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## Sensing weight in movement

### ABSTRACT

*From a phenomenological perspective this article aims at exploring how the weight of the body can be perceived from within when moving. The exploration begins with a diversity of dancers' experiences by looking into thirteen professional dancers' individualized eclectic techniques, including, for example, ballet, different kinds of somatic practices and/or Butoh. The lived experiences of the dancers thereby present the empirical basis for a phenomenologically informed description of how the physical mass as weighted is present to the dancers' experiences. Across the different qualia and content of the dancers' subjective experiences two dimensions of self-consciousness could be recognized. In one dimension the physical mass of the body is objectified and relates to a scrutinization of sensations. The other dimension verifies a pre-reflective and performative dimension of experience and relates to an overall sensation of what the body feels like in movement. In both dimensions of self-consciousness the dancers' experiences exemplify different kinds of possible sensorial qualia and bring attention to the fact that sensing the weight of the body from within also form part of situated and shared experiences.*

### KEYWORDS

sensing  
weight  
multi-sited fieldwork  
phenomenology  
self-consciousness

### INTRODUCTION

'Sense the weight of your body'. This sentence I have heard several times in different kinds of dance classes, most often in classes in which the technique is based on an exploration of how the body moves at a deeply embodied level. In the classes I have participated in, these techniques have often been defined as release-based techniques, and practices have centred round an exploration of internal kinaesthetic sensations in combination with a release

of muscular tension. Training and working on my technique in the classes, I did as suggested and focused my sensational awareness on the weight of my body. I closed my eyes and searched for a weighted feeling in the limbs moving and experimented with how I could loosen up my joints in connection to this weighted feeling. After a while I opened my eyes and watched the other dancers' movements, looked for the weighted feeling in what I saw, and also used the other dancers' way of moving weighted as information for my own movements.

Back in my office, reading phenomenological descriptions concerning perception, sensing and movement, I began wondering, what does it actually mean to sense the weight of my body? When I think of the years I took ballet classes I do not remember anyone saying, sense the weight of your body. However, obviously this does not mean that some sense of weight was absent when I adjusted the balance between my upper torso and my outward-rotated hip joints.

The weight of my body characterizes a very concrete and recognizable physical dimension of being a body. As other physical dimensions of my body, its weighted mass presents both openings and constraints to my being-in-the-world. In accordance with Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological descriptions of perception, this dimension of my body's physicality anchors and conditions my experience in a fundamental sense; however, it does not determine perception, or the content and qualia of sensation (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 1964). The weight of the physical mass of my body is constituted as a relationship between mass and gravity. This relationship informs the shape and posture of my body before I am aware of it, for example in the way I come to prefer to carry my weight when standing, walking, sitting, moving around in everyday activities and so on. As a dancer the relationship between mass and gravity is explored, specified and adjusted during training in quite different ways according to the different ideals and techniques the dancers focus on. Stated in another way, the relationship between the mass of the body and gravity is interpreted very differently depending on whether the dancer aims at working from an ideal of finding a perfect vertical balance of the body while mastering virtuosic skills, or from an ideal in which the release of muscle tensions is intended to bring in energy from a falling limb to take other parts of the body into a fluidity of successive movement using a minimum of energy and muscle tension. What the movement should be like influences how the relationship between mass and gravity is interpreted in practice – and how the weight feels. As Susan Foster indicated two decades ago, what is perceived from within and from the external ideal body are constructed in a tandem where 'each influences the development of the other' (Foster 1992: 482–3).

The aim of this article is to explore what it means to sense the weight of the body. I adopt Foster's description, with the intention of elaborating further on descriptions of how the weight of the body can be perceived from within. The article is based on the experiences of dancers working with relatively different dance techniques. The elaboration thereby begins with a diversity of dancers' subjective descriptions of how they sense the weight of their bodies. These different descriptions form the outset for a phenomenological informed exploration of (1) how the physicality of the body can be present in the subject's experience and (2) how the qualia, in the dancers' sensation of weight, differ.



## GENERATION OF EMPIRICAL DATA

The generation of empirical data, that is, the generation of the dancers' descriptions, has been designed as multi-sited fieldwork. This means that the field 'site' is viewed as 'an intersection of people, practices and shifting terrains, both physical and virtual' (Strauss 2000: 171–2). During the fieldwork I selectively and strategically traversed environments of dance within Western Europe, and through direct action established the multi-sited field<sup>1</sup>. The field sites were in this way established in an activist fashion by the researcher (Amit 2000: 15; Marcus 1995: 113). The multi-sited nature of the fieldwork privileged an investigation of variations among dancers' lived experiences in movement, and thereby implicitly included a comparative study of how dancers might sense the weight of their bodies. All together thirteen dancers participated in the study, four solo-dancers from The Royal Danish Ballet and nine dancers working with different techniques related to contemporary dance. Each of the dancers' personal technique is best described as eclectic (Bales and Netti-Fiol 2009: 60 ff.), that is, based on and including a broad range of dance techniques that each dancer interprets and combines in his or her individual way. All the nine dancers had included or still include different kinds of somatic practices in their training. Four of these dancers formed part of the music and dance improvisation group Magpie based in Amsterdam, and another two of these dancers worked specifically with techniques related to Body-Mind Centering and Butoh dance. The multi-sited fieldwork took place over a period of seventeen months (Ravn 2009: 115ff.). During this period, I followed and trained with each of the thirteen dancers over one week on two occasions. After each of these weeks a semi-structured interview was conducted.

In the fieldwork I used my own embodied competence as a dancer actively participating in training and workshops with the dancers – with the exception of those at The Royal Ballet. I thus actively used my own competences as a dancer as a research tool in the generation of data (Grau 2007; Ravn 2009: 121ff). Further, notes from participant observations, including my own first-person experiences of participating in the movement activities and my observations of the dancers' movement, were used to contextualize as well as to elicit movement descriptions in the interviews. In the generation of data I thereby succeeded in generating descriptions that could be validated in an intersubjective arena without reducing the dancers' descriptions to third-person data (Legrand and Ravn 2009: 397). Through a line-by-line reading, while constantly asking '*what does this sentence or sentence cluster reveal about the phenomenon or experience being described?*' (Manen 1990: 93, original emphasis), the analysis focused on how the experience of balance and weight took form for the dancer – in movement (Csordas 1993). The following three sections outline central characteristics of how the different dancers handle the relationship between mass and gravity in their technique and how the weight of the body is perceived from within.

## FOUR BALLET DANCERS' DESCRIPTIONS: WEIGHT AS CENTRED, BALANCED AND ALIGNED

For the four ballet dancers a sense of vertical balance is central to their control of their weighted mass. In their descriptions the ballet dancers centre their technical reference points of movement round a certain placement of the torso and limbs in relation to the centre of the body and the vertical. They refer to the centre of the body as being located a little below the navel and

1 A preliminary presentation of the dancers' descriptions was presented at the Society of Dance History Scholars conference 2009.

they deal with 'alignment' as an ideal vertical balancing of the limbs. The four ballet dancers indicate that the centre connecting to different reference lines within their bodies constitutes what they refer to as 'placement'. During daily classes they continuously scrutinize and check their sensing of their placement and alignment through a combination of seeing and proprioceptive sensation. That is, they work on combining what they see in the mirror with an inner sensation (Ravn 2007). However, even though they scrutinize and constantly check their sensing of their bodies using an objectifying approach, neither placement nor correct positions are themselves the goal of control. They claim that placement is to be felt as 'natural', or rather naturally there, when moving, and emphasize how a dynamic approach to movement is important when dancing. As one of the dancers notes, dancing is 'about sensing the sequence of movement instead of positions. To move from A to B in a way where the path between became important. In a way it [is] about the musicality of movement'.

When dancing, the sense of balancing the physical mass of their bodies is not connected to checking inner reference lines of alignment. The scrutinization of inner experience as used in training especially at the *barré* is no longer in focus. Rather, the ballet dancers' sense of mastering their body as weighted mass when dancing is connected to what they describe as a 'second nature' and what they characterize as a special habit and a specific consciousness of their body. They further describe how a movement has to 'feel right'. In their descriptions the inner sense of placement and alignment appears as a sort of reference background, and the sense of feeling right appears as if connected to a specialized embodied way of being when dancing. The body, so to say, has to feel a certain way when moving.

### **SEVEN DANCERS WORKING WITH CONTEMPORARY DANCE: PARTNERING GRAVITY**

The experience of the body limbs being weighted in movement formed part of the warm-up on most days in the different kinds of training and workshops I participated in with these seven contemporary dancers. Different focuses and approaches could be identified according to the different combinations of technique that formed each dancer's history. For all of these seven dancers, movements are in different ways explicitly described as directed by gravity working on the body. For example, one of the dancers explains:

In a more practical sense I try and take my starting point in really basic rules in the body associated with weight and gravity. When, for example, I stand, a lot of it is about putting the body in a position in which the muscles do not need to work and that instead you kind of stand and are able to balance more on the skeletal structure – in other words to use the body's construction more than the body's strength. I try to find something where it's all about, like, positioning things. Often it's a matter of letting go joints, so that you aren't standing and lifting combined with trying to get the weight down in the feet.

To feel weighted is central to many of these seven dancers. The sense of weight is for some of these dancers related to a sense of giving up control of movement to let the body be connected to gravity. This 'giving up of control' is then specifically addressed as a 'moment of suspense'. One dancer describes how



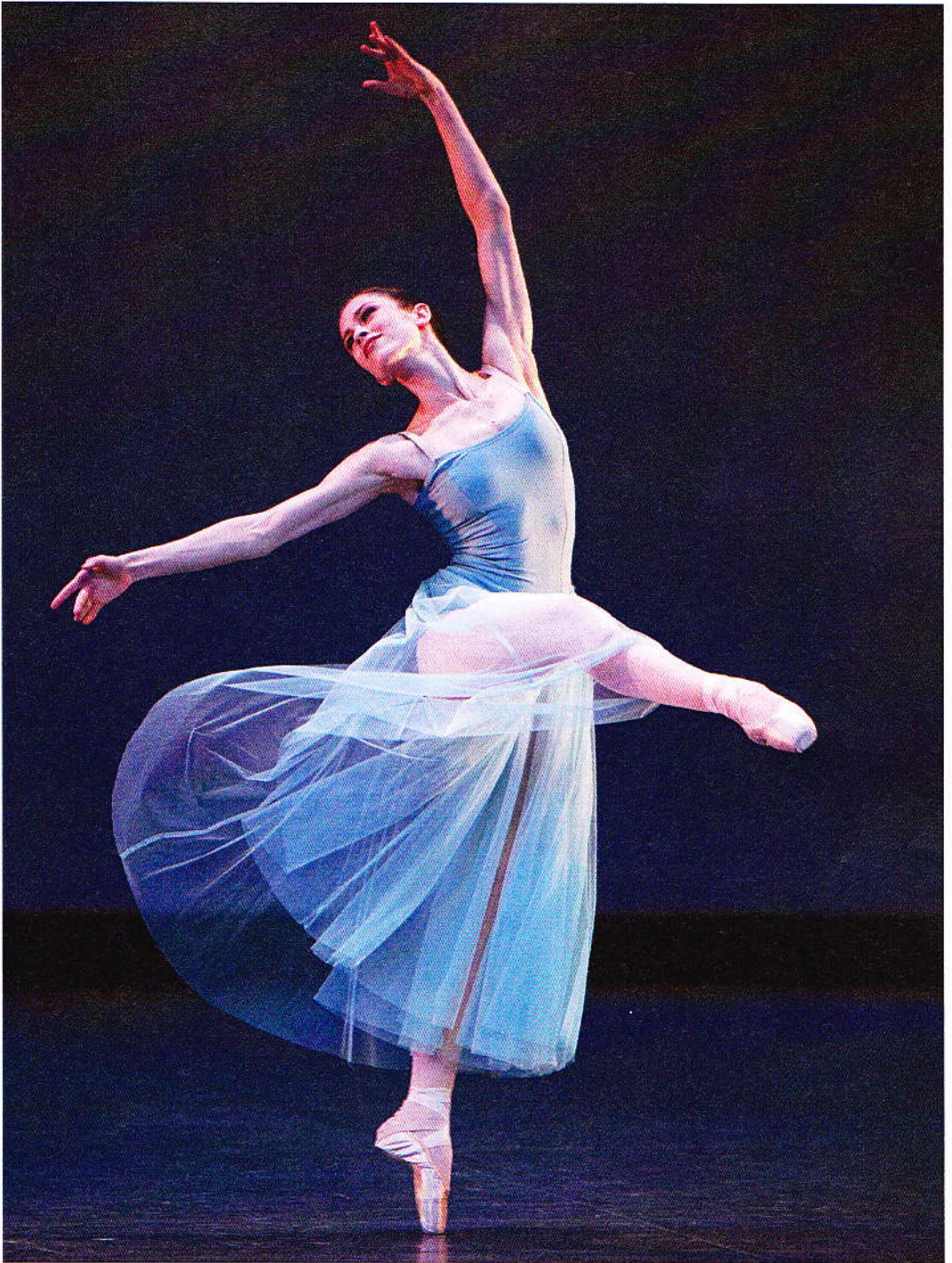


Figure 1: Photographer David Amzallag, Ballet dancer Hillary Guswiler in *Serenade*, The Royal Danish Ballet.



these moments of suspense are magical to him and allow for another sensation of his body that is – for him – closely linked to a ‘sense of feeling present’.

For these seven dancers gravity is not to be defeated by activating controlled elongation and creating lines out into space from the centre of the body, as is the case for the four ballet dancers. It is rather considered a partner, used to lead and guide any movement. In different ways, the seven contemporary dancers attend to their weighted physical mass, focusing initially on proprioception. The dancers develop movement patterns in which they scrutinize how the gravity works in those contexts, for example when balancing and positioning ‘things’ as the dancer describes in the quotation presented at the beginning of this section.

Compared to the ballet dancers’ description, the seven contemporary dancers approach the relationship between gravity and their physical mass differently. However, the contemporary dancers’ descriptions of their sensations can, like the ballet dancers’ descriptions, be recognized as including both a scrutinization of proprioceptive sensation and an overall sensation related to what their body feels like when they feel weighted.

### **TWO DANCERS WORKING WITH BUTOH-RELATED TECHNIQUES AND BODY-MIND CENTERING: WEIGHT AS DIFFERENT KINDS OF QUALITY**

For the two dancers working with Butoh-related techniques and Body-Mind Centering, the weight of the body is first considered one practical aspect they are to be in control of to manoeuvre the materiality of the body. The dancers refer to this as ‘grounding’, and use it as a way of keeping the balance of the body in a centred connection to the ground. ‘Grounding’ is related directly to a sense of the vertical. One of the dancers emphasizes that to her it is important that the movement can be stopped so that she does not automatically ‘stay’ in the movement, but rather grounds the flow of movement in her sense of the vertical. In her words:

The reason behind why you do things is based in grounding. If you lose your grounding, you do just for the sake of doing – and you lose the sense of where I am actually heading, because you have actually forgotten why you are heading anywhere. When I did release technique – then a lot of it was about there being an unbroken flow. That it came from a place and it went to a place without being broken. I do an awful lot of work with the break – with the vertical in reality intervening and blocking everything. The vertical is the vision – is the anchor. It is not movement for movement’s sake. I use the metaphor of the vertical for the concept of thought behind the vision: the anchor.

‘Grounding’ is considered basic to their techniques, and is expected to be established as a kind of stable and silent baseline for exploring and transforming energy and movement. In their training and workshops they do not pay ‘grounding’ any particular attention. When they in workshops specifically turn their awareness towards the weighted physical mass of their bodies, weight is related to an organic condition of a certain material and forms part of an organic presence. One of the dancers specifies that weight becomes of special interest to her when she turns her awareness to how her sense of different qualities of weight can be used to transform the organic presence of her body. As part of her

Butoh-related technique she has trained to transform her organic presence, so she performs the energy of external material. Movement is based on the sense of materiality and by extension two different kinds of materiality, for instance, a stone and mist, emerge as different qualities in movement. She continues:

You can choose to say, that kind of mist is what I would like to work with, and then you can try to fill your body with the image of that mist. In other words, I try to become that mist, try to transform my weight so that it corresponds to the weight of mist, my sense of transparency, my sense of moistness, my sense of moving in spirals - and perhaps the white colour, and then that's the quality the body moves with and in. The body tries to become it. [...] Weight is of the essence. What is the weight of mist? What is the weight of the stone? It is absolutely essential for the kind of quality and energy you are working in. What kind of weight is it you are pouring into your body?

For these two dancers working with Butoh-related techniques and Body-Mind Centering, the weight of their physical mass is to be both grounded and at the same time understood as a sense of energy and quality in movement. When working with the latter they specifically describe how they work on making themselves 'transparent'<sup>2</sup> to what might appear from the environment - and in a broader sense the universe. Making themselves transparent is related to a shift in how they feel their body, which means that their overall sense of what their body feels like is different compared to how their body feels in daily activities outside the studio.

As part of their training the dancers might use proprioceptive sensations in very focused ways - for example, when they adjust their vertical and the sense of being grounded. However, their ability to change an overall feeling of their body to make themselves 'transparent' forms a central and necessary part of the dancers' movement technique.

2. In this article the word 'transparent' is presented with two different kinds of meaning. In the dancer's descriptions 'transparent' presents an empirical level of the dancer's description of his or her experience, while in the latter phenomenological description related to the subject's self-consciousness, 'transparent' is used as a theoretical concept - in an ontological-related description.

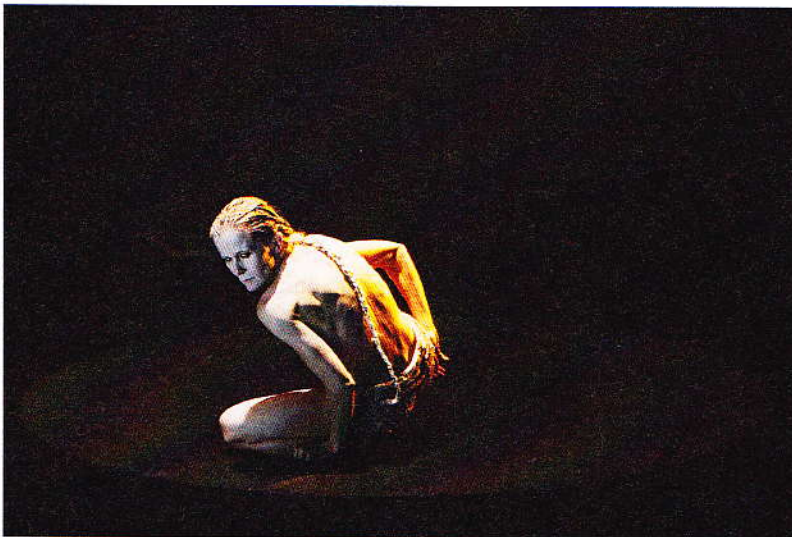


Figure 2: Photographer Per Morten Abrahamsen. Performer Kitt Johnson in Rankefod, X-act.



3. These methodological considerations are discussed in depth in prior work (Ravn 2009: 61ff).

## THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

In overall terms, somatic practices have been characterized as techniques in which ‘the potency of listening deeply to the body’ (Eddy 2009: 6) forms the outset for movement aesthetic. This characterization includes the fact that sensorial awareness becomes emphasized as the beginning point for the dancers’ development of their movement technique (Whatley et al. 2009: 3). The release-based classes I referred to at the beginning of the article, as well as the different descriptions of the seven contemporary dancers and the two dancers working with Butoh-related techniques and Body-Mind Centering, thereby present examples of how somatic practice might take form in dance classes. Before turning to phenomenological descriptions, I find it important to notice that the somatic approach comes to emphasize the first-person perspective of subjective experience in movement. When insisting on training the dancers’ capacity to make decisions based on sensory discriminations as perceived from within, somatic practices obviously court phenomenological descriptions. However, as will be clear, the dancers’ in-practice exploration of embodied experiences has to be distinguished from phenomenological explorations of perception and consciousness.

The phenomenological approach that I present is informed by Merleau-Ponty’s (1962, 1964) description of perception, as well as Shaun Gallagher and Dan Zahavi’s more recent phenomenological explorations related to cognitive science (Gallagher and Zahavi 2008; Gallagher 2010), proprioception (Gallagher 2003, 2005) and phenomenological methodologies (Zahavi 2010; Gallagher and Marcel 1999). In accordance with this phenomenological stance, the pre-reflective is understood as an intrinsic feature of what is conscious and of what might enter into our reflective realm. The pre-reflective is in this sense unnoticed to our experience, but it is not to be thought of as initially unconscious. Rather, the pre-reflective ‘can be unnoticed and still lived through subjectively’ (Zahavi 2010). This means that phenomenological reflection is connected to methodological processes in which the phenomenologist finds ways to be reflexive about the pre-reflective – and not about finding ways in which the phenomenologist can transform the pre-reflective into a reflective realm (Legrand 2007b: 586; 2007c). That is, phenomenological explorations of subjects’ consciousness of movement and of their body are *not* thought of as finding ways to ‘gain access to this pre-reflective and pre-given zone of our subjectivity’, as suggested by Depraz (2003: 11). Although processes based on turning the subject’s awareness towards an immediate aspect of movement sensation and from this approach to explore possible inherent qualities of movement and of the body are interesting ways to explore movement subjectively for the dancer, they do not work as a phenomenological method.<sup>3</sup> As emphasized by Gallagher and Zahavi (2008: 19), phenomenology centres round an *account* of subjective experience, and this focus should be distinguished from *subjective accounts* of experiences.

Phenomenology is not interested in qualia in the sense of purely individual data that are incorrigible, ineffable, and incomparable. Phenomenology is not interested in psychological processes (in contrast to behavioral processes or physical processes). Phenomenology is interested in the very dimension of givenness or appearance and seeks to explore its essential *structures* and conditions of possibilities.

(Zahavi 2010, emphasis added)



In the following exploration I will distinguish between the structure versus the qualia of experience in a relatively simplified way. The latter aspect of experiences will be used in relation to how a dancer's experiences can be characterized as content having different qualities for the dancer in his or her experience. The structure of these experiences, which is recognizable across the different subjective descriptions, suggests structures related to phenomenological descriptions of the subject's self-consciousness.

The dancers' descriptions presented in the previous sections present subjective qualia of experiences. However, across these descriptions a certain structure appears. As one characteristic of the dancer's inner sensation, it is evident that the dancers in selective and focused ways *scrutinize* proprioceptive sensations. They scrutinize proprioceptive sensations when checking and adjusting how joints and limbs are weighted and balanced, for example, by adjusting the upper torso according to the outward-rotated hip position working in the morning class at the *barré*, adjusting how the different joints are balanced and determining whether muscle tensions can be further released, or adjusting their vertical to be better grounded. In addition, all the dancers include descriptions of *how their body should feel*. This aspect of their inner sensation is not focused as is the scrutinization of proprioceptive sensations just described. Rather, it seems to refer to an overall sense of what the body feels like when moving. Again, the qualia of this overall sense of their bodies differ between the different dancers. The ballet dancers describe how movement is also connected to a sense of feeling right, the seven contemporary dancers describe a sense of feeling weighted, and the Butoh-related dancers turn to a description of being 'transparent'.

4. Be aware that the description 'transparent' is here used in a phenomenological description. See also endnote 2.

### A PRE-REFLECTIVE PERFORMATIVE DIMENSION OF THE SUBJECT'S CONSCIOUSNESS OF HIS OR HER BODY

According to philosopher Shaun Gallagher's phenomenological descriptions, proprioception is, in its most typical form, a pre-reflective and non-observational awareness that allows the body to remain experimentally transparent<sup>4</sup> to the agent who is acting (2003: 555). Or to put it more simply, in normal daily activities I keep balanced and standing upright without thinking about it. When the subject dynamically balances and coordinates the body limbs in relation to gravity, it is obvious to assume that most typically the weighted physical mass does not form part of what is consciously present to the subject moving. Balance and coordination are handled pre-reflectively. The body is transparent to the subject's experience in the sense that it is connected to the experience as it is anchored in the subject's bodily perspective (Logrand 2010). The reference to the body in proprioceptive sensations is thereby under normal conditions '*as subject* rather than *as object*' (Gallagher 2003: 57, original emphasis). Gallagher indicates that if proprioceptive sensations are experienced by the subject, as can be the case in dancing, the subject reflectively directs his or her attention to specific sensations in an objectifying fashion (Gallagher 2003: 55; 2005: 73–4), and the body is thereby taken as an intentional object of experience. No matter whether dancers continuously adjust their technique looking into mirrors, work on getting rid of surplus muscle tensions in their bodies, or turn towards deeper listening to the body, these approaches are, in Gallagher's terminology, primarily to be described as different ways of taking the physicality of the body as intentional object for experience.



The recognizable aspects of the dancers' experiences that are related to an overall sensation of what the body feels like in movement obviously exemplify which kind of qualia might be present in the pre-reflective performative dimension of their experiences. Their descriptions thereby add

to movement (Legrand 2007a).  
 ences, and that it can be trained on the basis of experiences focusing on qualia- describes how this dimension of experience is latent in everybody's experi- it into a mere intentional object' (Legrand and Ravn 2009). Legrand further experience, it is possible to experience the body's physicality without turning and objectifying dimension). In the pre-reflective performative dimension of (a pre-reflective and invisible dimension) and the body-as-object (a reflective dimension that is to be recognized between experiencing the body-as-subject self-consciousness as a pre-reflective *performative* dimension, and places it as a consciously aware of one's body. She describes this dimension of the subjects to Gallagher's description, Legrand thereby describes another way of being ences, and is not unnoticed as is the case in normal daily activities. In relation- reflective experience comes to be placed at the front of the dancer's experi- 2007a: 505–506, 512). In dance, part of the unnoticed dimension of the pre- this dimension of the subject's, normally unnoticed, consciousness (Legrand and sports and meditation is associated with a relatively sharp awareness of of presence. Legrand exemplifies and argues that body-expertise in dance, sious. This transparency is thereby also to be understood as another form- experience, or, to use a description of Zahavi's, it is unnoticed but not uncon- self-consciousness recedes in the background. It is transparent to the subject's level' (2007a: 498). Under normal conditions this pre-reflective dimension of tions the very possibility to recognize oneself as such at the observational consciousness in several articles. She describes how the pre-reflective 'condi- Dorothee Legrand (2007a, 2007b, 2010) has discussed pre-reflective present to subjects in everyday activities.

the subject's self-consciousness – a dimension that is not present or normally seems that the dancers' descriptions suggest another possible dimension of ity of their bodies and combining these into one unified sensation. Rather, it arise by taking many of the dancers' objectifying sensations of the physical- it would be possible that the dancers' overall sensations of their bodies should experiencing an objectification of the physicality of the body. For instance, that 'transparent' to different energies, is difficult to reduce to being solely about However, the other aspect, which refers to feeling right, feeling weighted or finizing facet of their practice confirms Gallagher's descriptions of how the Looking into the dancers' descriptions, it appears obvious that the scru-

body appear as intentional objects for the dancer's awareness.  
 appear are subsequently reduced to being about how physical aspects of the tional activities is structured in the subjects' experience. The ways any qualia to being understood solely in relation to how the experience of everyday func- tension and the effect of gravity are allocated in the body, are thereby reduced and deceleration of the limbs unfolds differently depending on how muscular qualities of movement experiences, like dancer's sense of how the acceleration ment while exploring perception (Legrand and Ravn 2009: 394). Such possible- tions seem to be based on the phenomenologist thinking on everyday move- reduced to object-directed actions (Sheets-Johnstone 2003: 83–4). The descrip- etiological stance tends to be based on descriptions in which movement is

As strongly indicated by Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, Gallagher's phenom-

5. In Legrand's further description of the pre-reflective performative dimension, she also argues that the body-as-subject is perceivable in this dimension of self-consciousness.



to empirical-based verifications of Legrand's description of how the physicality of the body can be experienced without turning it into an intentional object (Legrand and Ravn 2009).

### SITUATING AND SHARING SENSATIONS OF WEIGHT

Merleau-Ponty's exploration of perception presents a phenomenological description of an interwoven complexity of body-subject and the world. The content and qualia of experiences are not a result of perceptual inner processes of the subject. Instead perception is to be understood as a process in which body-subject and the world co-originate (1962, 1964). The body anchors perception, but is at the same time uniquely lived. It is through interactive processes of perception and movement that the body-subject has come to know his or her body (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 96, 235, 316; 1968, 133–4). As interpreted in Gallagher and Zahavi's descriptions, sensation always 'involves a reference to the world, taking that term in a very wide sense to include not just the physical environment, but the social and cultural world' (2008: 7).

Anthropological descriptions have brought descriptions of how sensing is formed by and forming part of a shared process (Seremetakis 1994; Howes 2005). Recently, Caroline Potter's anthropologically based description of the embodied process of becoming a contemporary dancer has specifically emphasized how an increased awareness of proprioception can be described as the ultimate goal of the contemporary dancer's training. Becoming a dancer is not only about enhancing movement competences and enlarging sensibilities, but also includes becoming socialized into a community of knowing practitioners. Proprioception is in this sense also to be understood as forming part of a socially constituted sense of motion (Potter 2008: 461), and is like any other sense experience to be understood as being socially made and mediated (I-lsu 2008; Chau 2008).

The qualia of the dancers' sensation of the weighted mass of their bodies is influenced by ideas and ideals of what the body and movement should be like when dancing, as indicated in Foster's (1992) descriptions. However, as becomes implicitly suggested in phenomenological descriptions and recent anthropological analyses, the qualia of the dancers' movement sensations are also actively influenced by other dancers' movement, as these movements unfold in shared practices. The dancers' practice of movement can be described as a participatory sense-making taking form in a practical operativity between subjects and environment (De Jaegher and Paolo 2007). What a dancer senses is a function of how the dancer moves, and how the dancer moves is a function of what he or she senses (Fuchs and De Jaegher 2009: 472). As emphasized in enactive phenomenology,<sup>6</sup> perception and motility are part of the same process and are to be understood as an intertwined cycle. Further, this intertwined cycle between perception and motility does not amount to the body-subject in the process of becoming in a singular sense, but includes the fact that perception-action cycles extend beyond individual to include the other. That is, the interactor's perception-action loops are coupled (Fuchs and De Jaegher 2009: 477). The subject's sensations formed through perception-action loops work in coordination *with* the other dancers present. This coordination entails co-regulation, which Fuchs and De Jaeger suggest includes a coupling of meaning as this is understood in the context of the situation (Fuchs and De Jaegher 2009: 471). Looking into the dancers' descriptions, this co-regulation not only amounts to the dancers' scrutinization and

6. Borrowing Depraz's definition, 'Enaction designates such a move of mutual emergence, with a stress put on its practical operativity and a critical stance laid against any representational or heremeneutical process' (2003: 7).

directedness in movement awareness, but also includes how an overall sense of what the body should feel like takes form.

The ballet dancers as well as the contemporary dancers exemplify how the qualia of sensing the weight of the body is lived and situated. The explorations of their experiences have been based on phenomenological explorations, but, nevertheless, end up confirming Ginot's discursive analysis of how we come to learn to know the physicality – and the somatic aspects of our bodies. Ginot argues that 'somatic itself is a technique of fabricating the body' (2010: 24), and that somatic practices, for example as related to dance, are therefore to be understood as contributing to the 'reorganization of the multiplicity and heterogeneity of that which we call the body' (Ginot 2010: 25).

The dancer's inner sensations of his or her body can be described in relation to two phenomenological dimensions of the subject's consciousness. In both dimensions the physicality of the body is experienced. However, in one dimension the physicality is taken as intentional object and is reflective, while in the other the physicality is pre-reflectively experienced and connected to sensations of the body as subject. Especially in relation to the pre-reflective performative dimension it would be a simplification to reduce the difference in the dancers' experiences to different conceptualizations of qualia that are originally based in a 'homogeneous, universal, ahistorical, and occidental body' (Ginot 2010: 23). Rather, the different qualia of this dimension suggest that the sense of being a body is a contingent project of the lived and living bodies.

## CONCLUSION

These explorations of the dancers' inner sensations of feeling the weight of their bodies reveals that their inner sensations are to be understood in relation to two dimensions, one focused and one connected to an overall sensation of what their bodies feels like. The first dimension exemplifies how the physicality is objectified in the dancers' experiences, while the second dimension resembles Legrand's phenomenological descriptions of a pre-reflective performative dimension of the subject's self-consciousness. In this dimension the dancer turns to the physicality of the body without taking it as an intentional object.

Further, the article reveals how the qualia of the dancers' sensations of their weighted physical mass differ according to their different movement techniques. The qualia differ in relation to both dimensions of the dancers' inner sensations. The article thereby brings attention to the fact that sensing the weight of the body forms part of shared and socializing processes.

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