

THE SUBJECT-BODY AND THE THRESHOLD OF BEING IN MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY

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ABSTRACT

One of the aims of Phenomenology is to address the inherited dualistic vision of reality, especially, the Cartesian partition of reality into ‘res cogitans’ and ‘res extensa; the body would no longer be viewed as an object of intentional synthesis, it becomes the subject, the point from which intentionality radiates, the point of orientation towards the world. There is nothing like ‘world-less’ subjectivity that creates reality. Hence the project of phenomenology which is ‘a disclosure of the world’ goes pari-passu with the disclosure of consciousness and its awakening. Based on the philosophy of the lived world (Lebenswelt) inherited from Husserl, Merleau-Ponty highlights the role of the lived body in the constitution and understanding of subjectivity and its relationship to the world. Thus, what is referred to as Subjektleib (subject-body) comes to the lime-light in the philosophy of Merleau-Ponty. What is underlined is the body’s relatedness to the world, a relation that reveals the possibilities of the subject-body, its successes, and limitations. The essay follows a phenomenological method; and this requires, among other things, that the data relative to being-in-the-world are assembled and analysed. This procedure reveals a priori, the ground and structures of experience, which include the lived body. includes in the sense that it adopts a phenomenological analysis of experience of our body. What Michel de Montagne says in the preface to his Essays: “Je suis moi-même la matière de mon livre” – I am myself the substance of my book” means that human experience, viz, personal experience is the true starting-point of philosophical inquiry. Philosophy begins as biography; it begins as wonder, wonder at one’s being, one’s encounter with Being. This is where and how phenomenological analysis of the lived body anchors personal experience of each person.

Key words: *Subject-body; being-in-the-world; pre-reflective synthesis; lived experience; dialectics.*

INTRODUCTION

In one of his major treatises, namely the *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty highlights the ‘lived body’ as the platform of human experience. He refers to it as *corps-sujet* (subject-body), the ‘stabilized structure’ of human existence. This characterization leads him to the conclusion that the ‘lived-body’ plays a central role in the construction of meaning. In other words, the ‘worldliness of the world’ⁱ is founded on the ‘being and activity’ of the lived body.

Edmund Husserl is known to have introduced the concept of *Lebenswelt* (the life-world) in his *Phenomenology*. Merleau-Ponty followed and deepened it as the starting-point of his philosophy. The study of reality reveals three general starting-points: things, thought and language. The philosophical study of reality is, however, not limited to the above starting-points. Merleau-Ponty brings a fourth one to our attention, viz, the lived or phenomenal body which penetrates things, thought and language. In the real world, the lived body can neither be reduced to the order of things nor thought, and neither can it be viewed with the categories of object nor subject. It is object and subject and ‘more.’

In the world of life (*Lebenswelt*), the lived body is not yet reduced to a platform for inscription of meanings; it stands out as primary intentionality, an intentionality that is not yet thematized, one that has the world as its correlate and indispensable home.

This essay highlights the status of the lived body as “*ingenui fontes*,” viz, the ‘native source’ (Lucretius) of human existence, with all its many marvellous achievements. It seeks to re-define consciousness as an engagement with the world, as a dialectic which the body has with the physical world in its efforts to create a

‘environment’ for itself. The excesses of intellectualism about the ‘density of experience’ *vis-à-vis* man’s rational powers are highlighted and critically evaluated.

The development of the theme of this essay is more practical than theoretical, a decision supported by the Latin adage, ‘*primum vivere deinde philosophari*’ which translates to, ‘first live, then philosophize;’ a reminder that one needs to have his feet on the ground before one can think of taking off in the clouds, calls for grounded action over idle speculation. The essay adopts a phenomenological method, a procedure that permits a disclosure of some of the basic structures of experience.

This entails that what is accepted as the true starting-point of philosophy is not the *cogito* of Rene Descartes, the father of Modern philosophy. In his phenomenological writings, Merleau-Ponty highlights a different *cogito*, an original ‘*a priori*’ which redefines subjectivity and moderates the pretences of Cartesian *cogito*.

1. The ‘Subject-Body’ as The *a Priori* of Existence

The body – *corps*, is a ‘pillar’, an ‘*a priori*’ of existence, co-natural with our being and our existence in the real sense of the word. It is neither an object nor an idea which we can seek to isolate and focus upon. As an ‘*a priori*,’ that is, what accompanies every experience, the body is the structure every experience, its ‘physiognomy’ delineates every experience; it is what we have neither thought about nor constituted before it begins to operate as a vehicle of our intentions.

1.1 The Notion of ‘Subject-Body’

What does it mean to be a ‘subjective’ body or a subject-body? It means to understand the status, value, and function of the body in the reality of human existence and understanding of reality. For Maine de Biran, one of the notable figures in Phenomenology, the

body remains central in any philosophical understanding of subjectivity. Hence the notion of ‘subjective body’ in his philosophy as well as its ulterior developments in Husserl afforded Merleau-Ponty one of the pillars of his philosophy. In simple terms the idea of ‘subjective body’ means to confer on the body all the rights and privileges of subjectivity, or rather of a subject that not only understands, imagines, and remembers, but also sees, hears, and even lifts, carries, and pushes.ⁱⁱ

There are many features of the ‘subjective body’ which Merleau-Ponty has in common with Maine de Biran. He shares with him the view that the resistance inherent in the world of objects is a co-efficient of human effort.ⁱⁱⁱ But this natural resistance of things to the exploratory powers of the subject-body is not a mere arrestation of effort; it is an enabler; it enables us to acknowledge our possibilities, powers, and limitations, and in that way leads to a better knowledge of who we are – we feel our relatedness as embodied subjects. Merleau-Ponty himself takes up and stresses this point: “We have learned to feel our body: we have found underneath the objective and detached knowledge of the body that other knowledge which we have of it in virtue of its being with us and of the fact that we are our body. In the same way we shall need to reawaken our experience of the world as it appears to us insofar as we experience the world with our body. But by thus remaking contact with the body and with the world, we shall also rediscover ourselves.”^{iv}

This ‘other knowledge’ mentioned in above-cited passage reminds us of our relatedness, the bonds that exist between subject-body and the world, viz, that we will be able to rediscover and rehabilitate subjectivity by reconnecting it with the body and the world.

1.2. The Subject-Body as a *Being-In-the World*

The saying that ‘experience is the best teacher’ holds true of the body. The body, in fact, intervenes in the world as often as the world fails to yield to its demands and questions. Manipulating and subduing to itself the things in the world, the body verifies the ‘possible’, what it can do, and in this verification the truth of things and the world is disclosed as guide for future actions. Hence using the things of the world, the body liberates itself progressively from the siege of the world which is everywhere, and as much as possible takes a distance from the threat and renders the world progressively hospitable. This is how the body is the original openness to the world, an *a priori* of experience. To say that the body is an *a priori*, a transcendence, means that it always and necessarily exceeds the grasp consciousness has of it; it essentially surpasses the mind’s ability to be aware of it in its entirety^v.

As an immediate outlet on the world and things in it, the body is not an *itself*, a thing as Descartes would want us to believe. Hence the body that interests us, viz, one that leans towards the world is quite unlike the non-living one, the corpse (object) to be specific, where the eye does not see, the legs do not walk and the heart does not beat, features that indicate a disengagement with the world. In a non-living body, the hand reveals itself; it is seen as an object of observation.

Quite unlike the non-living things, such as a corpse, the living body is immediately out of itself, it opens to the world, outstretched towards the things in the world. The hand reveals the objects it touches, their resistance, manipulability, and possibility. ‘From the things in the world I become aware of the possibilities of my body, because the things in the world are loaded by bodily energy and actions; the body, its position is the reference point of the position of things in the world, and this does not happen through a logical deduction, because my body, far from being an object in itself, is a

leaning toward the world, and the world is a point of support of my body'^{vi}.

This represents a break from the transcendental idealism of Husserl, which for all its good intentions, upholds the view that the mind should "be assigned some foundational or constitutive role with respect to the natural world as a whole."^{vii} In *Ideas* he upholds the view that the transcendental subjectivity is 'the absolute, within which everything transcendent, and thus the entire physical and psychological world, is constituted'^{viii}. For Merleau-Ponty the relations which my exposed body has with the world disposes make the living body the origin of all transcendences, and consequently the living body represents a *logos* more profound than all logical-objective relations which an abstract *cogito* can perform.

The *cogito*, I think, is not being denied by the affirmation of the living body. It is valid for one to affirm that he thinks, but on condition that saying so one means to say that the reflective awareness takes place because of being exposed to the world^{ix}. What is being proposed is that the *cogito* (the 'I think') must discover its roots in the corporeal existence. A critical view of the abstract Cartesian *cogito*, and other misrepresentations of subjectivity, creates room for a rediscovery of the body. This process requires that one moderates the claims of what can be described as 'formalism of consciousness and substitute it with sensory communication, without which it will hardly be possible for us neither to be inhabit the world, nor to think of it with the so-called *a priori* of reason.

1.3. The Dual Facets of the Body – Structure and Symbol

Phenomenology represents an attempt to overcome the classical distinction between the 'interior' and the 'exterior' through its distinctive notion of subjectivity and consciousness. Consciousness is considered here as consciousness of something. There is no

cogito (I think) without *cogitatum* (what is thought, the content of the *act of thinking*). The living body takes the place of a separate consciousness as the power of articulation, as what discloses the world to us in a coherent and unified way^x. The living body is, as Merleau-Ponty stresses, “our general medium of having a world”^{xi}. In other words through the body we are involved in a net-work of intentional relations with the world, relations which hardly permit a reduction of one term of the relation to the other. The argument against reductionism is principally based on the special character of the living body.

This special character of the body lies in its dual traits. The body “withdraws from the objective world, and forms between pure subject and the object a third genus of being, the subject loses its purity and its transparency”^{xii}. According to Merleau-Ponty the body plays the role of a symbol, the role of bringing together diverse experiences. In fact, the relation between the self and the world is dialectical relation where the body “speaks symbolically”^{xiii}, and serves as the horizon of co-existence. Hence the body is considered as a symbolic power because it loaded with ‘lived’ meanings, that is, it articulates and brings its diverse experiences.

Just as a symbol requires a context for its understanding, the context, viz, the *place of birth* of human experiences and meanings is the living body (*Lebenswelt*). There is a belief among many phenomenologists, especially Merleau-Ponty and others after him, that the body speaks symbolically insofar as what reveals embodied subjects to each other is their *appearance as “behaviour”*^{xiv}, and behaviour here is understood as the dialogue that exists between the body and its surroundings.

Besides the above view of the living body as a symbolic power, Merleau-Ponty, for instance, discovers in the human sciences what can be described as ‘metaphysics in man’, a reference to the notion

of ‘structure’ or ‘form’ as the *Gestalt* psychology uses it. Herein lies the specific and fundamental character of the *Subject-body* which consists in the fact that in its unmotivated and ambivalent presence it one thing, but also another^{xv}; it is a structure. With reference to this notion, it is important to note that an organism (subject-body) does not only undergo stimuli (sensory impressions); it elaborates what it takes in. Kurt Goldstein to whom Merleau-Ponty owes some of his views says that “the effect pattern depends primarily on the functional significance of the stimulus for the whole organism”^{xvi}.

A structure is a dynamic and meaningful core which organises around itself diverse elements which enter it; it is therefore meaning. But the ultimate meaning of a structure is a heavy one (*un sens lourd*), the root of significations and irreducible to no other signification. As an irreducible element ‘structure’ or ‘form’ lies beyond the classical dichotomy of ‘existence as a thing’ and ‘existence as consciousness.’ By saying that the subject-body has two faces the aim is to substitute relations of antinomies with those of complementarity^{xvii}. According to Merleau-Ponty the notion structure helps to avoid the correlation subject-object which dominates philosophy from Descartes to Hegel and the philosopher that shows interest in it is the one who wants to deepen our immersion in being^{xviii}.

Merleau-Ponty’s first book, *The Structure of Behaviour*, dwells on the immersion of subjectivity in being. The book describes human behaviour as a dialectic between the subject and the world. And dialectic, says Merleau-Ponty, “is not a relationship between contradictory and inseparable thoughts; it is the tending of an existence towards another which denies it, and yet without which it is not sustained”^{xix}. The interplay of influences of things and of the world on man and man’s active interchange and modification of such conditions that influence him make of mutual relations a

dialectic, a tension, or a ‘motion’ wherein no force or influence can be said to dominate absolutely at any one time, but all contribute to the total effect. What emerges out this dialogue, the environment bears the imprints of human presence and action^{xx}. This is precisely what the notion of structure enables someone like Merleau-Ponty to bring to focus.

The symbolic characterizations of the body, viz, the living body that assembles and articulates its experiences has its roots in Husserl’s notion of *subjektileib* (subject-body).

1.4. The Subjektileib and Its Pre-Reflective Synthesis

With Edmund Husserl, Merleau-Ponty and others, the notion of *Subjektileib* (subject-body) assumed importance as one of the basic structures of *In-der-Welt-Sein* (being-in-the-world). Merleau-Ponty adopts this notion to accomplish one of the main objectives of his philosophy, viz, to go beyond the Cartesian dichotomy between mind and body^{xxi}.

Despite his attempts at idealisations Husserl notes that there is in the pre-reflective a ready-made synthesis which beyond all thematizations. This is the sphere of pre-thetic experience, inhabited by an incarnate subject, what he calls the *subjektileib*, the organ of I do (*Ich kann*). The *Ich kann* (I can) is the power to organize the flow of perceptive experiences at each stage^{xxii}. Both Husserl and Merleau-Ponty highlight the importance of ‘I do’ (*Ich kann*), a ‘transition-synthesis’ accomplished through the body. Each perception is a moment of the corporal unity of the body and each object is part of the corporal unity, involved in the total functioning of the body. The body is not, therefore, an object but a means, a structure. With and through the body I inhabit the world. The body, says Merleau-Ponty, is not “in space, or in time. It inhabits space and time”^{xxiii}. To inhabit is not to know; it is feeling at home, being hosted by a space which does not forget us; it means to be among things that reveal our footprints and announce our

activities. To inhabit means to transfigure the things, to charge them with meanings which transcend their pure objectivity; it means to remove things from anonymity which keeps them in their ‘*in-seity*,’ to restore them to our ‘habitual’ gestures which permit our body to be aware of being among things, near them.

Husserl discusses the experience of touching where there is *ein Deckung*, an encroachment of the movement of touching and that of being touched. This bodily potentiality for reflexivity is viewed as a nascent reflection by Merleau-Ponty. To reflect is not to construct the world, but a return, a restitution of what it offers; it is not a deliberate act as such; it is rather a depth without which I could not deliberate. What I discover when I reflect on myself, is not my so-called interiority, but my original exposure to the world^{xxiv}.

In this openness of the body, viz, in this original co-exposure lies the primitive meaning of the world, its unmotivated flow to which the body, after the first original contact, characterized by stupor, seeks to give it meaning. This basic meaning is not a logical; it is a corporeal one; it is not about ‘knowing,’ but ‘I can’ (*je peux*), ‘I am involved’, a venture into things in the world to prove their possibility, resistance, or manipulability.

1.5. The Subject-Body as a Principle of Being

The ‘subject-body’ refers to the lived or phenomenal body itself. With reference to the lived body one feature stands out, viz, the unique “simple biological principle of survival.”^{xxv} As a principle it is neither a thing nor a thought, and it is neither an object nor a subject. One can rather say that it is both and ‘more;’ it is a relationship, a given; it is a *reservoir* of being. Ernest Starling uses “the metaphor of wisdom to characterize the body’s seemingly intuitive integration of its diverse faculties”^{xxvi}. Following in the footsteps of Ernest Starling scientists have become increasingly

aware of the native ‘wisdom of the body’, specifically witnessed in the body’s regulatory mechanisms, like the “body’s automatic control over vegetative functions (such as digestion, circulation, and temperature control).”^{xxvii}

To this bodily being one can attribute a personal, subjective nature not by virtue of being inhabited or animated by a principle of a different order, but on its own right. Hence the body is an existence which does not derive its subjective nature from a principle distinct from itself. This line of thought is reflected in Merleau-Ponty’s understanding of subjectivity.

1.5.1 The ‘New’ Concepts of *Subject* and *Subjectivity*

The term ‘subject’ varies according to different periods and currents of thought. With the advent of modern philosophy, for instance, the concept ‘subject’ acquired a more personal and epistemological meaning and use. This brought about a shift from the thesis that the knower is determined by the known to its reverse, viz, that the knower constitutes his field of knowledge^{xxviii}. From an existentialist perspective the ‘subject’ is not merely limited to an epistemological attitude, that is, to be a ‘subject’ means more than being just a pure and detached knower; he is someone with affections and emotions, to the extent of having an ethical attitude, implied in choices one makes. Today the term ‘subject’ rightly stands for a personal being, distinct from an abstract and body-less subject it was reduced to by some rationalist philosophies.

Merleau-Ponty’s understanding of the concepts ‘subject’ and ‘subjectivity’ is the function of his commitment “to account for the singular fact that my body is precisely my body”^{xxix}. The relations which I have with my body are not those of the *cogito* and the *cogitatum*, of the epistemological subject and its object. I have a common cause with it, I rise and fall with it, and in a way, I am my body. In short Merleau-Ponty dismisses as untenable what he calls

attitude spectaculaire (the phrase reflects Gabriel Marcel's book, *Être et Avoir*), that is, an 'I' without attachments.

In his essay on the above-mentioned book of G. Marcel, Merleau-Ponty holds the view that it is incorrect for philosophers to assume a perspective of observers at a spectacle, an attitude which "strips the object of its human aspect, of the hold it has on us"^{xxx}. Hence the term 'subject' refers to something known at its 'birth', as it comes into being; it refers to what 'discloses' its presence. In other words, viewed in the context of phenomenology, it stands for the manifestation, the *advent* of being to consciousness.

The phenomenon of consciousness plays a prominent role in the notion of subjectivity in general. No doubt, a reflective awareness, that is, a consciousness that one is a thinking being, plays a dominant role in Descartes. Merleau-Ponty does not reject the Cartesian cogito, but he differs with him about its dominant status. What he proposes is a concept of subjectivity that does not reduce the 'subject' to a 'I think' (*cogito*).

The fact is that consciousness, at its deepest level, that is, at the level of primary subjectivity, can neither be fully expressed nor verified as explicit orthetic consciousness: "we refrain from assuming an explicit consciousness which duplicates and sustains the confused grasp of primary subjectivity upon itself and upon its world"^{xxxi}. This means that at its deepest level human subjectivity is not an explicit awareness of 'I think.' It is rather a dialectic of the "impersonal"^{xxxii} and the personal.

Hence the real 'subject' is the 'personal' being, the 'I' who is always thrown to the world, viz, engaged in a situation. The world "is inseparable from the subject, but from a subject which is nothing but a project of the world, and the subject is inseparable from the world, but from a world which the subject itself projects"^{xxxiii}.

Another way to express this point is to highlight the dual traits of the body whereby it is a 'field' of metamorphosis. Through its sensory functions it feels and touches the world, and as an active body it turns back to give meaning to it.

The dialectic of the impersonal and the personal in subjectivity is nowhere else better demonstrated than in the synthesis of perceptual life. Dialectics itself is not a place of subjectivity which adopts the body as an instrument. The subject of perception, says Merleau-Ponty, is not myself as an autonomous subject, but myself in so far as I have a body and am able to 'look.' The theory of transcendental subjectivity represents an attempt to side-track the viewpoints of the body which is already a rallying-point, a dialogue, a question, and a response as far as the world is concerned. An obvious example of this dialogue is the act of perception. Rather than being a genuine history, it ratifies us in a 'prehistory.' Hence a question like, 'who is thinking' is not an activity reserved for the 'thinking ego' or determined by its structures; it belongs also to the individual bodily subject whose experience nourishes and sustains the reflective activity and experience of the '*cogito*'^{xxxiv}.

In every act of perception, and in sense experience in general one discovers that an object is never completely known, that it discloses only some of its aspects. Far from being a subjective deformation, an imperfection due to bodily existence, or a deformation of true or absolute knowledge, this partial disclosure of objects underlines the perspectival feature of human knowledge as well as the essential features of things which confers on the perceived "a hidden and inexhaustible richness, that it is a thing" and on the perceiving subject the "assurance of communicating with a world which is richer than what we know of it"^{xxxv}.

The assurance of communicating with the world which the cogito cannot claim to have constituted in real terms is further amplified

in the notion of bodily mediation of experience. Bodily mediation means that in direct experience the body, far from being grasped as ‘physiological reality,’ remains the basis or vehicle of intentions. In immediate experience, says Merleau-Ponty, the unity of man remains intact; the body is not stripped of its faculties; it is not viewed as a machine; and the soul is not defined as having an independent existence. Naïve consciousness does not see in the soul the cause of the movements of the body nor does it put the soul in the body as the pilot in his ship. “This way of thinking ... is not implied in immediate experience”^{xxxvi}.

The body is not only a living envelope of our actions; it is where our intentions find expression and embodiment. Merleau-Ponty’s cry “I am my body”^{xxxvii} – *Je suis mon corps* – is a rehabilitation of subjectivity and a rejection of any effective separation between the body and consciousness after the unsuccessful resolutions of the unity of body and soul in Plato, Locke, Hume, and others.

1.6. EVALUATION AND CONCLUDING REMARK

What has been highlighted about the living body as a primary subject and structure of every experience enables one to approach the human body in the mood of wonder. The living body is associated neither with the realm of things nor that of thought, and neither with the category of object nor that of subject. It is object and subject and ‘more.’ It is true that the body plays the role of a symbol, namely, the role of bringing together ...yet there is a ‘more’ about it. The native and vital force of the human body “by which the multiplicity of processes is somehow guided into a harmonious whole”^{xxxviii} requires a deeper and open-ended reflection. A verse from the Book of Job: “Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?” is a recognition of the living body as a single unified system, despite its numerous faculties and activities. The fundamental character of

corporeity or living body is that in its unmotivated and ambivalent presence it is one thing, but also another^{xxxix}.

The living body (the subject-body) is rooted in this ‘more,’ in a ‘density of being.’ But this density is a possibility which can only be actualized through human effort and action; it is an invisible which comes to the visible through the agency of the ‘I.’ As the power of ‘I do’, the subject-body anchors and unites me with being, to the ‘there is ...(being),’ the very possibility of all human actions and efforts.

In the footsteps of Merleau-Ponty and others the living body has been studied and highlighted as the ‘original intentionality.’ The thoughts and efforts of Merleau-Ponty’s can be described as a search for the ‘origins,’ the ‘primitive’ which he rightly discovers in *être-au-monde* (*being-in-the-world*). The disclosure of the world is hardly possible without the engagement of the living body. In this way the living body remains the primary subject of all experiences and inquiries. Man is thus identified with his body, “I am not in front of my body, I am in it, or rather I am it”^{xl}, and with it we project ourselves to the world; it is the basic structure of human existence. But in the final analysis there is a “more” about the living body. I am not just my body; I also belong to ‘being’ through the living body – *j’en suis*. Hence, I am a relational being.

The characterizations of the living body are efforts to go beyond inherited dualisms that hinder a better understanding of the unity of man. Today’s neuro-science will hardly agree with the followers of Rene Descartes about the status of the body in relation to the soul or mind. “There is no duality of mind and body – all is one.”^{xli} This essay recasts the Cartesian Cogito; it does not demean it. If the thesis that “we are greater than the sum of our biological parts” is tenable, it is likewise legitimate to argue that man should not be reduced to any of the functions of the human body, such as the reflexive feature of the body, viz. mind. What is ‘I think’ (cogito)

without the lived body? The insights of Sherwin B. Nuland about the physical origin of reflexive awareness call for attention:

“Like everything else about human function, the myriad fragments that coalesce to form human feeling arise from the workings of the physical structure that has been given to us. The uniquely human mind is a property of the organic characteristics of the uniquely human body, just as all function is the accompaniment of the physical structure from which it arises”^{xlii}

In conclusion the cogito, viz, the reflexive awareness remains, but it is one of the functions of the lived body. The lived body is the original disclosure. It is disclosed as the primary subjectivity, an embodied and ambivalent subject, open to the world and being, being-in-the world. The lived body is a kind of biological laboratory where diverse experiences are assembled, organized, and sorted out.

The world is ‘already there,’ given to my body before any kind of judgement or reflection. Hence reflection does not mean to construct the world as intellectualism proposes, but a return, a feedback, a restitution of what the exposure to the world entails. This is far from being a deliberate act; it is rather a depth without which I could not even deliberate^{xliii}.

The above insights reveal a basic truth about man: he is an *embodied and reflective being*, tied to the world, sharing the same element with the world, the ‘tissue of being’ that penetrates and sustains all that exists. Herein lies the ontological weight of the living body.

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ENDNOTES

ⁱ A. S. Weiss, *Philosophy Today*, 345

ⁱⁱ J. J. Gaines, 67

ⁱⁱⁱ *Ibid.* 69

^{iv} Merleau-Ponty, *PP*, 206

^v D. Bell, *Husserl*, 200.

^{vi} “Dalle cose del mondo ho la consapevolezza delle potentialità del mio corpo, perché le cose si rivestono delle sue azioni; ho la posizione degli oggetti tramite quella del mio corpo, non per una deduzione logica, non come si determina un’incognita in base alle sue relazioni oggettive con grandezze date, ma per un’ implicanza reale, perché il mio corpo, lungi dall’essere un oggetto in sé, è pro-tenzione verso il mondo, e il mondo è punto d’appoggio del mio corpo (U. Galimberti, *IL Corpo*, 67).

^{vii} . D. Bell, *Husserl*, 155.

^{viii} Ideas §53/p. 164, in D. Bell, 198.

^{ix} Merleau-Ponty, *PP*, 154.

^x “Bodily experience forces us to acknowledge an imposition of meaning which is not the work of a universal constituting consciousness, a meaning which clings to certain contents. My body is that meaningful core which behaves like a general function” (*PP* 147).

^{xi} *PP* 146.

^{xii} *PP* 350

^{xiii} U. GALIMBERTI, *IL Corpo*, 13

^{xiv} M. BARRAL, *Merleau-Ponty*, 74.

^{xv} “ce que j’appelle l’ambiguïté, c’est le fait que lorsqu’on réfléchit sur ce qu’est le cerveau, on finit par trouver quelque chose qui n’est plus du tout la masse de matière initiale, alors que, cependant, ce cerveau reste la masse de matière initiale” (M. MERLEAU-PONTY, “La connaissance de l’homme au XXe siècle”: Actes des Rencontres Internationales de Genève, in D. BOISSEAU, *Merleau-Ponty et l’ambiguïté*, 231).

^{xvi} K. GOLDSTEIN, *The Organism*, 218.

^{xvii} “L’intérêt majeur de cette recherche est de substituer partout aux antinomies des rapport de complémentarité“ (*S* 148)

^{xviii} “La structure indique un chemin hors de la corrélation sujet-objet qui domine la philosophie de Descartes à Hegel” (*S*. 155).

^{xix} *PP* 167 168.

xx *PP* 87

xxi J. TUEDO, “Merleau-Ponty’s refinement of Husserl”, 104

xxii “Entre les mouvements de mon corps et les propriétés de la chose qu’ils révèlent, le rapport est celui du ‘je peux’ (*S* 201).

xxiii *PP* 139

xxiv “Ri-flettere, dunque, non è costruire il mondo, ma restruirgli la sua offerta, non è nemmeno un atto deliberato, ma lo sfondo senza il quale nulla potrei deliberare” (*IL Corpo*, 66)

xxv S. B. NULAND, *The Wisdom of the Body*, xviii.

xxvi *Ibid*, xviii.

xxvii *Ibid*, xix.

xxviii R. KWANT, *The Phenomenological philosophy of Merleau-Ponty*, 16.

xxix M. MERLEAU-PONTY, “Être et Avoir”, review of Gabriel Marcel’s book of the same title, 100.

xxx “IL se sont établis dans une, ‘attitude spectaculaire’ qui dépouillait l’objet de son aspect humain” (M. MERLEAU-PONTY, ‘Être et Avoir’, 100)

xxxi *PP* 404

xxxii “Perception is always in the mode of the impersonal ‘One’ (*PP* 240)

xxxiii *PP* 430

xxxiv “Reflection can never make me stop seeing the sun two hundred yards away on a misty day, or seeing it ‘rise’ and ‘set’, or thinking with the cultural apparatus with which my education, my previous efforts, my personal history, have provided me. I never actually collect...., or call up simultaneously all the primary thoughts which contribute to my perception or to my present conviction” (*PP* 61)

xxxv *SB* 186.

xxxvi *SB* 188.

xxxvii M. MERLEAU-PONTY, “Être et Avoir,” 100.

xxxviii S. B. NULAND, xviii.

xxxix D. BOSSEAU, 231

xl M. MERLEAU-PONTY, *PP*, 150.

xli S. B. NULAND, xxii.

xlii S. B. NULAND, xxii.

^{xliii} “Ri-flettere, dunque, non è costruire il mondo, ma restituirgli la sua offerta, non è nemmeno un atto deliberato, ma lo sfondo senza il quale nulla potrei deliberare” (U. GALIMBERTI, *IL Corpo*, 66).