-relation is the phenomenological presupposition for every explicit form of self-perception or reflection, as well as object perception. Having admitted that it was out of the scope of his seminal paper, Zahavi leaves us to question: How is time-consciousness and its inherent self-awareness related to the body and intentionality in general? What does this mean for our analysis of the twofold temporal experience of the body's double aspectivity (i.e. being and having a body)? This draws us to focus on the connection between time-consciousness and kinaesthesia, as well as, between intentionality and self-awareness.

It is my contention in this regard that the concrete form of a temporally constituting intentionality must be a bodily one (cf. also Legrand 2006). This is because, firstly, every time consciousness relies on impressions, and thus affection and sensual receptivity that presupposes a body with localized sensations.<sup>5</sup> Secondly, all object perception presupposes a moving body with kinaesthetic skills, that is, the fact that perception is dependent on potential movement and action, as Husserl (cf. Husserl 1966, 1973a, 1973b) and after him Alva Noë (2004) have shown.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Cf. for a similar argument, see Landgrebe 1981: "without impressions there are no time constituting accomplishments and without kinaestheses there are no impressions" (59), cf. also Varela 1999, Depraz 2000; Zahavi 1999.

<sup>6</sup> In the perception of a house, for instance, only one side of this object (say, the front) falls within one's visual field, and is thus actually perceived, while the other sides (the sides and back) are empty intended or, in Noë's words, *virtually present*. The given side of the perceived object thus carries a sense of the whole object, and includes indications of possible future locations of my body under which other aspects of the object could be given. The horizon of the co-intended, but momentarily absent, profiles of the object is correlated with my kinaesthetic horizon. The absent profiles are experienced in an intentional 'if-then' relation: my relation to them is characterized by my awareness that *if* I move in this way, *then* this or that profile will become accessible (Cf. Husserl 1997 §55; Husserl 1966 §3).

If we assume that inner time consciousness is the self-awareness inherent in every act of experience, then the concrete and primary form of such a constituting time/self-awareness is to be found in what Husserl (and after him, Merleau-Ponty) called *operative intentionality*.<sup>7</sup> In contrast to an act- or object-intentionality, one could define such an operative intentionality as practically and holistically oriented towards the world. In this mode of intentionality, one encounters or discloses the things in the world not with regard to what they are, but how one can use them or what can be done with them; in Heideggerian terms, they are not presented as separate perceived or imagined objects but as ‘ready-at-hand’ (Heidegger 1962). Operative intentionality is, in this respect, genetically prior and thus a more fundamental form of bodily receptivity and action, whereas object-intentionality refers to acts of thematic perception, reflection or remembering that present or represents an already constituted, i.e. distinct and singled-out, object. As such, the former belongs to the constituting dimension of objectivity, while the latter represents an already constituted permanent object.

If we now apply this phenomenological insights to our hypothesis of the twofold temporality of human embodiment this would mean that *being* a body refers to the domain of constituting time, while the experience of *having* a body refers to an already constituted time. We could thus conclude that *being a body* is characterized by an operative and temporal intentionality; conversely, the body we have is an object of a higher order act or object-intentionality, and thus a temporal object. Furthermore, being a body must be characterized by an inherent pre-reflective self-awareness, whereas having a body refers to the realm of object perception or thematic reflection that, in turn, is founded on the former, more primary form of intention and self-awareness.

## 2.2 Implicit and explicit temporality

On a descriptive level, the temporal experience of being a body can be equated with what Thomas Fuchs defines as *implicit temporality*, and the experience of having a body with what he calls an *explicit temporality*. Fuchs maps these two temporalities onto Husserl’s distinction between lived body (*Leib*) and the ‘body as corporeal’ (*Körper*).<sup>8</sup> Implicit or lived time, as he also calls it, is regarded as a “function of the lived body, opened up by its potentiality and capability” (Fuchs 2006, 196). The lived body is thereby the concrete realization of lived time. In this mode, we do not *have* time, but are ‘inside time’; that is, completely engaged in the world and our tasks and

<sup>7</sup> Operative, motor or functioning intentionality is a concept, originally developed by Edmund Husserl (*fungierende Intentionalität*, Husserl 1969, 234, 1973a, 48) and prominently picked up and developed further by Merleau-Ponty (Merleau-Ponty 2012, 441, cf. Moran 2018, 594). Operative intentionality is thereby related to what Husserl later called drive intentionality. Both, are characterized as a tendency rather than an object intention, Husserl also differentiates in this regard between a latent and a patent intentionality, cf. for a detailed analysis Summa 2014, 209 f. If we leave the Husserlian framework, such an operative intentionality can be understood as general intentional directedness or embodied action and engagement. Theorists from enactivism (cf. Weber 2002, Thompson 2007) would argue that this directedness is rooted in the structural dynamics that is associated with metabolism, adaptive self-regulation, and self-maintenance. Living organisms thereby already engage in a kind of sense making, as Thompson argues, in that they interpret environmental stimuli in terms of their significance, and create a domain of meaningfulness by maintaining and preserving their identity (Thompson 2007, cf. Maiese 2018).

<sup>8</sup> Fuchs uses the notions ‘lived body’ and ‘corporeal body’, but as argued in the introduction, this is not entirely correct. The crucial point, here, is not that the body is material or physical, but that we experience the body as such. Thus I prefer the fuller expression of ‘the body as corporeal’.



hence “forget time as well as the body” (Fuchs 2006, 196). To illustrate this better, Fuchs gives the example of a child with his toys, whereby the child is absorbed in play and lost in his own world, oblivious to all else, including the time passing and their body moving. This mode of temporal experiencing implies what Fuchs describes as an ‘implicit self-awareness’ (Fuchs 2007, 231).<sup>9</sup>

Fuchs is less interested in the foundational relation between constituting and constituted time (respectively, operative and act-intentionality) as opposed to the concrete motivational problem: how can a formerly implicit time become explicit? That is, to consider, how does an experiential switch from a mere implicit time to an explicit experience of time take place. According to Fuchs, an explicit experience of time – i.e. temporal differentiations or evaluations like ‘earlier’ or ‘later’, ‘not yet’ or ‘yet to come’ – arises through a *gap* within the structure of intentionality; a gap between, say, “need and satisfaction, desire and fulfillment, or plan and execution” (Fuchs 2006, 195). For Fuchs, embodiment and temporality are thus intimately connected in that they have a “parallel background-foreground structure” (Fuchs 2006, 196). As Fuchs emphasizes with the aid of Husserl, intentionality at this concrete bodily level has a dynamic temporal structure of intention and fulfillment (cf. Husserl 1973a). Furthermore, it could be argued that operative intentionality or lived time is to be understood as an “affective intentionality” (Slaby 2008)<sup>10</sup> or as ‘affectively framed’ (cf. Maiese 2018), and thus comprises of a specific affective motivation and quality (Wehrle 2015a).

In contrast to implicit time, then, an explicit experience of time is deemed secondary. It appears on the scene when actions are either interrupted or fail, that is, when an experience or perception seems to be incomplete or fragmentary, or something unexpected happens. In this sense, one could argue that explicit time is motivated by a deviation from the concordant or normal structure of experience. These deviations are, in turn, dependent on the former experiences, as well as affective states of the respective bodily subject (Wehrle 2015b). When such a break or interruption happens, the lived body (and its external objects) becomes thematic, changing from a tacit to an attentive mode of awareness.

Applied to the anthropological domain of *being* and *having* a body, it can be concluded that in the former we are practically and implicitly temporally related towards the world by moving, sensing and perceiving. In being a body, an individual discloses and explores her environments, and may be directed towards particular things or spaces that are relevant for immediate actions. This subjective, but pre-reflective mode of actual embodiment functions in an operative way. Here, within the flow of experiences, time is unfolding via the actions of the lived body. In this, as Merleau-Ponty would put it, we do not actually *have* a temporal experience, rather *we are temporal* (Merleau-Ponty 2012, 451). In the mode of having a body, we instead explicitly refer to our body; whether this is particular parts of our body or our bodily abilities as further objects of perception and evaluation. To *have* one’s body thus presupposes a temporal distance from our ongoing and operative embodiment in which our bodily or functioning intentionality must be (at least in part) interrupted.

<sup>9</sup> Fuchs himself does not refer explicitly to Zahavi’s notion of a minimal self or pre-reflective self-awareness, although this is precisely what Zahavi argued for (cf. Zahavi 1999, 2017).

<sup>10</sup> One could even argue, that such an emotional disclosing, striving or tendency, which comprises of specific interests and preferences of the individual, is a concrete motivational necessity for every object constitution, that is, for full-blown object perception, cf. Wehrle 2015a.

Time in the primary and implicit sense is, in this regard, not something we think about, rather time is intentionally performed. Operative intentionality is essentially temporal. Building on Husserl's theory of time consciousness and concept of the lived body, we can thus argue with Merleau-Ponty that temporal constitution concretely takes place in the lived body's actual performance of movements, which integrate, in turn, the dimensions of past, presence and future by means of an *intentional arc* (Merleau-Ponty 2012, 137 f.). Bodily movement points always beyond itself, spatially and temporally. While engaged in a bodily movement, we are 'here', but also already 'there', that is to say, we are already anticipating the thing or the action that drives our intentional project of activity. The inherent temporality of bodily intentionality is illustrated by the gesture of pointing: "The gesture of reaching one's hand out toward an object contains a reference to this object, not as a representation, but as this highly determinate thing toward which we are thrown, next to which we are through anticipation, and which we haunt" (Merleau-Ponty 2012, 140).

In contrast to empirical time, this implicit time of operative intentionality is not correlated to the coexistence of particular objects or events, rather, it is an ability that keeps these objects and events together, and at the same time it holds them apart. It is the temporally and spatially situated body, with its goal-directed actions and movements, that operatively individuates and hence differentiates between temporal dimensions, objects and events, as well as relates them to each other. In this context, it is not a formal or bodiless inner time consciousness, but a concrete bodily subjectivity that constitutes time in the sense of a subsequent continuity and coherence of experience.<sup>11</sup>

For this reason, being a temporal body does not only mean spontaneity and agency, but also it means being situated within a world and time that has existed long before we even appeared on the scene. In this sense, the past – that is, our individual past along with the cultural or evolutionary past – is literally incorporated into and thus a part of being a body. This can be illustrated by the concept of the *body-schema*.<sup>12</sup> The body schema provides one with the immediate 'knowledge' about localization, size, and position within an inter-sensorial world. We 'know', for instance, whether we will be able to fit through a particular door or lift a certain object, and how to move or behave in a certain situation, without even thinking about. Such practical knowledge has its locus in our body and its parts; it is not thematic as such, but is automatically retrieved in the situation.<sup>13</sup> Acquired habits, practical know-how and bodily abilities provide us with orientation and skills that do not need constant attention or intellectual interference.<sup>14</sup> In this regard, the body schema mediates

<sup>11</sup> Merleau-Ponty is thus concretely combining Husserl's theory of time consciousness with his ideas of operative intentionality and the body, as was theoretically indicated in section (a). Also, Fuchs refers to Merleau-Ponty's concept of an 'intentional arc' in order to describe and explain temporal disturbances in the experience of schizophrenic, melancholic or depressed persons that will be discussed in part 2.

<sup>12</sup> Body schema is a term Merleau-Ponty took over from the psychology of his time (cf. Henry Head 1926, Paul Schilder 1923, Gelb and Goldstein 1920, Gallagher 2005a) and re-formulated in the spirit of gestalt-theory. In this sense, the body schema is not a mere sum of information regarding different bodily functions (for example tactile and kinaesthetic sensations), but an holistic form of bodily organization in direct reference to its environment: "I hold my body as an indivisible possession and I know the position of each of my limbs through a body schema (*schéma corporel*)" (Merleau-Ponty 2012, 100–101).

<sup>13</sup> Shaun Gallagher defines the body schema in this regard as a "system of processes that constantly regulate posture and movement – a system of motor-sensory capacities that function below the threshold of awareness, and without the necessity of perceptual monitoring" (Gallagher 2005a, 234; Gallagher 2005b, 24).

<sup>14</sup> Cf. recent research in philosophy, cognitive sciences and neurosciences that supports this: Dreyfus 1972; Dreyfus & Wrathall 2014; Milner and Goodale 2006.

constantly between the currently performing body, which behaves and projects itself toward the world and the habitual body, which determines the practical possibilities of this very body through already acquired skills and know-how.<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, the body-schema represents evolutionary, biological sedimentations or cultural influences of the past. Therefore, our temporal being is *passive* throughout; it is comprised of times and generations we never actually experienced, but continue to influence us in an implicit, nonetheless powerful, way. In this sense, we are never purely individual, but always already part of a history, culture and generativity, and indeed, a past that has never been present for us (Merleau-Ponty 2012, 252). This relates well with Plessner's idea that all living beings (from plants to humans) are inherently temporal, i.e. shaped by time, whereas animals (and so too humans), in addition to this, shape their behavior *informed* by time (e.g. past experiences); to reiterate, animals and humans have a historical base of reaction.

Along with Merleau-Ponty, we can thus state that as living temporal beings we are at the same time "we are entirely active and entirely passive because we are the sudden upsurge of time" (Merleau-Ponty 2012, 452). With further respect to Husserl, one could argue that we are not only constituting time, but as concrete bodily beings, we are simultaneously constituted and shaped by time. In being a body, we are thus already ahead of ourselves, as well as, behind ourselves. It is in this sense that Merleau-Ponty argues that subjectivity is time, and that time is subjectivity (Merleau-Ponty 2012, 444).

According to the anthropological understanding of Plessner, we are not only the 'upsurge of time', but can also grasp and thematize our body as an object in time, and reflect on how time has shaped (and may continue to do so) our bodies. As Fuchs has shown, this act of attention towards our body must be, in part, accompanied by a temporal disruption or distance towards our current movements or operative doings. For example, if I were to fall over a stone and hurt my knee, my body switches from the modus of being a mediator of experience and movement to a thematic object of my perception and concern. In making our body thematic, we refer to it as an intentional and thus temporal object. This more explicit access to our body is given in the mode of a body-image, that is, a "system of (sometimes conscious) perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs pertaining to one's own body" (Gallagher 2005a, 234). This also refers to social and cultural images and the objectifying gazes and evaluations of others (cf. Sartre 2001). In this sense, the body is perceived as an object in space, as well as an object in time. It is temporal because we can perceive changes of this object: having fallen painfully, my knee is bleeding where before it was not. Through this deviation, we become aware of our 'normal' movements, of which we were not explicitly aware as we enacted them. To explain this change, I infer that 'I fell'. Thus, in retrospect, I make this movement (e.g. the act of falling) and its temporality explicit. It is exactly this rupture or process of objectifying our body that makes explicit the experience of time (i.e. time pre- and post-accident), and of our body as an object with temporal aspects (i.e. unhurt vs. bleeding), possible.

Anthropologically, it can be thus argued that in order to have an *explicit temporal experience*, one has to be able to experience one's *body as object*. As we have seen in the example of falling, we are able to grasp or trace back the temporal nature of our

<sup>15</sup> In this respect, this habitual layer does not only comprise of skills, but also of a differentiated implicit body memory (cf. Fuchs 2012), which can include traumatic or positive emotional experiences.

embodiment, because of the distance created within our interrupted operational doings. We only become aware of ourselves as having a past as we experience the contrast between the functioning body we had in the past and the injured body we now have to encounter in the present. As we have seen with regard to Husserl's theory of time consciousness, it is only possible to refer to a lasting and coherent perceptual object thanks to its temporal constitution within a field of presence, meaning, in the retention of sensations. Only after we hear the complete melody, and it is retained as a whole, can we explicitly remember it as a temporal object that has a definite location in time. The same holds true for the relation of being and having a body. Without being temporal, we could not refer to ourselves as objects in time. However, without experiencing ourselves as objects, we would never be able to grasp this very temporal structure explicitly.

### 3 Temporal dissociation and human double Aspectivity

In the following, I want to illustrate the above argument, i.e. that we can descriptively differentiate between a twofold temporality that corresponds with the double aspect (being and having a body) of human embodiment. Although, these two aspects are not separate dimensions of experience, but two relational poles of one continuum (cf. Breyer 2016), they can be distinguished on the level of description, especially when it comes to non-normal experience.

In 3.1 section a) I will present examples of pathological experience in schizophrenia and melancholic depression, investigated by Thomas Fuchs, that show a dissociation of implicit an explicit time. Here, implicit temporality and self-awareness, i.e. the lived time of being a body, are disturbed, which leads to an overestimation of explicit temporality. As Fuchs perspective is that of psychopathology, such an overcompensation is necessarily interpreted as a negative fragmentation of experience, a lack of attunement with one's environment and others, that leads to suffering and isolation of the respective patients. That the possibility to experience time (and the body) explicitly, in turn could also have positive aspects shall be argued in b) where an example by Merleau-Ponty is used to argue that the lacking of this possibility results in a limited scope of temporal (planned) action and thus explicit experience of past and future.

#### 3.1 Examples from pathological experience

##### 3.1.1 Disturbances of implicit time in schizophrenia and melancholic depression

According to Fuchs and others (Fuchs 2013, cf. Maiese 2018, cf. Gallagher 2005b, Bovet & Parnas 1993, 584), mental conditions, for instance, schizophrenia, melancholia and depression, are best described as a psychopathology of implicit temporality and self-awareness (Zahavi & Parnas 1998). Major symptoms of schizophrenia, such as, as thought disorders, thought insertions, hallucinations and experienced passivity, are explained by a disturbance of implicit time, i.e. an interruption of the "constitutive synthesis of time consciousness" (cf. Fuchs 2013, 75). Because implicit or lived time is tied to the lived body and implies a pre-reflective self-awareness, this leads to a fragmentation of the (bodily) self, as well as, experience.

Concerning schizophrenia, Fuchs (cf. Fuchs 2013, 2007, 2006) argues in line with Merleau-Ponty that the *intentional arc*, which constitutes the continuity of implicit time, is fragmented and so, the passive temporal synthesis is disturbed. Schizophrenic patients, therefore, have problems in following a conversation or focusing on a strain of thought as they do not experience them as coherent and meaningful wholes anymore. In this regard, temporal gaps occur and there is an inability to anticipate what comes next (as in a melody or conversation). According to Fuchs, this refers to a lack in the protentional function of temporality that renders the occurrence of events too rapid, and the patients thus feel overwhelmed and even intruded upon by external events or their own thoughts. With this lack of protention, one additionally loses the ability to actively direct one's actions towards the future; one is stuck in the present or, better put, that-which-has-just-passed. Hence, they have to focus on what *just* occurred and the sensory feedback of one's just-passed movement (cf. Fuchs 2013, 86). Experiences, therefore, feel no longer as if they were one's own; in a sense, consciousness is continually surprised by itself and so, schizophrenics often experience their own thoughts as if inserted or manipulated (potentially, by another) from without. This leads not only to a fragmentation of experience, but also a de-personalization.<sup>16</sup> Disturbances in implicit time lead to a "disintegration and alienation of routine units of activity" and this forces patients in turn to produce "every single movement intentionally: the body's implicit knowledge has been lost, and its place taken by 'hyper-reflexive' self-observation and self-control" (Fuchs 2013, 90).<sup>17</sup> Disturbances in implicit time, therefore, cause a break in the affective attunement to the world, that must be overcompensated with explicit, that is, intellectual aspects.<sup>18</sup>

Moreover, as Fuchs emphasizes, implicit and explicit time correspond to two different forms of intersubjectivity. While we have an explicit form of intersubjectivity in which we are linguistically and socially related to each other on the level of explicit time, the level of lived intersubjectivity is characterized by an intercorporeality (cf. Merleau-Ponty 1964). Normally, the temporalities of individual living and operating bodies are, in this sense, synchronized into an "intersubjective now" (Fuchs 2013, 82), and thus in intercorporeal resonance. Only when this synchronization or implicit temporal normality fails does one explicitly experience time, such as, the experience that one is too late or too early with respect to the normal intersubjective standard of others. Time is experienced as such as a "loss of simultaneity" (cf. Fuchs 2013, 83). Such a desynchronization of the individual and intersubjective level of temporality is,

<sup>16</sup> Fuchs' phenomenological descriptions are in accordance with research that point to the reduced attention spans, deficits in working memory and executive control functions (cf. Voegeley et al. 1999; Voegeley and Kupke 2007; Manoach 2003), and deficits in sequential movements, discriminating in close temporal vicinity (Braus 2002) or estimate time intervals (Mishara 2007).

<sup>17</sup> As we have seen in part I of this paper, disturbances of implicit temporality are accompanied by a disturbance of pre-reflective self-awareness or inherent mine-ness of experience. In this regard, patients then have to explicitly assure themselves via introspection that their experiences really belong to them, cf. Zahavi & Parnas 1998, 700).

<sup>18</sup> A similar effect with regard to bodily behavior can be seen in the case of Ian Waterman, who suffers from lack of touch and proprioception from the neck down (cf. Cole 1995; Gallagher and Cole 1995). Here, the loss of bodily self-affection and sensorial feedback, forces him to control every single movement explicitly, i.e. with mental concentration and constant visual monitoring of his body. With this, so one could argue, also the implicit experience of time is lost. One's movements are explicitly temporal and compared as too slow in comparison to others.

for example, crucial for melancholic depression. Here, as Fuchs argues, time becomes explicit to such an extent that it is experienced as a “burden of guilt and omission” (Fuchs 2013, 94). The typical “triggering constellation” of melancholia is to be described as the experience of ‘falling or lagging behind’. This leads to a lack of affective attunement, whereby patients experience themselves with regard to the dynamic life going on around them as comparatively lifeless and rigid. Depressive disturbances are, in this sense, also characterized by a perception of oneself as physically static, lifeless and rigid, in other words, experience involves a “corporealization of the lived body” (Fuchs 2013, 96, cf. Fuchs 2005).<sup>19</sup>

In Fuchs research on time and psychopathology, external time is merely understood as a sign of the disturbance or break down of implicit time. Explicit time is thus described entirely in *negative* terms, namely, as something “experienced as a painful burden” (Fuchs 2010, 97) or the cause of pain and suffering. This emphasis on the negative effects on explicit temporality is, of course due, to his psychopathological focus. But, as I want to argue here, the explicit experience of time that corresponds to an explicit corporeality (the body we *have*, so to speak) does not necessitate negative phenomenological effects alone. From an anthropological perspective, explicit temporality and corporeality are *necessary* aspects of specifically human embodiment, and thus not just a default mode. This alternative perspective can go so far to argue that the split within our embodiment that brings these radicalizations of distance or disruption about, is simultaneously the source for all modes of explicit perception, memory and reflection. The inherent mediation in embodiment that accompanies a break in temporal experience may not only lead to disintegration, alienation or is be experienced as burden, displeasure or suffering. Instead, it could engender a reflective distance towards one’s body and behavior; allowing one, in turn, to control their movements or evaluate and optimize their body as a whole. In the following, then, I put forward a case in which explicit time or the capacity to have a body is disturbed in order to reflect the extent to which the ability to experience time explicitly can be regarded as positive or necessary aspect of human embodiment.

### 3.1.2 The case of Schneider: Concrete and abstract movements

In his *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty illustrates the ‘normal’ functioning of motor intentionality and embodiment through a contrasting analysis of pathological cases. Throughout the book, he refers several times to a patient of the German neurologists Adh mar Gelb and Kurt Goldstein, named, Schneider. Due to a war injury, Schneider has severe brain injuries and shows functional distortions in visual perception, movement, memory, thinking, and social behavior. In the context of this paper, I will focus only on a specific motoric problem and its relevance for Schneider’s temporal intentionality (i.e. his *being* a body). Gelb and Goldstein report that after his brain injury, Schneider was no longer able to perform what they call abstract

<sup>19</sup> In this sense, melancholic depression is not to be regarded as a fundamental disturbance of the protentional function or implicit time as in schizophrenia, but rather to be described as a dissociation of individual and intersubjective time. Although, one could argue that they got ‘stuck in time’ or ‘locked in’ and lose their connection to the future (cf. Maiese 2018), this does not mean that they lose their ability to anticipate and experience in a coherent temporal manner. Rather, what they lose is the sense of possibility, or the ability to plan meaningful activities in an intersubjectively shared future or objective time.



movements. When they asked Schneider to point to his own nose when blindfolded, for instance, he was unable to quickly perform this task. Although he perfectly ‘knew’ where his nose was, Schneider was unable to point to it when asked to do so unless this movement was embedded in a practical or operative action, like sneezing or in brushing away a fly. Schneider can thus ‘grasp’ his nose whenever this grasping is a part of a current action or situation, but he cannot ‘point’ to his nose upon request.<sup>20</sup> Merleau-Ponty questions the juxtapositions of these situations: He concluded that there must be a difference between grasping one’s nose in a current, practical or highly habitual situation and having to point to the same nose without being actually engaged in a practical and meaningful task. Grasping, therefore, is deemed a concrete movement, whereas pointing relates to a merely abstract or virtual movement.<sup>21</sup>

A similar problem occurs when Schneider was asked to show where one of his doctors lives: although he had visited the place several times, and so ‘knew’ where it was, he was not able to ‘indicate’ its location on cue. Again, it seems that things and events have no meaning for him when they are too ‘abstract’, viz. when they are not integrated in a ‘concrete’ situation. For this reason, Merleau-Ponty affirms that Schneider is conscious of his own body and of its surroundings as an “envelope of his habitual action but not as an objective milieu”, which is why he is only able to act habitually, but not spontaneously (Merleau-Ponty 2012, 106). Although the future-oriented engagement with the world is disturbed, Schneider is still embedded in the world and perfectly able to operate within the world in a habitual way.

Applied to Plessner’s double aspectivity of embodiment, there are arguably two different kinds of knowledge and temporalities involved. In concrete movements, ‘knowledge’ is part of *being* a body, that is, it is aligned with the body-schema, comprised of proprioceptive information, and which operates automatically in current movements and actions. In the case of an abstract movement, however, whereby one is asked to point to a part of one’s body, we need to refer to our body as an object. We need to have a body-image to point to the objective, external location of a specific part of our body in objective space. While a concrete movement realizes itself within the immediate field of presence or reality, the abstract movement refers to the realm of possibility and virtuality, that is, an imaginary situation, an abstract or even fictional space. To execute an abstract movement, one must be able to plan movements in advance, to imagine possible movements of one’s body. In normal motor intentionality, these two aspects – the real and the virtual – the body-schema and body-image come together to guarantee a smooth orientation and adjustment to new environments and tasks. Here, we seldom come across a movement that is purely concrete or merely abstract. Most of our everyday activities require an interplay of concrete and abstract aspects. But, in the case of Schneider, it seems that the openness for the realm of the possible is disturbed. His field of action is limited to immediate presence or habitual actions; he cannot imagine how to do things in advance or how to do them otherwise and appears stuck in the lived time of presence. Therefore, to be able to execute an abstract movement, like pointing, he needs to make this movement concrete for himself. For example, when he is asked to make a circle in the air, he first needs to locate the relevant

<sup>20</sup> Included in a current action, Schneider has no problem with his *being a physically extended Körper* - he can immediately find the ‘external’ aspect of his body. Schneider’s difficulties, rather, relate to experiencing his body as a spatial thing in the physical world, i.e. to perceive himself as Körper. I offer gracious thanks to the anonymous reviewer for making me aware of this point.

<sup>21</sup> For a critical discussion of Merleau-Ponty’s interpretation, see Jensen 2009.

limb through a preparatory movement. Schneider thus shows a “contraction of the awareness of action possibilities” (cf. Jensen 2009, 386).

What becomes clear here is how the ability to perform abstract movements properly requires certain planning and adjustment of one’s movements, and to project one’s movements into the future. Nonetheless, this requires a distance from the operational doings of one’s body. Apart from a body-schema, one needs a body-image. To anticipate or have an explicit future, as well as a past that can be remembered, one needs to be able to actively objectify their body. This opportunity is what Schneider supposedly lacks. But, it would be too quick to conclude that Schneider’s embodiment is like that of animals, reduced merely to being a body. What is at stake, here, is *the disintegration of the interplay of both aspects*. In human embodiment, the temporal aspects of being and having a body are interdependent, normally informing and influencing each other mutually. But in Schneider’s case, his body-image does not inform his doings, and vice versa. So, we can conclude that without the aspect of having a body, motor intentionality would be limited to the immediate field of temporal presence.

### 3.2 Examples from normal and liminal experiences

In the following, I will turn to normal and liminal experiences to illustrate the double aspectivity of human embodiment in its relation to time. First, I will describe and discuss the experience of ageing. Here, the inherent tension of being and having a body becomes most obvious. In ageing, we necessarily get aware of our inherent bodily and temporal nature, namely that we are material and finite bodies: while ageing is one the one hand gradually lived, it is at the same time experienced as a sudden shock and confrontation with one’s actual body that differs from the body (schema) we were (used to) and the body(image) we had (in mind). Moreover, this example shows another important aspect of having a body: The attention to the bodies we have or had, is heavily influenced, motivated or even constituted by the gazes of others. Having a body is thus always mediated by others, and in turn a confrontation with ourselves as other.

In the last section b) I will briefly discuss liminal experiences of pain, torture and rape. In this regard, I will not give a full phenomenological description nor can I live up to the respective ethical and political implications. I just use these examples to indicate that the ability to objectify the bodies we are, can be regarded not only as an increase of suffering or fragmentation, but also as an ability to distance oneself from one’s pain and situation. I will argue in this regard that to extinguish the possibility of objectifying oneself is precisely what makes torture and rape so brutal and humiliating.

#### 3.2.1 The experience of ageing

The double aspect of embodiment creates a tension that becomes especially radical and relevant with old age. Here, we come to experience a mismatch between the gradual experience of ageing and the appearance of the aged body; this shows, for example, in the widely known phenomena that one continues to feel young, but imprisoned in an old body. But, as I want to argue, this split is not the result of a static personal conception of self (that is forever young) and an inevitable changing appearance, rather, it results strategically from the attempt to cover or even deny the dynamical tension inherent in every human embodiment.

*Being* a body, we experience ageing as a gradual change, but we do not experience ourselves as 'old'. Oldness is an objective or relative category that belongs to the body we *have*. As De Beauvoir would put it, oldness is assigned to us by others (De Beauvoir 1996). What we experience from within are gradual or sudden changes in our embodied actions: the decrease in strength or fitness, slower reactions and delimited bodily abilities that deviate from past performance and no longer easily accommodate our environment; or, we feel out of sync with regard to the performances of others, as Fuchs has explained in relation to melancholic depression. Despite their limited magnitude, these apparent changes are experienced as sudden disruptions. They either gradually add up until they reach a threshold, and the mismatch becomes explicit; or the changes are recognized suddenly, i.e. when we try to do things we have not done in a while. In both cases, the operating, lived body becomes thematic and thus turns into the material and aged body we have.

This split becomes especially visible and radical the older we become: the more we experience our being a body as an expression of 'I cannot' instead of 'I can', the more we have to attend to our body as a material object. This embodied immersion in the world becomes rare as we are constantly forced to deal with our bodily shortcomings and changes as a result of old age. To experience ourselves as old implies that we have to be aware of our body as a body, in other words, as *Körper*; that is to say, the body's materiality, physicality and finiteness is made thematic to us. With regard to age, it becomes obvious, that our concrete *body-image* is heavily mediated by *others*, either directly or through the mediated gaze of others, i.e. when we see ourselves in the mirror with the eyes of others. Having a body, is in this sense never purely an individual experience as we experience *having* bodies through the gazes of others, as well as cultural and social images and norms internalized. According to De Beauvoir, the recognition of ourselves 'as old' is not something we can experience merely from within, but something that is assigned to us from *without*; through the judgments of other subjectivities that, in turn, represent the norms of a certain society. Therefore, De Beauvoir argues along with Sartre that old age is unrealizable: one cannot experience what "we are for others in the for-itself mode" (De Beauvoir 1996, 291). The appearance of the aged body is, in this sense, more apparent to others than to the subject itself. In turn, we experience ageing or having an aged body through the appearance and presence of others. It is thus also in the perception of the aged body of other subjects that we are confronted by our own future or current bodily stages and selves.

Being a body, we experience changes gradually and directed to the environment, only from time to time do we in fact attend to our bodies, for instance, when our embodied being has been physically disturbed or requires habitual adjustments; or, when our appearance is brought to our attention through others' gaze or the presence of a mirror. With old age we inevitably and increasingly attend to the body we *are* (as embodied beings), which is thus increasingly perceived as a body we *have*. The internal subject-object split inherent to every human embodiment becomes more self-apparent, and the achieved balance between the two, more shaky. We experience our body more and more as an object. This is the result of either internal physical modifications, changes in performance or the awareness that we deviate from the cultural standards of youth and beauty. But, the aged body we see in the mirror, or the 'old body' that is assigned to us through social categorization via others' gaze, diverges from our gradual experience of ageing, as well as our habituated *body-image*. Therefore, the sudden image of our aged body not only diverges from one's experience, but also from our habituated *body-image*. As such, this habitual *body-image*

always temporally lags behind with respect to the actual external representation or categorization we are confronted with.

In the same sense that we are “habituated to a different [past, auth.] body”, a sensing and moving body with more capacities, strength, and a broader environments (cf. Heinämaa 2014, 177), we are also habituated to a ‘past’ body-image: namely, a more or less stable image that we have created of ourselves in the course of our former lifetime. I would thus argue that not only the body-schema, but also the body-image is developed over time, and then becomes more fixed in adult life especially once we achieve certain life stabilities by means of, for instance, a reliable profession, social or family position. Although we constantly perceive ourselves daily in the mirror, we rarely update our body-image by these means. This is because we cannot perceive the gradual changes in our faces. Rather than look carefully at ourselves each time, we anticipate our appearance according to an already acquired body-image. Inevitably, the gradual physical changes accumulate to reach a moment that the actual ‘change’ becomes apparent. However, even this moment is achieved largely through the mediation of either others’ comments or in comparison with an old picture of oneself. The aged body we then suddenly discover is experienced not as something we are or even have become, but as something truly ‘other’.<sup>22</sup>

### 3.2.2 Limit cases of experience, pain, torture, rape

When experiencing pain, the aspect of having a body is especially important. The ability to objectify ourselves allows us, at least temporally, to gain some distance, and so some control over our pain. Nietzsche illustrates this in the following citation: “I have given a name to my pain and called it a dog [...] it is just as faithful, just as obtrusive and shameless [...] and I can scold it and vent my bad mood on it, as others do with their dogs, servants, and wives.” (Nietzsche 1974, 249–250). This citation points tacitly to the dangers of objectification, its ability to render certain people and animals inferior, but in doing so, Nietzsche also highlights the relief achieved in reference to pain as something exterior to oneself; something that is manifest, graspable and potentially manageable. With intense and chronic pain that extends all over the body, and is thus not easily locatable anymore, this objectification is increasingly impossible. In such situations, we *are* our pain, and we are unable to grasp or, indeed, *have* it anymore. In such cases of intense pain, we are not only unable to distance ourselves from our body, and make it the object of our intention, but we also lose our directedness towards the world, and in turn intentionality in the strict sense. Reduced entirely to our being a body, we lose our body’s disclosing meaning and functions; we are hence reduced to the body as mere field of sensation and thus thrown back on the materiality and vulnerability which is accompanied by it. In this alienated situation, we also lose every sense of time (and space), because neither do we experience change and movement on the level of implicit time or intentional temporality, nor can we refer to our body as a temporal or perceived object anymore.

<sup>22</sup> But, this othering of our material body can even be more immediate, such as, when parts of our living bodies turn more into merely material objects, like falling hair, cracking teeth, thick yellow nails, hanging eyelids (cf. Heinämaa 2013, 176). Here, they signal a transformation into materiality, and thus foreshadow the necessary end of living.

This total breakdown of the mediated structure of our embodiment becomes especially obvious in the case of violently induced pain. In the case of purposefully inflicting pain, like torture, the torturer seems to objectify the victim in a radical sense, thereby depriving their victims of subjectivity (cf. Scarry 1985; Grüny 2003). These victims find themselves in an entirely alienated situation, where their being a body is reduced to a mere passive receptivity. Furthermore, the loss of subjectivity does not mean that we are reduced to a mere object; the materiality is intertwined with the sensibility of living beings, and thus remains a part of our being a body. Instead, what we lose is the ability of having a body, the victim of torture is deprived of the inability to actively objectify herself. Torture can thus be described as radicalizing the subjective dimension of embodiment: “since the experienced pain completely fills subjective space, so that nothing else can be felt, up to a point where consciousness [and thus experience] might faint altogether” (Breyer 2016, 743). At the same time, through such a radicalization the victims lose any distance to their bodies, and thus the possibility to imagine, reflect or control them (and along with that, their pain).

Moreover, due to the monotony of torture practices, and the typically perpetually dark rooms in which torture takes place, the victim loses track of time and space. Deprived of the possibility to move, disclose or direct themselves towards the world and external objects, the victim loses the ability to bodily inhabit space or engage in lived time (through their operative intentionality). In such a situation of radical asynchrony, where the torturer inhabits more and more space, and also is the master of time, the victim loses all sense of an objective or intersubjectively-shared time. In this regard, human embodiment, the ‘I can’, as well as the ‘I have’, will be slowly disintegrated until the victim becomes incommensurable with pain and appears merely an object (at least, from a third-person perspective) – moved and touched at another’s will.

In extreme situations of violence, especially in cases of rape, characterized as an ‘invasion of the body’, some people report of ‘out of body’ experiences. This goes to express the ways in which a rape victim will ‘leave’ their body being violated, and regard it as if from a distance. As one’s sense of being a body and lived time is literally penetrated and dominated by another, it becomes an unlivable and unbearable state of being; as such, a dissociation from one’s body takes place.<sup>23</sup> This split or distance helps the victim to survive this “affront to the embodied subject” (Cahill 2001, 13). Although, the victims cannot restore neither their lived nor the intersubjectively shared time, one could argue that in such an out of body experience a second ‘frozen’ lived-time is established as substitution, in which one can observe what happens. Paradoxically, this split functions as a reaction of the embodied subject to retain its wholeness and dignity. In line with Plessner, it can be argued that a rape victim takes shelter in their ‘eccentric positionality’, and in doing so, they are able to re-establish the mediated relation between being and having a body, lived and explicit time.

## 4 Conclusion

Human embodiment implies that there is a *rupture* at the heart of our embodiment. And, it is this rupture, as I have tried to show throughout this paper, that is *essentially temporal*.

<sup>23</sup> For a critical discussion on the extent to which the experience of rape can be described as an actual dissociation, see Summa 2014, 263.

This means, the rupture of human embodiment constitutes our experience of a past and a future, and the very awareness of ourselves as temporal beings, in both an individual and generative sense. This creates a need to constantly mediate these two poles that normally go hand-in-hand. These poles stand for our operational and (re)presentational intentionality, pre-reflective and reflective awareness, implicit and explicit temporality.

While most phenomenological and psychopathological approaches emphasize the alienating and de-synchronizing disturbances of experiences that occur, when our body and temporal experience becomes thematic, an anthropological perspective could shed light on the positive aspects of the fact of self-objectification. Following Plessner, the distance or mediatedness within our embodiment can be understood as the precondition for explicit learning, reflection, as well as the development of culture and technology. Phenomenologically, it could have been shown that the temporal and operative intentionality of being a body is fundamental for a stable object perception, as well as an explicit temporality. Concretely, this enables us to make abstract movements, which involves planning and imagining what we do in advance of acting; that is to say, it gives us a sense of the possible. In addition, we relate to ourselves as past bodies, which becomes apparent in the example of ageing. Anthropologically, then, this split within human embodiment provides us with a past and a future – as well as a past and a future body - that not only shapes or motivates us, but to which we can and must relate as such. For these reasons, having a body as explicit corporeality and temporality is not merely be a default mode of embodiment, but this de-centering and fragmenting aspect necessarily belongs to it. While it certainly can be alienating, it also implies the capacity for one to take a distance towards their immediate actions and feelings, and thus gain a sense of distance and control, makes it possible to reflect on and evaluate one's bodily behavior. The body as object thus mustn't be necessarily a burden, but could also be a blessing (dependent on the respective circumstances).

It is by *having* a body, imperfectly construed as it is, that further enables us to actively and thus also temporarily distance ourselves from the body we *are*. This necessarily implies a temporal distance as well, that makes us aware of our bodies not only passively as material, changing and finite objects, but also actively, as possible bodies related to our future actions and plans. Therefore, this temporal distance from the *body we are* bears a tendency towards reflection already at a bodily level. That the body is *sensible for itself*, as Merleau-Ponty emphasizes in his later works, does not only mean that it is sensible in its materiality or spatiality, but above all that it is sensible for itself as temporal. This temporal aspect of being self-reflexive illustrates what Merleau-Ponty meant when he claimed that bodily reflection is the precondition for any other form of self-consciousness.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> The fact that one can experience oneself as a material body in the world, that is not only visible to or within physical reach of oneself, but most of all for *others*, could also be interpreted as the presupposition of explicit empathy. This is because we know first-hand that externally perceived material bodies (like us) can have an interior, i.e. we are experiencing subjects with perspectives and gazes themselves (Merleau-Ponty 1964, 168). In a sense, one could say that the distance we have towards ourselves makes room for the other, i.e. the encounter of ourselves as other is, in turn, the presupposition to experience the other as similar to oneself. Therefore, while there is already a pre-reflective self-awareness and intersubjectivity (intercorporeality) at the level of *being* a body, the fact that we also *have* a body may be interpreted as the source of an explicit self-consciousness, as well as, possibility of an explicit form of empathy.



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