

Heidegger and the Body: On a Jouissance that Clears

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Abstract

The Heideggerian *Leiblichkeit* (bodiliness) remains a proposal that stands tall in the phenomenological tradition as among the most sustained in investigating the puzzles of the body. Through his emphasis on bodying-forth, Heidegger situates the lived body within the broader frame of sojourning through being's clearing, a prerogative exclusive to human beings. The lived body in this ecstatic form lives and worlds ahead of itself, through its posture of readiness towards the unfolding of being and as a concernfully comported modality of gesture that is always already in place. However, the body's ontic dimension on this account remains massively underappreciated, reduced largely to a caricature of Galilean-Cartesian naturalism. Through an attentive exploration of the nodal points in this discussion, the paper develops the tension inherent in Heidegger with regards bodiliness and punctuates the same with alternative possibilities for the ontic-corporeal body centred around an obscure, inassimilable, uncontrollable, unsubstantial core. Through encounters with psychoanalysis, particularly its Lacanian iteration, it proposes that a refashioned notion of corpo-reality can be useful in clarifying the workings and architectonics of clearings old and new.

Keywords: Heidegger, bodying-forth, gesture, ontic, jouissance, corpo-real

Heidegger's most sustained treatment of the problem of the body is found in his Zollikon seminars (1959–1969), a series of lectures delivered to psychiatric and medical practitioners at the request of Swiss psychiatrist Medard Boss. While it is usually maintained that his previous major works such as *Being and Time* (1927/1962) steered clear of any substantial engagement with the *Leibproblematik* and thereby bypassed the question altogether—a point raised by scholars ranging from Sartre (1943/1956), de Waelhens (1963), Askay (1999), etc.—it would be equally incorrect to suggest that Heidegger didn't at all consider the lived body in his early writings and lectures (see Aho, 2013, pp. 270–271).

He later acknowledged that he was simply not adequately prepared to deal with this question at the time, and that the body was “the most difficult [to understand]” (Heidegger, 1987/2001, p. 231). The difficulty is eventually purportedly resolved as he draws his conclusions regarding the *Leibproblematik*, which, stated simply, come down to the fact that it is Dasein’s clearing that serves as the ground for the revelation of the lived body *as* body. The lived body emerges only in and through this existential mode in which Dasein is essentially inscribed, and is by no means supposed to deny the scientific-materialist constitution of the corporeal body as such. However, with this it already becomes clear that such a conception while accurate in its primary aim of establishing the preeminence of the subjective clearing serves only to relegate the body to being a passive byproduct of the clearing.

Through this inquiry the principle threads that I seek to pursue are as follows: is the clearing in which being dwells a necessary precondition for bodily being? In other words, is ontological existence the *condicio sine qua non* of the lived body? Or, does the order in which things manifest point to the lived body as the first mover, with a hand in the arising of Dasein’s clearing? Moreover, what is the status of the ontic body (the gross, physical body of the sciences) in shaping the coordinates of this discourse? Does the body of the drives have a bearing on how the body is lived *as* lived in the clearing opened by Dasein in relation to its own origins and workings? Hence by attending to the intricacies of the lived body in *Zollikon* and in critically interrogating Heidegger’s reticence concerning corporeality, the paper aims to broach alternate possibilities of thinking the ontic as mediated through themes borrowed from Lacanian psychoanalysis.

I. The Lived Body

One of the standard refrains of phenomenology is the idea that the human being’s body is experienced at two levels, the body in its corporeality and the body as lived/living. These distinct modalities help explain the two

different dimensions that the body parallelly occupies. Famously, Husserl in *Ideas II* (1952/1989) and *The Crisis* (1936/1970) deploys two different terms available for the body in German to eke out the two readings of the body. While *Körper* deals with the physico-material brute presence of the body as studied by the sciences and medicine governed by universal laws—a lamentable vestige of Cartesian naturalism—it is the lived body as *Leib* that becomes the lifeblood of phenomenological study owing to its distinct inward outlook that finds expression only through conscious experience. The *Leib* comes specifically with a sense of mineness that works towards attributing corporeal perceptions to the subjective ego.

However, the notion of *Leib* for Husserl remains rooted in the idea of a ‘zero-point’ that seeks to establish the primacy of the *hic et nunc* of the lived body as the subjective anchor orientating consciousness with regard to other points in space. Heidegger breaks with this metaphysics of presence (as evinced in the here and now of the body) through his idea of *de-distancing* and *ek-stasis* by stating that the body’s presence here is predicated upon its simultaneous worlding at a distance, the over-there of the body. He writes in *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1927/1962): “Dasein, in accordance with its spatiality, is proximally never here but yonder; from this ‘yonder’ it comes back to its ‘here’” (p. 142). Such a move decentres touch as the paradigmatic case of perception (and, by extension, bodily presence) and paves the way for Heidegger’s mature thinking on the lived body.

Already in his Nietzsche seminars Heidegger (1961/1979) formulates the body problematic in a certain way: “We do not ‘have’ a body; rather, we ‘are’ bodily” (p. 99). The body is not possessed in the sense that other objects are possessed. This is established through Husserl’s reading of the *Leib*, as a *sui generis* entity intricately bound up with one’s sphere of ownness that sets itself up as the zero-point for spatial and perceptual orientation towards objects and instances relative to the ‘here’ of my own body. Heidegger augments the argument by suggesting that despite

the lived body's specialised association with the *I*, it is not definable solely through its *I*-ness. The lived body suggestive of *I*-ness ultimately exists in a bodily modality that qualifies subjective experience through and through. In fact, beyond this bodily modality enthused with a sense of mineness (that is, as my own body), there is no other separate body to deal with: "There is actually no phenomenology of the body because the body is not a corporeal thing" (Heidegger, 1987/2001, p. 184). All aspects of corporeality "down to the last muscle fiber and down to the most hidden molecule of hormones, belongs essentially to existing" (p. 282). In fact, this can be taken as the crux of Heidegger's overall stance with respect to the cornucopia of body-phenomenologies that succeeded him, starting with Merleau-Ponty. But what exactly is this modality specific to the body as being simultaneously one's own body?

Here we are led to the notion of bodiliness (*Leiblichkeit*) as bodying-forth (*Leiben*), best expounded in the Zollikon seminars. The term bodying-forth is first introduced in the Nietzsche seminars (Heidegger, 1961/1987, p. 218). The logic goes as follows: the lived body is not merely an object of experience tasked with auxiliary functions pertaining to perception. At its most central, it is an orientating entity. As *ek-sistere* (standing outside), the body orientates outside-in, insofar as it expands the domain of presence to hitherto undisclosed territories and starts perceiving *from there all the way in* to the here. This is surely opposed to the immediacy of the here with respect to the there. This body has a reach (*Reichweite*) which it simultaneously inhabits, stretching further beyond where the physical boundary of the corporeal body—as epidermis—elapses. This is because the corporeal bodily limit as skin cannot account for the ecstatic dimension of the lived body's ontological limit (*Leibgrenze*). Escudero (2015) describes it in the following terms: "The limit of the lived body (*Leib*)—that is, the horizon formed by perception and gesture—is constantly changing inasmuch as we are 'bodying forth' (*leiben*), inasmuch as we move in daily life's situations, while the physical limit always remains the same" (p. 19). One can try describing

this through terms such as pre-reflective, pre-perceptual, pre-cognitive, pre-conscious, etc., but they always come up short. It essentially concerns one's comportment towards the world, in a manner that the world's disclosure as potentiality in the horizon opened through the body remains anterior to the actual enactment of a sensory event. This logically anterior site of potential disclosure, to which the body is somehow extended in advance, is what is engendered by bodying-forth. Kevin Aho (2013) describes the bodily experience as "[revealing] the extent to which my body already possesses a kind of unitary, sensory grip on its surroundings. It is already perceptually directed toward things and understands how to move through its environment; it already encounters things in terms of directions of right and left and front and back, and tacitly senses where things are in terms of distance and location" (p. 272). Directedness (*Ausgerichtetsein*) here is not given thematically as such but is instantiated through each successive iteration of encountering an entity within a designated field. For example, my fingers on the computer keyboard predispose themselves in a certain way even before they hit the keys, and in doing so already embodies, well in advance, the state of having hit the keys. Similarly, when I choose to walk out of the door, my body in a way has already gauged the myriad microsteps and procedures involved in the act of walking out, thereby incorporating the spatio-conventional directedness involved in the gesture of walking out. The sensory complex of walking out incorporates anticipatorily the outside into which I am walking, the inside from which I am departing, the exact path in space that my action of walking is going to trace, the objects lying in this path in space around which I will have to navigate, and so on. None of these facts are given directly in my field of immediate sensory experience as I decide to walk out of the room, hence reliance on the corporeal body alone would fail to give me a cue as to how to navigate these absences that at the same time are thoroughly pregnant with imminent presence.

Hence, the lived body by predispositionally opening up a horizon of sense ahead of the undertaking of the actual experience capacitates me to take the proverbial leap of faith, that is, a step in the designated direction bereft of rhyme or reason. This predispositional mediation of the lived body is a product of the overall familiarity with a scenario (ringing close to Husserl's notion of analogy). Heidegger calls such a predispositionality gesture (*Gebärde*). Gesture here is not an indication or expression of some other, probably interior, reality hidden between the veil of appearance. Rather, gesture, as clarified through its etymological explication (see Escudero, p. 19), consists in what the body primordially bears or carries along itself, as a trace of meaning assigned in advance. Bodily gestures of blushing or scratching one's forehead, instead of revealing affective or intellectual states, constitute a posture that is always already pre-formed through an encounter with the clearing of being-in-the-world (and consequently through the encounter with historical being). Gesture in this sense is comportment or attunement *tout court*: "'Comportment' is the way I stand in my relationship to what concerns me in each case, the manner one responds to beings" (Heidegger, 1987/2001, p. 185). To understand this, we have to take gesture as that which by its very presencing *as gesture* indicates something else, and thereby involves a responsive posturing to this else. As Heidegger says: "Bodily being is founded upon responding [to a world]" (p. 186). What it actually indicates is beside the point, since it may not indicate anything at all, and all indications anyway are themselves gestural. What is really at stake here is the impression that accompanies a gesture *as if* it refers to something other than itself, something that is addressing the gesturer from without. This is what sets a gesture apart from mere actions or objects. Only a human body is capable of gesturing, that is to say, of carrying an impression of otherness and responsiveness in its very selfsame appearance. And where does this otherness of the gesture arise from? It arises out of the acknowledgement that the gesture is *someone's* gesture. It is primordially intentional in its

nature of being associated with myself or some other self. It signals constitutive ownership and expresses first and foremost a Dasein standing in this clearing getting confronted by the vagaries of existence from without. The gesture gesticulates insofar it is *of* someone in its originary attributability. The orange on the table may as well belong to someone, but it doesn't possess its openness and referentiality as constitutive conditions of being. A table can be deployed in service of a gesture and made to carry the predispositional imperative characteristic of Dasein, but its gesturality is not primordial but only imposed from outside and therefore of secondary importance. Needless to say, such a formulation ties in well with Heidegger's observations on mood/disposedness (*Stimmung/Befindlichkeit*) in its similarly prereflective active-orientative nature, as noted by Haar (1987/1993), Aho (2009), Stolorow (2014). It is therefore not an overstatement to suggest that what Kant did in the realm of the mind—by granting it a constituting function preloaded with a priori categories and sensibilities—Heidegger did to the body—by endowing it with an intrinsic communicative-expressive quality.

With regards spatiality, the exact manner of the body's orientating character needs some more qualification. The body orientates not in the way a compass or gyroscope does. These equipment belong to the order of Galilean-Cartesian space governed by mechanical laws. In contradistinction to these, the lived body orientates by occupying multiple places and moments at the same time in real time. In engaging with an object in the world, the body not only sets a predispositional orientation towards it but in doing so virtually transposes itself into the object's locale. The example that Heidegger (1987/2001, pp. 82–83) gives is that of seeing a table at a distance, compared to the act of grasping a glass nearby. While seeing and grasping are both bodily dispositions involving different sense modalities (visual and tactile, respectively), the two differ interestingly in their deployment of bodiliness. While the grasping hand and the grasping itself can be seen,

in the case of its counterpart neither the eye nor eyesight can be seen or grasped by the agent herself. But just as grasping involves the body accompanying its object of grasp through to the completion of the action, similarly in seeing the body travels, so to say, through space and comes in contact with the table preemptively. However, in travelling through space—which really is a production of space—the body qua eye doesn’t depart from its prior position as belonging to my eyesocket. The body in seeing the table is both here and there and everywhere along the line of sight implicated in the particular act of visual sensation. In other words, the body engages with the world by perpetually bodying forth (*Leiben*), starting with the ek-static there through to its presence in the here. In fact, the here of the body is itself always in retreat, which goes on to show that the body even in its presence in the here is always already bodying forth. It is for this reason that the lived body can’t be said to exist in a specified location, instead it spatialises space through the existential clearing of Dasein leading up to the experience of the here that exists only as “the leeway of the range of that equipmental totality with which it is most closely concerned” (Heidegger, 1927/1962, p. 420). The table on the other hand occupies only one point in space and unless external force is applied on it, stays in rest or motion at the same place. Unlike the body, it cannot simultaneously incorporate otherness into its fold. The lived body in its existentially-laden stature as being “ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-(the-world) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world)” (Heidegger, 1927/1962, p. 237) “can be here and there at the same time” (Heidegger, 1987/2001, pp. 11–12).

The tacit pre-reflective understanding of its surroundings characteristic of the lived body arises from its being immersed in a certain frame of readiness and activity founded on prior habits. This suggests that the body is not a sovereign agent acting as per its own whims and fancies wielding some sort of imaginary discretionary power. The body can presentify (*Vergegenwärtigen*) but not bring objects into presence (*Anwesen*). The presencing of objects has a separate prerogative

amenable only to the appropriating disclosive Event (Heidegger, 2001, p. 182). Therefore, the manner in which the body spatialises space and localises itself concurrently on multiple planes before and throughout the commissioning of an action—in other words the body’s horizon of bodying-forth—must be based in a prior enveloping horizon: Dasein’s primordial emplacement in the clearing. In Heidegger’s (1987/2001) words: “the limit of bodying forth . . . is the horizon of being within which I sojourn (*aufhalten*)” (p. 87). As Ciocan (2015) demonstrates with clarity, this horizon of being (*Seinshorizont*) that serves as the lived body’s limit is underpinned by a prior understanding of being (*Seinsverständnis*) exclusive to the human being-in-the-world in its temporalising structure of care. While bodily being enables engagement with objects in the world, the significative-existential import of the objects is captured thanks to *Seinsverständnis*. For example, in witnessing a window crossbar at a distance, Heidegger (1987/2001) says: “For me, to be able to say ‘crossbar’ at all already presupposes an understanding of being. . . . Bodying forth occurs wherever the senses are involved, but here the primordial understanding of being is always already involved too” (p. 197). This understanding of being not only renders possible the spectrum of potencies upon which the body can body-forth, but it also understands each particular determination of said potencies upon actual enactment by the body. Hence, Heidegger goes on to suggest that while Dasein’s being is thoroughly bodily, bodily being itself doesn’t exhaustively enfold Dasein’s holistic understanding of being emanating from its standing within the clearing. The potentiality ingrained in and realised through bodily being is subject to Dasein’s overarching potentiality-to-be, and not the other way round. To quote Heidegger on this point: “Da-sein’s ecstatic potentiality-to-be is intensified as potentiality-to-be in its enactment and in its being enacted” (p. 164). Bodily being, then, is not only active-orientative in its character but also equally receiving-perceiving (*Vernehmen*) of the endowments made available to it through Dasein’s characteristic openness to being.

Such an openness is the existential sense of space qua the free and the permeable, where things can get spatialised eventually. The clearing that is “[space] is something [that sets things] free” (p. 187).

II. On the Thresholds of Ontic and Ontology

To recap Heidegger’s position so far, while the lived body is necessary to stand within the clearing, clearing itself is not reducible to the lived body. The clearing somehow exceeds the bodily dimension of existence as that which constitutes this dimension as such. As Heidegger (1987/2001) states: “Bodily forth [Leiben] as such belongs to being-in-the-world. But being-in-the-world is not exhausted in bodily forth. For instance, the understanding of being also belongs to being-in-the-world” (p. 196). Again in one of his more concrete examples, he writes: “We are not able to ‘see’ because we have eyes; rather, we can only have eyes because, according to our basic nature, we are beings who can see” (p. 232). This makes one curious: What about people who are born blind? Or those who have lost vision at a very early age? Is their “basic nature” still the same as those that are sighted? Are they still “beings who can see” and are comported to the (visual) world in a mode of receiving-perceiving? The Heideggerian response in all likelihood would be that in possessing an impaired organ the organ’s ontic existence is of course not denied, however the organ fails to be given *as* that specific bodily organ with its sense of mineness. To that end, the impaired eye is not possessed *as* an eye and certainly not as *my* eye, because that which confers existential significance to it—sight, in this case—is what retroactively constitutes its very being. In any case, mere seeing doesn’t automatically translate to perceiving, as avers Isaiah 6:9: “And see ye indeed, but perceive not” (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017). Visual sensations are rendered meaningful as perception only within the field of the clearing. Even the degree of inattentional blindness involved in acts of successful visual perception demonstrates with efficacy the influence of ontological selection and deselection. To perceive something clearly is to

simultaneously not perceive a significant portion of the total apprehended manifold available to the senses.

Here Heidegger's dogged insistence on prioritising the ontological dimension of the lived body and its irreducibility to ontic functions and mechanisms brings up the question of how ontological difference is established, that is, through the stark segregation between readiness-to-hand and presence-at-hand. The key here is of course *Being and Time*'s famous tool analysis (Heidegger, 1927/1962, pp. 98–99). David Cerbone (2000), however, argues at great length against deploying categories pertaining to tools and animals in analysing the bodily being of humans. But if we were to suspend such worries for time being and apply the readiness-presence template to one's own body, interesting results follow. To begin with, the argument falls short because the body is never not immersed and engaged in some activity. Disease and deformity can't be considered as moments of breakdown for the body, since the body remains fully devoted to its pursuit of survival and maintenance at the ontic level, and its utility of bodying-forth at the level of ontology. Disease itself is a normative-ontological category for Dasein triggered by events at the ontic-corporeal level. In such a case, how are we to maintain the total subjection of bodying-forth to the clearing? Doesn't the clearing itself show itself to be overdetermined by a bunch of forces, one of them being the state of the ontic body? The case can very well be made that admitting to stand within the disclosive clearing rests on a prior disclosure of the possibility of admittance into the clearing. It can be said that the corporeal body in a very specific sense is what affords that prior disclosure of admittance. But in what sense? This will be taken up in the next section.

As regards treating the body as a tool, one can take a look at Heidegger's (1987/2001) cautionary note against this:

[In] contrast to a tool, the bodily spheres of existing are not set free (*entlassen*) from being-human. They cannot be cared for in a toolbox. Rather, they remain in the sway of being human, held

in it, and belonging to it so long as the human being lives. (p. 232)

However, this argument instead of bolstering the case for the exclusive inalienability of the body vis-à-vis the toolbox (since the body never breaks down the way a hammer does, and is thus never disimmersed), can also recoil in the opposite direction: the ontic body is just as intimate to Dasein as the ontological, to the point that they can't be told apart. This is because the ontic body doesn't even find an occasion to show itself as ontic unless through externally imposed scientific make-believe, that too only when one is unwell or no longer alive. As long as Dasein continues to live, ontology keeps the body fully enveloped. In such a scenario, we are made to ask, how then does one learn of the ontic body at all? And in not being able to locate it, how does one theorise the ontic body? To do this we'll need to depart from this line of argument for the time being and go where ontological difference itself takes us.

On the other hand, the case of diseased and physically impaired humans brings us to a different point. The ontological clearing surely is a surplus over and above the body's ontic substratum, but this surplus is itself produced differently depending on the body's ontic state of affairs. This reveals that the analysis at this level is founded on a certain normative model of what the human being is, despite Heidegger's disclaimers to the contrary that Dasein and its bodiliness are ontologically neutral. The normative framing is also noticeable in the reception of Heideggerian bodiliness in the phenomenology of health and well-being. Thoibisana (2008), for instance, highlights the homely character of bodily existence as long as it is felt as the ground of my own authentic dwelling. Illness qua unhomeliness is a result of disconnecting from and thereby disowning this bodily ground of dwelling, which then reintroduces the subject-object division in relation to the body. However, this fails to address the crucial fact that it is a certain state of the body itself that induces this sense of disownment. Similarly, when the clearing appears at its most pristine, how do we deny that a part of it is also owed to

favourable bodily states? In fact, the idea of authentic dwelling/sojourn qua acceptance itself needs to be assessed further on its own terms. To begin with, is it at all reasonable to expect humans to dwell with contentment? Isn't the whole fact of dwelling based on a prior inability to assume one's thrownness, insofar as man seeks out shelter in order to ward off factual precarities? How does one dwell with precarity rather than away from it? Even if one manages to do so, shall it not continue to run the risk of privileging forms of existence that lend themselves more readily to acceptance, while rendering others as obstacles to be overcome? This is in view of the fact that finding a place of dwelling does not automatically bring fulfilment. Humans are always on the lookout for a place that is better (in their own terms) than where they currently are. If at all man settles for his current dwelling, he most likely does so in a manner of succumbing to fate or cruel fortune, a logic akin to learned helplessness, as a forced foreclosure of choice and mobility. This begs the question, isn't this precisely the structure of desire as understood in psychoanalysis? If so, authentic dwelling more than anything has to be taken as a gift of civilisation—a gift which on most accounts more closely resembles a cost, as suggested by Freud (1930/1961). Similarly, it must be observed that the perfectly homely doesn't take long to become uncanny—English rendering of *das Unheimliche*, literally, unhomely—unless a minimum distance is maintained from it (Freud, 1919/1953).

What then is at stake is the question of which potentiality (for dwelling, primarily) is to be taken as the definitive ontological stance, and how the corporeal body continually disrupts this stance-taking through unannounced contingencies. In many ways, the corporeal body *is* the site of such unassimilable contingency. Therefore if phenomenology holds on to the two-fold structure of the body as ontologically lived and mechanistically corporeal, there is also a case to be made for the body as neither ontological nor conventionally ontic since in many ways it eschews both the dimensions of pre-subjective clearing and

commensurable mechanical presence. The body in this sense is a body of *absence* and by extension *ab-sense*, to borrow a term from Lacanian psychoanalysis, that stands for the post/anti/non-significant dimension of things. It is absent in the sense of owing its being to a constitutive lack that endlessly disrupts every positive instantiation in the realm of sense-making. Perceived this way, it is nothing other than the body of *jouissance*—a sort of pleasure in pain, essentially transgressive and destructive in practice—which happens to be philosophy’s longstanding *bête noire*: “Philosophy abhors the Thing of *jouissance*. . . . It is this ‘not wanting to know anything about it’ that makes it [phenomenology, particularly] compulsively declare the imperative of returning to things themselves” (Badiou, 2013/2018, pp. 139–140).

III. Corpo-reality to-come

How does the understanding of being (*Seinsverständnis*) constitutive of ontological existence fare against the ontic physicality of the body? This demands a relook into the conception of the ontic body itself. The body qua physical-corporeal for Heidegger is that which is wholly subject and reducible to the generalisable laws of the sciences. As a category primarily traceable to Descartes, it is posited within and reinforces the subject-object binary relation where subject is taken as consciousness or mind and the body is consigned to the place of objectivity. This characterisation, however, misses the impenetrable dynamic core of the corporeal body. Isn’t the body also that fundamentally unanalysable engine that keeps producing dualistic characterisations (such as ontic/ontological) in an attempt to master its own underlying contingency? Is the difference experienced at the ontological level vis-à-vis the ontic not a stand-in for a more general experience of difference lying at the heart of all being, something rooted primarily in bodily experience? In this light, it may be argued that while Heidegger successfully diagnosed the truth of ontological difference, he immediately collapsed the difference back into identity by pledging allegiance to fundamental ontology. Whereas if dwelling is to mean

anything at all, it is in this act of inhabiting the irreconcilable cut, of refusing to dial it down to wieldy categories. In a separate yet relevant key, this is what constitutes the idea of split subjectivity in Lacanian psychoanalysis. This subject, in line with Heidegger's critique of Cartesianism, is not the self-transparent subject of consciousness. But while disclosure plays a role for the split subject, contra Heidegger the manner of disclosure is never commensurable or in tandem with the threefold temporalising structure of care. Rather, concerned comportment through care is what is retroactively achieved and assumed—in the form of egological rationalisation—through the trajectory of one's own life experiences. This is the dimension that is lacking in Heidegger's critique of Freud and psychoanalysis in the Zollikon seminars. The unconscious doesn't merely reflect one's prior situation from within a pre-given clearing capable of producing personalised meaning. Rather, the unconscious is structured precisely *as* this evanescent horizon of meaningfulness. To go further, the unconscious is also simultaneously the effect this meaningfulness has in introducing a rupture within itself and in the overarching ability-to-be (*Seinkönnen*). In other words, psychoanalysis investigates the origins of the clearing which it then constantly liquidates, reinstitutes and reworks. As regards Dasein's tacit understanding of being (*Seinsverständnis*), it can be said to have been forged through the human being's relationship to language, particularly through speech. Lacan refers to this strange existence of the human being as *parlêtre* (speaking-being), an improvement upon the *l'être-là* (French for Dasein). Christos Tombras (2019) describes this quite succinctly:

Speaking qua coordinated interaction between human beings opens a space, or clearing, where the emergence of significations—i.e. meaning—or rather signifierness is possible. . . . If there were no speaking, there would be nothing to comport concernfully towards, i.e. there would be no being. (chapter 6, section 4, para 5)

The dwelling-upon of difference qua subjective split is staged through a peculiar relationship to language in its corporeal dimension, and the manner in which absolutely nonsensical things come to take on definitive significance. The pathway of sense-making follows a peculiar logic whereby overflowing bodily *jouissance* (Lacanian for enjoyment; painful pleasures where one keeps bleeding into the other and vice versa) is sutured by the institution of relatively stable yet malleable loci of meaning. However, this stability is always marred by a shadow of potential collapse, which initiates a struggle to hold onto and periodically redefine the clearing (or, the ground of meaning) of one's existence. In light of this, language goes from being the glorious house of being to a prison-house/ torture-house, related infernally to the split Dasein who finds neither refuge nor escape from it: "In becoming a subject of language, the speaking being remains tormented by a tension between the body as an ontic entity (i.e. a thing) and the body as an imaginary entity that the speaking being inhabits" (Tombras, 2019, chapter 6, section 4, sub-section 4, para 2). This sheds some light on the bizarre experience of human dwelling as outlined previously.

The corporeal, now rendered as the *corpo-real*, therefore is not simply a summative abstraction produced by scientific laws and processes, nor is it the primary vehicle of ontological intelligibility. Both these definitions stay captive within what Lacan called the imaginary order characterised by a yearning for stability and coherence in the face of underlying disarray. The corporeal body of *jouissance* is both ontic and ontological, ontic only insofar as it is what comes simultaneously *after* and *before* the ontological clearing. In preceding the clearing, it is also the excess produced by the ontological clearing itself, that which the clearing fails to integrate within its standard apparatus of understanding and meaning-making. To that extent, it stands not within but over against the smooth discursive edifice of ontological being thereby perpetually haunting the latter with its constitutive restlessness—as speech (*Sprache*) imploding discursivity (*Rede*). However, instead of looking for a synthesis,

corporeality in the real embodies the cut itself. This then is the real onticity of the body: the body of jouissance held in place by the body of the Other qua signifierness, as a metastable non-relation between two non-homeomorphic structures of being. Ontology therefore retains its mystique, while at the same time being in the thralls of a carnal monster ready to throw surprises with each passing minute.

IV. Conclusion

The Heideggerian *Leiblichkeit* remains a proposal that stands alongside Merleau-Ponty's as among the most sustained in the phenomenological tradition. Through his emphasis on bodying-forth, Heidegger situates the lived body within the broader frame of sojourning through being's clearing, a prerogative exclusive to human beings. The lived body in this ecstatic form lives and worlds ahead of itself, through its posture of readiness towards the unfolding of being. Its gestural modality as concerned comportment that is always already in place is indeed worthy of further study. However, the body's ontic dimension on Heidegger's account remains massively underappreciated, being reduced largely to a caricature of Galilean-Cartesian naturalism. The paper develops this tension inherent in Heidegger and offers thereby an alternative reading of the ontic-corporeal body as centred around an obscure, inassimilable, uncontrollable, unsubstantial core. Through encounters with psychoanalysis, particularly its Lacanian iteration, it proposes that a refashioned notion of corpo-reality can be useful in clarifying the workings and architectonics of clearings old and new.

It must also be acknowledged that Heidegger's position in this regard has consistently been that the oddities of being in the clearing have to be taken for granted *sui generis*, or else it may risk getting reduced to simplistic binaries. However, in the absence of an alternate mechanics of clearing—which is certainly not mechanics in the conventional sense—doesn't one fail disappointingly to respond to the beckons of history? Isn't it reasonable to ask: how else are we to tackle the charge of

complicity in kinds of politics that seek to weaponise the clearing for its own sake? It remains to be seen.

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