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Heidegger and the Question of the Body

Towards a Theory of Embodiment in “Being and Time”

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Author:
Mickaël Stoeckel

Supervisor:
Docent Mirja Hartimo

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Abstract: In *Being and Time* (1927), German philosopher Martin Heidegger is tackling the question of the specific way of being proper to human beings. To conduct this project, he situates himself explicitly in the field of phenomenology and ontology, which he regards as being at the core of philosophical study. The innovation of his thesis on the particularity of the human being revolves around the concepts of *Dasein*, the entity of "being-there", and of *In-der-Welt-Sein*, the structure of "being-in-the-world". With these concepts, he aims to transcend the Cartesian split between mind and body, offering a more fundamental and unbiased depiction of human life. Early commentators have noted that *Being and Time* sets ambitious expectations for a phenomenological exploration of human corporeality. Problematically, Heidegger himself admits not to address the question of the body directly. According to scholars, this neglect of the body threatens to invalidate his entire ontological project.

This raises several questions: Would it be possible to draft a theory of embodiment based on a careful reading of *Being and Time*? Can we understand this supposed neglect of the body of Heidegger by investigating thoroughly the existential analytic of Dasein? Might there be an implicit theory of human bodily nature hidden behind the ontological primacy of ability-to-be, attunement and disposedness?

In this master's thesis my argument is that because the notions of Stimmung (mood) and Befindlichkeit (disposedness) are so central for *Being and Time*'s fundamental ontology's architecture, Heidegger is committed all along his masterwork to characterize the human being as embodied. But the terms "body" and "embodiment" are too suggestive of the

mind/body dualism to serve the holistic metaphysical account that Heidegger tries to unfold. An explanation of the notions of occurentness and availableness suggests that the human body is much more than just an object or an equipment. Rather human bodily nature is directly linked to Dasein's ability-to-be and facticity. A careful reading of *Being and Time*'s fundamental ontology and of the notions of ontic concretion and ontological difference, reveals that there is a central dimension of embodiment operating in the analytic of Dasein. The importance of the concepts of *Stimmung* (mood) and *Befindlichkeit* (disposedness) in Heidegger's fundamental ontology leaves no doubt that there is a strong theory of human bodily nature at the core of *Being and Time*.

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1 Introduction

When I walk down to the library, I usually pass by an electric cabinet where a visual artist named Jani Tolin has painted in big white letters on a pink background:

YOU DO NOT HAVE A SOUL

YOU ARE A SOUL

YOU HAVE A BODY

I suppose this statement does not have the status of a definitive philosophical claim, but rather is a way to trigger the passer-by to reflect on that topic. Nevertheless, every time, I think for myself: “Very nice that somebody points “the soul” as constituting the essence of human beings”. Nowadays, I guess the random passer-by, along with many scientists would consider that human particularity has to do with the mind and its cognitive functions located in the brain. I am not in favour of such a neuroscientific reductionism; however, I would like to challenge Jani Tolin’s message and respond with the following claim:

YOU DO NOT HAVE A BODY

YOU ARE A BODY

But what does it mean “to have a body” or “to be a body”? It is probably possible to find an agreement about what it means to “have” something. Human beings, in the same way as material things or ideal objects, have properties, attributes or predicates, for example “have a blue colour”, “weigh 60kg” or “make low frequency sounds”. But how does it differ from saying that a subject x “is” blue, “is” 60 kg or “is” a low frequency sound generator? To some extent, it is possible to identify a subject x with its properties, but sometimes it is problematic: what if the colour of x changes, or its weigh or the sound it is making? Does it mean that we would not be dealing with x anymore?

In the tradition of metaphysics and philosophy of logics, there has been extensive reflections about the different uses of the verb “being”. From Plato and Aristotle to Leibniz and Kant, questions of equivalence, identity and ontological considerations on essence have been primordial. With *Being and Time* (1927), Martin Heidegger

picks up the challenge to place again the question of being at the centre of philosophical analysis after decades dominated by psychologism and influenced by positivism and utilitarianism. Two years later, in *Was ist Metaphysik?*[1], his opening speech as chairman of the University of Freiburg, he declares that the problematic of being is not less than the highest task of philosophy. And hence, what does it mean to "be" a human being? Does the way of being of a human differ from other beings, like animals, stones, or other objects? And how? What would Heidegger make of our street artist friend's claim, that we "are" souls but "have" bodies? Would it be possible to imagine, in Heidegger's ontological framework, that we "are" bodies, and what would that mean? In this thesis, I will examine the topic of the ontology of the human body focusing on *Being and Time,* and argue against its commentators who consider that it is missing a proper account of the body.

To conduct his analysis on the particularity of the way of being of human beings, Heidegger chooses to use the specific German term of "Dasein" to denote human being. Literally translatable to English as "there-being", this term is common in the 18th century when referring to human existence. In German "da" means "there", and "sein" means "to be" or "being". The implication of this grammatical shift from the verb "sein" to the substantive "Dasein" has caused severe headaches among Heidegger scholars now for several generations. Some English-speaking academicians have agreed to settle for the translation "being-there", some others simply use the German term "Dasein" itself. With this much discussed term, Heidegger is trying to grasp the very essence of human beings, in their particular manner of existing. Dasein is for him that being that we are, that has the specificity to understand itself and to reflect on its own existence, as opposed to animals or objects, which he assumes, don't have these self-understanding and self-reflective properties.

What is fundamental for human beings understood as Dasein is that they are concerned with their engagements in life, that they project themselves in the past and the future, that they are in relation with other humans and objects, and moreover, that each of these features have some kind of subjective significance. In Heidegger's perspective, an animal or an object doesn't care about its existence; human beings, on the other hand, do "give a damn" about things that touch their life; they are

[1] See Heidegger (1929)

concerned with issues; they have the particularity to possibly "care about" what they do, what happened in the past and what might happen or not in the future. From the simple everyday life, to more existential questions (like death), humans are embedded in a network or worldly objects, concerns, and meanings.

For Heidegger, this human characteristic of "innerworldliness" is essential and he spends no less than seventy pages, in three chapters of *Being and Time*[2], explaining in detail the notion of "Being-in-the-World", which he calls a fundamental constitution of Dasein. In doing so, he takes a step away from Cartesian infamous conception of the evil demon and from the brain-in-a-vat scenario of Gilbert Harman, according to which our consciousness could be something completely detached from the physical realm (and possibly from any reality at all). For Heidegger, Cartesian ontology is weak and problematic, an issue which he addresses directly in *Being and Time*[3]. In a nutshell: Heidegger considers that Cartesian dualism can be handy to describe certain human activities with the terms of mind, body, and soul, but he also considers that those concepts do not reflect the essence of human being which is primarily united and non-dividable. In Heidegger's conception, Dasein is not a compound of physical, spiritual, and mental elements, but it is essentially a more original and holistic entity. Body, mind, or soul don't have a separate essence on their own; instead, it is only we, as speaking and labelling beings, who speak about bodies and minds.

Taken the importance of the everydayness of human beings and the primacy of Being-in-the-world in Heidegger's analysis, we could expect to find a phenomenological description of habitual bodily matters, for example, hunger, tiredness, or healthy living. We could also expect a thorough description of autonomous movement or a theory of human bodily perception, in the same way Husserl or Merleau-Ponty proceed to do in their works. Accordingly, Jean-Paul Sartre (1943), Hubert Dreyfus (1991), Jean Greisch (1994) have wondered why there is so little said on the body in *Being and Time*: isn't the body the first point of contact of human beings with their environment? The Belgian philosopher Alphonse de Waelhens writes that in *Being and Time,* "one does not find thirty lines concerning

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[2] See Heidegger (1927), Div. I, Chap. II, III, and IV, p. 53-126
[3] See Heidegger (1927), Div. I, Chap III.B, *The Contrast Between Our Analysis of Worldliness and Descartes' Interpretation of the World, p. 87-99*

the problem of perception; one does not find ten concerning that of the body".[4] The English-speaking commentator David Krell asks:

> Did Heidegger simply fail to see the arm of the everyday body rising in order to hammer the shingles onto the roof, did he overlook the quotidian gaze directed toward the ticking watch that overtakes both sun and moon, did he miss the body poised in its brazen car, a car equipped with a turn signal fabricated by and for the hand and eye of man, did he neglect the human being capable day-in and day-out of moving and setting itself in motion? If so, what conclusion must we draw?[5]

How should we understand this alleged neglect of the body by Heidegger? Can we find good reasons for him not to address the question of the body directly or is it a plain mistake of his philosophy? "[C]an one phenomenologically and ontologically justify placing the body in a secondary position in the existential analytic?" asks Michel Haar[6] while recognizing that "[In Heidegger], there are barely a few allusions without explicit references to the hand that handles tools." Dreyfus's view on that issue leaves no space for doubt: it would seem that "having a body does not belong to Dasein's essential structure", that "Dasein is not necessarily embodied" and that, "the body is not essential".[7] On the contrary, Didier Frank suggests that "it is essential - although this necessity was something that Heidegger never took into account - that Dasein have hands so that, all metaphors aside, the being of the being that it is could be named being-at-hand".[8] Is it possible to say that having a body (being embodied) is not a feature of Dasein's essential structure, but at the same time that Dasein is never without a body?

My main argument in this thesis is that because the notions of *Stimmung* (mood) and *Befindlichkeit* (disposedness) are so central for *Being and Time*'s fundamental ontology, Heidegger is committed all along his masterwork to characterize the human being as embodied. Leaning on Aho (2009), Ciocan (2001, 2008, 2015), Cerbone (2000,2021), Blattner (1996), Stolorow (2014), Levin (1999, 2023), and *The Heidegger Cambridge Lexicon* (ed. Wrathall, 2021), I try to demonstrate that Heidegger does not neglect the body, but rather wisely avoids the terms of body and embodiment. Whereas some of those philosophers argue for a similar view on the

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[4] See Waelhens (1963)
[5] See Krell (1992), p.152
[6] See Haar (1993), p.34
[7] See Dreyfus (1991), pp.47, 131
[8] See Frank (1991),p.144

basis of Heidegger's later philosophy, I suggest that it is possible to draft a theory of Dasein's bodily nature based on his early philosophy, i.e. by a careful reading of the analytic of *Being and Time*.

In the first chapter, I explicate the notion of "existential" philosophy at work in *Being and Time*. By defining the notions of "existentiell", categorial, "Vorhandenheit" and "Zuhandenheit", it is possible to approach the question of Dasein's bodily nature from a negative point of view, by ruling out what it is not. I agree with Cerbone (2000), that the human body cannot be reduced to an object or an equipment but that it has rather an internal ontological dimension. In a second chapter, I introduce the Heideggerian notions of understanding, ability-to-be and possibility which shape the facticity of Dasein. Based on Blattner (1996), I explain how in *Being and Time,* Heidegger operates a shift from the Cartesian dualism between physical and mental characteristics to a more relevant dualism between natural and self-interpreting characteristics. In the third chapter, I aim to clarify what is Heidegger's fundamental ontology. I try to define the notions of ontological difference and ontic concretion, which are necessary to understand the ontological dimension of human beings' embodiment. I argue that the structures of everydayness and care, and the concepts of authenticity and anxiety, pivotal in *Being and Time*'s fundamental ontology, clearly presuppose Dasein as embodied. In the final chapter, I argue further that the important notion of *Befindlichkeit* as attunement or disposedness, which Heidegger elaborates in *Being and Time*, strongly points towards an ontological dimension of embodiment. With Levin (1999), Stolorow (2014) and Slaby (2021), I claim that because we cannot imagine a phenomenon of mood (*Stimmung*) detached from the body, there is no doubt that Dasein's bodily being is always already there, present at the core of Heidegger's early philosophy. Considering how it binds Dasein in its bodily being and ontological dimension, it is no surprising that the notion of *Stimmung* as attunement is one of Heidegger's major philosophical legacies, for example, in the fields of music, arts and aesthetics. In conclusion, I give an overview of the true nature of the embodiment problem in Heidegger analytic of Dasein and open the discussion on the dynamics of human being by pointing at the concept of "bodying-forth" which Heidegger introduces thirty-three years after *Being and Time*.[9]

[9] See Heidegger (1959-1972). *Zollikon Seminars,* p.16, 84-89, 170, 199

2 The body and the existential analytic of Dasein

In this chapter, I will explain what is particular in Heidegger's "existential philosophy" and how it differs from a wider understanding of existentialism in the history of ideas. I will then introduce the Heideggerian distinction between the terms "existential" and "existentiell" and ask if the bodily nature of Dasein can be addressed with one of these terms. This will lead to another important conceptual distinction in Heidegger's semantically complex apparatus: the difference between the notions of *Vorhandenheit* and *Zuhandenheit*. Armed with these definitions, we will shift our attention towards the problem of Dasein's bodily nature according to Cerbone's reading of Heidegger. Cerbone (2000) examines the possible characterization of the human body as being something present-at-hand or ready-at-hand. His presentation of Dasein's bodily nature will help us to define the problematic in a more specific way and introduce us to Heideggerian fundamental ontology.

2.1 Existence, existentialism, existentiality, existential, existentiell

In the introduction of *Being and Time,*[10] Heidegger defines Dasein as follows:

> This being [Seiende], which we ourselves in each case are and which includes inquiry among the possibilities of its being, we formulate terminologically as Dasein.[11]

While repositioning the question of the being at the center of the philosophical enterprise, Heidegger is tackling the most universal and most empty of all concepts: the verb "Sein" (in English "to be") and its present participle "Seiende" ("which is" or "being"), terms that are often translated to English as "to exist" and "existent". By asking the question of what it means to be, Heidegger tries to grasp the very "existence" of entities in their reality, in their materiality, in their "being there" or Dasein. For a human being, "to be" essentially means "to exist". The word "existence" derives from the Latin "existentia" which can be found translated as "Dasein" in some German dictionaries.

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[10] To render the lecture of this paper more convenient, I will refer to *Being and Time* as "BT".
[11] See Heidegger (1927), p.7 (revised translation of *Being and Time* by Joan Stambaugh, published in 2010 by SUNY Press. Page numbers refer to the seventh edition of the original German text, which is of standard use among scholars).

In German language, “Eksistence”, with a “k”, is a neologism that Heidegger uses to unload Dasein from its subjective connotation. What I mean by that, is that Heidegger wants to challenge the subject/object perspective of philosophy, whereby human being is a sensing and knowing entity, or subject, which perceives and appropriates itself external objects. By pointing our attention towards “eksistence”, Heidegger wants to blur the borders between the subject and the object of perceptions and underline that human being is entangled in its world to the extent that it would not make sense to consider him as detached from it.

Sometimes, Heidegger even writes “Ek-sistence” with a dash, which could be explained by his willingness to emphasize this entanglement view. In Latin, the prefix “Ex” signifies an exit, a passing from inside to outside, while in Greek “Ek” denotes an ek-static opening, a spacing-out without actual inside or outside. In Heidegger’s view, this nuance is significant because it allows to account for the uniqueness of human beings’ relation to time and temporality, which is the subject matter of BT. In that account, human life is an ek-static opening where human being has a particular relation to its own death as well as to others’ “end” and to nothingness in general; alongside being existing, one peculiar structure of Dasein is its Being-toward-Death.[12]

Finally, by choosing the term of “Ek-sistence” to qualify for a characterization of Dasein, Heidegger also supposes something particular about its essence: that Dasein is turned or open towards the world; in Husserlian words, we could say that Dasein is essentially intentional, it is directed outwards, its thoughts, representations, and actions are “about something”. Existence is something that Dasein always relates to in a particular way: “The “essence” of Dasein lies in its existence”[13], “Dasein always understands itself in terms of its existence, in terms of its possibility to be itself or not to be itself.”[14]

2.1.1 Heidegger’s existentialism

Considering how important the notion of Existence seems to be for Heidegger in BT, it wouldn’t be such a big step to call his inquiry a philosophy of existence or an existential philosophy. His way of approaching the existentiality of human beings

[12] See Heidegger (1927), Div II, Chap. 1
[13] Ibid, p.42
[14] Ibid, p.12

could easily lead to labeling his work as existential phenomenology or existentialism. It is commonly admitted that BT, which is dedicated to Edmund Husserl, picks up some pieces of his master conceptions about immediate apprehension of phenomena, but leaves out the complex vocabulary and apparatus of phenomenological reduction. The contribution of Heidegger in the development of phenomenology was to shift its method from the lived experience to existence itself. Indeed, he writes:

> We come to terms with the question of existence always only through existence itself. We call this kind of understanding of oneself existentiell understanding.[15]

Heidegger's approach of human existence revolves around the central feature that Dasein has a self-understanding of its being. Human beings are not given their content by an ahistorical essence or by a transcendent idea independent of a cultural context; neither are they what they are by nature. Rather, Dasein grasps its content itself in its very own act of self-understanding. This view is reminding Kierkegaard's awkward formulation that "the self is what relates itself to itself"[16] or the later famous Sartre's proposition that "Existence precedes essence".[17]

However, even though he is trying to elaborate a logic of existence, Heidegger is not an existentialist philosopher *per se*, as we understand nowadays. Or at least, he wouldn't call himself one: "Heidegger flatly denies any kind of existentialist affiliation in his course of 1941 on Schelling"[18]. As a cultural movement, existentialism was rather vivid after the second world war, especially among French artists, novelists like Camus, painters, and playwrights. Because of Sartre and other philosophers like Merleau-Ponty or Simone de Beauvoir, existentialism is also often associated with Marxism or feminism. Existentialism became a philosophy of authenticity and freedom, often taking a political dimension. For Heidegger too, the notions of authenticity and freedom are important, but he never clearly formulated a political theory. Heidegger's phenomenological inquiry of existence in BT has influenced Sartre and other French philosophers a lot, but his "existentialism" cannot be identified with the cultural and political forms existentialism is known for nowadays.

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[15] See Heidegger (1927), p.12.
[16] Kierkegaard, *Sickness unto Death*, p. 13.
[17] Sartre, *Existentialism and Humanism*, p. 26.
[18] See Heidegger, GA49:17-73. Quote from Escudero (2021), p.297.

2.1.2 The distinction existential/existentiell

It is relevant here to introduce the complex and rather confusing distinction made by Heidegger, between "existentiell" (*Existenziell* in German) and "existential" (in German *Existenzial*). This distinction has deep consequences on his ontology and on our research question about the body. In BT's introduction, Heidegger wrote:

> The question of existence is an ontic "affair" of Dasein. For this question the theoretical transparency of the ontological structure of existence is not necessary. The question of structure aims at the analysis of what constitutes existence. We shall call the coherence of these structures existentiality. Its analysis does not have the character of an existentiell understanding but rather an existential one.[19]

What Heidegger wants to underline here is the fact that, even though it is in its own existence that Dasein has access to existence as such, we must make a distinction between existence itself and the very structure of existentiality. In that respect, what is existentiell is defined as what is accessible through existence, and what is existential, is what is accessible through a phenomenological or scientific approach of the existence of Dasein. To clarify the distinction, let's have a look Escudero (2021):

> "Existential" refers to the ontological structures of human existence, formally defined as being-there (Dasein). "Existentiell" signifies a particular, ontic realization or instantiation of Dasein's ontological structures.[20]

Found both as an adjective or as a substantive, the term "existential" is used in BT to characterize the ontological structures of human existence, for example, being-in-the-world, logos (*Rede*), or being-towards-death. On one hand, "existential" is situated on a level where there is fundamentally being, that is the level of philosophy and ontology. On the other hand, "existentiell" is on a level where humans are investigated, for example, by biology, psychology, or anthropology.

To illustrate the distinction that Heidegger coins with those terms, let us look at spatiality, which is an existential property of Dasein. On an existentiell level, Dasein's spatiality translates into the location of an individual human, its physical dimensions, its direction, or distances between human beings. Let's take another example of existential: Dasein's temporality. On the existentiell level, this translates into

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[19] See Heidegger (1927)
[20] See Escudero (2021), *The Cambridge Heidegger Lexicon*, p.300

duration, chronology, past and future events, timetables, calendars and so forth. One last example is the existential of interpretedness which translates on the ontic level into concrete acts of language, discourses, or arguments. The notions of existential and existentiell are very bound to each other and in Heidegger's account, an existential understanding can never be totally detached from a concrete existentiell understanding. The ontological implications are addressed further (in chapter 5 and 6) to explain how the distinction resonates on the problem of the human body.

2.1.3 The distinction existential/categorial

The term "existential" is to be distinguished not only from the term "existentiell", but also from some other categories or "categorial". In each case, existentialia are different modes of being that must be enacted, whereas categories are defined as the nature of entities other than Dasein (such as nature, equipment, minerals, animals, real things, ideal objects, etc.). Heidegger is very explicit about this distinction:

> All explications arising from an analytic of Dasein are gained with a view towards its structure of existence. Because these explications are defined in term of existentiality, we shall call the characteristics of Dasein's existentials. They are to be sharply delimited from the determinations of being of those beings unlike Dasein which we call categories.[21]

Let's now refresh our research question formulation regarding the problem of the body in Heidegger's existential analytic of Dasein: could the human body qualify for being called an existential or an existentiell, or is it a categorial? We will see later in section 2.3, that corporeality or embodiment could make a good candidate for qualifying as an existential. Indeed, if being-in-the-world is an existential mode of Dasein, why shouldn't corporeality be as well? Can corporeality be treated separately from being-in-the-world? What does this imply for our understanding of corporeality or embodiment? What is the difference between having a body and living (in) a body?

2.2 The categories of Vorhandenheit and Zuhandenheit

Before I explain Cerbone's take on the matter of human body's existence, I will clarify another major distinction in Heidegger's conceptual analysis of being, the distinction between the categorial of *Vorhandenheit*, literally presence-at-hand, but also

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[21] See Heidegger (1927), p.44.

translated as objective presence or as occurrentness, and the one of *Zuhandenheit*, literally readiness-at-hand, also translated as handiness, availability, or availableness.

For starter, we can observe that, in the very words Heidegger is using, the body is present, with the term "hand", appearing among several German prefixes and suffixes. It may not be a mere coincidence that some body parts "appear" in the terminology that Heidegger utilizes. Maybe he is pointing at some form of neglected physical intelligence? Maybe there could be something genuinely sense-making in our very physical and kinesthetic being? Maybe meanings are already encoded at the level of our sight, touch, or senses in general, in our spine, or in our nervous system?

Heidegger did not deal with those questions as such in BT. Neither did he try to describe bodily perceptions and how they possibly translate into meanings. Unlike Husserl or later Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger does not propose a theory of how the human body would play a role in consciousness or in the structure of intentionality. Where Husserl holds the input of senses as crucial, Heidegger seems to avoid the subject. Therefore, many of BT's commentators tend to hold allusions to body parts as mere metaphors. For them, the way Heidegger refers to touch, sight or hearing is not convincing, but my opinion, based on Cerbone (2000), is that if we carefully read the existential analytic of Dasein, Heidegger's view is valid.

2.2.1 Occurrentness (*Vorhandenheit*)

In BT, Heidegger deploys the category of *Vorhandenheit* to describe the way of being of a mere thing. In German, what is *vorhanden* is present before us; this adjective denotes the fact that a mere object is existing. The substantive form *Vorhandenheit* is a category that describes a certain property of things: it reduces existence to a static object that can be observed. In that sense, it cannot be said that Dasein would have the characteristic of occurrentness. For Heidegger, Dasein is not a "thing", a "what", or in other words, an occurrent being. Dasein is always essentially a "who", to whom its own existence is of concern. Therefore, the only way to understand who we are is to investigate the ways "how" we exist.

Even though, in BT's introduction, Heidegger seems to talk of occurrence or presence in a more generic way, that could possibly be applied to Dasein as well, later on he

uses the term of presence-at-hand or objective presence in a more restrictive way, for example when he is writing about Dasein's existential of being-in-the-world:

> Being present in something objectively present and the being present together with something having the same kind of being (in the sense of a determinate relation to place) are ontological characteristics which we call categorial. They belong to beings whose kind of being is unlike Dasein.[22]

According to Cerbone (2021),[23] it is already clear, in the introduction of BT, that *Vorhandenheit* is to be limited to a narrower definition:

> [...] the simple apprehension of something objectively present in its sheer objective presence [Vorhandenheit], which Parmenides already used as a guide for interpreting being- has the temporal structure of a pure "making present" of something. Beings, which show themselves in and for this making present and which are understood as genuine beings, are accordingly interpreted with regard to the present; that is to say, they are conceived as presence (ontia).[24]

Heidegger's account of presence and objectiveness, besides being very complex,[25] is also very problematic in terms of the human body. What about the presence or the occurrentness of my own body? Isn't it clear to me that I am here physically, in the library and moving my fingers over the keyboards? Isn't it clear that there are other human bodies on the same floor, that they are objectively in the same space as me and not at home? When I took the metro this morning, my body was transported through space with other human bodies, and it wouldn't have been very hard to verify that they were objectively present. In Heideggerian account though, I can't just consider myself and others as lively corpses or mere objects. When I register the objective presence of human bodies, it's the objective presence of a Dasein that I have in mind, not just the objective presence of an object. I perceive myself primordially as a human being and a Dasein. Those other human beings around me also perceive themselves as Dasein, and they perceive me as Dasein, not just as a corpse.

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[22] See Heidegger 1927), p.56
[23] See Cerbone (2021), *The Cambridge Heidegger Lexicon,* p.538
[24] See Heidegger (1927), p.25-26.
[25] See Backmann (2015), *Complicated Presence*

2.2.2 Availableness (*Zuhandenheit*)

Zuhandenheit is also a characterization of objects other than Dasein, however what is denoted with that noun is their specific availability. Among Heidegger's scholars, the example of the hammer is infamous:

> The act of hammering itself discovers the specific "handiness" ["Handlichkeit"] of the hammer. We shall call the useful things' kind of being in which it reveals itself by itself handiness [Zuhandenheit][26]

According to this quote, availableness is the category that describes the kind of being of equipment and other such useful items, insofar as they play a meaningful role in a process, in an "order-to". A piece of equipment like a hammer does not just merely exist as a thing, but it is before all at our disposal, here for us in the accomplishment of a task. If the term *Zuhandenheit* is mostly associated to fabricated entities like equipment, it is also used in a broader sense. Every single available thing for use can be said *zuhanden* for Heidegger: "The forest is a forest of timber, the mountain a quarry of rock, the river is water power, the wind is wind "in the sails"[27] ."In that sense, every material thing could have the property of handiness, as we can potentially come up with new ways of using raw materials for a specific new purpose.

Could it be so that the category of *Zuhandenheit* would apply to the human body? According to Cerbone (2021)[28], it is the narrower sense of availableness, the one which refers to equipment and to technically developed item, that is the more significant for Heidegger. *Zuhandenheit* is a notion that Heidegger also uses in later works on technology. But in BT, Heidegger insists on the idea that *Zuhandenheit* is functioning in a privileged way to make us apprehend what is *Vorhandenheit*. When an equipment breaks down, or seizes to operate in the expected manner, we are put in front of the phenomenon of *Vorhandenheit*: what is occurrent, simply objectively present is revealed to us when an item stops to be handy or *zuhanden*:

> As a deficient mode of taking care of things, the helpless way in which we stand before it [the "unhandy" thing] discovers the mere being present of what is at hand."[29]

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[26] See Heidegger (1927), p.69.
[27] Ibid, p.70
[28] See Cerbone (2021), p.78.
[29] See Heidegger (1927), p.73.

But isn't it so that we often become conscious of our bodies when they stop "functioning" properly or when we are in pain? For example, we become aware of our body in a strong way, when our feet get sore. We take the whole dimension of our bodily presence when we walk on a dance floor and realize that we are desperately clumsy. When we get hungry or sick, it is very natural to think that our bodies are just things being in the way of whatever we want to accomplish? Why wouldn't we be entitled to consider the human body as an equipment, in the sense of *Zuhandenheit*, as defined in the architecture of Heidegger's analytic of Dasein?

2.3 David Cerbone on the problematic of Dasein's bodily nature

2.3.1 The body is not *zuhanden*.

To answer that question, I will try to reproduce the arguments of Cerbone (2000)[30]. According to him, it seems that, within Heidegger's phenomenology, not only is it impossible to reduce the human body to a thing or to a mere object, but reducing the body to a tool, an equipment or something ready-at-hand is to be excluded too.

> Strictly speaking, there "is" no such thing as a useful thing. There always belongs to the being of a useful thing a totality of useful things in which this useful thing can be what it is. A useful thing is essentially "something in order to…". The different kinds of "in order to" such as serviceability, helpfulness, usability, handiness, constitute a totality of useful things.[31]

Cerbone, in line with Heidegger, considers that an analogy between a tool and the human body is not a lucky fit. The human body can't be understood as located within a structure of with-which, or in-order-to, or towards-which. Indeed, human beings are not concerned per se with the tool they are using but rather by the work they want to accomplish. Human beings do not primarily focus on the body parts involved in their actions; they rather concentrate on the undertaken activity in itself. Of course, one could come up with lots of counter examples on that matter: it is nowadays very common for athletes to analyze their performances through the lens of anatomical and ergonomic sciences; each muscle, nerve and breath can be identified, rehearsed, and coordinated in different ways. Personal coaching and psychosomatics can lead to rendering all sorts of human activities more efficient or sustainable if the performer

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[30] See Cerbone (2000), *Heidegger and Dasein's "Bodily Nature": What is the hidden problematic?*
[31] See Heidegger (1927), p.68.

concentrates on the quality of the individual tasks and executes every part of it mindfully. New ways of training a football team for example insist on the concentration to put collectively into actions rehearsed strategies instead of just focusing on running fast, hitting strong and winning big.

Nevertheless, in all these examples, there is always a larger structure of meaning and of care: ultimately, the football player prepares and follows the plan because she wants to perform well, the worker integrates notions of ergonomics because she wants to work sustainably (the ideal situation being that, at some point, efficient processes and ways of doing become automated or spontaneous and don't require any specific mental effort anymore). In addition, we could add that it is obvious that we care about our own bodies in different ways that we care about tools; a football player cares about her knees in an all-different way than she cares about her shoes. For those reasons, Cerbone considers that there would be something odd about a definite conception of the human body as an equipment.

2.3.2 Heidegger's deferral of the question of the body in BT

Based on Heidegger and Cerbone, we can see that the categories of occurentness and availableness are unfit concepts to build a satisfying theory of the human body. Whether others consider that this invalidates Heidegger's philosophy, Cerbone defends the thesis that, taken the specificity of his philosophical project, Heidegger is wise to defer the treatment of the question of the body: "Only given the existential analytic can one begin to offer a proper account of ourselves in bodily terms."[32] In other words, one should first proceed to answer the question of the being of human being, and only then deduce from that answer a theory of embodiment.

If we believe Cerbone, what some have called Heidegger's neglect of the body is therefore more of a wise postponing of the question. And indeed, when Heidegger discusses spatiality[33], it seems that he doesn't want to treat the topic of "corporeality" but suggests that it should be down later:

> The firm directions of right and left originate out of this directionality. Dasein continually takes there these directions along together with its de-distancing. The spatialization of Dasein in its "corporeality", which

[32] See Cerbone (2000), p.209.
[33] See Heidegger (1927), Div. I, Chap.III

> contains a problematic of its own not to be discussed here, is also marked out in accordance with these directions.[34]

This refusal of Heidegger to discuss the question of corporeality directly could seem particularly problematic given his intention to overcome the Cartesian dualistic view. As mentioned above, Heidegger holds as one of his objectives, to argue against a conception of human beings essentially dominated by the notion of mind and ego.

> For Heidegger, however, the body would seem to be immediately implicated in his phenomenology of everyday activity, in what he calls 'circumspective, non-thematic absorption'.[35]

How can Heidegger maintain that Dasein is never without a body and always involved with its environment and, at the same time, that having a body and being a body (or being embodied) would not be features of Dasein essential structure? Dasein is dwelling in a primary relation to the world, a relation of practical engagement. How can we understand the fundamental existential of being-in-the-world if Dasein is not essentially embodied?

2.3.3 Negative characterization of the body by Cerbone

To address these questions, Cerbone's approach begins with the systematic exclusion of alternative incorrect interpretations of corporeality within Heidegger's framework. He proceeds by critically examining whether there exists another conceptual category more suited to grasp Dasein's bodily nature. His inquiry explores the possibility of a "third possible candidate" beyond the notions of occurrentness and availableness. In his footnotes, Cerbone references a question posed by Haar, leveraging it to provide a comprehensive and illuminating overview of his investigation:

> Michel Haar asks: 'Can one phenomenologically and ontologically justify placing the body in a secondary position in the existential analytic?'[36]. In this paper, my aim is to show why Heidegger thinks that the answer to this question is 'yes'. Haar maintains, I think correctly, that Heidegger does not acknowledge the body as an 'existential', and justifies this by holding that 'transcendence (in other words, understanding) like the other existentials such as attunement and "thrownness" - both permeated with transcendence - are structures more original than the body'. The question that remains, and which I will try at least to sketch an answer to here, is what the 'secondary position' occupied by the body looks like: is it a

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[34] See Heidegger (1927), p.108.
[35] See Cerbone (2000), p.210.
[36] See Haar (1993), p.34.

> category wholly different from Dasein, such as readiness-to-hand? Or does one need to work through Dasein's existential features in order to characterize the body as Dasein's?[37]

Cerbone identifies such a possible third candidate in lectures Heidegger gave in 1929/30.[38] Heidegger crafts an intriguing analogy that juxtaposes the functioning of organs in organisms with the relationship between the body and the human being as a whole. Cerbone points out that this analogy aids in positioning the human body within the analytic framework of Dasein. It allows to think the distinction between body parts and body as an entity and to account for the essential wholeness of human. It also enable to explicate phenomena like feelings of ownership of one's body, and incorporation of capacities in one's behavior or comportment. But according to Cerbone it ultimately falls short of forming a comprehensive theory of embodiment. Because I wish to concentrate on BT, I will not expose further that "third candidate". For now, we just ought to understand that neither an analogy with organisms, nor the categories of *Vorhandenheit* and *Zuhandenheit*, appear to be good solutions for explaining the status of the human body in regards of existential questions.

The obvious physical similarities humans share with animals notwithstanding, Heidegger insists on a fundamental distinction between the human body and that of an animal organism. Consequently, Cerbone suggests, it becomes imperative to revisit and thoroughly reconsider the complex issue of the body:

> I would suggest, a determination of what there is about the body that is open to interpretation, rather than explanation. Interpreting the body means placing bodily performances within a broader structure and so requires that the body not be treated as a closed system of capacities; rather, the body must be understood as a system of capabilities, as a locus of comportment as opposed to (mere) behaviour. But this broader structure into which the body must be placed in order to be properly characterized as a human body is nothing other than the world in Heidegger's 'ontological-existential' sense, namely that world which is partly constitutive of Dasein's way of being. Thus, in order to sort out the body into its animal-like aspects and its capabilities, to sort out which features of the body are open to explanation and which to interpretation, the structure of the world must first be made clear, which is just what Division I of Being and Time sets out to do. In this way, we see again why Heidegger insists on developing his existential analytic of Dasein, and so

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[37] See Cerbone (2000), p.226-227.
[38] See *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude* (1929/1930)

> his account of the world, first: until that's completed, the whole problematic of Dasein's bodily nature must remain hidden.[39]

2.3.4 Conclusion

Drawing on Heidegger's conceptual framework of categories and considering Cerbone's critiques, I have underlined the inadequacy of occurrentness and availableness in capturing the essence of the human body. I have posited that a comprehensive understanding of Dasein's bodily nature necessitates prior acknowledgment of humans intrinsic wholeness. While analyzing the human bodily nature on the basis of considerations about the animal biological organism is tempting for an approach of embodiment in terms of ownership and incorporation, the comportments of human beings are primordially determined by their world, the structure of care for the world and human capabilities. Consequently, Dasein's bodily nature eludes reduction to mere categorical interpretations of the body—as an object, a tool, or an organisms. But the notions of embodiment and corporeality cannot either, in the strictest sense, be classified as existentials. To truly grasp the essence of Dasein's bodily nature, we must delve into an analytic of Dasein and further unravel Heidegger's foundational ontology.

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[39] See Cerbone (2000), p.225.

3 A dualism between natural and self-interpretive characteristics

On the path to formalize the particular status of the human body in Heidegger's phenomenology, it is of interest to examine William Blattner's thesis[40] how, in BT, Heidegger operates a shift from the Cartesian dualism towards a dualism between natural and self-interpretive characteristics. On this account, physical characteristics of the human body are not conceived as the only traits that determine humans' particular bodily being. Instead with each of these traits, we can associate myriads of self-understanding characteristics or states that reveal Dasein in its potentiality. To illustrate that idea, let's start with an example: at the age of 18, the Belgian musician Django Reinhard lost two fingers of his left hand. After that accident, he abandoned the violin and banjo to concentrate on the guitar, playing solos with only his index and second finger. Where many would have just simply quit playing music, Django imagined the possibility of mastering an instrument with a very dramatic physical restriction. In Heidegger's perspective, what is determining in this example, is that Django imagined or "projected" himself into a world where he would be able to master the guitar. It shows that what shapes human agency and comportment is not essentially conditioned by physical or material reality, but rather by Dasein's self-understanding. In this chapter, I will explain major concepts of Heidegger's existential philosophy: understanding, facticity, ability-to-be and possibility. Borrowing from Blattner, I will argue that each of these concepts can help us characterize the problematic of Dasein's bodily nature in its ontological dimension.

3.1 Existentiality thesis and Heideggerian concept of Understanding

In his article, Blattner starts from the hypothesis that the existentialist conception of Dasein depicted in BT must be linked with the notion of ability. He then argues that the newly identified dualism between natural and self-interpretative characteristics is inseparable from Heidegger's central claim, which is that Dasein is its ability-to-be. According to Blattner's and Cerbone's reading of BT, it appears that embodiment and bodily characteristics would be an "abstracted, factual way"[41] of approaching Dasein and not a proper ontological one. To clarify this claim, I will start by defining the Heideggerian existential concept of "understanding" (in German *Verstehen*). In

[40] See Blattner (1996), p. 97-110
[41] See Cerbone (2000), p.227.

previous chapters, I have already given several definitions of Dasein as the being which self-understands itself in terms of its existence. I quote here another definition of BT, where Heidegger mentions understanding and existence to describe Dasein as follows: "Dasein is a being which is related understandingly in its being toward that being. In saying this we are indicating the formal concept of existence."[42]

Hence for Heidegger, Dasein has a particular relation with understanding. That leads Blattner to formulate the following Heideggerian thesis:

> The Existentiality Thesis: If Dasein is A, then it is A because it understands itself as A[43]

But Blattner insists that the Heideggerian concept of "understanding" is rather special and Heidegger writes two chapters on that subject (§31 and 32 of BT). With the terminology of "understanding", Heidegger doesn't refer to a propositional content or some knowledge.[44] Rather he is referring to the phenomenological process at stake in the "act" of understanding. In the German text, Heidegger uses the term *Verstehen*, which, as in English, derives from the verb "to stand" (*stehen*). Once more, the semantics used by Heidegger is constructed around a physical metaphor: to understand means to be "standing" for, or in relation to something (the German prefix *ver-* is quite difficult to translate). "Understanding" is not just a mental state or an abstract idea separated from the concrete body; it can be a physical act that involves the body too. Etymological curiosity set aside, Heidegger indicates to the reader that "understanding" is not a particular form of awareness or cognition, but rather it is a competence or a capability. For Heidegger, "Understanding" is an on-going process, a phenomenon in time and space, a movement of existence. If there is no essential distinction between soul and body as Heidegger argues, but just ways of being of Dasein, "understanding" takes place as much in the body that in the mind, in a caress for example, or in a true gesture.

In English or in German, the concept of "understanding" has many possible meanings, but with the following quotes, Heidegger leaves no doubt that in his analytic of Dasein, it ought to be interpreted with the key-concept of ability:

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[42] See Heidegger (1927), p.55.
[43] See Blattner (1996), p.98.
[44] See Wrathall (2021), p. 797.

> Speaking ontically, we sometimes use the expression "to understand something" to mean "being able to handle it", "being up to it", "being able to do something." In understanding as an existential, the thing we are able to do is not a what, but being as existing.[45]
>
> Understanding is the existential being of the ownmost potentiality of being of Dasein itself in such a way that this being discloses in itself what its very being is about.[46]

Through the existential of understanding, Dasein discloses the openness of being itself. It is not just an understanding of "something", but always a "self"-understanding too.

3.2 Ability-to-be and facticity.

3.2.1 *Seinkönnen* and ability-characteristics

The "potentiality of being", in German *Seinkönnen*, is translated elsewhere as "ability-to-be". With this concept, we are dealing again with a verb that has been turned into a substantive, to strengthen the dynamical dimension of the phenomenological characterization of Dasein. *Seinkönnen* is composed on the verb *können* which means "to can" or "to be able". According to W. Large,[47] around the time of the publication of BT, in early Heideggerian philosophy, the concept of ability-to-be can be seen as a reappropriation of the Aristotelian concept of *dunamis*. But the Heideggerian ability-to-be slightly differs from *dunamis* in that, in his ontology, the accent is rather on the ekstatic than on the actual nature of ability. We will see later more in detail what these considerations entail in term of "possibility".

Let us consider first a couple of examples used by Blattner to illustrate the specificity of Heideggerian "understanding" as ability-to-be. When we say that someone knows or understands baseball, we don't mean that this person masters the rules of the sport or is in possession of a particular theoretical knowledge. What we have in mind is that this person is competent to relate with people in that field and can play the game, or manage a team, or is a sports journalist. In the same way, when we say that Jones is six feet tall or is a female, Blattner insists that what is important for humans is not just the physical properties described, but very much the ideas entailed by the fact

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[45] See Heidegger (1927), p.143.
[46] Ibid, p.144 (in italics in the original text)
[47] See Large (2021), p.7.

that she's tall or of a certain gender. According to Heidegger's analytic of Dasein, the core issue is that Jones is understanding herself as being tall and behaves accordingly in a clumsy or skilled manner. Similarly, the central aspect of being a woman is that she understands herself as one and behaves accordingly. The size and the sex of Jones are not just some properties of hers, but they have meaningful links with her competences and her capabilities. For Jones, as existing Dasein, the question she's concerned with is "how" she is being tall, "how" she is being a female, and "how" she understands herself as tall or as female. With these examples, Blattner introduces the distinction between state-characteristics and ability-characteristics.

Taking into account his existentiality thesis and the particularity of Heidegger's concept of Understanding, Blattner formulates the following Heideggerian ability thesis: "All of Dasein's characteristics are ability-characteristics".[48] To argue for this thesis, Blattner operates in two steps. First, he explains that in Dasein's existence, every state-characteristic is associated with a self-interpretive ability-characteristic. For example, if we look at that property of Jones of being the leader of her book discussion group, it is not only so that Jones is naturally a group leader. What could be seen as a state-characteristic – to be the book discussion group leader – is above all an ability-characteristic, because Jones must be capable of it. What is at stake is her know-how to lead such a group rather than her status. In addition, Blattner insists that the distinction is not between "physical" state-characteristics and "self-interpretive" characteristics and that we shouldn't narrow down our focus on state-characteristics to physical ones. This is even more important if we want to approach mental states in terms of neurological, chemical, or hormonal terms, but I won't go further in that direction now. However, I will address this issue in chapter 5 where I treat the Heideggerian concepts of mood and fundamental affects.

3.2.2 The distinction Factuality/Facticity

The second way for Blattner to consolidate the ability thesis is to argue that Dasein is "only to be identified with self-interpretive characteristics, not with its factual state-characteristics."[49] Here it is necessary to shed light on the distinction between what is

[48] See Blattner (1996), p.100.
[49] Ibid., p.101.

factical (i.e. interpretive) and what is factual (i.e. non-interpretive) and try to clarify the concept of facticity of Dasein developed by Heidegger.

> .. those beings which are not worldless, for example Dasein itself, are present "in" the world, too. More precisely, they can be understood within certain limits and with a certain justification as something merely present. To do this, one must completely disregard or just not see the existential constitution of being-in. But with this possible understanding of "Dasein" as something objectively present, and only objectively present, we may not attribute to Dasein its own kind of "objective presence".[50]

As mentioned earlier in chapter 2.2, it is possible to read two accounts of occurentness in BT, a narrow and a broader one. In the above quote, Heidegger refers to this broader sense of occurentness and admits that we can with "a certain justification" address Dasein as non-human and non-existential. That requires that we isolate the existential part of Dasein away and concentrate on its factual characteristics, for example, its biology. By contrast to this "factual" Dasein, which Blattner calls also a non-existential abstraction[51], the "proper occurrence" of Dasein is its facticity: ""Facticity" is the name that Heidegger gives to Dasein's determinacy as an existential entity."[52]

Facticity, in German *Faktizität*, is not a word commonly found in a regular German dictionary. Based on the Latinate *facere,* and *Faktum,* it differs from the more common notion of factuality (in German *Tatsächlichkeit*) based on the word *Tatsache* or *Fakt*. According to Escudero[53], "facticity refers to Dasein's thrownness. [..] A factical entity is faced everyday with the task of being what it has already been and choosing what it can be."

For Heidegger, there is a clear cut between facts as *Tatsache*, which are aspects of things occurrent and available, and facts as *Faktum*, which are aspects of Dasein. Escudero gives as an example of a fact as *Tatsache*, that his bike weighs six pounds, when an example of fact as *Faktum* would be that he is a teacher. The distinction between facticity and factuality draws the line between two attitudes one can have towards an individual: a scientific, detached one, that focuses on properties like

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[50] See Heidegger (1927), p.55.
[51] See Blattner (1996), p.102.
[52] Ibid., p.102.
[53] See Escudero (2021), p.312.

weight, height, age or an existential, ontological one, that accounts for individual's ways of existing in the world.

Heidegger writes in BT: "The factuality of the fact of Dasein, as the way in which every Dasein actually is, we call its facticity."[54] This distinction is of highest interest for our research question on Dasein's bodily characteristics, Dasein's embodiment or bodily nature. A too quick reading could create the confusion that bodily characteristics would be of the kind of the factual, while embodiment or bodily-being of the kind of the factical. Indeed, if we accept that we can address the human body with the broader concept of occurrentness as non-human and non-existential, then the fact that Django is having only three fingers on his left hand could be seen as a simple *Tatsache*: a bike weighs six pounds, Django has a three-fingered left hand, those are just "physical" facts. On the other hand, Django's self-interpretive characteristic of being a great guitar player, is of the dimension of the lived body. It involves that Django embodies his physical characteristic of having three fingers, that he understands himself as being a virtuoso despite his handicap, or in other words, displays the ability-to-be a three-fingered left-handed guitar master.

3.2.3 The case of spatiality

This reading is immediately challenged by Heidegger in the following paragraph's remark on spatiality:

> Initially it is only a matter of seeing the ontological distinction between being-in as an existential and the category of "insideness" that things objectively present can have with regard to one another. If we define being-in in this way, we are denying to Dasein every kind of "spatiality". On the contrary. Dasein itself has its own "being-in-space," which in its turn is possible only *on the basis of being-in-the world in general.* Thus, being-in cannot be clarified ontologically by an ontic characteristic , by saying for example: being-in in a world is a spiritual quality and the "spatiality" of human being is an attribute of its bodiliness which is always at the same time "based on" corporeality. Here again we are faced with a being-objectively-present-together of a spiritual thing thus constituted with a corporeal thing, and the being of the beings thus compounded is more obscure than ever.[55]

[54] See Heidegger (1927), p.56.
[55] Ibid. (1927), p.56.

In this quote, we can find in a nutshell the whole complexity of Heidegger on the issue of Dasein's bodily nature. With that example of spatiality, Heidegger wants to underline that Dasein is not "in" a room like water is "in" a glass. The fact that Dasein cannot be hold for an object, doesn't mean that Dasein wouldn't have the characteristic of spatiality, but it is not the same kind of spatiality, it is of its own kind. When we say of a soldier that he is in the army, or of a student that he is in University of Helsinki, what we want to say is not that the soldier is in a military facility or in a jet fighter, or that the student is in a classroom. What we mean is that their agency and their future is connected to these institutions on a symbolic level. Their actual physical position is not the one of a mere object, it is rather a spatiality in which they take care of their world and their unfolding possibilities.

Dasein has its own kind of spatiality, as well as its own kind of objective presence. I think that Blattner's following duality's thesis summarizes very well the implications of Heidegger's facticity/factuality distinction.

3.3 Duality thesis and the three meanings of possibility

> The Duality Thesis: Dasein can be considered both in its proper ontological make-up, as essentially self-understanding, and in an abstracted, factual way, as something that merely occurs (esp., naturally)[56]

Blattner suggests that the ability, the duality, and the existentiality theses come together as a coherent ensemble under the pivotal notion of *Seinkönnen*. To back up his claim he quotes Heidegger:

> The characteristics to be found in this being [Dasein] are thus not present "attributes" of an objectively present being which has such and such an "outward appearance", but rather possible ways for it to be, and only this.[57]

3.3.1 Ekstatic possibility and possible being.

With this extract, Blattner opens the discussion on the notion of possibility (*Möglichkeit*). According to him, it is not trivial to distinguish between actual and possible characteristics of Dasein. With the following quote, Heidegger suggests that

[56] See Blattner (1996), p102.
[57] See Heidegger (1927), p.42.

not only Dasein has its own spatiality and objective presence, but that it also holds a a special notion of possibility, which mere occurrent things can't bear:

> The being-possible, which Dasein always is existentially, is also distinguished from empty, logical possibility and from the contingency of something objectively present, where this or that can "happen" to it. As a modal category of objective presence, possibility means what is not yet real and not always necessary. It characterizes what is only possible. [..] In contrast, possibility as an existential is the most primordial and the ultimate positive and ontological determination of Dasein.[58]

Here, Heidegger clearly suggests a third sort of possibility, besides "logical" possibility and "occurrent" possibility of things unlike Dasein. For this observation, Blattner is indebted to Richard Schmitt[59], but disagrees with him insofar that Schmitt interprets "occurrent" possibility as physical possibility. Blattner insists that nowhere does Heidegger mention of "physical" possibilities. Rather, he proposes, basing himself on BT (p.42) that Dasein's characteristics are existential possibilities, or in other words, abilities.[60]

What Blattner has in mind with this discussion on possibility becomes clearer, if we acknowledge another aspect of "understanding", i.e. its important link with the notion of projection (*Entwurf*). Heidegger writes:

> Why does Understanding always penetrate into possibilities from among all the essential dimensions of what can be disclosed to it? Because understanding in itself has the existential structure which we call project [Entwurf].[61]

Let's note that the original German text uses the word *dringt in.*. which is translated elsewhere not as "penetrate" but as "press ahead" into possibilities. Again, we are dealing with a very physical kind of semantic, which signifies a physical effort of "pressing ahead into" a direction. Based on this alternative translation, we can start to see how, in the phenomena of understanding, Dasein is pressing ahead into a possibility. According to Blattner, this involves "working out" or "exercising" one's ability-to-be. As an example of how Dasein is working-out its ability-to-be, Blattner describes how a skill, like biking, can be improved with practice or, on the other

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[58] See Heidegger (1927), p.143-144.
[59] See Schmitt (2000), p.178.
[60] See also Faulconer (2021), p.595.
[61] See Heidegger (1927), p.145.

hand, deteriorates, when not used over a long period of time. Indeed, after years of not biking, one might feel clumsy and uncomfortable jumping on a saddle; on the other hand, when biking every day, one will reach higher competence.

So, what to say of a person who has not been riding a bike for several years? Can she ride a bike? Can we really say that somebody "has" an ability if it is not constant in time? Is it so that we should introduce degrees of abilities and skills? At least, we must come up with a model of how this translates into the concreteness of the human body as well. This is not without reminding the Aristotelian categories of first and second order actuality and potentiality.

But Blattner suggestion is that we cannot define an ability as something that is ever achieved, or otherwise there wouldn't be a need to exercise or "press ahead" further. This idea is summarized in the following definitions:

> attainable: An ability, A, is attainable just in case there can be some point in time at which it is true to say of a person that she has A, even if she never tries to exercise A thereafter.
>
> The Unattainability Thesis: Dasein's ability-characteristics are not attainable[62]

Blattner concludes his argument by defining the new frames of Heidegger's ontology of human "which we can now see to be a dualistic understanding of an entity constituted by its unattainable, self-interpretive ability-characteristics"[63].

I consider Blattner's effort to formalize Heidegger's ontology very interesting (Blattner tries to link his thesis with the notion of being-towards-death that is also touching the subject of Dasein's bodily nature), but it is also very complex and would require more research. I believe that the newest translation that presents "understanding" as a "penetration into possibilities" doesn't lead to similar consequences. Indeed, if "understanding" does penetrate possibilities in the sense that it would infiltrate or enter through open doors, then there is no need for an effort, a "working-out" or an "exercising" of the ability-to-be. In that sense, Blattner's unattainability thesis is maybe not valid, and might not be a helpful ontological framework to look for a theory of embodiment in BT.

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[62] See Blattner (1996), p.107.
[63] See Blattner (1996), p.109.

3.3.2 Conclusion

Blattner's reading of Heidegger seems at firsthand to be a promising ontological analysis to refute BT's alleged neglect of the body. What Heidegger says on facticity and his crucial notion of *Seinkönnen* as possibility or ability-to-be, can indeed only make sense for an embodied being. Nevertheless, it is difficult to carry on with Blattner further if we want to avoid technical complications.

I prefer to focus on the way Cerbone revisits Blattner's formalization attempt of Heidegger's theses. I repeat here what Cerbone writes:

> ..., embodiment and bodily characteristics would be part of the 'abstracted, factual way' of considering Dasein, as opposed to its 'proper onto logical make-up'.[64]

On that account, ontological investigation must distinguish between facts, that are the domain of factuality, and the fact to be as a fact, which is the domain of facticity. In that understanding, Heidegger considers that what is primordial to human beings is their facticity, not factuality. To treat Dasein with the conceptual apparatus of embodiment and bodily characteristics would be to reduce human beings to factuality. This would constitute a regression in the Heideggerian ontological hierarchy and therefore Cerbone uses the term "abstraction", that usually signifies that we are theorizing something or isolating facts from their concreteness. For Dasein, it is a fact to be factual, or in other words, when human beings self-understand themselves as merely factual, they step away from something more essential or more primordial which is their facticity.

With this quote, Cerbone also suggests that, if we want to investigate Dasein's bodily nature in BT, we have to looks at the notion of ontic concretion, and the distinction between ontology, and fundamental ontology. I will therefore attempt in the next chapter to give a more comprehensive exposition of Heidegger's complex architecture of ontology. That will take us on the path of an understanding of Dasein's concreteness and authenticity.

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[64] See Cerbone (2000), p.227.

4 Lived body, ontic concretion, and fundamental ontology.

The history of philosophy conceals long discussions about what is ontology or what it ought to be. Heidegger's conception of ontology, I am afraid, will add even more complexity to these discussions as it seems to establish a hierarchy into at least three kinds of ontological levels; for Kleinberg-Levin (1999), Heideggerian ontology introduces no less than five levels (see section 5.2.2)! In this chapter, I will try to clarify some technical points about BT's fundamental ontology and see how that sheds particular light on the question of the body throughout Heidegger's philosophy. First, I will share general considerations about philosophy and phenomenology. Then, I will try to explicate the notion of fundamental ontology and of ontological difference. For the question of the body, it is of importance to define properly what Heidegger calls "ontic concretions" as opposed to the ontological dimension of embodiment. To finish this chapter, I will reflect on how, considering BT's fundamental ontology, the idea of embodiment or bodily being intersects with the notions of everydayness and care, but also with authenticity and anxiety.

4.1 Philosophy as phenomenological ontology

In the beginning of BT[65], Heidegger reminds us that, as his predecessor Husserl, he is looking to come closer "to the things themselves" or at least, like Smith[66] suggests, Heidegger is trying to attend "to the phenomena themselves"[67]. For him, philosophy's main task is to deal with the question of being, therefore philosophy is an enterprise that is essentially concerned with ontology. But it is not traditional ontology he has in mind: rather the philosopher must undertake "the task of destruction of the history of ontology", as he names his section II.6[68].

According to Heidegger, Aristotle and Bergson are wrong in thinking that the concept of space is the fitting conceptual background for ontological investigation. Kant is the first one to posit temporality as being the proper framework for ontology, a conception that Heidegger makes his: Dasein "is" its past, it is entangled in the world and its traditions. But he finds fault with Kant's ontology, noting its neglect of the

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[65] See Heidegger (1927), p.27.
[66] See Smith (2001)
[67] See Heidegger (1985), *History of the Concept of Time*
[68] See Heidegger (1927), p.19.

subjectivity of the subject, which he believes phenomenology can rectify.. In his view, phenomenology differs from other sciences in that it doesn't designate object or describe content a priori, but only leans on experience and first-person narrative to uncover truth. Therefore, Heidegger contends that "ontology is only possible as phenomenology".[69] At the outset of BT, there appears to be a fusion of philosophy, ontology, and phenomenology, suggesting an equivalence between these fields:

> Ontology and phenomenology are not two different disciplines which among others belong to philosophy. Both terms characterize philosophy itself, its object and procedure. Philosophy is universal phenomenological ontology [..][70]

Clearly, Heidegger considers that philosophy's object is ontology and that it operates with the methods of phenomenology. But what is more striking is when he goes on to say that "Philosophy is universal phenomenological ontology, taking its departure from the hermeneutic of Dasein, [..]"[71] Philosophy, in Heideggerian sense, starts and finishes like reading a book written by and talking about human beings; Dasein is at the very center of philosophy, like the following quote also suggests:

> As far as content goes, phenomenology is the science of the being of the beings- ontology. In our elucidation of the task of ontology the necessity arose for a fundamental ontology which would have as its theme that being which is ontologically and ontically distinctive, namely Dasein.[72]

In the coming section, I will clarify the notion of fundamental ontology and the distinction between ontical and ontological. When we ask ourselves philosophical questions and approach phenomena with phenomenological methods, we do more than just "bracketing" the world away, like Husserl's conception would hold. Rather, we are always "in the world" and we proceed to an interpretation of our doings and perceptions, in a way that the meanings arise in relation to the context we are plunged into. To account for that premise, Heidegger suggests we need to think of a fundamental ontology, an ontology that is broader than particular or regional ontology (biology, for example), an ontology of being itself in general.

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[69] See Heidegger (1927), p.35.
[70] Ibid, p.38
[71] Ibid, p.38
[72] Ibid, p.37

4.2 Distinction between ontology and fundamental ontology

The distinction between ontology and fundamental ontology has its source in ancient Greek etymology. In Greek, *to on* derives from the verb *einai* ("to be") and refers to "that which is, the being, entity, being". As Inwood notices[73], "Heidegger complains that, in Aristotle's usage, it ambiguously means what is and the "being of what is"." Because of this ambiguity, the concept of ontology used from the 17th century onwards can be defined as the study of beings a such but can also refer to regional ontologies; ontology of nature for biology, ontology of institutions and groups for sociology, and so on. For Heidegger, regional ontologies must be distinguished from ontology in general; for this reason, he coins the more general term of fundamental ontology. And because Dasein is the being for which the question of being is of concern, fundamental ontology, in Heidegger's sense, should start from the analysis of the kind of being specific to Dasein:

> Thus *fundamental ontology*, from which alone other ontologies can originate, must be sought in the *existential analysis of Dasein*.[74]

In that sense, the phenomenological philosophy of BT transcends mere ontology; it constitutes a fundamental ontology. It seeks to attain a comprehension of being itself, not only of "beings", and that is a concern particular to Dasein. For this reason, Heidegger can say that Dasein displays a "pre-ontological" understanding of being:

> Sciences and disciplines are ways of being of Dasein in which Dasein also relates to beings it need not itself to be. But being in a world belongs essentially to Dasein. Thus the understanding of being that belongs to Dasein just as originally implies the understanding of something like "world" and the understanding of the being of beings accessible within the world. Ontologies which have beings unlike Dasein as their theme are accordingly founded and motivated in the ontic structure of Dasein itself. This structure includes in itself the determination of a pre-ontological understanding of being.[75]

What does "pre-ontological" mean? According to Inwood, with this term, Heidegger denotes the property of Dasein to have an "implicit, pre-conceptual understanding of being"[76]. I approached this idea when trying to explicate the Heideggerian concept of

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[73] See Inwood (1999), p.147.
[74] See Heidegger (1927), p.13.
[75] Ibid., p.13.
[76] See Inwood (1999), p.147.

Understanding as a pre-theoretical existential characteristic of Dasein that discloses the openness of being (see above). In the fundamental ontology inquiry, Heidegger aims to capture the essence of Dasein's ontology because it is fundamental or "prior" to other ontologies. Sometimes, the term fundamental ontology also denotes "the investigation of being to which the analytic of Dasein is merely "preparatory"".[77]

How does our investigation of the human body and of embodiment connect with these intricate discussions on ontology and fundamental ontology? Undoubtedly, in traditional ontology and in metaphysics, which are overlapping domains of philosophical inquiry, questions of the relations between material and mental realm are at the core of controversies throughout the entire modern age (Descartes, Leibniz, Spinoza, etc) but also in the contemporary era. By insisting on the pre-ontological or pre-theoretical nature of Dasein, Heidegger forges a primal unity between the physical and mental domains. How can Heideggerian fundamental ontology help us shape the problem of the body anew? To answer this question, I will proceed to clarify what Heideggerian scholars discuss under the concept of "ontological difference", which is the human capacity to discern differences.. Specifically, I will explore how this concept illuminates the distinction between the ontic and the ontological (the underlying essence of being). On this foundation, I will argue that the human body, while being a tangible entity, possesses inherent ontological dimensions.

4.3 Ontological difference, the ontic and the ontological

The early Heidegger coined the concept of "ontological difference", to denote that transcendental quality displayed by Dasein, when it moves beyond entities, to understand what is "behind" them, what is that structure of being, or that "world" where they exist. According to Dahlstrom[78],the Heideggerian concept of ontological difference is *sui generis* and universal. It can be characterized on the ground of the distinction between the two German terms meaning "difference": on the one hand the Germanic *Unterschied*, on the other, the Latinate *Differenz*.

> The ontological difference [*ontologische Differenz*] is ... the difference [*Unterschied*] ... in which being is distinguished from entities, the being that determinates the latter at the same time in the constitution of its being .... The ontological difference [*Differenz*] is the difference carrying

[77] See Inwood (1999), p.148.
[78] See Dahlstrom (2021), p.227.

> the ontological in general …, thus not a specific difference [*Unterschied*] that can and must be made within the ontological sphere.[79]

This quote reveals the deep motivation of Heidegger when he elaborates BT's fundamental ontology. "Difference" can be viewed as a general structure of being itself that could be compared to the Husserlian "givenness". Human perception functions so that being gives itself as differentiated in the form of entities. It is this "unhiding", this "coming forth" of being that makes it possible to perceive entities. It is not us "making" the differences, rather we follow them, and every understanding we have of entities is just gained from following the hermeneutical gesture of being.

What does this entail for the topic of the bodily nature of Dasein within BT*?* We have previously examined how Heidegger draws a distinction between Dasein and the concepts of availableness and occurrentness. This distinction showcases a form of intra-ontological difference. Furthermore, we have observed Heidegger's differentiation between a hammer and its utility for the carpenter, or a plant and its availability to the botanist. These distinctions exemplify what Heidegger, in BT, terms the ontic-ontological difference, grounded in the *sui generis* concept of ontological difference, a cornerstone for understanding the question of embodiment.

To delve deeper, let us first clarify the distinction between the ontic and the ontological, and endeavor to define the ontic. Although Heidegger later abandons this dichotomy due to its boundaries not being entirely distinct, it remains a central theme in BT. Slaby articulates the Heideggerian notion of the ontic as follows:

> The ontic concerns concrete properties and characteristics of an entity, in contrast to the ontological which pertains to the specific *way* an entity of a certain kind *has* its characteristics.[80]

According to this definition, the adjective "ontic" denotes those properties of entities that can be known empirically, on a quantitative or measurable level. On the other hand, the adjective "ontological" refers to the level of *how* these entities are, on a qualitative level. Insofar, when we examine the tangible attributes of physical objects, animals, or the human body (considered as *Körper*, or as "thing"), we engage with the ontic domain. This perspective persists even when we explore the human entity as a living body—a psycho-physical unity characterized by causal interactions. It is only

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[79] See GA29/30:521
[80] See Slaby (2021), p.542.

when we move towards an investigation of the living body as a person, as a mental-bodily whole that we move to the level of the ontological. On the matter of Dasein's bodily nature, the distinction ontic-ontological overlaps rather neatly with the above clarified distinction between the concepts of existentiell and existential.

Whereas the ontological is the specific task of philosophical inquiry, the ontic is the field of dealings of everyday life and of sciences outside philosophy. Nevertheless, even if the ontic can be distinquguished from the ontological, as they are different levels of human activity, they remain essentially entangled, in the same way entities and being as such are. There's no being to be known, that is not the being of an entity; for that reason, the ontological is deeply anchored in the ontic. In Slaby's words[81]:

> ..., given that being is always and necessarily the being of entities, ontic matters – what Heidegger also calls "ontic concretions" (e.g., SZ 78) – are the stepping stone necessary for reaching ontological ones, and so the ontic and the ontological are closely entwined ...

Philosophy has, in that extent, the hard task to discriminate between what is "purely" or "simply" to do with concrete and everyday contingent life and what are essential ontological structures. But this can only be done on the ground of an analysis of phenomena within concrete, every day and contingent life. Slaby continues[82]:

> Practically, this means that whenever Dasein exists (which is an ontic affair – a matter of this or that instance of Dasein's concrete life), it thereby embodies or "lives" an understanding of being, i.e., ontological matters are alive and manifest in the ontic concretion of Dasein (my life, your life, etc.).

In other words, even though Dasein is plunged into concrete life or into ontic matters, it exists so that it reveals an ontological dimension, whether consciously or not. Dasein doesn't have to be involved in ontological investigation, to *be* ontological. Its everyday involvement with concrete life is always already conditioned by its ontological nature: "To be ontological does not yet mean to develop an ontology."[83]

For this reason, the way Dasein *is* ontological can be said to be pre-ontological: in his manner of being involved in ontic affairs, Dasein displays a pre-understanding of being. The philosopher's task, as pursued in Heidegger's BT, is to unravel and

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[81] See Slaby (2021), p.542.
[82] Ibid, p.543.
[83] See Heidegger (1927), p.12.

articulate this inherent predisposition of Dasein to grasp the nature of existence. This justifies an investigation of human beings' everyday life as the source of fundamental ontology. That is why fundamental ontology must start with the phenomenological method in the form of an existential analytic of Dasein:[84] "…, the roots of the existential analytic, for their part, are ultimately *existentiell*; i.e. they are *ontic."*

Heidegger's use of the term "concretion" might seem obscure at first. When he speaks of the "ontic concretion" of Dasein, it appears to bring the discussion closer to the materiality of the human body. However, it's not immediately clear whether Heidegger is directly addressing bodily structure and embodiment. Instead, he dedicates considerable attention to exploring Dasein's everyday structure, spanning nearly thirty pages on Dasein's structure of everydayness[85]. In the following section, I will argue that this concept of "everydayness" sheds light on Dasein's ontic concretion and its potential bodily implications.

4.4 Ontological dimension of embodiment, concreteness, and everydayness

In our contemporary era of highly digitized consumerism, the intersection of our physical existence with material realities is increasingly scrutinized through a capitalistic lens. Happiness is often equated with material comfort, societal medias dictate standardized body images, and advancements in science promise enhancements to our physical selves. Every aspect of our bodily existence, from sleeping and waking routines to dietary habits, clothing choices, and grooming practices, has been meticulously analyzed, optimized, and commodified. The range of tangible human activities involving the body is nearly endless, continually expanding alongside technological and cognitive advancements. In the age of the Internet of Things, the human body is gradually objectified and integrated into data-driven models. Wearable devices track our movements in real-time, quantify calorie intake, and monitor vital signs such as blood pressure and sleep patterns. Soon, implantable chips may enable the seamless management of personal data. What insights can these latest developments in the Internet of Things offer regarding the existential nature of embodied existence?

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[84] See Heidegger (1927), p.13.
[85] See Heidegger (1927), *Everyday Being-With* (§26), *Everyday Being a Self* (§27) *and Everyday Being of the There* (Chap. IV, B)

In contrast to the Cartesian philosophical perspective, which often posits the subject as detached from mundane activities, Heidegger's philosophy challenges this notion. It does not conceive of Dasein, or human existence, as a self-conscious entity fundamentally separated from the material world. Instead, in the beginning of BT, he emphasizes the importance of phenomenologically approaching Dasein in its everyday life:[86]

> The manner of access and interpretation must instead be chosen in such a way that this being can show itself to itself on its own terms. And furthermore, this manner should show that being as it is *initially and for the most part* – in its *everydayness*. Not arbitrary and accidental structures but essential ones are to be demonstrated in this everydayness…

I would a priori agree with the view that bodily being is a constitutive and determinant compound of our existence: isn't everyday life conditioned by the way we stand or walk, by health, pains, allergies, diseases? Isn't everyday life determined by how one tunes itself with one's physical skills and handicaps? However, according to Käufer[87], the Heideggerian concept of everydayness isn't that tied to the idea of individual corporeity. Käufer holds that the German concept of *Alltäglichkeit* has a kind of impersonal and indefinite connotation. Heidegger writes in BT: "everydayness is, after all, precisely the being [Sein] "between" birth and death"[88]. What he has in mind with his concept of everydayness is not that human beings are just immersed in a contingent, subjective, chaotic *present* moment. Rather, what the German *Alltäglichkeit* concept denotes is a collective gloomy *continuity*:

> The German *Alltag* connotes a vague generality that does not distinguish one day from the next, or one person's everyday from another's. *Der Alltag* is singular, but it means an impersonal, routine, monotonous recurrence over an indefinite timespan.[89]

For Heidegger, the concept of everydayness isn't literally "concreteness", rather what is essential in Dasein's everyday life, is the characteristic that it runs smoothly on routines, and that it supposes a certain familiarity or habitus. All the outstanding events taking place during everyday life will not be strictly lived as normal everyday phenomena. Everydayness entails an idea of *normality* as opposed to *exceptionality*.

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[86] See Heidegger (1927), p.16.
[87] See Käufer (2021), p.293.
[88] See Heidegger (1927), p.233.
[89] See Kaüfer (2021), p.293.

4.4.1 Everydayness and care

The ontic matters that Dasein is engaging with in its every day existence are whole conditioned by a deeper ontological structure, whereby everything in mundane life can be making sense (or not), namely the structure of "care" (in German, *Sorge*). The existential of care finds its etymological sense from the German verb *sich besorgen*, which means "to take care" or "to care about". Thus, all the everyday seemingly meaningless activities listed above, like drinking a smoothy, brushing one's teeth or dressing up, are not only dictated by hunger, disgust, adequate knowledge, or decency, but rather, all these are already partaking in a more general structure of being concerned or being caring. Most Heideggerian scholars would agree that the analysis of care is one of the major contributions to phenomenology of BT. I certainly won't argue against them: the ramifications of the existential of care are numerous and provide very solid background for human being's investigation: the existential of "caring for oneself", gives for example a consistent background for understanding how Dasein constitutes its selfhood or thinks about death; the concept of "caring for others" helps mapping intersubjectivity and has extensions in political, psychological, or moral issues. In Heideggerian everydayness's analysis, the pivotal concept of *Sorge* sheds light on several essential modes of being of Dasein among which the mode of "Being-with" (*Mitsein*) and the mode of "Being-together" (*Mitananderseit).*

To sketch a phenomenology of embodiment within BT*,* one must understand that what is primordial in everyday life according to Heidegger, is not the biological-psychological mechanisms at work, neither the way senses perceive an alleged objective surrounding world. Those are conceptually flawed views that rely on ontologically mistaken subject/object assumptions. Instead, what is relevant for the study of human beings' embodiment, is that existential of care. On this basis only, the everyday existence of Dasein can be understood as governed by social norms and therefore Dasein's bodily being as subjected to collective models.

> … as everyday being-with-one-another, Dasein stands in *subservience* to others. It itself *is* not; the others have taken its being away from it. The everyday possibilities of being of Dasein are at the disposal of the whims of others.[90]

[90] See Heidegger (1927), p.126.

Whether other bodies are physically present in a room or not, Dasein's bodily activities are conditioned by the structure of care as "Being-with": in its dealing with objects and equipment, human being always embodies the knowledge of what is the most common use. Dasein habitually complies with some conventions in its ways of behaving. In that extent, what characterizes Heideggerian everydayness is a sense of averageness, of "most commonness". But as this averageness allows to get acquainted with some structures of Dasein, in everyday life we still might remain blind to rarer phenomena and therefore also to borderline structures: "the analysis of everydayness is intrinsically limited", states Kaüfer[91]. We do also need to provide a theory for the exceptional and the unusual. While absorbed by average everyday dealings, Dasein is kept away from understanding other less recurrent aspects of its constitution, which are only punctual or extraordinary, but not less important, on the contrary.

4.4.2 Everydayness and authenticity

To account for the extraordinary, Heidegger insists on the relevance of the concept of authenticity, yet another cornerstone of his philosophical legacy. Heidegger writes:

> The self of everyday Dasein is the *they-self*, which we distinguish from the *authentic self*, that is, the self which has explicitly grasped itself.[92]

I wish not to digress too much on the topic of authenticity because it is a vast field of debates and controversies; nevertheless, I think there is much to learn from Heidegger's philosophy of authenticity in the context of the ontological dimension of Dasein's bodily nature. Authenticity is a boarder notion that stresses the ontological limitations of Dasein's everydayness. According to Käufer[93], the concept of authenticity works as a methodological key for following developments in BT.

Authenticity, in German *Eigentlichkeit*, has etymologically an ordinary meaning and a more philosophical one. On the one hand, *eigentlich* means "actually" or "really". On the other hand, *Eigen* denotes a particular possession, implying that in authentic existence, Dasein "owns" or takes a hold of its existence. In Käufer's words:

> Heidegger suggests that an authentic existence that has taken hold on itself (in the substantial sense) is really existence (in the ordinary,

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[91] See Käufer (2021), p.294.
[92] See Heidegger (1927), p.129.
[93] See Käufer (2021), p.71.

> emphatic sense), i.e., that self-owning best expresses the structures that belong to the essence of existence).[94]

While in everydayness, Dasein is in danger to fall prey to inauthenticity, to sink in averageness, or publicness, Dasein's authenticity is a step aside, a display of free choice for a fully owned and assumed existence; the authentic existence is not completely detached from everyday life, but not totally passively suffering it either. In authentic existence, Dasein is in public averageness, but it doesn't get *lost* in it.

> Dasein *can* fall prey *only* because it is concerned with understanding, attuned being-in-the-world. On the other hand, *authentic* existence is nothing which hovers over entangled everydayness, but is existentially only a modified grasp of everydayness.[95]

Authentic existence too is absorbed with ontic matters and struggling with tools or equipment, but it hasn't stopped projecting for own possibilities, making choices within the domain of Dasein's ability-to-be (*Seinkönnen*). In authentic existence, Dasein, as an agent, is owning its choices and its everyday life, including ontic matters. In that extent, in authenticity, Dasein's embodiment or bodily being is always in adequation with itself and not only with the general social surroundings.

4.4.3 Authenticity and anxiety

In BT, Heidegger explains that it is not only by choice that Dasein comes to authentic existence but also through exceptional experiences like anxiety. Anxiety reveals Dasein in his "*being free for* the freedom of choosing and grasping itself"[96] and thus brings it before "the authenticity of its being as possibility"[97]. Although fundamentally different from what Heidegger qualifies as everyday life, authenticity is not an exceptional *state of affairs* or something that Dasein achieves permanently:

> *Authentic being a self* is not based on an exceptional state of the subject, detached from the they, *but is an existentiell modification of the they as an essential existential.*[98]

The thesis that authenticity is a modification due to anxiety is not per se an innovation of Heidegger. In the tradition, we find discussions on authenticity and

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[94] See Käufer (2021), p.71.
[95] See Heidegger (1927), p.179.
[96] Ibid, p.188.
[97] Ibid, p.188.
[98] Ibid, p.130.

anxiety among early existentialists, such as Kierkegaard. But Heidegger's conception of authenticity is different because it doesn't have a merely evaluative role as in Kierkegaard, Nietzsche or Aristotle, who are foremost concerned with ethical considerations. The relation of authenticity and anxiety in BT is formalized in a more methodological perspective: it is through the "affect" of anxiety that Dasein is disclosed to itself in its authentic way of existence.

According to Withy[99], anxiety can be defined as a "fundamental disposedness or fundamental mood in which Dasein is exposed to a threat in its own being." The topic of anxiety constitutes another classic for scholars' studies. I will clarify a few points which will help us to introduce considerations on affect and moods and further sketch the ontological dimension of embodiment. In BT, Heidegger dedicates an entire section to anxiety[100]. But the most thorough account of Heidegger's notion of anxiety is to be found in his lecture "*What is metaphysics?"*[101]. The thesis of this lecture is that the encounter between anxiety and Dasein is revelatory of "nothingness" or more exactly, that in the phenomenon of anxiety, Dasein is revealed in its "nothingness".

Both in *What is metaphysics?* and in BT*,* Heidegger is building up on ideas of Aristotle, Augustine, and Kierkegaard. Anxiety (in German *Angst*) is to be compared with and differentiated from fear (*Furcht*). In Augustine and Kierkegaard, the reader can find extensive descriptions of the physical disturbances or changes associated to the affects or emotions of fear and anxiety. Anxiety is often described as heavy pressure on the chest or as a weight impeaching to breathe; in anxiety, as in fear, blood pressure can be rising, heartrate getting faster, temperature dropping; etc… Heidegger, on his part, doesn't abound in bodily descriptions, his analysis is clinical.

Following Augustine's tradition, Heidegger borrows the Aristotelian idea that fear has a threefold structure which could be reproducible as well for anxiety, with the particularity of one of these parts being deficient. The Heideggerian differentiation between anxiety and fear is built on the Aristotelian account of emotions found in his *Rhetoric.* In fear, there's firstly a *wovor* (in English, "in-the-face-of-which"), a definite entity creating a threat or a negative effect. Secondly, there is a *worum* (in

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[99] See Withy (2021), p.37.
[100] See Heidegger (1927), Div 1., Chap. 6, §40. *The Fundamental Attunement of Anxiety as an Eminent Disclosedness of Dasein,* p.184-191
[101] See Heidegger (1929), GA9:307/234, p.111-114.

English, an “about-which”), us as a subject, that is “the someone” put in danger or threatened. Thirdly, there is fear as such, the emotion, or the affective state in which our environment and our being are playing the event of a threat. Unlike fear, anxiety doesn’t fit neatly the threefold structure, because in anxiety there is not clearly an entity or a thing that we are running away from, in other words there is no “object” of anxiety. In anxiety, it is just us or our “emptiness of self” that is the *wovor*, and by extent, it is nothingness itself that is met in the place of the “object” of anxiety. The entity that is a threat, the “in-the-face-of-which” of anxiety is unknown or indefinite. Because in the phenomenon of anxiety, there is no other particular entity to be anxious about than ourselves, the idea of entity in itself loses its meaning, as well as the dichotomy subject/object. In anxiety, Dasein is left alone with “the Nothing”; what is remaining significant in the phenomenon of anxiety, is the structure of being-in-the-world. Insofar, in anxiety, Dasein becomes conscious that anxiety is constitutive of its own being: so in Heidegger perspective, being-in-the-world **is** anxiety; the essence of anxiety is Dasein itself, in its structure of care.

For scholars, Heidegger’s account of anxiety has consequences on three levels of the analytic of Dasein: the level of authenticity, that of phenomenology and that of intentionality (or openness itself). According to Withy:[102]

> In *Being and Time,* anxiety appears primarily as the mood of authenticity. Along with (hearing) the call of conscience and the resolute anticipation of death, it belongs to authentic self-disclosure.

At times, Heidegger seems to hold that authentic self-disclosure is anxious (BT 266, 299); at others, the reader could understand that it is self-disclosure that makes us ready or disposed for anxiety (BT 301, 385). There is a certain confusion whether it is experiencing anxiety that allows one to be authentic (BT 191,344), or if one must *be* authentic to be anxious (BT 344). In my opinion, what we ought to retain is that authenticity and anxiety are intimately linked and that they participate from the same constitutive moment of fundamental ontology. If we believe Withy, the crucial point is to understand that:[103]

> Anxiety brings Dasein to authenticity by bringing it out of its fallen absorption in the world and individualizing it through a disclosure of its

[102] See Withy (2021), p.37
[103] Ibid, p.37

> thrown being as care. It is a rare breakdown in life [..], in which the world lacks significance and entities lack importance or involvement.

When Withy uses the word "breakdown", it is not in its contemporary negative meaning. On the contrary, the "breakdown" that takes place in anxiety is, something constitutive, rather than only destructive: it is "thanks" to *Angst* – and that is the methodological importance of anxiety in Heidegger's philosophy – that Dasein can step aside from its absorbed everyday self, can transcend the world of entities, and grasp itself in a new and more authentic manner. According to Withy, anxiety is a key to the possibility of Dasein to go beyond entities (*meta ta physica*) towards being in its philosophizing, in its authenticity and its very openness. Anxiety, in the way it contrasts with the everydayness it is anchored in, constitutes the very ground on which Heidegger constructs fundamental ontology. Anxiety opens the very possibility for Dasein to grasp itself and at the same time grasp that whole world which is co-constitutive of its being.

4.4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have defined ontology in general and explained how for Heidegger it is intimately related to phenomenology. I have then introduced the notion of ontological difference and clarified how the ontic/ontological distinction is co-constitutive of the analytic of Dasein and can give indications as to Dasein's bodily being. I then chose to focus on the Heideggerian notions of everydayness and anxiety, as they are BT's prototype of how Dasein gains its understanding of itself and the world. In the phenomenon of anxiety unfolds the peculiar ontological dimension of Dasein's embodiment. But anxiety is not the only fundamental mood that Heidegger is taking into consideration in BT and other works around BT.

In the next chapter, we will see that alongside anxiety, there are numerous moods that Heidegger holds as having deep bounds with fundamental ontology. I will explain more in details the concepts of mood, attunement and disposedness which are at the core of BT's methodology. In doing so, I will argue with Stolorow and Levin that because those affective structures are central to Dasein's analysis and that because affects are essentially bodily, we can with certainty establish that Heidegger is thinking an ontological dimension of embodiment in BT, even if not naming it as such.

5 Bodily being and primacy of attunement in Being and Time

For Heidegger, fundamental ontology is not a purely theoretical domain, completely detached from the concrete realm; t is not an idealistic, ethereal framework of principles accessible solely through the exercise of reason. Rather it has roots in the phenomenon of life itself, in grounding emotions (*Grundaffekts*). This conception isn't without challenging the occidental conception that intellect, philosophy, and science are based on reason, and that emotions or intuitions are just on the way.

In this chapter, I will shed light on the concepts of *Stimmung* and *Befindlichkeit,* so crucial in Heidegger's fundamental ontology. While introducing the concept of *Stimmung* in its musical signification, I will lean on Withy (2021) to expose the role of mood or attunement in Heidegger's account of affectivity. I will provide an overview of how Heidegger's interpretations of mood have left an indelible mark on generations of thinkers and artists. To continue, I will explain how Stolorow (2014) bridges moods with the notions of ontic and ontological and how he argues that bodily attunement is already always at the center of BT's inquiry of human being.

Then, I will engage with Slaby's expertise to discuss translations of *Befindlichkeit* as situatedness, and disposedness. The way it overlaps with *Stimmung* is telling of the primacy of attunement in the question of the body. Drawing on D. Kleinberg-Levin's argument (1999), I will explore BT's ontological exploration of our embodiment, emphasizing our bodily felt experiences through openings, movements, and perceptions. Kleinberg-Levin contends that Heidegger's "I think" does not occur within a "theoretical" mind but manifests within a dynamic, fleshly being. He argues that critics who accuse Heidegger of neglecting the body's significance have too narrow a view of both the body itself and the discourse surrounding it.

5.1 Stimmung, moods and musical attunement

Understanding the Heideggerian concept of mood is crucial because it binds the question of the body with the ontical/ontological discussion and allows to go beyond the cartesian dichotomy of mind and body. Let's first look again at German language and the etymology of the concept of "mood". The noun *Stimmung* used by Heidegger – a very familiar German word indeed – stems from the substantive *Stimme* which means "voice". *Stimmung* is also closely related to *Bestimmung* which means

"determination". In German common language, the expression *Es stimmt!* ("That's right!") is very current, to signify the correspondence between a propositional statement and a concrete factual state of matters.

Most interestingly, *Stimmung* is a term that is widely used in the musical field: it was particularly in favor in the 17th and 18th centuries, when composers were trying to translate their feelings into their works and further into emotions or state of mind of the listeners. As Withy underlines,[104] being a careful reader of MacQuarrie & Robinson's translation of BT, the noun "Stimmung" originally means "the tuning of a musical instrument, but it has taken on other meanings and is the usual word for one's mood or humor".[105] According to Withy, but also to Wallrup,[106]

> Heidegger often plays on the musical resonance of the term, and he uses musical imagery to describe mood or attunement in GA 29/30: attunement is like "a melody that doesn't merely hover over the so-called proper being at hand of the human, but that sets the tone for such being, i.e., attunes [*stimmt*] and determines [*bestimmt*] the manner and way of its being".[107][108]

The concept of *Stimmung* carries a musical undertone, suggesting that in affective phenomena, Dasein is either tuned by or attuned with its surroundings. Numerous scholars find the musical metaphor particularly relevant, thus preferring to translate *Stimmung* as "attunement". This preference stems from Heidegger's departure from traditional theories of emotion or affective phenomena, whereby he doesn't make clear distinctions between emotions, feelings, or moods. Consequently, "attunement" is a more fitting translation than "mood". Although "attunement" may be less intuitive, it not only captures the original musical essence of *Stimmung* more accurately but also sidesteps the issues associated with the modern psychological interpretation of "mood." In France, many scholars specializing in Heidegger's work have ceased attempts to translate *Stimmung*, opting to retain the German term instead. In the same way the term"Dasein" is challenging to translate, *Stimmung* has sparked extensive academic debate for decades.

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[104] See Withy (2021), p.500.
[105] See Footnote 3 to Macquarrie & Robinson translation of *Being and Time (1978)*, p.172 (original H. p.134)
[106] See Wallrup (2012), I will come back to his considerations on musical attunement.
[107] See Withy (2021), p.500.
[108] See Heidegger, GA29/30:101

5.1.1 Heideggerian attunement according to Withy

Withy insists that *Stimmung* is not to be understood as a phenomenon occurring in a subject, and it isn't just a special coloration of the experience of a neutral objective outside world either. For Heidegger, the adequate way to account for mood or attunement stems from Aristotle's concept of *pathé* or affect, and no significant progress has been made by modern philosophy or psychology. It seems that, alongside Schopenhauer or Nietzsche, Heidegger would consider that it is only music, poetry or art that can take us closer to the true essence of our existence. But Heidegger doesn't make such a call in BT yet; it is only later that he thematizes his fascination for poetry and the poet Hölderlin, for example.

In his Aristotle-inspired account, Heidegger conceives affects or attunements of two sorts: those which elevate the soul and release it from the burden of existence (e.g., joy, hope, bliss, gaiety), and those which depress the soul or reveal the burden of existence (e.g., sadness, melancholy, anger). Building upon Aristotle's framework of pain and pleasure, Heidegger seems to think moods as either taking us up or down. This has inspired some Heideggerian scholars to elaborate philosophical studies on the phenomenology of weight and gravity.[109] Even the most tranquil moods can be held for elevating the soul or revealing the burden of existence: moods need not inherently be forceful; they can be subtle, nearly transparent, or even neutral.

Even if elsewhere, Heidegger describes moods as powerful forces that overtake us, in BT, he suggests that even the "tranquil lingering" of the theoretical state (when a scientist thinks about a mathematical problem or elaborates a study in physics) is a mood.[110] And so is the "pallid lack of mood that dominates the "grey everyday"."[111] This is so because Dasein is always already attuned to the world. There is ultimately no moment of its existence, where Dasein is not in a mood: even if Heidegger insists and dwells on the importance of extraordinary or strong moods, as anxiety, fear or love, which are particularly effective in carrying us away, we can say in Withy's words

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[109] See Ciocan (2001) *La vie et la Corporéalité dans Être et Temps de Martin Heidegger*, Gunnar Declerck (2011) *L'insoutenable pesanteur de l'être. Pesanteur physique et pesanteur ontologique dans la pensée de Heidegger.*
[110] See Heidegger (1927), p.138.
[111] Ibid, p.345.

that "there is no condition in which we are not attuned".[112] We can find the same idea formulated in Heidegger's words:

> Attunement always has its understanding, even if only by suppressing it. Understanding is always attuned.[113]

Dasein is by essence open to the world and is always attuned with it or by it in a certain way: mood is never totally absent; human beings cannot stop being in a mood, they can only change the mood they are in; , for example, one can only stop being angry, by becoming calm or joyful. Here, we touch to another characteristic of the Heideggerian concept of attunement, knowingly that even if moods are merely passive, suffered, and pervasive, we still do have a range of control over them. Heidegger does not clearly explain how, but suggests that we can change the moods we are in, through mood shifts or with the help of a counter-mood (*Gegenstimmung*). But in the end, according to Withy, "we do not *have* them [*moods*] so much as they have *us*."[114] Mood can be conceived like a medium, a climate or a mise-en-scène, that is imposing itself on and shaping our volition and cognition; it is the (back)ground for our thinking and for our acting. Another way to render the idea that moods are pervasive but can also be socially transmitted, is by using the notion of "atmosphere" or "energy", to describe, for example, when we enter a café and are taken by its "atmosphere", or when we enter a concert hall and get carried by its "energy".

5.1.2 Musical attunement and the importance of *Stimmung* in aesthetics

Most interestingly, while BT is designed by Heidegger for the metaphysical purpose of rethinking the question of being and while his concept of *Stimmung* is entangled in complicated considerations on fundamental ontology, many authors and artists have praised and developed further his work on attunement. I wish to share a few examples of how his contribution on the notion of *Stimmung* has translated into the fields of aesthetics, music, and theater and still inspires contemporary practitioners.

It is through what Heidegger himself called the "starkest misinterpretation of *Being and Time"*[115]*,* produced by Otto Friedrich Bollnow,[116] that Heidegger's peculiar

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[112] See Withy (2021), p.501.
[113] See Heidegger (1927), p.142-143.
[114] See Withy (2021), p.501.
[115] See Thonhauser (2020), p.104-113.
[116] See Bollnow (1941), *Das Wesen der Stimmungen* (The Nature of Attunements)

philosophical perspective on affectivity develops into the field of aesthetics and phenomenology of emotions. Heidegger's philosophy of *Stimmung* permeates the sphere of art in France, where after Sartre, De Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty, it is the artists themselves—including actors and dancers—who draw inspiration from BT. In Strasbourg, Nancy[117] writes on the corporeity of human being. The philosopher, and theater director, Lacoue-Labarthe develops the concept of mimesis, which reminds greatly of Heidegger's *Stimmung*.[118]

Let's mention as well the philosopher and musicologist Peter Szendy[119], who specializes in aesthetics of music, literature, and movies, and has also composed for operas and vocalists. His work introduces a notion of musical hearing, which bears strong resemblance with Heidegger's *Stimmung*. With the concept of "effiction", he constructs a phenomenology of musical practices that includes features of a wholistic nature of Dasein. He explains for example, how learning to play piano is like merging with another body, but also melting into the vibration of the piano instrument itself, until totally forgetting about one's own body, in a form of "getting attuned" or "tuning in". The musical experience is a fusion of body and soul, where one "reinvents itself in a way even more astonishing than in children's play".[120] To me, this example vividly illustrates how Heideggerian attunement envelops the human being.

I wish to mention as well the brilliant work of Erik Wallrup.[121] In his doctoral thesis on musicology, he covers the history of *Stimmung* and dwells on Heidegger's contribution to the understanding of that phenomenon. Wallrup sketches a parallel between Kierkegaard and Heidegger, [122] both for whom, in the phenomenon of musical *Stimmung,* there is a "unity that precedes the division subject and object".[123] Wallrup quotes Michel Haar, that considers that for Heidegger, *Stimmung* is like a music, complete by itself, like a tune or an attunement that defines the deep cohesion of Being-in-the-world. Wallrup explains:

> That might be true at a later stage in Heidegger's thinking, but in *Sein und Zeit* the musicality of *Stimmung* is repressed: we find no reference to the

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[117] See Jean-Luc Nancy (1992), *Corpus*
[118] See *Mikä Mimesis? Philippe Lacoue-Labarthen filosofinen teatteri.* A. Hirvonen & S. Lindberg (2009)
[119] See Szendy (2002), *Membres fantômes – Des corps musiciens*
[120] See Szendy (2002), p.10 (own translation)
[121] See Wallrup (2012).
[122] Ibid., *The* Stimmung *of Heidegger's fundamental ontology,* p.151-157
[123] Ibid. p.152.

> musical origin of the term, even if he uses its etymological possibility of tuning Dasein into a mood. *Befindlichkeit* is also characterized by being attuned. However, Heidegger's distinction between *Stimmung* and *Befindlichkeit* disappears not only in the writings after *Sein und Zeit,* but later on in this work, too. *Stimmung* becomes the one and only word, and it is only from context that reader knows if is used ontically or ontologically.

Wallrup's insight into Heidegger's use of the vocabulary of attunement is puzzling. But his description of the place of the body in the listening can be helpful. The human body and the brain, conceived as lived body are described as a nexus for psychological, physiological, neurological and emotional processes, processes all tied together not merely by space in its tridimensionality, but by time or temporality:

> Granted that the act of musical listening opens up a world. Heidegger's interplay between disposition, understanding and discourse, can be used to elucidate an approach to music, too. The musical world is opened up in a mood, and at the same time the listener has begun to understand what is at work in the music, with musical discourse put into play.[124]

In Wallrup's explanation of musical listening, and of the phenomenon of attunement, lies a paradigmatical example of the "leap" from the ontic to the ontological, from the ordinary mood (*Stimmung*) to the ontological disposition (*Befindlichkeit*).[125] Wallrup refers to the beginning of §29 of BT as being particularly explanatory of that leap that takes place in the phenomenon of *Stimmung*. He points out that:

> This passage from the ontic to the ontological is hidden in Stambaugh's translation. However, I acknowledge my debt to her translation in my formulations on *Sein und Zeit*, often following her English solutions for Heidegger's technical language. One important difference is that Stambaugh renders *Befindlichkeit* with "attunement", whereas I prefer "disposition" holding that "attunement" is a better translation of *Stimmung* in Heidegger's thinking from the 1930s and on.[126]

How do we pass from the ontic to the ontological in attunement? What are we supposed to make of that overlapping between attunement as *Stimmung* and attunement as *Befindlichkeit?* Would it be wise to talk about moods when denoting ontic concretions and use "disposedness" to refer to ontological dimension? Stolorow's account might clarify those key-questions of the bodily nature of Dasein.

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[124] See Wallrup (2012), p.155.
[125] Ibid, p.151.
[126] See Wallrup (2012), fn 19, p.151.

5.1.3 Stolorow's on attunement and the lived body in Heidegger's fundamental ontology

Stolorow (2014) delivers an interesting view on the ontological importance of the body in Heidegger's early work. Although his expertise is more in developmental psychology, psychoanalysis, and trauma healing, his approach contributes to the idea that Heidegger is not neglecting the body in BT. According to Stolorow the body is central in the analytic of Dasein. He presents his thesis in the following words:[127]

> Because of the central role that Heidegger grants to mood (disclosive affectivity) as a primordial way of disclosing Being-in-the-world, and because it is impossible to think mood without also thinking the lived body, Heidegger has placed the latter at the very center of Dasein's disclosedness. Heidegger's account of mood thus entails and highlights, rather than neglects, the ontological significance of the body.

We have seen above the crucial role of the fundamental mood of anxiety for BT. But anxiety is not the only fundamental mood which Heidegger is considering; similar importance could be given to the mood of profound boredom, wonder or existential guilt. In BT, Heidegger devotes eight pages to the moods of idle talk, curiosity and ambiguity[128], which are revelatory of Dasein in its way of falling in inauthenticity. The mood of fear as well, is the subject of commentary by Heidegger: it reveals Dasein "negatively", in its movement of falling away of itself: "fear is anxiety which has fallen prey to the "world". It is inauthentic and concealed from itself as such."[129]

According to Stolorow, along with anxiety, anticipatory grief qualifies for being a fundamental mood too. Taken the importance of the notion of Being-towards-death in BT, and the importance of emotions and feelings related to the loss of loved others, Stolorow has argued that in authenticity, Dasein faces anxiety, death and loss equiprimordially.[130] Finally, we can mention the moods of homesickness, turbulence, melancholy, awe and astonishment, that Heidegger treats in later works.

Moods or attunements have the special and primordial characteristic to disclose its essence to Dasein as Being-in-the-world: more than by reasoning or understanding, it

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[127] See Stolorow (2014), p.5.
[128] See Heidegger (1927), Chap 5., p.161-169.
[129] Ibid, p.189.
[130] See Stolorow (2011), chapter 7.

is through affectivity that human being makes sense of its concrete existence. In §29 of BT, Heidegger insists:[131]

> That a Dasein factically can, should and must master its mood with knowledge and will may signify a priority of willing and cognition in certain possibilities of existing. But that must not mislead us into ontologically denying mood as primordial kind of being of Dasein in which it is disclosed to itself *before* all cognition and willing and *beyond* their scope of disclosure.

According to Heidegger, moods have an original role in the constitution of Dasein, not in an innovative or peculiar sense, but in a genetical sense: moods are at "the source" of how Dasein constitutes itself as such. Stolorow argues that this happens in three manners: firstly, moods disclose Dasein in its thrownness, in its "there" or situatedness (, see more on translations of *Befindlichkeit* in 5.2.1),[132] secondly, moods reveal Dasein in is wholeness[133] and finally, moods uncover Dasein in its structure of care.[134]

To strengthen his argument that moods are central in the analytic of Dasein, Stolorow quotes S. Elkholy (2008)[135], who explains how the ontical experience of moods operates as a revelation of ontology:

> Arguably, Heidegger's most important contribution to the history of philosophy, in addition to entrenching the subject in its world and thereby overcoming the subject/object dualism, is the primacy that he accords to mood in his analysis of human existence. Through mood humans gain access to their world, to themselves and to their relations with others in the world in a manner that is prereflective and unthematic.... [M]ood, especially the mood of Angst, has the power to reveal the whole: the whole of how one is in the world and the whole of the world at large.

For Elkholy and Stolorow, with the analytic of Dasein, Heidegger operates a shift from traditional metaphysics of reason, based on transcendental ideas and cognition,

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[131] See Heidegger (1927), §29, *Da-sein as Attunement,* p.136.
[132] See Heidegger (1927), "Beings of the character of Dasein are there in such a way that they find themselves in their thrownness, whether explicitly or not. In attunement, Dasein is always already brought before itself, it has always already found itself, not as perceiving oneself to be there, but as one finds one's self in attunement." p.135.
[133] Ibid, "*Mood has always already disclosed being-in -the-world as a whole and first makes possible directing oneself toward something.*" p.137.
[134] Ibid, "[..] being-in as such is existentially determined beforehand in such a way that what it encounters in the world can *matter* to it in this way. This mattering to it is grounded in attunement, and as attunement it has disclosed the world, for example, as something by which it can be threatened." p.137.
[135] See Elkoly (2008), p.4.

towards a metaphysics of feelings, based on affects. We have seen above that in BT, Understanding is an "organic" or existential structure of Dasein, rather than a purely mental and cognitive faculty. This perspective aligns with Withy's previous arguments that it is with the mood of anxiety that the philosophical activity starts, not from an abstract, ideal reason as if dropped from an alien intellect. Instead, it is the mood of anxiety that unveils Dasein's transcendence, not abstract reason per se.

Freeman (2011), Ratcliffe (2008) and other scholars have expressed some concerns about Heidegger's account of mood because it fails to distinguish properly between emotions, feelings, and other affects. Indeed, the notion of mood is highly problematic: how does mood diverge from bodily appetites? What constitutes the origin of moods? Do they exhibit intentionality? Stolorow agrees with those who criticize Heidegger for borrowing common sense words and giving them an all-new conceptual horizon. The concept of *Stimmung* can be confusing. But Heidegger very seldom uses the terms of "emotion" or "feeling" in an ontological sense. Therefore, Stolorow suggests that "mood" is a general term under which Heidegger includes all kind of affective phenomena like "moods", "emotions" and "feelings":

> I believe Heidegger, in this context, is using the term "mood" to refer to the *whole range of disclosive affectivity* ... but, and this is crucial, only insofar as these affective phenomena are disclosing our ways of Being-in-the-world.[136]

To back up that claim, Stolorow points to the notion of *Befindlichkeit,* in English, situatedness, disposedness or, how he puts it confusingly, "how-one-finds-oneself-ness": "How-one-finds-oneself-ness shows up ontically as mood, through which we are attuned to ourselves and to our situatedness in the world."[137]

In BT*,* the existential structure of *Befindlichkeit* is equiprimordial with understanding (*Verstehen*) or discourse (*Rede*) in the way it discloses Dasein in its Being-in-the-world. Life is experienced in the form of *Stimmung* as disclosive affectivity and, according to Stolorow, "disclosive affectivity always includes an experienced bodily component, a "bodily attunement"" [138]. For that reason, it is impossible to think mood and the disclosedness of Dasein as Being-in-the-world, without considering that the

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[136] See Stolorow (2014), p.8.
[137] See Stolorow (2014, p.8.
[138] See Levin (1999), p.135.

lived body is essential for Dasein's existence. Even if Heidegger doesn't name it as such, the lived body is always somehow "present" in BT, or else it would be very difficult to make sense of the accounts of mood, attunement and *Befindlichkeit*.

Stolorow borrows arguments from his field of expertise (psychology, psychoanalysis): if we dive into the domain of ontogeny of affective existence, it helps to understand how we "learn" to have emotions and how our emotional life is constituted in concrete existence. This is the key to another criticism often addressed to Heidegger, i.e., that he doesn't talk about the infant, and how Dasein's existential structures develop in early age; are babies born with their existential structures or are they learned? how do they change in time (childhood, teenage years, old age)?

To fill up these blanks in Heidegger's analytic of Dasein, Stolorow appeals to two interesting steps in the genesis or constitution of affective life of human beings: first, to affect differentiation and secondly, to symbolic integration of affects. Stolorow explains[139] those two important and intertwined processes through which infants develop their affective or emotional skills. On the one hand, an infant increases its emotional pallet through the regulative feedback of sensations of pleasure and displeasure: a baby gradually grows out of an originally undifferentiated affective state, through sensations experienced with more and more different nuances. On the other hand, from the age of ten- to twelve-month-old, the infant comes slowly to its symbolic maturity and learns to associate verbal symbols with different emotional states. From exclusively bodily experienced, emotions become gradually symbolical and verbal. Both developmental processes take place within a relational context:

> It is the caregiver's attuned responsiveness, phase-appropriately conveyed through words, that facilitates the gradual integration of the child's bodily emotional experience with symbolic thought, leading to the crystallization of distinctive emotions that can be named.[140]

This dialogue between children and caregivers is crucial and through it, moods and embodied lived experiences constitute an essentially unified phenomenon. To conclude his demonstration, Stolorow claims:

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[139] See Stolorow (2014), p.9.
[140] Ibid, p.9.

> From the standpoint of a developmental phenomenology of affectivity, it is impossible to think mood without also thinking the lived body.[141]
>
> Heidegger's account of mood thus entails and highlights, rather than neglects, the ontological significance of the body.[142]

Taken the significance of *Stimmung* in the analytic of Dasein and that it is impossible to think Being-in-the-world without thinking as well the body, Stolorow concludes that Heidegger's account of mood is inviting us to see the ontological importance of the body: it would be misreading BT, to say that Heidegger neglects the body.

5.2 Primacy of *Befindlichkeit* and the ontological dimension of embodiment

5.2.1 Slaby on attunement and disposedness

For a careful linking between Heidegger's fundamental ontology and a philosophy of attunement, I think it is quite helpful to call for the expertise of Slaby, [143] from *Freie Universität Berlin,* who argues that the best English translation of *Befindlichkeit* would be "disposedness". He proposes the following definition: "Disposedness is the formal title for the dimension of *affectivity* within the ontic concretion of Dasein (i.e. human existence)."[144] Heidegger's account of moods – the prime ontic concretions of disposedness – constitutes a ground floor for the existential of disposedness as the passive-receptive dimension of Dasein's "openness to the world". As such, it is affectivity that constitutes our intentionality, or in more Heideggerian words, Dasein's concrete "*directedness towards…*". In Slaby's view, moods and attunements are not just side-effects of our existence, but they are the very matter which determines us, not only individually but also in our collective being.

Slaby delves into the etymology of the German noun *Befindlichkeit* and thoroughly explores all conceivable English translations and their philosophical implications. The verb *sich befinden*, from which it originates, essentially carries two meanings: firstly, denoting "feeling in a certain way," and secondly, indicating a spatial position, literally translating to "finding oneself somewhere." By considering these meanings, one might equate *Befindlichkeit* with "situatedness." A third meaning can be derived

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[141] See Stolorow (2014), p.9.
[142] Ibid, p.10.
[143] See Slaby (2021), p.242-249.
[144] Ibid, p.242.

from the common expression *für gut befinden*, which signifies approving of something. Here, there is a connotation linked to evaluative judgment, involving the act of deciding or deliberating about something. According to Slaby, all these meanings of *Befindlichkeit* hold significance in Heidegger's philosophy.

Based on this etymology, Haugeland (2013) has proposed the unorthodox translation of "findingness" or "so-findingness", while Dreyfus (1991) suggested the even more difficult translation as "where-we're-at-ness". Earlier on, MacQuarrie & Robinson (1962) had come up with the translation of "state of mind", but since one of Heidegger's philosophical ambitions was to overcome the body-mind dichotomy, it is maybe not the most suitable translation. Blattner (2006) argues that the translation to "disposedness" is much better, because it holds for three important dimensions of *Befindlichkeit*: experiential open-ness (or closed-off-ness), evaluative orientation and action readiness. *Befindlichkeit* as "disposedness" also reproduces ideas developed by Heidegger in his lectures on Aristotle, from whom he borrows the notion of disposition. In this line of thinking, we can mention Foucault who talks about "dispositive of power" and Vallega-Neu (2005) who uses the term "disposition" to refer to *Befindlichkeit*.

Another take on *Befindlichkeit* is given by Stambaugh (1996) as "attunement". This translation is particularly in favor among scholars because it prefigures for the Heideggerian concept of *Stimmung*. Dasein as thought by Heidegger is "never not" in the mode of disposedness, because it is always in a certain mood. I have explained above that in Dasein's existence, there is a constant change from one mood to another (which is a different thing than changing from one mental state with mood to a mental state without mood.) Dasein is always "attuned" to its world, whether it is "in" tune or "out of" tune (for example in the phenomena of anxiety and boredom).

The best candidates in Slaby's cartography of the Heideggerian *Befindlichkeit,* are the translation as "affectedness", which denotes rather well its general dimension, "attunement", which is more specific and better to signify its ontic concretion or "disposedness", which has a good conceptual range and is rather correct in its temporal logic applications. We'll leave the translation "findingness" to language purists, even though it denotes rather well the sort of radical situatedness of Dasein, the "thrownness", which Heidegger is conceptualizing.

Problems around the terms of *Befindlichkeit* and *Stimmung* have been common among Heidegger's readers, because both can be translated as "attunement". We have seen above that, at time, those terms are used interchangeably by Heidegger himself. But they are distinguishable insofar as *Befindlichkeit* refers to a general existential of Dasein, whereas *Stimmung* refers to an individual attunement or mood.

For the best approach of the topic of Dasein's bodily nature, I think the translation as disposedness is the most satisfying because in BT, the accent is on the ability-to-be-affected as we can see in those following quotes:

> The moodedness of attunement constitutes existentially the openness to world of Dasein.[145]
>
> *In attunement lies existentially a disclosive submission to world out of which things that matter to us can be encountered.* Indeed, we must *ontologically* in principle leave the primary discovery of the world to "mere mood". [146]
>
> The there is equiprimordially disclosed by mood, or else closed off. Attunement brings Dasein *before* its thrownness in such a way that the latter is not known as such, but is disclosed far more primordially in "how one is". *Being*-thrown means existentially to find oneself in such and such a way. Thus attunement is grounded in thrownness. Mood represents the way in which I am always primarily the being [Seiende] that has been thrown.[147]

Interestingly, Slaby argues that disposedness has a specifical temporal dimension, and indeed Heidegger's work is called *Being and* ***Time.*** The facticity of Dasein is always to be understood in a temporal structure, where Dasein has past and present moods, that condition Dasein's future possibilities. Dasein's existence unfolds like the past would be pushing or weighing on the present and the future, and according to Slaby, "disposedness" fits this complex temporal dynamic of *Befindlichkeit*. Temporality is another key concept of Heidegger; its bound with disposedness gives the all significance to the ontological dimension of Dasein's bodily nature, in so far as it is the backdrop for Dasein's possibility or ability-to-be, not only individually but also collectively. The shared temporality of affectivity is inextricable from collective history, it is impossible to conceive a Dasein that is not an embodied agent, neither morally, nor affectively. *Befindlichkeit* is an essentially dynamic existential of Dasein

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[145] See Heidegger (1927), p.137.
[146] Ibid, p.137-138.
[147] Ibid, p.339-340.

that constitutes an ontological bodily dimension of Dasein. This is also a thesis defended by Kleinberg-Levin (1999).[148]

5.2.2 Kleinberg-Levin and Heideggerian dimension of embodiment

D.M. Kleinberg-Levin is an 84 year renowned American philosopher, who names his life time philosophical project "The Body of Ontological Understanding". In 2023, he published *Critical Studies on Heidegger – The Emerging Body of Understanding*. But I will refer to an earlier article published under the name D.M. Levin, which has been influencing Heidegger scholars for the past decades (Stolorow, Aho). I will show how he has been carrying further the comprehension of the relation between Dasein's bodily nature and BT's fundamental ontology's pivotal notion of *Befindlichkeit*.

As an attentive reader of Husserl's *Ideas II* and Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, Kleinberg-Levin has developed an account of the lived-body, where the body that "I am", the body of experience is conceived as an intricate system of dispositions and capacities. In accordance with an Heideggerian reading of Aristotle, Kleinberg-Levin approaches the problematic of the body not from the classical angle of a compound of a physical or animal thing with spiritual and reasonable features, but rather from the angle of an "ontological" body, a system of ongoing dynamical processes. Only by thinking an ontological body, can we account for human actualities and potentialities and for processes like the learning of new skills. Where classical metaphysicians have turned the question of the body from an ontological question to an ontical one, Kleinberg-Levin wants to follow Heidegger on the path to thinking embodiment ontologically. He acknowledges that in BT, there's no attempt to formulate an ontology of embodiment or to explicate learning and development processes of human beings. But, as we have seen above, the very ontology of BT is not possible, except for an embodied being like human being.

Kleinberg-Levin's account of the ontological body revisits many of the concepts that we have exposed in this study: the existential of Care, pre-ontological Understanding, *Stimmung* and *Befindlichkeit*. Thinking embodiment in its relation to the question of being, allows to give a structure for human phenomenal life's dimensions of openness to being, ekstatic exposedness, receptive responsiveness and

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[148] See Levin (1999), *The Ontological Dimension of Embodiment: Heidegger's Thinking of Being*

responsive receptiveness. Taken that phenomenology is committed to the way we experience existence, one of the first striking aspects which philosophy must account for, according to Kleinberg-Levin, is the phenomenon of motility, i.e. how we experience ourselves to be freely moving, standing, walking, sitting and skillfully handling objects and technological devices. Motility, as the human being's autonomous capability for movement, opens the ontological question of how human being understands its capacities and agencies and projects himself "beyond himself": every movement, even the a priori most meaningless little gesture, is constitutive of our knowledge of the world and of ourselves, and constitutive of the meanings that we discover and live in our concrete life. Motility is the manifestation that we think not only with our theoretical "mind", but also with our feet, our hands and our eyes.

In human behavior, a dynamic unfolds, that cannot be accounted for with the traditional concepts of the body as an object inhabited by a "mind. Instead, Kleinberg-Levin suggests that we return to a "still more "primordial stratum" of corporeal intentionalities that are always already functioning even without our reflective, thematizing recognition."[149] Many things in our experience, for example, how we learn new skills and use them, points at the necessity to recognize that the "body" has to be thought as "intelligent" or "thinking" by himself.

> Since the child's first concepts (Begriffe) are schemata of comprehension formed in the very process of reaching-out-for, grasping (greifen) and manipulating, it is only to be expected that our experience of tangible beings, and hence, more abstractly and reflectively, our experience of being itself, will tend to be determined in ways that correspond to the initial character of the inquiring, learning gesture.[150]

Based on his analysis of the ontological bound between motility and skillfulness, Kleinberg-Levin establishes an ontological hierarchy where we can distinguish between five levels of embodiment. The first level is the level of naïve and unreflective, everyday experience, the "natural attitude", without understanding or awareness. The second level is the level of "objective thought", where, for example, motility is described and measured in scientific ways (by mathematics, physics, or neurology). Those two first levels fit a traditional concept of truth as correspondence, where a subject has a "correct" idea of an object. The third and fourth ontological

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[149] See Levin (1999), p.141.
[150] Ibid., p.139.

levels are entering in deeper level of radical reflection. For example, with motility, the third level would be to consider movements in that they have intentionality, and the fourth level would be how the feasibility of a goal is evaluated, and strategy designed accordingly. With these two levels, starts to rise the understanding that traditional theory of truth is "essentially *derivative* from a more primordial *experience* of truth as unconcealment, hermeneutical disclosure."[151]

The fifth level in which human motility can be described, according to Kleinberg-Levin, is the level of ontological thinking, where it is understood as pre-ontologically determined and as demanding a constant upholding of the concern for being in general. This is the deepest level where most possible awareness is embodied, not transcending bodily nature, but rather embracing it and caring for it. This is essentially an intersubjective level, or collective one, because of the work of the existential of Care, as described in §§41-2 of BT. In Heideggerian terms, we could say that in authenticity, we are bodily attuned and turned towards others because we share the ontological dimension of *Befindlichkeit* constituted in Dasein's bodily nature: "the extent of our openness to alterity is thus the measure of what I have called the ontological dimension of our embodiment."[152]

I wish to conclude my presentation of Kleinberg-Levin's take on the ontological dimension of the body, with this lyrical quote:

> By grace of the bodily attunement (*Stimmung*) inherent in the pre-ontological understanding of being that is distinctive of our human way of being (our *Befindlichkeit* as human beings), we are woven into a field of clearing [..] that we share with all other beings. Thus, it is through our bodies that a sense of moral responsibility first takes hold of us. To the extent that our gestures, our seeing, our listening, and our speaking are rooted in the ontological dimension of our embodiment, drawing their inspiration from this dimension and flowing from the measure of grace and tact that this dimension accords to them, they may enjoy a certain freedom from the dominant ontology, the prevailing ways that being presences. And they would therefore be more capable of practicing care and compassion, because in the ontological dimension of embodiment, our being is not bound to the ego-logically constructed structure of subject and object, but is intertwined with other beings through the being of the field.[153]

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[151] See Levin (1999), p.146.
[152] Ibid, p.146.
[153] Ibid., p.135.

6 Conclusion

In the process of writing this paper, I have frequently contemplated reaching out to Jani Tolin to engage in a dialogue about his concept of the pink electric cabinet. Upon reflection, I propose that he could adopt a more intricate and paradoxical stance, perhaps along the lines of:

YOU ARE A SOUL

YOU ARE THE BODY THAT YOU HAVE

YOU HAVE THE BODY WHO YOU ARE

One can only wish Martin Heidegger were still among us to offer his perspective on this debate. Nonetheless, I am convinced that his early writings provide numerous leads. Thus, in my paper, I have argued that Heidegger, in BT, does not overlook the question of the body. Contrary to this, by examining the analytic of Dasein and its role in developing fundamental ontology, it becomes evident that the body is central to the human mode of being and, consequently, to the entirety of Heidegger's early philosophical work. While some scholars suggest that Heidegger's later works illuminate the ostensibly absent theory of embodiment in BT, I have endeavored to demonstrate that a meticulous analysis of BT reveals a latent theory of Dasein's bodily nature and of the ontological dimension of embodiment.

In the first chapter, I have established that the issue of embodiment is intricately connected with the fundamental problems of being and existence. After delineating the terms existential, existentiell, and categorial, I have explained Heidegger's concepts of availableness and occurrentness. On this basis, I have argued that despite their apparent relevance in certain contexts, the categories of availableness and occurrentness fall short in conducting a thorough analysis of human embodiment. Dasein's bodily existence transcends mere interaction with objects or utilization of equipment. Hence, following Cerbone's injunction, we should delve deeper into the analytic of Dasein and further elucidate Heidegger's fundamental ontology before addressing the question of the body.

In the second chapter, I have emphasized the connection between embodiment and the Heideggerian notions of understanding, ability-to-be, and possibility. Drawing on

Blattner (1996), I have described how Heidegger in BT transitions from the Cartesian dualism between physical and mental characteristics to a more pertinent dichotomy of natural and self-interpreting attributes. On that account, ontological inquiry must differentiate between facts, which belong to the realm of factuality, and the existence of facts, which pertains to the realm of facticity. Hence, Cerbone advances the argument that to confine Dasein to the conceptual framework of embodiment and bodily characteristics is to reduce human beings to mere factuality, which constitutes a regression in the Heideggerian ontological hierarchy.

In the third section, I have provided an overview of ontic concretion and the differentiation between ontology and fundamental ontology. The early Heidegger's distinction between the ontological and the ontic, as well as the concept of ontological difference, offers insights into Dasein's bodily existence. To illustrate Heidegger's construction of fundamental ontology, I have focused on the phenomena of everydayness and anxiety, which reveal the unique ontological dimension of Dasein's embodiment. However, anxiety is not the sole foundational phenomenon Heidegger considers in BT.

In the fourth chapter, I have presented the major critique of Heidegger's supposed neglect of the body in BT—that affectivity is central to fundamental ontology and inconceivable for a disembodied entity. I have explained the concepts of *Stimmung* and *Befindlichkeit* (mood, attunement, or disposedness), foundational to BT's methodology. In line with Stolorow, I have argued that these affective structures, essential to the analysis of Dasein and inherently bodily, affirm Heidegger's engagement with an ontological dimension of embodiment in BT, albeit not explicitly named. Moreover, I have underlined Kleinberg-Levin's comments on motility and dynamism, advocating for an understanding of Dasein's disposedness as intrinsically temporal.

The reluctance of Heidegger and Heidegger's scholars to directly address the body using terms like "embodiment," preferring instead the language of "bodily-being" or "bodily nature" of Dasein, is notable. Soren Overgaard[154] defends the thesis that early phenomenology of Dasein crucially involves a notion of embodiment, while also elucidating why Heidegger avoids direct discussion of the body in BT: the terms

[154] See Overgaard (2004), *Heidegger on Embodiment*.

"body" and "embodiment" are ontologically problematic, burdened by a long philosophical tradition.

Schalow[155] critiques Overgaard's conclusion, arguing that by intertwining the problem of the body with Heidegger's phenomenological ontology of being-in-the-world, Overgaard overlooks the transition from fundamental ontology to a metontology—a metaphysical inquiry into existence. Moreover, Overgaard does not account for Heidegger's omission of sexuality or indicate where it might fit within Heidegger's ontology. Schalow asserts that the issue of embodiment in Heidegger's BT is intertwined with his conception of the unity of time and space, suggesting that to grasp the dynamism of being, the notion of embodiment is indispensable.

Overgaard[156] counters Schalow's critique by suggesting that his perspective may not be sufficiently radical. According to Overgaard, Schalow overlooks that sexuality is fundamentally connected to enjoyment and that incarnality encompasses a moment of pure sensibility. Thus, for Overgaard, metontology does not offer a superior framework for approaching incarnality compared to fundamental ontology. For Schalow, the issue of incarnality appears to be an ontic concern, relevant only to the concrete properties of Dasein and not to its mode of being. This, however, may overlook the essence of the embodiment problem. Heidegger himself stated, "the whole being [Sein] of the human being is characterized in such a way that it must be grasped as the bodily being-in-the-world."[157]

For a future investigation of Heidegger's take on Dasein's bodily-being, we could turn to his later work, in particular the Zollikon Seminars where he introduces the concept of "bodying-forth". Perhaps to Jani Tolin, we might say:

YOU DO NOT HAVE A BODY

YOU ARE BODYING-FORTH

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[155] See Schalow (2006)
[156] See Overgaard (2006), *Incarnality and Metontology: a Reply to Frank Schalow*
[157] GA 18, p.199.

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