

TEMPORALIZATION OF TOUCH AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR EMBODIMENT¹

1. Preliminaries

One of the concepts that Husserl is most famous for in contemporary phenomenology and beyond is the concept of the 'lived body'. In Husserl's texts, especially in *Ideas II*, the notion of 'lived body' is very closely linked to the sense of touch. When I touch something I do not only have *sensations* of the touched object, e.g. its coldness or hardness, but I also experience "sensings" (Husserl 1989: 152) in the body itself. This is exactly what Husserl calls "double apprehension" (ibid.: 155), which constitutes the lived body through localization. Due to its sensings the body is no longer apprehended merely as a yet another object among other objects. The lived body becomes a "'here' which has no other here outside of itself, in relation to which it would be a 'there'" (ibid.: 166), or in other famous words of Husserl, it is "bearing in itself the *zero point* of all these orientations" (ibid.: 166). This *here* has, according to Husserl, a *pre-conscious* status; it has "a localization which is actually intuitively given" (ibid.: 161). By contrast, "the intentional lived experiences themselves are *no longer* directly and properly *localized*; they no longer form

¹ The article was developed as part of the research project *Bodytime. An interdisciplinary inquiry on regular body rhythm and its dysfunctions* (P 26110-G15), funded by the Austrian Science Fund.

a stratum on the Body. Perception, as the touching apprehension of the form, does not have its seat in the touching finger in which the touch sensation is localized” (ibid.: 160–161). Thus, Husserl characterizes the lived body through the sense of touch and by means of localization, i.e. he describes it primarily in terms of *spatial* characteristics. With the term ‘localization’ Husserl creates a concept of *pre-conscious bodily space*. The lived body is a pre-intentional *here* that must always be where I currently am – even before referring intentionally to the world.

The *temporal* dimension of the lived body, on the other hand, remains largely unthematized. In § 81 of *Ideas I* Husserl writes: “[T]ime is a name for a completely *delimited sphere of problems* and one of exceptional difficulty.” To avoid confusion in his investigation, time “has remained silent to a certain extent, and must of necessity remain silent” (Husserl 1983: 162). Even in his later discussions on time (1991) Husserl focuses mostly on inner time consciousness, while forms of bodily time are not in the center of his interests.

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This paper accordingly focuses on the temporal dimension of the body by arguing that pre-reflective bodily constitution occurs not only in the form of localization through tactile sensations, but also in the form of a pre-reflective *temporalization*. Such *bodytime* requires an extended concept of touching. I will develop these ideas in three consecutive steps:

The first part, expands upon Husserl’s concept of touching. This proves necessary due to the limited character of Husserl’s approach. In *Ideas II* the sense of touch is connected almost exclusively with the touching hand or, more precisely, with palpating fingers². As a consequence, corporeality is a priori confined to the human body. This paper, in contrast, argues for an extended concept of touching: starting from Aristotle’s concept of touching in *De Anima*, and Helmuth Plessner’s *Die Stufen des Organischen und der*

2 In *Ideas II* Husserl rarely uses the German word *berühren*, and mostly utilizes the verb *tasten* or *betasten* to describe the sense of touch. In the English translation the latter is expressed as *to touch*. This may be misleading because of a subtle distinction in the German language: While *tasten* can only be carried out by fingers, the German word *berühren* includes the whole body, hands included. As a consequence, in the following paper, the word (*be*)*tasten* will be translated with *to palpate*, while *to touch* will denote a broader meaning, associated with *berühren*.

Mensch. Einleitung in die philosophische Anthropologie (published in 1928), touching is construed as getting in contact with something or someone and as the realization of borders. Thus, touching is resolved from its reduction to palpation and broadened into a general bodily phenomenon.

On this basis, I provide in the second part of this paper a description of *temporalization*, i.e. the *temporal dimension* of touching. On the one hand, touching and being touched seem to be necessary conditions for *lifetime* in general, because they secure a continuity of being-towards-the-world. On the other hand, it is argued that bodytime is a pre-conscious time in which the three time ecstasies interact.

In the third part of this paper, this continuity of being-towards-the-world through touching is exposed as fractured or deferred. Husserl characterizes the relation between the touching hands of one body as the co-presence of the physical body (Ger. *Körper*) and lived body (Ger. *Leib*), but overlooks that this simultaneity also encompasses a *time deferral*. To describe this in more detail, I turn to the phenomenon of phantom limb sensations, and that of injury.

2. On Touching

In *Ideas II* Husserl gives a few examples of how touching evokes corporeality. Here is one such example:

“[I]n order to bring to perception here the tactual thing, paperweight, I touch it, with my fingers, for example. I then experience tactually the smooth surface of the glass and the delicate crystal edges. But if I attend to the hand and finger, then they have touch sensations which still linger when the hand is withdrawn. (Husserl 1989: 154)”

While palpating the paperweight I feel its hardness, smoothness, coldness, and its delicate edges – qualities that Husserl calls *sensations*. But at the same time, and “with a ‘different direction of attention’” (ibid.), I also have feelings of hardness and coldness in my fingers themselves, which may persist even if I withdraw my finger from the paperweight. To describe this type of phenomena

Husserl coins the term “sensings” (ibid.: 152). Combined, sensations and sensings constitute so-called “double apprehension” (ibid.: 155). Thus, in touching, I can specify an external objective place in space, which provokes sensations, but I can also feel the sensings at their very place within the body itself. This is what Husserl calls “localization” (ibid.: 153). Localization is, according to Husserl, the necessary condition for the lived body, or in other words, the body becomes a lived body only “by the localization of the sensations as sensations” (ibid.: 151), i.e. as sensings. Because of its capacity for localization, the sense of touch is differentiated from all other senses in which localization is not possible.

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These examples show how tactile sensations evoke localization and therefore corporeality. They are, however, associated with a very limited view of the sense of touch, which is understood primarily as the touching hand³ or, more precisely, the palpating fingers. This has several detrimental consequences, which can be gleaned from the already quoted example of the paperweight: the act of palpating the paperweight has a precise starting point. During the process of palpating, it is always possible to clearly delineate between the palpating subject and the palpated object (Waldenfels 2002: 76). However, touching is not just the process of palpating, and it does not only concern the hands of a subject. Touching is much more varied and heterogeneous. During the act of touching the touched thing and the one doing the touching get in contact, which means they are always touching and being touched at the same time (ibid.: 79–80).

As a result it is no longer possible to clearly differentiate between the touching and the touched. These types of contact do not necessarily have an explicit beginning or a precise end. Unlike Husserl’s example, in which the paperweight gets touched intentionally and consciously, I would argue that touching is not and cannot be fully controlled by consciousness. Its heterogeneity may be shown by the following example: at this particular moment, my elbows are touching the table, my feet are touching the floor, a large part of my body is being touched by my clothes, and while I’m talking to myself silently, my lips touch each other.

3 The important but also restrictive role of the hand in Husserl’s concept of touching, as well as its exhaustive significance for embodiment, has been meticulously exposed by Jacques Derrida in the form of a deconstructive lecture on *Ideas II* in his book *On touching*. Jean-Luc Nancy (2005: 159–182).

The sense of touch is also very important in children's development. In childhood, the skin is the primary sensory organ. Children require plenty of tactile stimulation for growth and mental development (Fuchs 2000: 115), not only on their hands and fingers, but throughout their entire body.⁴ Sensations of touch can be localized much more precisely than internal sensations, such as those in the heart or viscera which are nevertheless tactile stimuli. (Bernet 2009: 53; Husserl 1989: 165). Therefore the sense of touch is characterized by constantly gliding from palpating to touching (Waldenfels 2002: 77).

That the sense of touch is not necessarily limited to the fingers and hands was already pointed out by Aristotle, as his *De Anima* describes a much broader concept of touching. The sense of touch is the most fundamental among the senses: Living beings "have at least one of the senses, touch [...]" (Aristotle 1993: 414a 36).⁵ In this Aristotelian understanding, touching is not restricted to the hands, but is much more extended; together with the sense of taste, touching is also the sense of nutrition, or more precisely, of food intake. As a consequence, touching becomes relevant for living beings, irrespective of whether they have hands or not. The anthropocentric gesture, accompanying the already quoted examples from Husserl, can therefore be avoided. Thus, we find a much more fundamental notion of touching in Aristotle compared to Husserl.

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On this basic level, touching is first and foremost a *sense of demarcation*. Bodies come into contact through reciprocal touching. Thus, they define themselves in delimitation from other bodies; they distance themselves; they separate (Nancy 2000: 5; 92). The sense of touch creates a first boundary: it sets apart self and non-self, lived body and objects (Fuchs 2000: 109–110). Helmuth Plessner's 'biophilosophy' is closely linked to this concept of touching. He develops a *logic of the living forms* based on the concept of the delimitation of the body. *Delimitation*, in Plessner's sense, is characterized in terms of consecutive levels of existence which are the result of an "Abhebung" (Plessner 1975: 243), a *raising* from itself in itself. Living bodies therefore differ from non-living bodies because of their ability to realize borders, or in

4 See also: Anzieu 1985.

5 However, the sense of touch is not considered as superior sense.

Plessner's own words, living bodies are "grenzrealisierende Körper" (ibid.: 126), i.e. border-realizing or border-erecting bodies. Consequently, life depends on a peculiar relationship between the body and its limits (its form, its margins), a relationship which Plessner describes as *skin-like* (Ger. "hauthaften"; ibid.: 123).

The concrete boundaries of an organic body thus differ from those of an inorganic body. The boundaries of a thing correspond to its edges, by which it abuts on other things (ibid.: 100–101). Thus, the boundary belongs neither to the body itself nor to the adjoining media, but to both, because the ending of the one is always the beginning of the other (ibid.: 103). In contrast, the borders of the living body belong to the body itself, which therefore guarantees not only the transfer of its contents to the adjoining medium by means of its limits, but rather performs the transfer by means of its borders – by *being* its borders (ibid.). While inorganic bodies have an edge or a contour, living bodies are *themselves* their borders, through which they stay in contact with their environment. The organisms realize their borders by relating to the environment, as well as by differentiating from it. There are at least three border aspects in touching: the border between inside and outside; the border between foreign and familiar; and the border with other bodies. Thus, the sense of touch is itself a border phenomenon; it is the sense of demarcation and differentiation.

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The sense of touch as a sense of differentiation and demarcation is also crucial in the deconstructive phenomenology of Jean-Luc Nancy. According to Nancy, contacts are decisive for differentiating oneself from other bodies and from the environment. They always take place on the limits of the body – limits that, in turn, are located on the surface of the body. In this regard, Nancy writes in *Corpus*: "*Bodies don't take place in discourse or in matter. They don't inhabit 'mind' or 'body.' They take place at the limit, qua limit*" (Nancy 2008: 17). The term 'border' also implies the notion of being exposed and with it the fundamental and continuous touchability of the body. The surface of the lived body, its skin, always exposes itself, and is therefore always tangible:

"Nothing exists that is 'pure,' that does not come into *contact* with the other, not because it has to border on something, as if this were a simple accidental condition, but because touch alone exposes the limits

at which identities or ipseities can *distinguish themselves* [se démêler] from one another, with one another, between one another, from among one another. (Nancy 2000: 156)”

Thus, the borders of the body are not static, but rather constitute an outermost edge, and are in constant flux. According to Nancy, they can neither be totally controlled by consciousness nor can they be completely closed off or opened up. The body is therefore never closed; rather, it is *always exposed*. It is a porous passage constantly absorbing and emitting, and therefore simultaneously an entry and exit point, permeable from both sides. It is exposed to its environment, *touchable*, and at the same time always *touching* its surroundings: it is, in short, a touchable and touching lived body. This concept of borders should be an invitation to reconceptualize the notion of the (lived) body from the perspective of its ability to erect borders and to differentiate. The edges and borders are targets of constant rapprochement; they are areas of contact.

Touching, understood as realizing borders, characterizes everyday life much more than palpating fingers. It provides for a much broader concept of touching, which becomes relevant for a wide variety of bodily phenomena.

At the end of this chapter some general remarks are necessary: the proposed concept of touching is not intended to give the sense of touch any advantage over the other senses. In fact, as Nancy and Derrida point out, there does not exist *the* sense of touch, *the* sense of sight, *the* sense of smell, *the* sense of taste or *the* sense of hearing (Derrida 2005: 180). All senses are, on the one hand, closely intertwined with one another, and have, on the other hand, their own importance and specifications. The point is rather to reorganize the sense of touch and the senses (ibid.). Thus, the proposed concept of touching does not depend strictly on the so-called sense of touch. Instead, the constitution of the lived body as a border-realizing entity always presupposes the outside and the other, and refers to the absence and the interruption in general, to *spacing* (ibid.) as well as *timing*. This last point will be analyzed in more detail in the following two chapters.

3. Temporalization of the Lived Body

3.1 Lifetime

Touching, in general, is closely intertwined with the life of a human being. As already noted by Aristotle, it is the first sense that the fetus develops, a sense whose loss leads to certain death:

“It is apparent, therefore, that this is the only sense deprived of which animals must die. For, it is not possible for anything which is not an animal to have this, nor is there any other sense except this which something which is an animal must have. And for this reason the other objects of perception [...] do not in excess destroy the animal, but only the sense-organs [...] (Aristotle 1993: 435b 4–11)”

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The tactile equivalent to the loss of vision (*amaurosis*), hearing (*anakusis*), sense of smell (*anosmia*), and sense of taste (*ageusie*) can only be a *partial* disorder in sensing, but never a total one. By the sense of touch

“the animal is determined as such. For it has been shown that without touch it is impossible for an animal to exist. Hence, excess in objects of touch not only destroys the sense-organ, but the animal also, because this sense alone it must have. The other senses the animal has [...] not for its existence, but for its well-being. (ibid.: 435b 14–20)”

Therefore, touching is not only one of the senses, but rather an indispensable condition for life and embodiment.

The crucial factor in touching is the following: in contrast to seeing, where I can close my eyes if I do not want to see, smelling, where I can hold my nose if I do not want to smell, or hearing, where I can cover my ears if I do not want to hear, touching is much more similar, if more empathically so, to tasting in that I cannot freely decide if I want to touch or if I want to be touched. On the contrary, I am always touching and being touched – if I were not, my life would be over. Touch is the only sense that cannot be lost completely and, maybe even more importantly, it is impossible to be born completely without

it. Consequently, my lifetime is bound to my tangibility and my lived body: “Having a *lived body* means having *time*. The time of my *lived body* is my lifetime [Ger. die Zeit meines *Lebens*]” (Pöltner 2016: 24; transl. by J. G.). To this, I would also like to add: the temporal dimension of my lived body is based on a touching-touched being-towards-the-world, which is not only spatial, but also *continuous* and therefore *temporal*.⁶ As detailed above, touching is an ongoing process that involves the whole body, meaning that there are no ‘breaks’ in touching. However, the tactile body is not a homogeneous contact surface but tactile flesh with divergent thickness and folds, continuously interpenetrating with other senses (Al-Saji 2010: 24). It has different sensitivity as well as divergent intensities. Thus, the tactile body can be characterized as a “qualitatively different scene: a relief where touch sensations overlap and intertwine” (ibid.).

Whether we get to know a new part of the world, acquire a new skill, or become used to a new habitat, the being-towards-the-world of the lived body is the *sine qua non* for all these endeavors. The touching-touched lived body is the “a priori of our existence” (Fuchs 2000: 326). Touching provides a pre-intentional relation to the world, which gives life its continuity, namely the temporal dimension of touching and being touched. Thus, touching provides bodytime with a continuity of being-towards-the-world.

3.2 Bodytime

To deepen our understanding of touch, especially of how it relates to affection, it is useful to turn to Husserl’s *Analyses Concerning Passive and*

6 For this reason, positions that assume that one can have a “pure lived body” (Fuchs 2000: 388) without tactile sensations must be rejected. As examples states of deep relaxation or contemplation are frequently cited (Fuchs 2000: 388; Ströker 1965: 163), but even in such circumstances, the lived body has tactile affections (that is, unnoticed affections, which will be considered more detailed in the next chapter of the paper) and is not deprived of a sense of the world (Grunwald 2001: 5). In most cases I also do not consciously feel the ground under my feet while stepping constantly on it. A pure self-feeling without contact is not possible – even feelings of being hungry or tired, or feelings of pain, which have no immediate datum in space, are based on bodily conditions.

Active Synthesis. Husserl describes two levels of affection. First, there is “actual affection”, which motivates the body to bring its attention unto something. It is a “peculiar pull that an object given to consciousness exercises on the ego” (Husserl 2001: 196). Second, there is a pre-conscious level of affection, which remains simply “the tendency toward affection” or “the potentiality of affection” (ibid.). Thus, it is not noticed as affection, but remains implicit: “Sensible data (and thus data in general) send, as it were, affective rays of force toward the ego pole, but in their weakness do not reach the ego pole, they do not actually become for it an allure that awakens” (ibid.). In relation to touching, both levels of affection are important: the tactile field of the body consists not only of intentionally directed actual affections like pain, but also of unnoticed affections like “the pressure and pulls of the clothes” (Husserl 1989: 145) or touch sensations that occur while walking: when I walk, my feet touch the ground; but the ground, in turn, also influences my way of walking.

142 If the ground is smooth like sand, I will walk on it differently than I would if it were hard like cement or slippery like the snow or ice. If the ground is even, I will put my feet on it differently than I would if it were uneven. Usually, I do not have to consciously reflect on how I should put my feet on the ground; my body has retained previous experiences of walking and modifies its gait accordingly (Rodemeyer 2015: 131).

What gains importance within the field of touch are not objects, but rather affections that exercise various affective pulls and that are differentiated relative to one another (Al-Saji 2010: 25). Affection is therefore in a certain way “a function of contrast” (Husserl 2001: 197). The intensity of affection depends on the context, and therefore on the interrelation of affective forces within the field of experience, as well as on the direction of interest and on sensibility, which, again, determines what is salient (ibid: 150). Thus, it can be said that contrast is constituted both spatially and temporally; it is habitual, and has a historical horizon. This results in an affective relief constituted by contrast (Al-Saji 2010: 27). Consequently, affections are never isolated from, and are indifferent to, each other; they are not static in their significance and motivational power. In the temporal flow of experience unimportant affections can become important and important ones may vanish (Husserl 2001: 163).

Walking is a habitual movement, which is acquired in an experimental mode of trial and action, error, and reaction. As a result, a habituation occurs, in which single movements are integrated into a figure that is incorporated in the unconscious bodily modes of comportment (Fuchs 2000: 186–187; 328). To a limited degree, this also applies to animal life. Animals like horses try to get up immediately after birth. Initially, their movements are stiff, insecure, and clumsy. However, already after a few hours or days they are much more confident and stable, because the movements have become habitual.

Through practice and repetition, these sensorimotor processes become habits, i.e. they are so firmly integrated into our daily life routines that they become almost like a *second nature*⁷. Such habits characterize the “basic temporal structure of the lived body” (ibid.: 326). Sensorimotor processes become dispositions of the lived body, ranging from motor and perceptual skills (e.g. walking), to controlling the secretion processes, speaking, reading, writing, or playing instruments. Habit, in this sense, means basic familiarity with one’s body, and, through it, the world: the lived body is characterized by developed structures and has its own history.

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This, the pre-intentional relation to the world provided by touching is *always* already assumed. The term *always* denotes an “implicit past” (ibid.), a body memory, which necessarily precedes conscious knowledge: although consciousness influences and synthesizes many aspects of body memories, a certain aspect of these memories is also sedimented in the body itself. The bodytime does not mean simply an embodied time consciousness, as for instance Rodemeyer seems to assume: “Thus this memory, along with all sensory experiences, is constituted through an integrated, embodied consciousness (not just consciousness alone)” (Rodemeyer 2015: 132). Although she admits that body memory is not related to consciousness only, but to an *embodied* consciousness, this does not really solve the problem but merely shifts it to another level, because consciousness has only been transferred into the body. This simple maneuver, i.e. transferring Husserl’s concept of inner time consciousness into the realm of the body, is not able to

7 From a bodily point of view the German phrase, *in Fleisch und Blut übergehen*, describes this process quite well.

cope with the peculiarity of the lived body; on the contrary, it is overlaid by the structures of consciousness (Waldenfels 1995: 16).

In contrast to this kind of approach, I argue for a temporal understanding of perception and the lived body: what the lived body remembers is not the same as those memories produced by retention that are immanent to consciousness, but it pertains rather to body rhythms, performed bodily procedures, or trained implementations that remain external to consciousness (Esterbauer 2012: 541). Walking was never learned consciously; it has always been done bodily. In this case walking differs decisively from other examples often quoted in this context: typing on a keyboard or playing an instrument (Merleau-Ponty 2012: 146–154; Fuchs 2012: 10; Fuchs 2016) have been learned consciously and have, in the course of time, solidified into a habit.

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Past perceptions influence the body in its present as well as in its future. If this were not the case, we would constantly have completely new perceptions and experiences. Walking uphill or downhill, climbing a flight of stairs, and so on, all these activities would never cease to surprise us, and would be a great challenge to us. How quickly the body adjusts to new circumstances becomes abundantly clear, when we think of the first few steps taken on land after having spent several hours, or even days, on a boat, or after having ridden a horse for some time (Rodemeyer 2015: 131). In its present, the lived body relies on perceptions and experiences made in the past – in other words, past perceptions and experiences are transformed into the present and the future (ibid.). Bourdieu notes: “The habitus – embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history – is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product” (1990: 56).

But the temporal structure of the body is not limited to habituation. Various forms of body memory have been elaborated in particular by Casey (2000) and Fuchs (2000; 2011; 2012). Casey distinguishes three different types of body memory: habitual, traumatic, and erotic. Fuchs (2000: 327–332) uses a somewhat different classificatory scheme: in addition to habituation, he describes three other types of body memory: incarnation (appropriation of foreign or resistant sensations of the body), sensitization (development of feelings and moods), and oikeiosis (development of relationships with other

people, spaces, things).⁸

According to Fuchs, the history of the lived body includes the following aspects: first, the biologically based unfoldings of bodily dispositions and faculties; and second, the diverse sensual and atmospheric experiences that are sedimented in body memory. It is there, in body memory, that nature and culture, corporeality and sociality, are intertwined. In history, the pre-reflectively lived time and the reflexive envisioned time of human history come together and interpenetrate one another (2000: 315).

Thus, touching constitutes not only a continuous bodily space, as thought by Husserl, but also a *continuous bodytime* construed as an individual course of one's life. Time consciousness is neither transferred into the lived body nor is it simply an embodiment of consciousness. Instead, bodytime grounds conscious time. The latter is always embedded in a bodily time, which remains necessarily external to it. Thus, the acts of consciousness, which constitute time, always take place in (bodily) time (Esterbauer 2012: 533). My lived body, i.e. my life, temporalizes itself without any help from consciousness (Pöltner 2016: 24–25). A scar is my visible history of a violent contact that I have not only experienced at some point in the past, but that I *still am* – now, in the present (Esterbauer 2012: 542). Thus, bodytime is neither a uniform time nor a linearly passing time. Rather, it is a *transeunt time* (Ger. “transeunte Zeit”; Petzold 2012: 3), i.e. a time in which the three time ecstasies exceed themselves and mutually interfuse each other without thereby merging or coalescing. Thus, the habitual way of thinking about traditional causal relations and linear references in time is subverted. There is no *then* that could be understood as a direct result of a *before*, which was formerly been a contemporary *now*.

8 In *The Phenomenology of Body Memory* (2012: 12–18), Fuchs modifies and expands his terminology; he differentiates six forms of body memory: procedural memory (sensorimotor and kinaesthetic faculties), situational memory (concerning spatial aspects), intercorporeal memory (concerning encounters with others), incorporative memory (development of embodied personality structures especially in early childhood), pain memory (concerning painful experiences) and traumatic memory (for instance experiences of a serious accident, of rape, torture, or threat of death; this is the most indelible impression in body memory).

As shown above, bodytime gains its continuity of being-towards-the-world by constantly and necessarily touching and being touched. In the following chapter, this continuity will be characterized as broken and deferred.

4. The Deferred Character of Temporalization

4.1 Co-Presence

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The phenomenon of self-touch, i.e. of two hands of one body touching each other, plays a special role in the constitution of the lived body in Husserl's phenomenology. If our hands touch each other, we are touching and being touched at the same time; not only that, the whole procedure is doubled, as each hand both touches and is touched. Thus, each hand is simultaneously the object of touching and the performer of the touching act. Here, we not only have a double apprehension as in touching an object, but "the sensation is *doubled* in the two parts of the Body, since each is precisely for the other an external thing that is touching and acting upon it, and each is at the same time Body" (Husserl 1989: 153). This is exactly what Husserl calls "double sensation" (ibid.: 155). The enormous importance of double sensation shows up again in children's development: by touching, say, their hands or feet, infants explore their own body and learn to distinguish it from other touched objects, which are not characterized by this double sensation (Fuchs 2000: 11). Double sensations are only possible in the sense of touch, which is why the latter is clearly distinguished from all other senses (Husserl 1989: 145–148). This has two major consequences for embodiment:

First, double sensation results in the corporeal body (Ger. *Leibkörper*) being split into the physical and lived body:

"[F]irst, it is a physical thing, matter; it has its extension, in which are included its real properties, its color, smoothness, hardness, warmth, and whatever other material qualities of that kind there are. Secondly, I find on it, and I sense 'on' it and 'in' it: warmth on the back of the hand, coldness in the feet, sensations of touch in the fingertips. (ibid.: 153)"

Second, Husserl establishes indirectly a conception of time through which physical body and lived body come to coincide once again. He writes: “That which is constituted in the outer attitude is there co-present together with what is constituted in the inner attitude” (ibid.: 161). Co-presence means simultaneity or a “temporal coincidence” (Derrida 2007: 222) of sensation and sensing, of the inner and outer attitude, which occurs precisely in the self-contact of the two hands.

However, although Husserl, in *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time (1893–1917)*, emphasizes that the present is not a single, discrete moment but rather a “temporal field” (1991: 32) that is constituted by protentions and retentions; his highly complex theory of inner time consciousness never departs from the purity of the now in which the corporeal body comes to itself (Laner 2014: 228). It is exactly this assumed simultaneity between physical body and lived body that I aim to question and criticize in the following chapter, starting from the extreme case of phantom limb sensations.

4.2 Time Deferral

Phantom limb sensation is the perception of touch sensations of a limb that no longer exists, or exists only partially. It may even happen that a person tries walking on a leg that no longer exists. As a complement to the widely held thesis that phantom limb phenomena show the absolute spatiality of bodily sensations (Fuchs 2000: 100; Fuchs 2013: 86), it is here argued that they also demonstrate the temporal dimension of the lived body.

Phantom limb sensations give neither real nor erroneous impression of presence. Rather, they arise because of a dissociation within the temporal bodily existence. The lost bodily presence has not yet been sedimented; it has not yet become past. As a result, it takes over the actual present (Merleau-Ponty 2012: 84). Inveterate bodily rhythms cannot be shaken off easily or quickly; rather, they tend to be carried out, even when they are no longer physically performable (Waldenfels 2005: 102–103). The habitual body takes over the actual body, or, in other words, the physical body and the lived body are not co-present; there lies a *time deferral* between them. In extreme cases

of phantom limb sensations there even occurs a *time fracture*. Here, however, normality and pathology go hand in hand (Waldenfels 2005: 102–103) as temporal deferral proves to be constitutive for embodiment. The phantom limb as extreme cause of time deferral is closely related to the crucial feature of touching: touching also necessarily means being touched and thus a complete exposure and vulnerability. Although this dimension is also implicitly included in Husserl's concept of palpation – if the paperweight has a sharp edge, it will cut my skin and hurt me – it remains underexposed and, again, related to the hands only. But the relation to the world occurs not only through the initiative of the subject, as suggested in Husserl's examples on touching; instead, it is primarily a continuous state of being-touched, from which I cannot escape. It is therefore a permanent physical exposure, which in turn is connected to a fundamental *vulnerability*.

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If I walk on thin ice, the ice might break. If I walk on glass fragments, I might get hurt. An injury never concerns only the body in isolation, but is usually related to both: the relationship between the physical and lived body, as well as that between the corporeal body and the objective world (Delholm 2011: 114). We do not only suffer an injury or break a leg; we also become immobile. An injury *eats into* our lives and lifetimes and is thus an interruption to and disorder in our daily lives. The lived body becomes a physical body; it experiences its corporeality (Fuchs 2013: 84–85). We can also say that the as yet inconspicuous physical body that I *have* becomes a body that I *am*. Thus, getting injured or getting ill leads to a fracture, a *temporal deferral*, between physical body and lived body (ibid.: 87). However, every injury is also a beginning of an adjustment process, in which we re-appropriate our own body and reinvent our relationship to the world (Delholm 2011: 114). Very often this new relationship retains the trace of the injury by which it was initially caused.

Even in self-contact a time deferral between physical body and lived body occurs, and can thus be related to Husserl's example of the pair of touching-touched hands: the bodily existence that opens us to the world remains bound to the physical body and thus to the being's pre-personal or impersonal existence. To some degree the physical body's own processes, cycles, and rhythms remain anonymous to the lived body (Waldenfels 2005: 102–103). This includes the

heartbeat, breathing, diet, digestion, reproduction, disease and aging, sleeping, and waking. Thus, if my two hands touch each other, there is no co-presence in the sense of pure presence, or even in the sense of a coincidence between the physical and lived body, but rather a *division* of the self – a division in which my body manifests itself as a functioning body on the one hand and an objective body on the other, with the two bodies never coinciding fully (Waldenfels 1995: 17). Thus, self-touch is – in line with Husserl’s definition of reflection – an inevitable “Nachgewahren” (Husserl 1959: 89), which “refers to the grasping of a lived experience immediately after the experience itself, i.e., while the content of this episode is still given in retention” (Schmicking 2010: 45).

This leads to important consequences for the constitution of the lived body: the lived body as bodily living is, in itself, temporal. Although it is always and necessarily a now, it can never fully merge with it. The lived body is shaped by sedimented experiences as well as by bodily expectations. Thus, the unity between the lived and physical body is never concurrent; it is always postponed. This temporal deferral is gradual, ranging from a full-blown fracture in the case of phantom limb sensation to a minimal deferral in self-contact. Thus, corporeality is based on temporal deferral, or as Merleau-Ponty puts it: “[T]he ambiguity of being in the world is expressed by the ambiguity of our body, and this latter is understood through the ambiguity of time” (2012: 87). Already in the self-contact itself is the unity of lived body and physical body only partial and postponed, similar to the unity of the perceived spatiotemporal object (Husserl 1973: 142). Or, as Derrida writes: “Even between me and me, [...] between my body and my body, there is no such ‘original’ contemporaneity” (2005: 193). Lived body and physical body build a constantly changing and shifting unit, a non-coincidence; they are never fully co-present.

5. Conclusion

Finally, the initial question – whether there is a pre-conscious temporal constitution corresponding to the spatial constitution of the lived body – can be answered in the affirmative. A detailed analysis of touching has revealed

that, in addition to its spatial dimension (*localization*), the lived body also has an important temporal dimension (*temporalization*).

It was suggested that Husserl's concept of touching is too restrictive, as it limits touching to palpating hands, and consequently to an active human being. For this reason, the first part of the paper undertook an expansion of the notion of touching, starting from Aristotle and moving up to Plessner and Nancy. First, the newly proposed concept of touching is no longer restricted to hands but refers to the whole body. Second, touching has now been reconstrued as a *realization of borders*, i.e. through touching, bodies differentiate themselves from other bodies.

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Based on the concept of touching, the second part of the paper portrayed bodytime as a continuous and constant being-towards-the-world through touching and being touched. *Bodytime* was characterized by its three main aspects: first, it is said to be closely connected to lifetime. Second, bodytime is not part of consciousness, but rather withdraws from it. Moreover, it grounds time-consciousness. Third, bodytime has been characterized as transeunt time, in which the three time ecstasies exceed themselves and influence each other.

The third part of the paper showed that the continuity of bodytime is *fractured* or *deferred*. Starting from the extreme case of the phantom limb, it was demonstrated that, in cases of injuries, and even in the case of the two hands of one body touching each other, a time deferral occurs. The time deferral is gradual; it ranges from a fracture (in phantom limb sensations) to a minimal postponement (in self-contact). Therefore, the idea of a full-blown unity between the lived and physical body was rejected, substituting it with the notion of a deferral, of non-coincidence.

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