

Senses of self and senses of the body

Phenomenological aspects of self- and bodily awareness

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I hereby declare that this dissertation contains no materials accepted for any other degrees in any other institutions, and no materials previously written and/or published by another person, except where appropriate acknowledgment is made in the form of bibliographical reference.

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Abstract

My dissertation aims to investigate two aspects of the experience we have characteristically as human subjects; our experience of ourselves, which I understand as the so-called *sense of self* and our experience of our bodies. The approach taken towards these subjects is predominantly phenomenological and purposefully not metaphysical. In my discussion of the phenomenal aspects of experience I also refer to findings and studies of psychology and neuropsychology in order to draw philosophical conclusions. Importantly, my theses and conclusions are compatible with a variety of metaphysical views of the self.

The sense we have of ourselves is understood to entail two different levels of experience. The first of these is argued to be the experience of being a subject who undergoes experiences and is embedded in our everyday experiences of the world, which has phenomenal elements we can characterise and conceptualise and which work in a peripheral manner on the level of unreflected, first-order conscious states. A pathological condition is also taken into consideration for the purposes of gaining phenomenological insights.

The second level of our sense of ourselves is understood as that which constitutes the experience of who we sense we are as individuals, and it is also argued to entail phenomenal elements we can characterise on the level of a subject's psychology. This discussion also involves dealing with the challenge of social psychology with respect to character.

The second major aspect investigated in my dissertation is our awareness of our bodies *qua* our bodies. This involves inspecting the specific phenomenal elements of bodily awareness and certain pathologies thereof. Subjective bodily awareness is contrasted with the objective body and it is shown that the phenomenological view of our experience of our bodies can be accommodated by a different metaphysical framework of subjective experience. Conclusions with respect to the phenomenal aspects are also drawn from a specific pathology of bodily awareness.

My dissertation concludes in analysing which specific aspects of the sense of our bodies contribute to which phenomenal aspects of the senses of self and how.

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Introduction

Philosophical occupation with the nature of self and personal identity mostly concerns metaphysical issues. One such issue is naming the conditions under which x is the same person at t_1 as at t_2 . There have been various conclusions drawn as to the nature of these conditions (i.e. psychological or bodily), none of which seem to start from our *experience* of being an x , i.e. a person, an individual or a self. The investigation of experience of selfhood/personhood can be done without it involving *any* metaphysical commitment. My dissertation starts from considerations about our experience of being x -s.

These include how our sense of being the *experiencer* of experiences works; what makes up our sense of being a certain individual and how we sense our bodies. These are issues that my dissertation intends to explore, and whilst accepting that a complete theory of the self should have some answers to give to the metaphysical questions of self, personhood and personal identity, this is not the main goal of my enquiry. My theory is able to accommodate or be compatible with different views of personal identity and the self, but the truths it hopefully yields will be valuable for a view that, whilst being philosophical, does not ignore the findings of empirical cases and neuropsychology (among other disciplines) and aims to work towards a more integrated but essentially experiential theory of the building blocks of our multi-level sense of self and our awareness of our bodies.

The hope however remains that our empirically- and phenomenologically informed, to wit *interdisciplinary*, philosophising about the sense of self also has something of pure philosophical value to add to the (future) conceptual considerations of one or more theories of selfhood, personhood and personal identity.

Importantly, I should also emphasise that, in being concerned with experience, my theory does not follow the main schools of embodied theorists who claim that the self can only be conceived of as bodily or as constituted by the body. Instead, I present my own findings to state which elements of *experience* make up the sense of self on the immediate, unreflected or *basic* level and the more complex, *individual* one in separation of the most prominent elements in providing us with a *sense* of our bodies ‘from the inside’, and I examine which of the elements of the sense of the body may contribute to/are involved in certain aspects of the senses of self afterwards.

One may object that this view is too restrictive and cannot give us sufficient insight into how we live our lives as embodied subjects in the world, to which I reply that firstly, my view does not imply a denial of living as embodied subjects to any extent (in fact it leaves the question of embodiment in this sense open, whilst emphasising that the findings of phenomenology are in a certain sense completely compatible with a Cartesian framework as well) and secondly, that my methodology allows that I can contribute to revealing and specifying certain aspects of how we experience ourselves as subjects and individuals, in some of which our sense of embodiment plays a less pronounced and in some a more pronounced part. This approach aims to clear the way to further, (either phenomenological or empirical) conceptually more refined enquiries into the nature of subjective experience.

This brings me to a question which can be conceived of as meta-theoretical. The metaphysical questions of what a person is, what a self is, what these have as the necessary and sufficient conditions of their existence are the subject matter of pure philosophy. As I indicated above, if a person is defined in terms of the psychological/bodily conditions under which she may persist through time, this is a rather impersonal, removed concept. However, I suggest that there can be a more ‘personal’ definition of the self that brings it closer to our experience and sense/phenomenology of it. This latter definition or model may be more on the side of experiential and empirical considerations and evidently, self-observation.

In order to see the approach more clearly, we can say that there is a difference between pure and applied philosophy, which is real and not nominal in three aspects (Wollheim, 1999), namely in their:

method:

while pure philosophy is preoccupied with conceptual analysis (=linguistic analysis), applied philosophy includes conceptual analysis but also includes empirical observation, experiment, common usage and knowledge etc.

aim:

pure philosophy aims to discover conceptual necessity (in all possible worlds), while applied philosophy enquires about theoretical necessity, as set by the laws of nature (which I shall interpret as our nature as the subjects of experience).

subject matter:

pure philosophy looks at things as they must be anywhere, whereas applied philosophy is interested in the general features of the world and taps into scientific theory.

This is a very helpful clarification for my project, as, whereas there are sections in which I also engage in conceptual analysis, the studying of the *sense* of the self and the elements of bodily awareness is, for the most part, a subject of applied philosophy. I should add another essential aspect, that of *experiential investigation*, which is mostly related to phenomenology and it implies reflection on one's own first-person experience and the reports of the subjective experiences of others.

One vein of empirical research which is heavily involved in studying subjective experience and the sense of self is unfortunately omitted from my dissertation, that is developmental psychology. Whilst I acknowledge that there are many valuable insights provided by developmental research, my focus is limited in the sense that, as I shall explain, I only aim to investigate the sense(s) of self and those of the body from a viewpoint which sees the subject as an individual, i.e. an adult whose experiences are investigated from a time-slice perspective and a synchronic viewpoint. My conclusions apply to the experiences of such an individual. This also means that I make no stipulations or claims as to how the sense of self is maintained or changes through time, i.e. the diachronic aspect of the senses in question are not discussed. This however can be the objective of further research, which could build on a number of the concepts and conclusions contained herein.

Phenomenological theorising, due to its preoccupation with experience, normally brackets the metaphysical issues. One of the benefits and a novelty of my predominantly phenomenological discussion is that, instead of simply putting the metaphysical question aside and saying nothing about it, I shall emphasise that what I have to say about the sense of self is theoretically compatible or consistent either with a variety of metaphysical views of the self. What I do take for granted is that the experience of being subjects of experience and individuals is something we positively have, a point which I shall argue for throughout my discussion.

As Phenomenologists have observed, the crucial idea to what it means to be a self calls for an examination of the structure of experience and vice versa. In other words, the investigation of

self and experience have to be integrated if both are to be understood (Zahavi, 2011). More precisely, the self is claimed to possess *experiential reality*, is taken to be closely linked to the first-person perspective, in agreement with which I shall also postulate further elements of experience that feature as constituting the basic sense of self. My view is probably a departure on the level of the individual sense of self from the views of the Phenomenological tradition and its modern representatives, inasmuch as I accept the option that a narrative understanding and sense of self is not criterial of having a sense of who we are.

One of the main goals of my dissertation is to understand the phenomenological structure and layers of this experience. The other is to elaborate on how we experience our own bodies ‘from the inside’ by taking a closer look at certain relevant aspects of our sense of our bodies and finally, to come to valid and hopefully informative conclusions regarding how the elements of the sense of the body may take part in the elements of the sense of self.

I start the first chapter by outlining the vast range of philosophical problems related to the self and specify the aspects of the problems which my dissertation concerns. I separate the metaphysical issue of what the self is from a phenomenological account of the experience of such a self. I examine Harry Frankfurt’s (1988a) account of what personhood consists in and suggest that the concept of person, upon closer inspection, should be distinguished from the concept of self for the purposes of my dissertation, thereby narrowing the focus of my enquiry further. I argue that the re-interpretation of the concept of ‘self’ has certain benefits, one of which is that it can justify certain intuitions about ascribing selfhood, as opposed to personhood, to subjects who fail to meet the Frankfurtian criteria.

In the second chapter I lay out the phenomenological backbones of an experiential account of selfhood on the basic level and arrive at one of the main concerns of my project, the discussion of the basic sense of self. I name certain elements of our experience (namely our sense of perspective/mineness/perspectival ownership, unity, individuality and boundary) as those which create the sense of being the subject of experience on a basic, unreflected and non-linguistic level. I explain other prominent working notions used to describe subjective experience in philosophy and assess the role my own elements of the basic sense of self play in light of these in my theory.

In order to lose the metaphysical baggage, I explain my interpretation of the ‘sense of self’ with the aid of phenomenology (Zahavi, 2005) and adverbial theories of perception. In line with this, I unpack what is meant by the expression ‘sense of self’ and introduce a distinction between how the different levels of the self have been conceived of in terms of phenomenology. I also discuss Sartre’s (1957) relevant theory of self-awareness on a minimal level.

In Chapter 3 I overview accounts of consciousness and place the basic experience of self in what Ned Block (1995) calls ‘phenomenal consciousness’. I discuss whether the basic sense of self characterises all of our conscious experiences, which involves another point of departure from the Phenomenological view which holds that every conscious experience necessarily entails phenomenology or ‘what-it-is-likeness’.

I offer views of how self-experience is entailed in every phenomenally conscious experience and how it can plausibly be thought of as that which is present in first-order conscious experience, such as self-representation (Kriegel, 2006 and 2009) and Zahavi and Parnas’ (1997) phenomenological view. I also unpack how the theoretical-logical model of first-order self-experience may be cashed out in first-person experience by discussing the structure of a conscious state in terms of attention versus background (Evans, 1970). I subsequently conclude that, while the basic sense of self should not involve representation, it can be legitimately conceived of as an in-built phenomenal ‘part’ of a first-order conscious experience in virtue of appearing in the background/periphery thereof.

In Chapter 4 I offer an understanding of the loss of the basic sense of self which relies heavily on first-person reports and studies of schizophrenic patients, and which interprets some of their distorted experience in terms of the basic sense’s failure to function as that which individuates or delineates the subject on a fundamental, experiential level.

In Chapter 5 I turn to the elaborate sense of self and I unpack what I mean by ‘individuality’ on this more developed level of self-experience. In line with this, I offer a more psychological reading of individuality and refer to the experience of who we are as persons. I overview accounts of self-constitution (Frankfurt, 1988; Schechtman, 2007) and argue that a sense of narrative may not be necessary in order to arrive at an account of what the individual sense of self consists in at one unspecific point in time. I explore how self-concept, sense of

authorship/agency, interpreted as an extended version of Frankfurt's description of identification and externalisation (1988) and character/personality (Kupperman, 1991; Goldie, 2004) constitute our sense of who we are and individuate us psychologically. I also consider the challenge of social psychology, which questions the explanatory power and even the existence of character.

Chapter 6 and 7 are concerned with the other major topic of my enquiry; namely, the sense of the body. I discuss what bodily awareness consists in from a number of different aspects. I frame the general discussion by providing an account of what bodily awareness is and by suggesting a conceptual division among the different readings of 'embodiment' for the purposes of my dissertation. I also make an important point about certain claims of Phenomenology which my discussion leaves open.

The first particular aspect of bodily awareness I focus on in particular involves our first-person, general sense of our bodies 'from the inside' in terms of proprioceptive awareness of the body. This means that I examine a phenomenological understanding (Gallagher, 2005; Zahavi and Gallagher, 2008) of proprioception, which I take a somewhat critical view of. I argue that from a conceptual viewpoint, proprioceptive awareness qualifies to be a form of conscious awareness.

I also discuss a potentially controversial but informative point about how compatible phenomenological insights of the subjective or 'lived' body are with a Cartesian understanding of subjective experience (Farkas, 2008), especially if we analyse some anomalous bodily awareness cases.

Chapter 7 discusses the third and fourth aspects of bodily awareness, i.e. the sense of ownership and agency (Bermúdez, 2011; de Vignemont 2010b; Gallagher, 2005 and 2007). These are seen as the constituents of bodily awareness 'from the inside' and I argue that we have ample empirical and phenomenological reasons to accept a phenomenologically-loaded sense of ownership, while I define agency as having the minimal phenomenal constituents of the sense of initiation, control and intentional binding.

Chapter 8 employs the same thematic as at the end of my discussion of the basic sense of self. While there I discuss disturbed self-experience in schizophrenic patients, here I turn to a certain disorder of the sense of embodiment in terms of disturbances in the sense of ownership and/or agency in deafferentation (Gallagher and Cole, 1995). I examine to what

extent damage to the sense of our bodies ‘from the inside’ may entail a diminishment of the other aspects of bodily awareness I discussed. I also place the phenomenological aspects of deafferentation within the framework of the body schema and body image (Gallagher, 2005).

In the concluding chapter I assess which of the discussed elements of bodily awareness contribute to which of the aspects of the basic sense of self on the one hand and the individual one on the other.

Chapter 1. Self and person

The main purpose of this chapter is to introduce the first main subject of my dissertation and to isolate it from other important and heavily discussed subjects and working concepts in philosophy. I shall start by stating the main basic theses of my enquiry about the ‘sense of self’ in terms of the experience of being the *subjects of experience* and continue by placing these within some prominent philosophical views about the self in 1.1. In part 1.2. I shall provide views in support a theory of experiential selfhood and in 1.3. I narrow down the concept of person familiar to personhood and identity discussions to a certain, experiential and first-person specific aspect which I claim is covered by ‘self’. This specific and restricted understanding serves as a guide to the rest of my discussion.

First and foremost, I base my enquiry on certain assumptions, which I shall work with and support throughout the dissertation;

I am the subject of experiences; I see, hear, i.e. perceive the world around me, I feel pain and hunger and other sensations, I have emotions, intentions, thoughts and memories. In experiencing all of these (and more), I also experience myself as the experiencing and acting subject and agent; that is, I have a ‘sense of self’ in my conscious experiences on a basic level, which I shall say a great deal more about in the following chapters.

In addition, I, as a human being also experience myself as an individual with a certain psychological make-up, a character. More specifically, I believe that I have an inner sense of who I am both in an elaborate (individual) and a more basic (subject) sense. In the elaborate sense this refers to, among other things, the particular patterns of thought, behaviour and emotions that make up our psychological individuality or personality, and on the basic level it is the experience that I am the subject of many external and internal experiences I undergo.

The sense of being a subject of experience and an individual, as I will explain, can convincingly be divided into at least two different levels of phenomenology. The basic notion throughout my dissertation, therefore, is not ‘the self’, but the *experience of being a self or subject*, i.e. *the sense of self*, a more detailed analysis and phenomenological characterisation of which will begin in Chapter 2.

However, the experience of myself as the subject of experience need not be interpreted as the experience of a certain entity, series of entities or a construction, but as an aspect of conscious experience, a ‘sense of self’, a sense of being a single subject who undergoes a variety of experiences and who acts on the world. Therefore, it is the phenomenal aspect of living and experiencing the world and my own inner states as a subject which is the starting point of my discussion and which I am going to be concerned with instead of the ‘self’ *per se*. In other words, I enquire about *how I experience myself as a subject* and not *what I am as an entity*, which may or may not be a self.

In most philosophical discussions however, the metaphysical question plays a much more prominent part than the phenomenological one. One heavily discussed issue is whether there is such a thing as the self, while another concerns its metaphysical nature; i.e. what is the self? Is it something that exists within us like a traditionally conceived, unchanging soul, or is it our personality/psychological make-up? Is it something we are *essentially* and if so, what does its nature consist in? Can it be something we either consciously or unconsciously build up over the years? Can we identify where the self is located within the brain? Evidently, some of these issues tap into a variety of other branches of philosophy and other disciplines, and I am aware that whichever response one decides to cast her vote on will leave plenty of room for questions and counter-arguments.

In order to sidestep most of the issues about what the self is, and since my dissertation is neither about the self, nor about theories of the self or whether it exists, I aim to make no substantial claims or arguments about what I take (or do not take) the self to be.

Importantly however, one of the benefits of my phenomenological discussion is that what I say about the sense of self is, instead of being in ignorance of the metaphysical framework, theoretically compatible or consistent either with the metaphysical view that there is an entity the ‘self’ refers to (whether it is a soul or a body or part of the brain), the opposite view that there is no actual entity that is the self and it is but an illusion, or the view that the (full-blown) self is a construct. What I do take for granted is that the experience of being subjects and individuals is something we have, a point which I argue for in the following chapters. The main goal of the first half of my dissertation is to understand the phenomenological structure and aspects of this experience.

1.1. The self

Having laid down the basic tenets of my discussion and named the *experience* of being the subject of experience and an individual as the focal points of my dissertation, I shall now place my discussion within the larger landscape of philosophising about the self.

Despite my intention not to take a metaphysical stance on what I take the self to be and whether I take it to be something or not, I have two reasons to overview some examples of the philosophical debates concerning the self. Firstly, I will refer to the ‘self/selves’ throughout my dissertation (mostly due to the treatment of the self by the relevant phenomenological discussions). Secondly, a vast number of historical and current philosophical discussions render the metaphysical issues as *the* defining questions about the self. Therefore, it is important to introduce the main uses of the term below and place my enquiry within the main streams of philosophical thinking about what the self is.

The metaphysical questions concern either whether the self exists or what the entity we call the self consists in. Joel Kupperman (1991) groups most views of what the self is under three main philosophical currents, a useful and clear division. He refers to these as;

- ones that hold that there is an entity that the ‘self’ refers to, an enduring self (ES), among which we find Hindu thought and Christianity, but among which we may also place the Cartesian self. This view would suggest that the self can be discovered and understood via different acts such as thinking or meditation (or recollection). This is in contrast to;
- views which hold that there ultimately is no such entity as the self (no-self or NS), which was held by Hume but also by Buddhist thinkers. Hume famously claimed that there is no ‘added’ metaphysical entity, there is only the contents of our streams of consciousness. This arguably contradicts the strong intuition and phenomenology that most of us have, namely that we are ‘selves’ and these selves are retained throughout our lives.

- Finally, there are the views that see the self as a construction (constructed self or CS) created and constructed throughout a life, understood mostly as a psychological narrative.

Kupperman's main categories (to which there are also exceptions in the history of philosophising about the self) are useful for my purposes, as I can show that this general scheme can fit my phenomenological enquiry into the structure and layers of the experience of being a self in more than one place, viz. it can accommodate *both* the view that there is an enduring entity that we call the self (without this necessitating a causal link between the self and the sense of self), *and* the view that ultimately there is no enduring metaphysical entity behind our experiences. Even if this more radical metaphysical conclusion is accepted, it is still worthwhile analysing and characterising the apparent *experience* we have of being selves or subjects. (Interestingly, the NS seems only to deny that there is such entity as posited by ES, not that the self could turn out to be something other than an enduring entity. Therefore, the CS view is actually compatible with the NS view.)

On the one hand, my claims and enquiry about the sense of self and its different levels of phenomenology can also be compatible with the claim that on the elaborate, individual level, the sense of self is constituted by something we construct either consciously or unconsciously throughout our lives. On the other hand, the CS view does not have much to say about how we come to have a sense of the first-person perspective and of being the subjects of experience, which means that it may be open to accommodate my views about the more basic sense of self. The analysis which takes place at the level of experience seems flexible enough to accommodate more than one metaphysical conclusion about the self, none of which would render the analysis invalid or uninformative.

Another way to approach the subject of philosophising about the self in general suggests that we overwrite and/or replace our terminology, as there are so many different uses and understandings of 'self' that we end up making inconsistent and contradictory claims about the self in metaphysical debates. While this is an important warning for all of those who decide to engage in discussions about the self, it is a rather pessimistic outlook in general to take on the abundance of the terms used to describe the self by Olson (1999), who thinks that since there is no agreed use of the term 'self', or 'characteristic features or even paradigm cases of selves, there is no idea of 'the self' to figure in philosophical problems.'(1999:49)

He subsequently proposes abandoning any talk of selves, since the concept of the self we believe in does not exist, and neither does ‘the self’ itself.

He offers different reasons why the term can be replaced with a different reading in a variety of cases:

1. The self is an unchanging, simple substance to which one’s impressions and ideas have reference.

As presented above, the denial of this self was argued for by Hume. This view of the self was prevalent pre-Locke in the history of philosophy but has been rejected by most philosophers since.¹ Olson thinks that if this is what we take selves to be, there are simply no selves, and the problem of the self is only of historical interest.

2. One’s self is the inner subject of one’s conscious experiences.

Olson thinks that this account infers that I am my self, since I am the subject of my conscious experiences and that therefore, since I am a person, selves are people (even if the two terms are not used interchangeably). In this case we can replace the term with ‘I’.

3. One’s self is just that person, himself.

This account identifies the self with the person and hence collapses problems about the self into problems about personhood and personal identity. This of course raises the complex issue about what a person is.

4. One’s self is the unconscious mechanism responsible for the unity of one’s consciousness.

¹ The discussion of why this view of the self is not held any more is orthogonal to my review of the main ideas of what the self is.

On this view there is nothing subjective or ineffable or immaterial about the self, and selves are not people. Instead it may either be a part of the brain or an aspect of one's personality or character.

Since there is such diversity in the way the word 'self' is used, Olson concludes that what we mean by the self always turns out to be something else. This means that there is no such idea as the idea of the self, and therefore nothing for the 'problem of the self' to be about. (ibid.)

Olson makes a valid observation about why we need to be careful when talking about the different aspects of the self, as we may be describing different phenomena than we think we are. It is also a problem for those who try to engage in interdisciplinary dialogues, as the philosopher might take the self to be something entirely different than e.g. the psychologist/psychiatrist does.

Moreover, they might both conclude that they do not necessarily know what they are referring to when they talk about the self, although this does not cancel out the reality of the term in either scientific or everyday parlance. In fact, Olson's suggestion of always replacing the word 'self' with something else may mean that our characterisation of the self becomes severely fragmented and does not do justice to our diverse but nevertheless real *experience* of self anymore. Olson's point is quoted here as providing another, non-phenomenological reason as to why it may be more sensible and fruitful for understanding the way we are to start from the *experience* and suspend the attempt to define what the self actually is or is not.

Whatever the self turns out to be, we have a first-person sense of being single subjects of experience and individuals. It is this experience which gives rise to our tendency to think of the self and which encourages us to conceptualise what we are in terms thereof.

In support of the above claim, someone who engages in philosophical enquiry about the self should also realise that thinking about and experiencing the single self is crucial to human behaviour and how we see our nature in general. This is attested to by Barresi et al. (2010):

Whether persons and selves are unified objects or mere organizations of elemental material substances or psychological processes, in common sense human beings take themselves to be unified agents and this belief in personal unity is an apparent cause

of much of their behavior. The fact that humans believe themselves to be persons and selves makes a difference to how their lives are lived. (...) Even if our self-conceptions are wrong, if they are persistent and ubiquitous, they are an important part of who we are (...) (2010:11)

1.2. Experiential selfhood²

In the previous section I isolated my phenomenological discussion from the metaphysical stances taken on the self and claimed, importantly, that my views and enquiry can accommodate a variety of metaphysical views about the self. I also indicated that while Olson's criticism should be kept in mind, it is another reason why discussing experience is a good starting point, as it is untouched by the terminological (as well as the metaphysical) debate. I shall now give a more specific description of my discussion within the general subject of the self.

Granted that there is ample reason not to abandon the term 'self', we can instead, however hard it may be, try to unite the different views and aspects thereof. As part of their effort to do this, Barresi et al. (2011) explain that, as a counterbalance to the fragmentation in theories of self, there is a current need to adopt an integrative stance toward person and self that takes into account several dimensions that have proved important in any discussion of these terms, which they call the *ontological dimension*, the *experiential dimension*, and the *social dimension*.

From the above three dimensions, I place my enquiry into the sense of self under the second; i.e. *experiential dimension* of selfhood. This is described as follows:

The focus of the experiential dimension is on the first-person experience of self, not with regard to what we can infer about what sort of thing, other than experience, the self might be, but on what our experience of the self is actually like. (...) An

² although I will keep referring to 'selfhood' throughout the dissertation, this use of the term does not mean that I depart from talking about the sense of self. 'Selfhood' in my understanding refers to the reality of the experience we have and not to the self as a separately existing entity.

integrated account of person and self should take note of these characteristic ways in which humans experience themselves. (Barresi, 2010:4)

Zahavi (2007) also expands on the self understood ‘as an experiential dimension’ in a sentence that is central to my enquiry (although this is not identical to what Barresi et al. mean):

The crucial idea to what it means to be a self calls for an examination of the structure of experience and vice versa. In other words, the investigation of self and experience have to be integrated if both are to be understood. More precisely, the self is claimed to possess experiential reality, is taken to be closely linked to the first-person perspective, and is, in fact identified with the very first-personal givenness of the experiential phenomena. (2007:184)

Whether the self refers to an independent metaphysical entity (a substance); is non-existent; merely amounts to a ‘bundle of perceptions’ famously referred to by Hume, or is a construct will not be further discussed or decided here. Instead, I assume that everything that is said about the sense of self in my interpretation on the level of experience precedes any of the views of whether the self exists and what the self is. Consequently and regardless of the metaphysical status of the self, I shall turn to the experience of being a single self, which ‘sense’ I take to be more fundamental than a certain kind of self that may or may not exist as a certain entity or perception.

1.3. Separation of ‘self’ from ‘person’

As stated in the Introduction and the first section, the analysis of the *sense of self* is one of the main subjects of my dissertation. In order to remain faithful to the experiential dimension of selfhood, I shall now draw out the differences between two concepts that many discussions in philosophy use interchangeably; namely the terms ‘person’ and ‘self’. I aim to show that the philosophical tradition that tends to conflate the concept of self with the concept of person³ may overlook some of the differences between what the two concepts seem to capture in

³ and consequently the concept of ‘personhood’ with that of ‘selfhood’

terms of perspective, reflection and more broadly, phenomenology. I explain what these differences are and propose that on the basis of these, I shall use ‘self’ as a restricted dimension of ‘person’, which serves the purpose of talking about the subject who undergoes experiences as seen from the first-person perspective.

‘Self’ as the referent of ‘I’ is an option that I reject here, as ‘I’ can refer to a subject in sentences like ‘I weigh so-and-so kilos’. Such sentences don't shed much light on the subject understood as the subject of experience. My restricted sense understands ‘self’ first and foremost as this subject.

The separation will be useful for my purposes, as the term ‘person’, in discussions of personhood/personal identity seems to cover another experiential dimension than ‘self’ does. ‘Self’ in my understanding is seen as doing justice to the fact that our experience of our perceptions, actions, intentions, sensations, mental states and experiential boundaries adds up to the first-person experience of selfhood. ‘Self’ therefore implies the subjective, first-person experience or the apparent subject of experience itself (although this is an issue to be debated by metaphysicians). ‘Self’, as is demonstrated by the different philosophical applications includes the first-person perspective as well as subjectivity. Our experience of someone else’s actions, intentions etc. does not have the kind of intimacy and directness we have of our own experience, since we do not experience someone else’s actions etc. as adding up to a self, but as adding up to, in the normal case, what we call a ‘person’. For my purposes, ‘self’ covers the subject and has an explanatory role in having and ‘living’ the experience or ‘sense’ of self, which ‘person’ in this discussion cannot cover.

The concept of ‘person’ on the other hand, here refers to an individual or agent who is capable of authoring his or her actions, may reflect on these and is accountable for whatever he or she decides to do. In the Lockean sense it is a ‘forensic’ term, which seems to correspond to the third-person perspective. The person may even be unaware of some of the characteristics that describe him or her, which reflects on the fact that the experience of personhood may diverge from the experience of selfhood.

A somewhat similar point to mine is also underlined by C.O. Evans (1970), who claims that what he calls the ‘persons-approach’ to investigating what a person is, is part of a programme of deliberate reversal of the traditional approach to epistemology:

The tradition emanating from Descartes was to begin an epistemological enquiry with one's own case, and, from that starting point, arrive by inference at knowledge claims about things apart from oneself. However, philosophers have since come to believe that many of the insoluble problems of knowledge can be traced back to the premiss that one must start with one's own case. (1970:21)

Evans takes it that the problem of 'self-identity' should be taken to mean the problem of self-awareness, whereas the problem of 'personal identity' should refer to the problem of the identity of persons, and the treatment of the two as separate goes back to the difference between asking what a person is and what the self is. As he notes, the nature of self-awareness and philosophers' curiosity about self-awareness are not satisfied either

by knowledge of the identity of other persons or by knowledge of the criteria on which such knowledge is based. It is less misleading, therefore, to phrase the problem 'Of what are we aware in self-awareness?' in terms of the question, 'What is the self?', than it is to phrase it in terms of a question about persons. (1970:20)

Importantly, the question 'What is a person?' leaves it open whether or not the reader is included within the class of persons, according to Evans. This is not left open with the question 'What is the self?', as this is a question which the reader must address to himself if he is to understand it. The question implies token-reflexivity, i.e. for each reader it turns into the question, 'In what does my identity as a self consist?' Despite the fact that identity is not my main concern, Evans' attitude is very illuminating in drawing out some of the differences between questions concerning persons on the one hand and those concerning the self on the other.

1.4. Conditions of personhood

There are certain other, empirical examples of why the interest in selfhood is not identical to the interest in personhood, e.g. even though infants are not seen or defined as persons in the

moral sense⁴, there are still many valid and illuminating questions we can ask about their sense of self (such as how it develops and what actions, behaviours etc. it involves on a developmental scale).

Having specified my own understanding of ‘self’ and ‘person’, I shall now illustrate how the notion of self and person can easily diverge in one particular example, that of Harry Frankfurt’s (1988a) view. I aim to show that even Frankfurt’s psychological condition leaves room for disqualifying human subjects of experience from personhood.

Frankfurt says that the conditions of personhood should do justice to those attributes that underlie our occupation with ourselves. His is a perspective from the psychology of human beings, as opposed to those (such as P.F. Strawson, 1959; Dennett, 1976 or Wilkes, 1988) who apply third-person or observational conditions to define what a person is in terms of species-specificity. What is common to both kinds of perspectives is that they can disqualify certain ‘selves’ from personhood.

An important part of the psychological view, in Kim Atkins’ (2004) insightful presentation is that:

The criteria for being a person do not serve primarily to distinguish the members of our own species from the members of other species. Rather, they are designed to capture those attributes which are the subject of our most humane concern with ourselves and the source of what we regard as most important and most problematical in our lives. (...) We do in fact assume, on the other hand, that no member of another species is a person. Accordingly, there is a presumption that what is essential to persons is a set of characteristics that we generally suppose – whether rightly or wrongly – to be uniquely human. (2004:145)

A person is defined as one who has a desire for one of her desires to become effective, a kind of ‘second order desire’ Frankfurt calls a ‘second order volition’ (1998:12), which involves the capacity for reflection on our (first-order) desires, which would require a well-developed self-concept and even a capacity for efforts to self-discipline and improve. The capacity to

⁴ The concept of a person covers many domains of everyday discussions as well as scientific research such as the moral, the metaphysical, and the psychological ones. Dennett (1976) asks if the metaphysical definition is necessary for the moral one and decides that the two do not coincide but lay on the same continuum and are not completely distinct. He is in agreement with Frankfurt on the idea that for one to meet the conditions of being a person, one does not have to be a human being.

form second-order desires refers to the ability to choose which desires and wants we want to constitute our will and decide to act upon, i.e. a certain capacity of reflection and self-evaluation.

Being a person on Frankfurt's terms consists in being the kind of entity who reflects upon their desires and aversions, and chooses the desires and aversions by which they will be motivated to act. Those who do not attempt this are what he calls 'wantons'. The essential characteristic of a wanton is found in that he does not care about his will and fails to reflect and choose the desires that would constitute his will.

I have to note that Frankfurt does not include the notion of a perspective *per se*. However, firstly, my point about the difference between 'self' and 'person' was not that those who form a concept of the person normally *include* in their definition that it characterises the subject from an external, third-person viewpoint, but that it is intrinsic to the philosopher's concept that it examines the individual from such a perspective. Although Frankfurt's concept relies on introspection, as it is a capacity for reflection in terms of which he distinguishes persons from non-persons and hence defines what the person is in terms of psychological states (which may subsequently bring us closer to identifying the concept of self with that of the person), is it not still conceivable to apply the concept of self in terms of subjective experience and the first-person stance even to those who fail to possess the capacity in question? Even if the person is defined in terms of having a certain capacity for reflection, this is still seen from a perspective that falls outside of the individual's own viewpoint, and in this sense is still separated from the concept of self. Would Frankfurt's 'willing drug addict' experience from the first-person perspective that he lacks the capacity of reflecting on his desire for the drug and therefore that he is not a person? This already seems to require the kind of reflection he lacks and so the judgment that he does lack it can only be made from a third-person viewpoint. His subjective experience would be that he has an overpowering desire for the drug, which translates directly into action and in this sense the phenomenologically-loaded sense of perspective and experiential selfhood still applies to him.

Frankfurt's definition, besides indicating that personhood may not be species-specific, is a more demanding notion than that of experiential selfhood. It implies that we have the capacity for reflection on our (first-order) desires, which would require a well-developed self-concept and even an effort to self-discipline and improve.

Due to the relatively high-level requirements the concept of person sets out, Frankfurt's view implies that there can be an experiential self without there being a person, insofar as the self is not capable of forming second-order desires, which is a conceivable case in certain ontogenetic stages of human development as well as in certain mental disorders, such as autism.

What I aim to show below is that there are cases in which while we can plausibly think of ascribing selfhood to someone, we may not be able to do so with personhood. My narrowed-down version of the concept of selfhood however allows that they can be applied separately.

Keeping in mind that there are many theories as to which mental capacities are affected in Autistic Spectrum Disorder and what the condition is a deficit of in terms of these capacities, we can find examples in the cognitive psychological literature such as Peter Carruthers' (1996), who, upon reflection on Frankfurt's classic view states that;

the capacity for these sorts of swift and reliable forms of meta-access to our own beliefs, desires, and sequences of thinking and reasoning will be mediated, in the normal case, by the operation of the theory-of-mind module. It is therefore to be predicted that someone who is mind-blind, or whose theory-of-mind module is damaged, will experience considerable difficulty in tasks which involve the more complex (second-order) forms of practical reasoning. This is because such a subject's access to their own mental states will be relatively difficult, slow, and unreliable. We should therefore expect such a person to perform poorly on tasks that require them to evaluate their own desires or beliefs. And we should also expect them to perform equally poorly in tasks that require them to evaluate their own recent problem-solving strategies. (1996:270)

This amounts to the claim that these subjects are highly unlikely to meet the Frankfurtian condition of personhood. Even if this fairly exclusive conclusion is accepted, whether this also means that they fail to be selves is not self-explanatory and should be argued for in its own right (this is *not* the view of certain psychological accounts, as they grant the existence of at least a 'minimal self' in such subjects, which I will expand on in the second chapter).

1.5. Conclusion

I started this chapter by stating the main focus of my dissertation in terms of the experience of being a single self who is the subject of experience, i.e. *the sense of self*. I isolated my discussion from the main metaphysical views of what the self is and emphasised that whilst my concern is not to answer the metaphysical questions, my theory can be consistent with a number of metaphysical views.

I moved on to specify the dimension of selfhood which I am interested in, i.e. *experiential selfhood* and explained, with the help of useful thoughts by Barresi and Gallagher and Zahavi, what this consists in.

I explained that while a number of philosophical discussions of personhood and personal identity treat the ‘self’ as identical to the ‘person’, I shall use the term ‘self’ in a restricted meaning to cover the first-person dimension of being the subject of experience. My restriction of ‘self’, which relies on the differentiation of experiential perspectives seems to benefit from and correspond to cases in which ascriptions of selfhood to subjects who fail to meet the philosopher’s criteria for personhood are still justified. Studies of autism for example lend empirical support to the idea that the concept of self may be more basic than the concept of person in describing subjective experience and can be thought of as a restricted form thereof.

I attempt to describe and characterise aspects of the first-person experience of being a subject, and since this characterisation is best approached from the perspective of phenomenology, the restricted use of the term ‘self’ compared to the term ‘person’, for the reasons given above, will be highly useful.

In the next chapter I shall unpack and give a detailed characterisation of what the sense of self on the basic level amounts to in conscious experience.

Chapter 2. The basic sense of self

After narrowing down and specifying the focus of my enquiry on experiential selfhood and a restricted concept of ‘self’, I have now arrived at the first crucial part of my discussion of the *sense of self*. I am going to examine what the sense of self consists in in terms of phenomenology and conceptualisation on the basic level.

I am going to provide an account of what I take the basic sense of self to be. In line with this, I aim to unpack what is meant by the expression ‘sense of self’ in its basic version. I shall do this firstly by describing an episode of conscious experience from ordinary life and describe the *phenomenological* elements that may amount to providing our basic sense of self, such as the sense of *perspective* from which I undergo the experience, entailing the sense of *mineness* which renders the experience as mine; *unity*, which renders the experiences I undergo simultaneous and occupying the same experiential space; *individuality*, which differentiates from non-self, and *boundary*, which provides the experiential borders as it were. I shall continue by defining and or/clarifying the meaning of further concepts commonly used to describe a subject’s conscious experience and which are also central to my discussion, such as ‘subjectivity’ and ‘ipseity’. I shall then provide a way of conceiving the term ‘sense of self’ and refer to adverbial theories to aid this understanding. I shall finish the chapter by presenting a phenomenological example of the ‘minimal’ or level of the self.

Before starting my discussion I should note two things; firstly, that in giving account of the sense of self, my intention is to describe it in a way that does not include the sense or awareness of one’s body at this point, i.e. in describing how it is that I have a sense of self in ordinary experience of the world, I intend not to make any reference to how I have a sense of embodiment. This may be seen as a somewhat arbitrary distinction of awareness of self from awareness of my own body on the level of phenomenology (especially if one takes Sartre’s and Merleau-Ponty’s views on embodiment seriously), but the methodology my dissertation requires that I examine the sense of self in separation from the sense of the body first. This does not imply that I suggest stripping the experience of the self of that of the body as a rule, but here I intend to gain phenomenological insight and conceptual clarification from examining elements of the sense of self and those of the body separately first.

Secondly, I am going to work with a *synchronic* view of conscious experience and of the senses of self, i.e. I shall not make any claims about the continuing sense of self either in its

basic or its elaborate form and only examine what constitutes our sense of self at a specific moment in time.

2.1. The basic sense of self in experience

I suggest starting from an instance of everyday experience, therefore if we take an ordinary example of walking through the woods on a sunny autumn day, we may be able to deconstruct this experience to find some fundamental features that would contain the elements of what I shall call the ‘basic sense of self’.

As I go along (or if I stop), I see into the distance and I see the trees, the ground beneath me, I smell the leaves and the conkers in the air and I feel the sunlight and the crispy wind (as well as my clothes) on my skin and hear the children playing nearby. At the same time, I have a sensation of tiredness, I feel hungry and I also feel relaxed and I remember that I used to come here with my parents when I was young.

What I aim to unpack in the present section is what the fact and experience of being a single subject of experiences amounts to in terms of phenomenology. In other words, which phenomenal features of an episode of conscious experience contribute to the basic sense of being the subject of the experience?

Let us firstly consider however what it means to be the subject of experience. I have various perceptual, affective and cognitive states, i.e. I am a subject of experiences, which means that in a basic sense these experiences are presented to me, I am the *experiencer*. There is also a sense in which I am the subject of many other, bodily states as well, i.e. I am the one whose heart is beating, whose stomach is digesting food etc. but these processes need not be (normally) *experienced* by me. (If they are experienced, I become the subject of further experiences, in the same way as I am the subject of a perceptual or affective experience. I shall discuss certain aspects of bodily awareness in the second half of my dissertation.)

Many events happen to subjects, and it can be legitimate to talk about the metaphysical subject of an event such as an event of walking or a stomach churning. While an experience can also be regarded as an event which has a subject in the metaphysical sense, the ‘subject’ in the somewhat special and more specific sense that I want to use it refers to the phenomenal presence that is the subject, whose ontological status remains open. As indicated in Chapter

1, I aim to draw a sharp distinction between the metaphysical issues surrounding the nature of the self or subject and the experience of being one. Therefore, when I discuss the subject, my emphasis is not on the metaphysical sense of there being a subject for every experience (i.e. event), but on the phenomenal subject who undergoes experiences in the broad sense of the word, i.e. who sees, hears, feels and generally becomes phenomenally aware of those things which appear in her experience.

One of the main claims of my dissertation, the main point of which is resonated in a number of the Phenomenological literature, is that this ‘awareness’ or ‘sense’, which is my preferred term for reasons I shall explain below, also entails a basic sense of being the experiencer, i.e. the subject who sees, hears, feels etc. (In other words, I, in a very fundamental form appear in the experience.) However, as I shall argue similarly to certain authors, this is *not* a higher-order or reflective awareness, as that would imply that my sense of myself as the subject is not basic anymore. The present conception of the basic, unreflected sense of the self purports to the claim that the subject is aware of herself *within the same act* as through which she becomes aware of the objects of her experience, which will be elaborated on in the next chapter in detail. There I shall provide an analysis of conscious states and the modes of how the unreflected sense of self may be built into the structure of a conscious experience.

Let us take a closer look at the phenomenology of my imagined episode of a walk in the woods in order to reveal the phenomenal features which make up the sense of self in its basic manner. Firstly, there is a certain *point of view* or *perspective* (which may not be physically stationary) from which the trees and people going past are perceived, a point from which I perceive the surrounding world, see it, hear it, have contact with it, etc. This means that it is always from a certain standpoint from which the world reveals itself and which in the normal case always turns out to be the first-person perspective, i.e. necessarily *my* perspective. Experiencing myself as a subject who has the experience is essentially tied to this perspective, as having a first-person perspective entails that experiences automatically appear in my experiential space as my experiences, without me having to reflect upon either on my first-person perspective or the experience itself.

This is most obviously the case with a perceptual experience, such as seeing the sun go down behind the top of the hill. I see this from a perspective that is for me from the first-person, which also means the experience feels as happening to me, or as mine. In other words, the first-person perspective renders me as the subject of experience, a point to which I shall

return below. However, the first-person viewpoint does not only apply to perceptual experiences but to other, non-perceptual states as well. Arguably, conscious experiences are endowed with the first-person perspective, as e.g. I could fear, desire, imagine, feel or remember something, which experience would also be presented to me from the first-person perspective, i.e. as my fear, desire, imagination, feeling or memory of something. (Concerning the trickier case of conscious states which may not possess any phenomenology whatsoever (such as an abstract thought) and therefore potentially no sense of self, I shall say more in the next chapter.) In yet another sense, I experience not just the presumably publicly available world and its contents, but the bodily and mental events taking place within the confines of the first-person perspective as well.

For certain authors (such as Zahavi, 2011 and Albahari, 2006) perspectivity and the ownership that it entails ('perspectival ownership') means that all of the experiences that I have, whether they are perceptual experiences, cognitive states or sensations, appear in a way that is distinctive, i.e. they appear to me in a way that they do not appear to anyone else, i.e. they are subjective.

Thus a very heavily-discussed concept of conscious experience, which I understand as a crucial phenomenal aspect of the first-person perspective is *ownership* or *mineness*. I prefer to make a distinction between 'mineness' and 'ownership' (although more or less the same distinction could also be made between 'perspectival ownership' and 'personal ownership' (Albahari, 2006)). 'Mineness' or perspectival ownership refers to the un-reflected feature of experience that it is an experience for-me. It refers to the *mode* in which an object of experience appears to or is experienced by the subject. All of the different kinds of experiences of different internal or external objects I have entail the sense of 'mineness' in common, understood as the shared aspect that they are experienced by me, from the first-person.

This arguably does not entail that the *objects* of my experience cannot be experienced as public, i.e. available for other perspectives than my own, only that my experiences are only there for me in the first-person mode. For Zahavi (2005, 2011) it is this feature or dimension, i.e. *first-person givenness/mineness* of experiences that is always the same and is common to every conscious experience (and every conscious experience is seen as phenomenally conscious, as I shall explain in Chapter 3), hence identified as the minimal or core self. This means that no other phenomenal features of experience (such as unity or boundary) are

named in order to account for the minimal self. An appealing objection against Zahavi's identification of 'mineness' with (minimal) selfhood/subjectivity is presented from the developmental perspective by Praetorius (2008), who makes two claims relevant for my current discussion. One is that distinguishing between self/non-self is *not* tied to 'mineness' understood as the experience of first-person givenness but to a more personal kind of mineness/ownership:

a one to two year old infant would seem to be perfectly capable of distinguishing between itself and other persons, and to distinguish between what belongs to itself and others, and thus must obviously already have a sense of itself as something distinct from "others". (...) However, if we are to believe the observations from research within developmental psychology (...), the infant's apprehension of (...) ownership of its body and things in a publicly shared world, does not entail recognition by the infant that it is so apprehended from a first-person perspective, that is, it is not the kind of mineness and selfhood which, at a later time, is involved in and characterises first-person givenness of experiences. (2008:6)

I agree with the above point in the sense that to have a sense of self/no-self or that I have a sense of where my experience ends, as it were, does not entail that the objects of experience are presented to me in a certain way which in a basic sense renders the experience as mine. These can be separate features (normally working in an integrated manner) essential for giving a complete picture of what I call the basic sense of self, or the experience of being *a single subject of experience*.

Praetorius' second relevant claim (against Zahavi) states that neither entertaining nor experiencing any of the different phenomenal dimensions or modes of experiences (i.e. what he understands by 'perspectival mineness') does by itself entail the apprehension of subjectivity of experiences. Thus, however else it comes about, it is not until the child can apprehend that her 'point of view' may differ from those of other, and furthermore, that he or she has unique access to his or her experiences that it makes any sense to ascribe to the child first-person givenness of experiences, and thus subjectivity of experiences with a built-in experiential self-reference.

While it is not necessary for me to follow Praetorius' line of thought about whether awareness of or access to experiences is what grants the first-person givenness or 'mineness' thereof, as my enquiry focuses on 'full-blown' subjects of experience (who are already

‘equipped’ with all of the aspects of the basic sense of self) and not infants, I aimed to show above that while the sense of mineness is a legitimate and essential concept to describe a feature of the basic sense of self as long as it refers to perspectival ownership and hence the first-person perspective, it is *not* sufficient to describe all of the aspects which contribute to the experience of myself as the single subject who undergoes experiences. By contrast, what I call ‘ownership’ is connected to more elaborate levels of identification with and appropriation of thoughts, actions or even our personality traits (about which I shall say more in detail in Chapter 5). These acts, which take place at the reflective level, are not indicated here to have a role in the basic sense of self.

Zahavi for one also identifies the first-person perspective or ‘mode of givenness’ with what he calls ‘mineness’ and names this dimension of experience as the holder of selfhood. In addition, he identifies subjectivity with the first-person perspective. Importantly, the perspectival nature of a perceptual experience is not merely that *I* experience it. Rather, the object reveals itself in a certain way when viewed from the first-person perspective, which in turn renders it being not just about the subject, but also about the object in that objects appear different when viewed from different perspectives. This also implies that as my first-person perspective changes (as e.g. I walk behind the chair that is in front of me now), the object is revealed to me from a new angle, from which it is perceived differently. So while the experience of the chair is ‘mine’ in Zahavi’s sense, the object is revealed to me from different perspectives.

Obviously, the nature and implications of having a first-person perspective could be the subject of a separate and lengthy discussion. Issues concerning the notion of the first-person perspective include whether having a first-person perspective presupposes self-consciousness or any act of reflection. Importantly, my inclusion of the point of view and mineness in the essential aspects of the basic sense of self resonates the emphasis of Phenomenology on the first-person perspective in subjective experience, as necessarily, I experience being the subject of experience from a first-person viewpoint.

Another phenomenal feature of this usual experience is that whilst I am walking, I have occurrent thoughts about the strudel place I am about to get to, I may have memories of it from before which are accompanied by feelings of joy or contentment. I may also be feeling hungry or tired and generally relaxed or immersed in the colours of the leaves on the oak trees along the path. I have all of these perceptual states, sensations and cognitive and

conative states at the same time, and there is a sense of *unity* among the different contents of my consciousness, the view of the woods, the smells, the thoughts and the emotions, which also seems to be an essential element in the basic sense of self. This unity is meant in the sense that the experiences are had by me, the subject, simultaneously. In order to highlight the sense that I have of the unity of the different states I am the subject of, we can think of an example where I am subject to simultaneous things but without these forming a unity, such as being subject to rules or regulations (e.g. as a driver, a certain set of laws apply to me but as a PhD student, the regulations of my university do) without an accompanying sense of unity among these. When I undergo perceptual, emotional etc. experiences however, I sense that these are all had at the same time by the same subject, i.e. in unity.

A possible counter-example to the sense of unity may be when I am busy doing something such as cooking in my kitchen but I go through the process almost automatically and my mind is somewhere completely different, as it were. In this case, the example goes, I could feel like my perceptual experience of the room that I am in and my thoughts are not in unity in that they take up different experiential spaces or are even separated from each other in time. In this case I would argue that, although my thoughts are not focused on the space I am in or the activity I am carrying out, in a basic or implicit sense this still represents a case of simultaneous experiences which are parts of the same experiential time and space. I still literally see the cooking ingredients and kitchen tools and smell the vegetables I am preparing at the same time as I think about a distant place for example but my attention here is focused more on the contents of my occurrent thought than on what it is right in front of me. Both of these are placed within the same experiential space and experienced simultaneously, it is just that this experiential space allows for attention to be paid to different contents unevenly, i.e. it may highlight a specific content or object whilst leaving everything else (perceptual contents, sensations, emotions etc.) in the shade, as it were. (I shall also say more about the structure of a conscious experience and attention in the following chapter.) This however does not entail that the experiences I undergo are not felt implicitly to be in synchronic and spatial unity. (I would also venture to think that the case of mind-wandering has a phenomenal character which allows the subject to know that it is only ‘as if’ she was not where she is, seeing and hearing what she actually does.)

Another aspect of the function of unity is to provide *individuality*, i.e. the sense that unity creates singularity. Once experiences are organised into a unified whole, this unity also becomes *one* single whole. In virtue of this fact, it is distinguishable from the rest of the

world and other ‘unities’ and so it is countable or rather, individuated. The sense of self then by virtue of including unity, also includes individuality in the sense of singularity (not to be confused with individuality meant in the more complex, psychological sense, referring to the fact that we are the individuals we are, with specific character traits, thoughts and attitudes which distinguish us from other people. I shall say more on this in Chapter 5.) This sense of experiential unity enables me to implicitly (on a basic level) distinguish myself from the environment and from others⁵, i.e. along with unity, there is a function which serves the purpose of sensing self as different from non-self. I sense that the leaves, trees, even the air I breathe and the other people are not-me.

Fourthly, and connected to the above features, there is also a sense of *boundary* I have. I do not just mean the bodily boundaries of a person here but rather the sense that ‘my experience ends there’. I implicitly sense that my experiential ‘space’ as it were only extends to a certain point (which will also be of interest in the discussion of the sense of the body) and not beyond that, e.g. I sense that my feeling of sadness only extends to my conscious contents etc. and not beyond, not to another person or the air for example. Importantly, this does not directly imply knowledge of self/no-self. An analogy to this understanding is that I may know which country I live in and which one I do not, but this still does not mean that I know the borders of the country I live in.

To recap, the *prima facie* elements of the ‘basic sense of self’, i.e. *perspective and mineness, unity, individuality* and *boundary* are divided up here on phenomenological and conceptual grounds and in a way that does not imply in any important sense that these are not highly interconnected and operate jointly in a subject’s normal experience.

2.2. Further central concepts of the subject’s experience

Including the elements I listed above, there are also a number of other commonly employed philosophical concepts which are central to describing a subject’s conscious experience as well as the sense of self. I shall now examine these in light of my characterisations above and of the roles I ascribe to them in contributing to the basic sense of self.

⁵ this point is arguably also crucial for developmental psychologists in order to determine whether newborns have a sense of self. (Rochat, 2004)

i. 'subjectivity':

I do not aim to give a complete overview or analysis of the vast usages of the term 'subjectivity', but instead to consider a few interpretations that seem closest to relating it to self-experience. These are: ipseity, titularity/ownership, privileged access and tonality.

In fact, Ronald de Sousa (1999) for one provides a summary of no less than twelve different meanings philosophers have ascribed to the term 'subjectivity' and due to the incredibly rich understanding of the concept in the philosophy of mind, it may be useful to think of it as a comprehensive one.

It would probably be a rather futile enterprise to try to rid subjectivity of its associations with the other aspects of the sense of self that I take into account, such as point of view or perspective. The grammatical root of the term is of course also of interest, as it is the *subject* whose experience is at issue in the first place.

The assumption is that the experience of selfhood (in the basic sense of being a subject that perceives, senses, feels and acts in the world as well as in the elaborate sense of being an autonomous individual with a particular psychological set-up and a certain history) is implicitly embedded in certain non-reflective and reflective aspects of our everyday experiences.

Subjectivity understood as the subjective character of experience is often closely related to the phenomenal character of experience. 'Phenomenal' here means that there is something it is like to have the experience. Nagel (1974) famously claimed that all conscious experiences possess what-it-is-likeness, which for him is identical to subjective character. On the level of experience, subjectivity refers to 'experience with a point of view', but the point of view may not be of a single subject for him. Subjective character is constituted by the so-called 'what-it-is-likeness' of the experience for the subject who has them, often interpreted as the qualitative character of the experience. 'Subjective' here however does *not* denote a reading that relates to the privacy of experience. In discussing his points about what it is like to be a bat, which is something inaccessible and inconceivable for us, humans, the point of view Nagel specifies is not one accessible only to a single individual. As he points out, it is a type:

There is a sense in which phenomenological facts are perfectly objective: one person can know or say of another what the quality of the other's experience is. They are

subjective, however, in the sense that even this objective ascription of experience is possible only for someone sufficiently similar to the object of ascription to be able to adopt his point of view — to understand the ascription in the first person as well as in the third, so to speak. (1974:5)

Another and different purpose subjectivity can have is to grant a type of unique character to experiences or states of consciousness that one has. This unique character for Zahavi (2005), who is following the footsteps of Husserl is granted by the first-person access one has to objects through her experience. ‘Access’ here is not meant to be a reflective notion but one that is constituted by the experience and it boils down to the givenness of the object to the subject as perceived, imagined, etc. As he says, ‘experiential properties are not properties like red or bitter; they are properties pertaining to these various types of access’. This line of thought brings subjectivity very close to the issue of first-person perspective in that my experience of or access to an object is in the first-person mode only to *me*. In this way it is the point of view that I have which makes my experience subjective for the reason that it entails a ‘primitive experiential self-referentiality’ (2005:122).

Zahavi points out that the ‘what it is like’ question has two readings, namely ‘what is the object like for the subject’ and ‘what is the experience of the object like for the subject’ but these can only be separated on a conceptual level, not on an experiential one. The experiential properties are of *both* the object and the experience of the object. As opposed to publicly available and perceivable objects, experiences are accessible ‘in a unique way from the very same first-person perspective they help constitute’ (2005:123)

Once we emphasise the qualitative character / what-it-is-likeness of not just the content or the object of experience (whereby ‘content’ and ‘object’ are synonymous), we can turn to the mode in which the content in question is perceived, or in other words how it is there *for me* (Farkas, 2008), e.g. it is a qualitatively different experience to hear a Beethoven symphony to hearing a punk rock number, but it is also different to *hear* a symphony as opposed to reading the notes on a sheet of music. How does the qualitative character of experiencing the same object change when perceived by different subjects? Is my experience of reading the notes of a symphony different to someone else’s reading the same notes? Arguably yes, as a composer would probably have to think a lot less about which note corresponds to which sound, which would make his experience more of an unbroken flow. This may be an example that is not sufficiently simple and may imply prior conditioning (as the composer is formally trained and

accustomed to read the notes flowingly), but the fact that the same content or object is experienced but has a different what-it-is-likeness due to *how* it is experienced by each subject still stands, which renders these experiences subjective to the person who reads the notes. If we take the phenomenological view, it will not be plausible to think of two exactly alike experiences, such as two numerically different but qualitatively identical perceptual experiences of a large white wall. These seemingly identical experiences will still be distinguishable by the fact that they are had by two distinct subjects with different first-person accesses to the experience of the same object. ‘Subjectivity’ in its most self-evident understanding refers to this, i.e. different points of view from which the world is perceived.

The above example admittedly implies the non-basic level, whereby subjectivity also involves separating the issue of epistemic access to experiences or mental states from that of being the owner of these. Katalin Farkas takes such a view in her account of ‘the subject’s point of view’ and says that in her understanding, subjectivity relies on ‘a certain cognitive capacity’ and not on perspectival ownership that we have in a special way. Her characterisation of subjectivity seems similar to Zahavi’s in making reference to the certain way things are there *for me* but for her, it is ‘the knowledge we can acquire about the perspectival facts and in virtue of this we also gain prima facie authority over others in these’ (Farkas 2008:31), whereas for Zahavi it is simply the ‘mineness’ or first-person dimension of experience on a minimal level, which ultimately renders their views as rather different in kind.

‘Subjectivity’ in my understanding should capture the difference in terms of what it is like for me to be in a certain state or to experience something as opposed to what it is like for another person. Whether this difference boils down purely to different points of view, or a cognitive capacity or reflective states, my theory can remain neutral about. In characterising the basic sense of self I make no reference to ‘subjectivity’, instead I refer to ‘individuality’ and ‘boundary’, which are hopefully sufficient to describe how the experience of being a subject is of a single point of view.

ii. ‘ipseity’

To make matters more complicated, there have been two different traditions of the use of the term ‘ipseity’; one that comes from Continental Phenomenology and refers to ‘selfhood’.

Consciousness at the very fundamental level is characterised by ‘self-givenness’ or ipseity in Sartre’s (and other Phenomenologists’) terminology:

The ego is far from being the personalising pole of a consciousness, which, without it, would remain in the impersonal stage; on the contrary, it is consciousness in its fundamental ipseity, which, under certain conditions, allows the appearance of the ego as the transcendent phenomenon of that ipseity. (Zahavi, 2005:115)

‘Iipseity’ was a crucial notion to Sartre’s theory. It is a basic characteristic of pre-reflective consciousness. It is the so-called self-givenness or self-referentiality:

‘pre-reflective consciousness is self-consciousness. It is this same notion of self which must be studied, for it defines the very being of consciousness’ (ibid.)

When speaking of self-consciousness as a permanent feature of consciousness, he did not refer to reflective self-consciousness. Reflection is the process whereby consciousness directs its intentional aim at itself, thereby taking itself as its own object. Sartre considered the self-consciousness in question to be pre-reflective. It is not an addendum to, but a constitutive element of the experience. (Zahavi, 2011)

As a theoretical successor of Sartre in many respects, Zahavi names ‘ipseity’ as what makes experiences belong to the same subject over time, much like a thread that holds a string of different pearls together. Selfhood or subjectivity in his view is the same as mineness or the first-person viewpoint, as we have seen. However, even if one decides to grant Zahavi the role of subjectivity as the diachronic unifier of experiences, whether subjectivity can also unify different experiences in a synchronic manner is not evident. As I said in the previous section, I do not derive *all* of the phenomenal features of the basic sense of self from one feature, that is mineness.

On the other hand, an alternative use of the term ‘ipseity’ follows papers by H.-N. Castaneda (1989) and John Perry (1979), who, in discussing the problem of the ‘essential indexical’ (such as ‘I’, ‘here’, ‘now’ etc.) point out that referring to myself involves more in cognitive terms than simply referring to the person who happens to be me.⁶

⁶ Perry’s contention is that locating beliefs are essentially indexical. He establishes this by showing that neither the “traditional” theory of belief (‘The Doctrine of Propositions’), nor a non-traditional theory of *de re* belief can properly account for locating beliefs.

The first of his famous examples is that of John, who believes that the shopper with a torn bag of sugar is making a mess in the shop. But he does not rearrange his cart, he just keeps walking around the store, trying unsuccessfully to catch up. Then he makes the sudden realization that *he* is the shopper with a torn sack and so he acquires a new belief, as he puts it: ‘*I am making a mess.*’

He gives three examples altogether, all of which contain uses of indexicals that Perry argues are ineliminable in each case, the speaker’s belief cannot be expressed in language that does not contain indexicals. These are what Perry calls *locating beliefs*, i.e. beliefs about where one is, when it is, and who one is.

In this sense ‘ipseity’ means self-reference, or self-recognition, which occurs when a person uses ‘I’ to refer to himself as the subject (as opposed to being the object) of a particular experience or a certain act. Importantly, this may imply more refined acts of introspection, which means it cannot be implicated as an aspect of my basic sense of self. Although ‘ipseity’ is not included in my list of elements of the basic sense self, its application as ‘selfhood’ is an important descriptive concept of subjective experience in Phenomenology.

2.3. Terminology of the ‘sense of self’

There are two different meanings attributed to the ‘sense of self’ in the relevant literature one can encounter most often. Thereby we can refer to

i.) the linguistic sense:

In this sense we want to know what an understanding of the first person pronoun ‘I’ contributes to the understanding of a sentence involving ‘I’. To answer this question is, in José Bermúdez’s (2008) reading, to give an account of the sense of ‘I’. ‘Sense’ here is understood as Frege used it, i.e. correlative to the notion of understanding. However interesting and informative this endeavour may be, it is not what I am after in my discussion, as it does not take us any closer to understanding the *experience* of being the subject of experience. Consequently, someone could answer the question about how the meaning of the pronoun contributes to the meaning of a sentence involving it, but the question of what the sense of self is would remain open.

ii.) *self-awareness*:

‘Sense’ in this reading is synonymous to ‘awareness’ or ‘consciousness’ and this is the most often employed use of the expression ‘sense of self’. This is a somewhat misleading terminology though, as many of the ways in which we are supposed to be aware of ourselves are said to be ‘pre-reflective’, ‘pre-noetic’ and ‘non-conscious’ and, as I shall argue in Chapter 6, a strong reading of ‘awareness’ i.e. one that is limited to the dimensions of reflection, attention and control is *not* the most useful one when reading phenomenological accounts of how we experience ourselves/our bodies. In this sense the concept of self-awareness would wind up excluding some of its supposed constituents, which is absurd. This is also a reason to prefer the term ‘sense’ as it reflects the rather subtle ways in which we have experience of self. To press this point further (and because virtually no one separates the concept of ‘sense of self’ from the concept of ‘self-awareness’ in the literature), let me illustrate it with a simple example that brings out the potential difference (and in Chapter 6 I shall argue that a more allowing definition of ‘awareness’, which makes it synonymous with my reading of ‘sense’ is justified and should be accepted from the viewpoint of the taxonomy of bodily awareness as well):

I can be said to have a sense of time, as in I can implicitly ‘tell’ when I need to get up or leave home for my class without having to look at the clock. On the other hand, if I oversleep and get up really late, someone can ask me ‘are you aware what the time is?’ as in, ‘have you seen a clock?’, ‘do you *realise* what time it is?’.

In the first example I do not need to be aware of what the time is (and facilitate this by looking at the clock), precisely because *I have a sense*, a certain experience (which is not a case of explicit knowledge) of when I need to get going and mostly get it right.

In the second case however, I completely lack a *sense of* time, as I have no idea when I should have got out of bed and it is only the awareness of the actual time (which I informed about from somewhere and counts as a case of explicit knowledge) that makes me hurry up.

The analogy suggests that I can have a more subtle, implicit sense of self without being explicitly (linguistically, reflectively) aware of (my)self.

I admit that the discussion of awareness should not be closed here and that an extended account of the types of awareness philosophers provide in their discussions about self-consciousness may be called for but this will have to be put off until the discussion of

conscious experience and then bodily awareness. I shall discuss the types of consciousness of mental states in Chapter 3 and analyse these from the perspective of the basic sense of self, and I shall turn to the type of consciousness that we can plausibly use to characterise bodily awareness in Chapter 6. My simple and preliminary point here was to show that the meaning of the term ‘sense’ (as long as we deploy a strict meaning of ‘awareness’) should not be equated with ‘awareness’ as it highlights the phenomenal nature of being conscious of something.

When I use the expression ‘sense of self’, I refer to *experience*, the subtle experience of being an experiencer, i.e. the subject who acts and perceives the world and her own states.

The above interpretation of the expression ‘sense of self’ is not something that is widely resonated in the literature, at least not without compelling one to take an *impersonal* view of self-experience. Therefore, and to understand my terminology better, we can borrow the description of perceiving objects by so-called ‘adverbial theories’. One of the advantages of these theories is that they do justice to the phenomenology of experience without commitment to the ‘metaphysical excesses’ of other theories such as the sense-datum theory, one version of which (by Moore, 1913) postulates the independent existence of sense-data, i.e. the object of experience, that which is *given* to the senses and which is not identical to the ordinary physical object.

In order to avoid having to postulate the existence of ontologically questionable non-material sense data, adverbial theories suggest that when there is no actual physical object being perceived (as is the case in illusions for example) it

is really not a case of perception, or of any other kind of consciousness, of an object at all, whether of the object we ordinarily take it to have (a material thing) or of any other object (e.g. a sense-datum). It is really a case of someone’s being in a state of consciousness that has a certain nonrelational (whether sortal or qualitative) characteristic. (Butchvarov, 1997:264)

This characteristic of perception is expressed, rather than in terms of objects to which our perceptual acts are directed, by *adverbs* modifying the verb which is used to express the state of consciousness, such as ‘sensing’. Therefore, canonical descriptions of perceptual experiences employ adverbial modifications of the perceptual verbs: instead of describing an experience as someone’s ‘visually sensing a green ball’, the theory says that they are

‘visually sensing greenly and ball-ly’. This is why this approach is called ‘adverbial theory’, but it is important to underline that it is more a theory about the phenomenal character of experience itself than it is a semantic analysis of sentences describing experience, or the semantics of perceptual verbs. (ibid.)

If we apply the logic of adverbial theories to the sense of self, we could say that we experience *selfly* but this or the reality of the experience has no consequences for whether the experience is *of a self* that exists over and above the experience. This experience can be articulated in a number of ways and at different levels of complexity, however it can also be said to have a basic reading, referring to the experience of being a unified subject with relatively clearly defined experiential borders, who is situated in the world and has a perspective on it.

2.4. Phenomenological versions of the ‘minimal self’

As I stated in the first chapter, along with a number of phenomenologists (such as Zahavi and Gallagher), I also argue that there are different, distinguishable experiential levels of the sense of self. There are various ways to conceive of the different ‘selves’ or senses of self on the level of phenomenology (normally thought of in terms of so-called ‘pre-reflective’ and reflective levels of experience, about which I shall say more in what follows) as well as neurobiology (in terms of specific areas of the brain), and there are also attempts to link the phenomenological levels to the neurobiological ones, as is shown in the table below:⁷

Level	Experience	Phenomenology	(Neurobiology)
3	Reflective	Narrative self,	Autobiographical,
2		Reflective, extended	Extended self
1	Pre-reflective	Minimal, basic self (ipseity)	Core self
			Proto self

⁷ source: Nelson et al. (2009:808) (My brackets, due to the lack of necessity of a discussion of the neurobiological levels here.)

From the viewpoint of phenomenology, experience is split into two levels here; the pre-reflective level implies that no ‘higher-order’ reflection, linguistic formulation or explicit knowledge of the self occurs. The reflective level on the other hand involves more developed experience such as cognitive states and reflective attitudes towards oneself and expression in language.

The ‘minimal’ self is presented as occurring on the pre-reflective level, as the fundamental ‘ipseity’ or ‘mineness’ of experience. The narrative or reflective self however denotes a full-blown level of experience, whereby the subject is aware of herself *qua* a self, can reflect on her own actions and thoughts and forms her life into a meaningful narrative (which I shall argue in Chapter 5 is *not* necessary for having a developed sense self form my theory).

As I mentioned in the previous section, most discussions of the sense of self refer to questions about how we are aware of ourselves in experience, i.e. whether there is *a* self that we are aware of that is *separate from* the experience itself or whether the experience becomes aware of itself, without this necessitating an entity or a so-called Kantian ‘pure identity-pole’, viz. and ego that unifies experiences from without, as it were.

The Kantian view amounts to the claim that while there are a variety of different experiences I undergo at any moment in time (such as now, when I see the screen, hear the cat meowing and smell someone’s cooking), what is constant and pulls experiences together both at a time and through time is the self. The self stands *apart from* and above the stream of experiences and is able to structure and organise these. Besides, the ego (self) makes it possible to distinguish between different streams of consciousness, i.e. individuates them and renders them personal. The sense of self refers to awareness of such a subject.⁸

On the other hand, if one takes the early Sartrean view, one will agree that self-awareness is not awareness *of* an ego or a subject, as this way we would make a distinction between the experience and the subject of said experience, which raises the issue of why the ego’s experience should count as self-awareness.

Sartre, in his short book entitled *La transcendance de l’ego* (*The transcendence of the Ego*) discusses whether consciousness is to be found after a reduction to be presided over by a (transcendental) ego. He argues that if we are absorbed in a certain experience, our search for

⁸ These views may also be collected under the general term ‘egological’

the ego will always fail to find any such thing, that is the ego is not an element within the contents of our consciousness, which is a fundamentally Humean claim (i shall return to in Chapter 3). This is because the ego essentially involves moving away from the experience and reflecting thereon. Even in this case however, the ego is not the subject, but the object of the experience. In fact, Sartre says that consciousness unifies *itself*. In other words, the stream of consciousness is not integrated by an external ego or principle.⁹ However each stream of consciousness is considered different or personal, regarding which he notes that:

the individuality of consciousness evidently stems from the nature of consciousness. Consciousness (like Spinoza's substance) can only be limited by itself. Thus, it constitutes a synthetic and individual totality entirely isolated from other totalities of the same type, and the *I* can evidently be only an *expression* (rather than a condition) of this incommunicability and inwardness of consciousnesses. (1957:38)

Sartre qualifies this absolute and inward form of consciousness *unreflected* and says that the 'I' would in fact tear it apart. When speaking of self-consciousness as a permanent feature of consciousness, he did not refer to *reflective* self-consciousness. Reflection is the process whereby consciousness directs its intentional aim at itself, thereby taking itself as its own object. Sartre considered the self-consciousness in question to be pre-reflective, meaning that it is not an addendum to, but a constitutive moment of the experience. (Zahavi, 2011)

As Zahavi (2008) explains, the ego emerges when we adopt an objectifying attitude towards consciousness, in which case the ego is still the object and not the subject of reflection. When the ego is examined, it is seen 'as the ego of another', i.e. I take a perspective that is external to my consciousness. (It is important to note that Sartre decided to review and modify this view later on and went on to state how it is that the unreflected/pre-reflective level of consciousness manages to remain, not just single but *personal*.) Consciousness at the very fundamental level is characterised by 'self-givenness' or ipseity in Sartre's (and other phenomenologists') terminology:

The ego is far from being the personalising pole of a consciousness, which, without it, would remain in the impersonal stage; on the contrary, it is consciousness in its

⁹ Such a view may be called 'non-egological'.

fundamental ipseity, which, under certain conditions, allows the appearance of the ego as the transcendent phenomenon of that ipseity. (Zahavi, 2008:115)

Sartre's conviction was that the self, understood as ipseity has to be investigated on a par with experience. The minimal (or core) sense of self can be identified with the pre-reflective sense of ownership (or 'mineness'). This means that the minimal, experiential self that is arguably void of temporality or any kind of complexity in terms of narrativity is strongly linked to the mineness of experience. This self, in opposition to the Kantian ego or any self that is separate from the stream of consciousness is actually an 'integral part of the structure' of consciousness. (Zahavi 2008:125) The self is experienced in every instance of acquaintance of the first-person mode of presentation of experience (which is every experience).

Consequently, the issue of self-awareness is settled in a way that does not require the positing of a 'free-standing' self, but 'self-awareness is always the self-awareness of a world-immersed self. The self is present to itself precisely and indeed only when worldly engaged.' (ibid.) The self is not the subject of experience but better understood as the *subjectivity* of experience.

Since the phenomenological levels of the minimal self (which are *not* identical to my concept of the basic *sense of* self) indicate parts of experience which do not appear in and of themselves in everyday experience but as integrated with the autobiographical and reflective levels, the capturing of an instance of everyday experience and analysing the phenomenal features thereof that may constitute the basic sense of self is a worthwhile enterprise. I understand 'basic' in both positive and negative terms, i.e. it is the sense of being the subject of experience and it does not require a developed, elaborate and reflective sense of the individual or personality that I am.

2.5. Conclusion

In this chapter I introduced the notion of the basic sense of self and turned to an instance of everyday experience in order to see which experiential elements thereof may constitute the basic sense of self. I named *perspective* or *mineness*, *the sense of unity*, *individuality* and the *sense of experiential boundary* as the essential aspects of the basic sense of self and then

clarified the meaning of other central concepts deployed in describing a subject's conscious experience. I explained what I mean by 'sense' and referred to adverbial theories of perception to support my understanding of 'experiencing *selfly*' without ascribing a metaphysical role to the self. I also presented phenomenological views which describe the 'minimal' self. In the next chapter I shall analyse the consciousness of experience and how it may entail the basic sense of self from the point of view of phenomenology.

Chapter 3. The basic sense of self in conscious experience

After the description of the essential phenomenal aspects of experience which constitute the basic sense of self, I shall now extend my analysis to include the concept of ‘conscious experience’ and examine what this entails in terms of phenomenal consciousness on the one hand and how the sense of self may be built into an instance of conscious experience on the other. I intend to give a plausible explanation as to how the basic sense of self can be found in every conscious experience a subject undergoes.

One of the crucial questions we cannot avoid considering when aiming to give a phenomenological description of the basic sense of self is whether this self-experience features in every episode of consciousness. In other words, is it the case that whenever I experience something I also somehow experience being the subject? In the Phenomenological discussions as well as in the relevant pieces of philosophy of mind literature, this question is asked in either one of the following ways: ‘Am I always aware of myself in conscious experience?’ or, more impersonally-formed: ‘Is there self-awareness in every conscious experience?’. These two questions provide the twofold framework (that is, conscious experience and self-awareness in a conscious state) of my following discussion.

In line with this, I shall begin this chapter by presenting the notion of ‘consciousness’ and break it down by applying Block’s (1995) original distinction into phenomenal and access conscious states. I expand on the notion of phenomenology understood as the experiential aspect of a conscious state and examine the combinations of phenomenally- and access-conscious states (such as states which are *both* phenomenally and access-conscious and which only possess one or the other) with respect to whether they can entail the basic sense of self.

In the second part of the chapter (from 3.3. onwards) I shall explain how the structure of a conscious experience/state may allow for the basic sense of self to be built within it, without necessitating a higher-order or so-called ‘monitoring’ state.

3.1. Consciousness and the basic sense of self

The question I posed above regarding the relationship of the sense of self to conscious experience could evidently serve as the subject matter of a separate doctoral dissertation, and since it only covers a relatively limited portion of mine, I have to note that my purpose here is not to place knock-down arguments regarding self-experience in consciousness. Neither do I have the space or need to enlist and analyse most of the literature written on the subject of self-consciousness. Rather, my, potentially partially incomplete aim here is to take a look at some of the relevant theories of conscious states and how awareness of the self may be part of conscious experience and to use these insights for giving my own account of the basic sense of self.

I aim to support the claim that it is plausible to think that the basic sense of self (or self-awareness, as it is commonly coined in the consciousness literature) is present in any conscious experience without it having to be represented by another mental state. I do this by considering a number of ways philosophers have conceived of the structure of awareness and an awareness of the self within it. I shall propose that the subject's being aware of being in a conscious state is to be understood in phenomenal terms, whereby being aware may be a rather subtle, focus-less experience instead of full-blown higher-order awareness, and that, in line with this, the 'of' in 'being aware of the self' only denotes a linguistic formulation of being aware and not an experiential reality, wherein awareness of self can actually occur within the same state of consciousness.

Before tapping into the details of self-awareness on a basic and hence unreflected level in conscious experience, we need to draw up a conceptual map of the vastly rich concept of consciousness. This is necessary for two reasons; one is that my central focus is on the structure of awareness and an account of awareness is not viable without at least an introductory interpretation of 'consciousness', and secondly, I am going to consider whether *conscious* experience has among its constituents a sense of self, which requires that I clarify what 'conscious' refers to in this discussion.

Firstly, we can draw a line between 'creature consciousness' and 'mental state consciousness' (Rosenthal, 2002). 'Creature consciousness' simply refers to the property of consciousness of an organism or a human being or person, whereas 'mental-state consciousness' refers to the property of being conscious of a mental state that is had by such a creature or person. Within

creature consciousness, we can make another distinction between ‘transitive’ and ‘intransitive’ consciousness, whereby consciousness *simpliciter* is intransitive, as it does not have any objects. In contrast, transitive consciousness is always consciousness *of* something, be it a thought of Easter, or seeing a rose bush in the garden etc.

I shall place the basic sense of self within the sub-categories of mental-state consciousness.

3.1.1. Phenomenal- and access-consciousness

Since my overall discussion is framed by an enquiry into whether there may be a basic sense of self that characterises all of our experiences, I shall first establish whether the sense of self in question should be restricted to experiences that are regarded as *phenomenally conscious* states.

The states I take to possess phenomenology or what-it-is-likeness in general, i.e. are phenomenally conscious are the following:

Firstly, I take perceptual states to have phenomenology, i.e. there is something it is like to see those trees in the woods, to hear the birds chirping on them and to smell the dry leaves and take them in my hands if I pick some off the ground.

Secondly, I take sensations such as pain, feelings of hunger, thirst or hotness, coldness etc. to be phenomenally conscious as well, i.e. there is something it is like to be in these states.

Emotions also seem to have phenomenal character, as they are mostly¹⁰ associated with certain feelings, and it seems obvious that there is something it is like to experience these (e.g. sadness, anger, disgust, disappointment, excitement, pleasure etc.).

A less easily decidable question is whether abstract thoughts, beliefs and other purely cognitive states have phenomenal character. Is there something it is like to think that e.g. Jogging is exhausting? I may have the accompanying feeling of laziness or tiredness accompanying this judgment, which certainly does have phenomenal character, but the

¹⁰ But arguably not all emotions have an accompanying feeling, depending on one’s specific and preferred theory of emotions. Some of the more complex emotions may have the emphasis on a certain judgment or appraisal of a situation.

content of the thought itself may lack phenomenology. It seems evident that beliefs that are not occurrent in consciousness necessarily lack phenomenal character, e.g. I believe that Deák tér is three stops on metro line M2 from the Moszkva tér (which I also believe has been renamed), but as long as I am not asked to think about this (i.e. cause it to become conscious), there is nothing it is like to experience this belief. Zahavi (2005) explains that Husserl took conscious thoughts to be experiential episodes, and the cognitive differences between our attitudes towards the different contents e.g. *doubting* that the elections will go smoothly, *judging* that the elections will go smoothly or *hoping* that the elections will go smoothly amount to experiential differences due to the two-fold conviction of his that each of these cognitive attitudes has their own phenomenal character along with each of the contents (so it is different to think that ‘snow is white’ than to think that ‘the sky is blue’). This experiential difference is not a sensory but a cognitive one (Zahavi, 2005 and Strawson, 1994), as is showcased by the difference in the experience of someone who listens to a sentence uttered in a language one does not understand and someone who speaks the language and also understands it.

A straightforward argument in favour of the phenomenal nature of cognitive states comes from Pitt (2004) in the following form:

(P3) If a mental state is conscious, then it has phenomenal properties

(P2) Conscious thoughts are conscious mental states; therefore,

(P1) Conscious thoughts have phenomenal properties. (2004:2)

As opposed to Husserl and Zahavi however, he does not even partly rely on the experiential difference between (propositional) attitudes towards contents but claims that

Thinking a thought is like having a pain, in the sense that the thinking and the having are not something in addition to the mere occurrence of the states. Hence, thinking (in the sense of entertaining) is not a propositional attitude, but merely a having-in-mind. (Compare thinking a thought (entertaining a content) and having a pain with, respectively, believing the thought (content) and disliking the pain.) (ibid.)

Pitt argues that even if we concede that (P3) is trivially true (which he goes on to say may not be obvious as unconscious phenomenal states are conceivable, but this point seems *prima*

facie implausible) due to the analytic entailment that ‘there is something it is like to be in it’ by ‘conscious’, this does not make it untrue. (P2) is also true, and the argument is valid, which means that (P1) must also be true.

But ‘consciousness’ and ‘phenomenal (consciousness)’ may be different concepts after all, which may compromise the truth of (P3). As we will see below, we may encounter states that are not phenomenally conscious but can be called conscious in a different sense nevertheless. It is plausible that conscious cognitive states such as thoughts, expectations or judgments are phenomenally conscious *overall*, but this may be due to the experience or what-is-it-likeness that they possess in virtue of entailing different *attitudes* to different contents and not because the content itself must possess phenomenology. As I shall explain in what follows, phenomenally conscious states are necessary *and* sufficient for holding the basic sense of self.

The relevant distinction between different types of conscious states was originally drawn between *phenomenal consciousness* and *access consciousness* by Ned Block (1995) and naturally has been subject to debate ever since. The distinction is grounded in the idea that the phenomenal properties of consciousness are of a different character to the cognitive, intentional or functional properties of consciousness. For Block, and I tend to agree with him, the phenomenal properties of consciousness are experiential or ‘P-conscious’ properties:

The totality of the experiential properties of a state are "what it is like" to have it. Moving from synonyms to examples, we have P-conscious states when we see, hear, smell, taste, and have pains. P-conscious properties include the experiential properties of sensations, feelings, and perceptions (...) (1995:4)

Block also includes thoughts, desires and emotions. While I think it is evident that emotions possess experiential properties, the case of desires is less straightforward. A desire-state such as ‘I wish to smoke’ may involve accompanying bodily or emotional states which entail phenomenal properties, but the desire and its content itself, once stripped of all other kinds of states (emotions, sensations etc.), may lack phenomenology.

On the other hand, we have *access consciousness* (A-consciousness). This *non-phenomenal* category of consciousness captures the tasks involved in cognition, representation and the control of behaviour. A state is A-conscious if it is poised to be used for the direct *rational* control of thought and action. For a state to be A-conscious, it is not enough for that state to

be available for use, it should be '*poised*' and ready to go. Block suggests that we may have many representations of facts available for use if somehow re-activated, but their availability does not make them A-conscious. For example, my knowledge of how many stops Moszkva tér is away from Deák tér is available to me, but this information is not A-conscious because it is not yet '*poised for the control of behaviour*'. (1997:376) Block also believes that A-Consciousness and P-Consciousness mostly occur together but he also discusses cases in which they may not.

One question is whether cognitive states, such as occurrent thoughts or judgments like the one above about going jogging can be conscious but non-phenomenally conscious. Block says that cognitive states such as thoughts and desires are also P-conscious, i.e. there are no '*purely*' cognitive states. But what is it about them that makes them P-conscious? One possibility, he says is that '*it is just a series of mental images or subvocalizations*'. Another possibility is that '*the contents themselves have a P-conscious aspect independently of their vehicles*.' (1995:245). As I pointed out above however, we may conceive of cognitive contents such as '*two plus two equals four*' as those which possess phenomenology in terms of the attitude taken towards them (such as fearing that, hoping that, remembering that, etc.). This means that there will be no *phenomenal* difference between remembering that '*2+2=4*' and that '*3+1=4*', but there will be a difference between remembering that '*2+2=4*' and hoping that '*3+1=4*'.

On the basis of what I have said so far, the possible combinations of the types of consciousness a mental state can have are summarised in Table 2.) below:

	P-conscious	A-conscious
a)	Yes	Yes
b)	No	Yes
c)	Yes	No
d)	No	No

Table 2.) Possible combinations of P-conscious and A-conscious states

a) and d) (which indicates wholly unconscious states) both seem uncontroversial and some authors also accept b), i.e. that there are access-conscious states that lack phenomenal consciousness (though Block himself is an exception). Those who argue for the existence of

such states point to blindsight patients. These subjects have some variety of visual impairment and claim that they are not able to *see* (i.e. be phenomenally conscious of) the object placed within the blind field of their vision. However, they can still carry out tasks related to these if prompted to do so, such as grabbing them in a way (i.e. by making preparatory hand and finger movements that suit the object)¹¹ that suggests that they indeed have informational access to the different features of the object (Marcel, A.J., and E. Bisiach, 1988). Block's (1995) examples of an A-conscious but non-P-conscious state (b) include philosophical zombies (functionally identical creatures to us who lack experiential properties) and the hypothetical case of 'superblindsight', whereby the patient would not need any encouragement or being told to guess but would know what is in the field that is not phenomenally conscious to him. (However, someone who believes that cognitive states lack phenomenology have the option of rejecting Block's point and point to these as instances of b.)

As for c), i.e. a phenomenally conscious state that is not ready for the control or guidance of rational behaviour, Block gives the following example:

suppose you are engaged in intense conversation when suddenly at noon you realize that right outside your window there is - and has been for some time - a deafening pneumatic drill digging up the street. You were aware of the noise all along, but only at noon are you *consciously* aware of it. That is, you were P-conscious of the noise all along, but at noon you are both P-conscious *and* A-conscious of it. (ibid:234)

This would link attention very closely to access-consciousness, as the contents which are not in the focus of attention are still experienced, i.e. phenomenally-conscious, which I think is plausible. (In fact I have, upon reading Block's line just become fully aware of the birds chirping outside, but I know it has been there all along and I have heard it 'in the background'.) I would also propose that dreaming is a state that is normally phenomenally conscious, as I do have experiences of events, scenarios etc. but it definitely does not control my *rational* behaviour or speech, i.e. it lacks access-consciousness.

¹¹ There are other ways in which informational sensitivity is tested to be present in blindsighted people, e.g. if they hear an ambiguous word and have been primed in the blind field with another one relevant to the interpretation of the original word, they favour the interpretation associated with the word shown in the blind field. See: Marcel, A.J., and E. Bisiach, 1988

Another question concerns the phenomenon called ‘inattentional blindness’. This refers to cases where subjects are told to concentrate on one aspect of a video they are being played and whilst watching, something unusual happens in the video (2011) (a man dressed as a gorilla walks onto the basketball court during a game), but the subjects of the experiment fail to notice this. Once the unusual happening is pointed out to them, they can of course see it for themselves as well. This suggests that when an attention-demanding task is performed, subjects can fail to be phenomenally conscious of unexpected contents. This may in theory be another case which supports the empirical possibility of b)-type states, as the gorilla is definitely not phenomenally-conscious. Interestingly however, if we take this case to be c) (as Block might), we could argue that a ‘subtle’ phenomenal awareness similar to the bird chirping in the background *is* present and is made into full-awareness once attention is directed to the content, which seems to be a more plausible explanation (from a third-person perspective, that is without having any personal experience of the case) than thinking that the subjects have access-consciousness to the gorilla.

3.2. The basic sense of self in phenomenal- and access-consciousness

Having characterised the basic sense of self in terms of *experiential aspects* of conscious states in Chapter 2, this necessitates that those states which entail it have to be phenomenally conscious, as only phenomenally conscious states possess experiential properties and hence can allow for the experientially-defined elements of the basic sense of self. I have explained what phenomenal consciousness entails and compared it to access-consciousness. A consequence of my previous characterisation of the basic sense of self is that phenomenal-consciousness is necessary and also sufficient for having a basic sense of self. With this in mind, one may take the following lines of reasoning:

- 1.) The basic sense of self, in virtue of being experiential, is necessarily P-conscious.

In conjunction with the acceptance of b) above,

- 2.) Conscious states that are A (but not-P) fail to have the basic sense of self.

(If, however we were to reject b) *or* we accept Pitt’s definition (P3), then

- 3.) There are no states that only have A-consciousness and no P-consciousness, so necessarily, all conscious states have the basic sense of self.

In summary, so far, on the one hand we have phenomenally conscious but non-access conscious states; both phenomenally and access conscious states and purely access-conscious states lacking phenomenal character. (the fourth option, i.e. non-P and non-A is clearly irrelevant for my present discussion) On the other hand, we have the hypothesised basic sense of self, which lacks reflection and may be cashed out in terms of some form of first-order awareness. Hence, the basic sense of self may itself be minimally an intrinsic part of phenomenally conscious, first-order experience.

Let us grant that there are purely access-conscious states which present not just a conceptual but also an empirical possibility. If we were to have a purely A-conscious state without P-consciousness, I would think that our basic sense of self is still not lost, as it were. The reason for this is that I examine the subject's sense of self as it actually is in any conscious experience, and a normal experience would involve that there are many states I seem to be undergoing at the same time (as suggested by the phenomenal feature I called 'unity' in Chapter 2). In keeping with the spirit of giving an account that remains faithful to the reality of subjective experience as it is in everyday instances, I suggest we may benefit enormously from taking a so-called 'time-slice' view of the subject. This entails making a 'synchronic cut' in the presumably continuous experience of the subject. At any moment in the experience I describe, as the example of taking a walk in the sunny autumn woods, if we were to 'pause' this experience and 'zoom in' on the subject, we may find purely A-conscious states such as using information about the bumps on the road to change how I put my left foot in front of the right one, but there will also be numerous other, parallel states occurring at that one specific moment in time, such as perceptual states involving seeing and hearing what is going on around me; sensations of tiredness or hunger, emotions such as pleasure or content etc. These states all possess the phenomenal consciousness that provides grounds for my basic sense of self. This also means that, despite the ongoing debate in the philosophy of mind about whether cognitive states such as thoughts, desires or recollections can or cannot possess phenomenal character, we are not actually pressed to argue in favour or against this issue in order to describe the basic sense of self; that is, even if we were to accept that these states lack phenomenology, my time-slice view allows that the basic sense of self be still present in all the other, phenomenally conscious states at any point in time when we put the subject under examination (except for when she is wholly unconscious). My preferred

view of the subject states that whoever undergoes phenomenally-conscious sensations, emotions, perceptual states etc. is also ‘felt’ as the subject of her thoughts, desires and other such states whether this involves the phenomenal consciousness of *all* states or not.

The next step is to explore whether it is the case that upon breathing in the scents of the leaves, the trees and the ground and looking up at the top of a tree and the sun lurking behind it, I am not only phenomenally aware of the environment that surrounds me, my tiredness etc., but also sense my being the subject of these experiences *within one and the same conscious state*.

3.3. The basic sense of self within the structure of conscious states

In last section I established that phenomenal consciousness is necessary *and* sufficient for a basic sense of self. Experiences that are phenomenally conscious have a so-called ‘what-is-it-like’ character. Sometimes this is also characterised as the ‘subjective character’ of the experience, however, being ‘subjective’ does not necessarily mean that the experience contains an experience of the subject; a number of accounts of phenomenal character deny that we are aware of ourselves in an ordinary conscious experience

I shall defend a different view. In the present section I aim to show that it is plausible to conceive of conscious experience as that which (in addition to constituting the representation of external objects) also allows for the unreflected sense of myself as the subject undergoing the experience.

This sense or awareness I may have of myself is a somewhat special kind of awareness, in that it does not imply reflection or an explicit propositional structure (to the effect that I am aware *that* I am having the experience). In its most primitive form, the sense of self is an implicit (part of) experience that does not require an ability to form a so called higher-order state of consciousness that ‘looks down’ on the original experience as it were, and facilitates the explicit and reflective judgment that ‘I see those trees’.

If we adopt this view, we owe a clear explanation as to how the sense of self is a part of the experience and whether this position has any phenomenological support when examining the structure of a conscious experience.

A considerable difficulty in accounting for the sense of self in conscious experience arises due to the consideration that the self-awareness we are in search of is *not* the awareness of an object. Arguably, there are objective and subjective forms of self-awareness connected to a distinction between the use of ‘I’ ‘as subject’ and use of ‘I’ ‘as object’; (Kant 1781-1787/1999, Shoemaker 1968, Wittgenstein, 1965).¹² Roughly speaking, the difference between these two modes of self-awareness suggest that when I am aware of myself in the objective mode, *I am the intentional object* of my conscious state (the state is directed at myself as the object), such as when I think of myself as an expectant mother or I remember that I went cycling, or I am happy with myself that I volunteered on the Danube banks when the river was flooding. (Objective self-awareness has a very significant role to play in social interaction and the formation of social emotions, such as shame.)

Self-awareness as awareness of the *subject* of the conscious state is much harder to conceive of, as it implies that the subject is aware of herself *as the subject who has the conscious experience*, the rememberer or the feeler of a certain event or emotion. The basic sense of self is essentially *the sense of being the subject* of experiences, which evidently puts it in the realm of subjective mode of self-awareness (cf. Kriegel, 2004). The difficulty arises on the logical as well as on the phenomenological level. In the next-subchapter (3.3.1) I shall address the logical structure, whereas in 3.3.2. I shall address the phenomenological one.

First, logically speaking, the structure of ‘awareness of’ something seems inherently to imply an act of objectification, which would mean that I can only be aware of something as-object, that is by making it or having it as the object on which our consciousness is directed.¹³

¹² However, Kant’s and Wittgenstein/Shoemaker’s distinctions arguably do not necessarily map onto each other (Longuenesse, 2012)

¹³ So-called higher-order theories of consciousness, in accounting for other aspects of consciousness besides self-awareness claim that what makes mental states conscious *per se* is the fact that they are represented to the subject of these in a separate state.

Exactly how this looks as an argument is shown in Lycan’s (2001) succinct formulation:

- (1) A conscious state is a mental state whose subject is aware of being in it. [Definition]
- (2) The ‘of’ in (1) is the ‘of’ of intentionality; what one is aware of is an intentional object of the awareness.
- (3) Intentionality is representation; a state has a thing as its intentional only if it represents that thing. Therefore,
- (4) Awareness of a mental state is a representation of that state. [2,3]
- And therefore,
- (5) A conscious state is a state that is itself represented by another of the subject’s mental states.

(As a viable alternative, we can decide to resort to the aid of adverbial theories of consciousness here to be able to think of a conscious state (as explained in 2.4.) in terms of ‘experiencing *selfly*’. This would mean that the self does not have to be conceived of as an object of experience but rather the mode of the experience (cf. Kriegel below). A similar line of argument shall be taken in what follows.)

Second, several philosophers claimed that the phenomenology of experience provides no room for a sense of self in an unreflected experience. For example, Hume famously claimed that there is no awareness of the self (and hence no self) to be found in experience or in introspection:

For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch myself at any time without a perception, and never can observe any thing but the perception. (Hume, 1739: VI.4)

A quite different reason for denying an awareness of the self in experience can be supplied by those who argue for the *transparency of experience*. On this view, when I look at the top of the tree, the leaves hanging from it and the sun lurking behind, there is no ‘extra’ element added to these things/objects being represented to me.

Michael Tye (1995) paints us the following picture:

Focus your attention on a square that has been painted blue. Intuitively, you are directly aware of blueness and squareness as out there in the world away from you, as features of an external surface. Now shift your gaze inward and try to become aware of your experience itself, inside you, apart from its objects. Try to focus your attention on some intrinsic feature of the experience that distinguishes it from other experiences, something other than what it is an experience *of*. The task seems impossible: one’s awareness seems always to slip through the experience to blueness or squareness, as instantiated together in an external object. (...) And this remains so even if there really is no blue square in front of one – if, for example one is subject to an illusion. (...) Introspection does not seem to reveal any further distinctive features of the experience over and above *what* one experiences in undergoing the illusion. (1995:30)

According to the above thesis, experience is *transparent* in the sense that when one examines introspectively one's concurrent conscious experience, one only becomes aware of the external objects represented by one's experience. In other words, when I look at and smell those oak trees above my head in the woods of the Buda hills, the only things to account for within the experience are the explicit objects of my awareness (the trees, leaves etc.) and nothing else. This is certainly a challenge to someone holding the view that all phenomenally conscious states imply a sense of self, because the objects of my awareness in this case are undoubtedly the objects in my environment and not myself, the subject undergoing the experience.

Being aware of ourselves *as subjects* is problematic not just due to the intentional structure of a conscious state but also because we need to account for it on the *basic level*, i.e. it is not an explicit, cognitive or linguistically formed sense of being the *experiencer*. Quite the opposite, it is something implicit, unreflected and non-cognitive, and it does not require the apparatus of language in order to be experienced.

In the remaining part of this chapter, I will discuss why every phenomenally conscious experience implies an implicit form of self-awareness and hence the basic sense of self, and then move on discussing theories of self-awareness which both place self-awareness within the structure of a first-order conscious state or experience. I shall argue that my view is also seen as that which does not posit an extra state on top of the first-order one in order to account for the basic sense of self and subsequently point out the differences between mine and the presented views. In the last part of the chapter (3.3.2.), I shall put flesh on the logical structure of a conscious state involving self-awareness in terms of the phenomenology this involves.

Firstly however, I need to expand on the argument for why every episode of phenomenal consciousness as described above necessarily implies an implicit sense of self.

A strong line of argument, following Kriegel (2004) may start from a distinction between *transitive* and *intransitive self-consciousness*, a distinction which parallels the one between transitive (taking an object) and intransitive (not taking an object) types of consciousness (understood as the property of mental states) (cf. 3.1.).

The difference between transitive and intransitive *self-consciousness* is cashed out in terms of whether it takes an object (in which case it is transitive) which can only be the subject and her

mental state and *not* an external object (e.g. it does not make sense to say ‘X is self-conscious of her new shoes’, but only that ‘X is (self-)conscious of thinking that she has new shoes.’) This, i.e. transitive self-consciousness is the property a creature has when she is conscious of herself and her mental states. In this case there are two, numerically distinct states (one is of self-consciousness and the other is of the thought, i.e. the object). In the intransitively self-conscious state exemplified by the sentence ‘X is self-consciously thinking that her shoes are new’, by contrast, the reported state of self-consciousness is one and the same as the thought about the shoes. Here self-consciousness *modifies* thinking about the shoes, but it does not take it as an object. Therefore, in the first example (of transitive self-consciousness) a mental state is said to be self-conscious in virtue of the sort of object it takes. In the second (intransitive self-conscious) however, the state is self-conscious in virtue of the way it is had by the subject, viz. X has her thought that her shoes are new in a self-conscious sort of way. (ibid.)

What it means for a person to think something in a self-conscious way is explained not just in terms of the grammatical structure of statements involving consciousness but also in psychological terms. The kind of consciousness involved in intransitive self-consciousness is a sort of ‘peripheral awareness’, the phenomenology of which will be the subject of my section on the phenomenological structure of conscious states. Since we are peripherally aware in the visual, auditory etc. modalities, there is no compelling reason not to infer that this is not the case in self-awareness in Kriegel’s view. Transitive self-consciousness on the other hand always appears as the focus of our conscious state, i.e. when we reflect on our own mental states or ourselves (and hence take these as the objects of the state).

Let us grant that it is possible to be aware in a way that is peripherally self-conscious. How does this end up being the way in which we are aware of every (phenomenal) experience in this way? (I should note that Kriegel’s own view is about (state-) consciousness in general as he makes no mention of access- versus phenomenally conscious states. In fact, he argues that ‘all forms of consciousness depend on intransitive state consciousness’ (ibid:175) and focuses on establishing that there is one form of self-consciousness, such that all forms of consciousness are dependent upon it.)

(Phenomenal) consciousness clearly does not require or depend on transitive self-consciousness, i.e. where the state takes the subject or her mental states as its object (this seems unrealistic and overly demanding). This means that while I can fail to be self-

conscious of a state transitively (i.e. not reflecting on having a certain experience but simply having it), this does not imply that I am not intransitively self-conscious of it by virtue of having the experience *in a certain mode*. The object of such a state is the (external) object I perceive, think of etc. and so the self-consciousness in question figures not as the object (my thought, etc.) but as *the mode* in which the experience occurs.

Approaching the issue from the side of a state being (phenomenally) conscious, we may ask the question; what is it that guides us to classify a state as (phenomenally) conscious?

Kriegel (not unlike Zahavi's account) names the property of the state being *first-person knowable*:

When we consider a certain phenomenon conscious, it is because our knowledge of it is first-person knowledge. Phenomena we have only third-person knowledge of are unconscious. (ibid:176)

That is, the difference between my knowing that e.g. my memory about new shoes is conscious and the way someone else does is intrinsically different. This state is conscious only insofar as my knowledge of it is the sort of knowledge I do, and someone else does not, have of the fact that the shoes are what I am right now remembering. This however does not mean that first-person knowledge defines what 'conscious' is or that it grabs its essence. Instead, it means that we use it in order to pinpoint the *phenomenon* we want to talk about. Kriegel's next step is to conclude that

the only experiences and thoughts we can have first-person knowledge of are experiences and thoughts we have self-consciously, that is, experiences and thoughts we are peripherally aware of having. For when we have a mental state un-self-consciously - that is, without any awareness of it whatsoever - we have to infer its existence on the basis of evidence, which means that our knowledge of it is mediated in a way first-person knowledge is not. (ibid.)

Therefore, (phenomenally) conscious (i.e. first-person knowable) states are intransitively self-conscious, i.e. one is peripherally aware of herself *as the subject* who has the experience in virtue of *the mode* in which her experience is had (which, as I shall point out below explains how this type of (self-)awareness distinguishes someone else's experience from one that occurs in my stream of consciousness). This mode is supposed to be ubiquitous and

involuntary, which also points to the fact that firstly, it is difficult to capture in very clear and positive phenomenal terms and secondly, it is non-reflective.

Kriegel does not define what knowledge is in his sense of first-person knowability, but I would argue that his account leaves room for implying that it does not mean reflective knowledge, as that would render the state transitively self-conscious. It is enough that the state is knowable in a certain way, it does not have to be actually known in that way.

As I argued, phenomenal consciousness is necessary and sufficient for the basic sense of self and accepting the slightly modified version of Kriegel's argument (to apply only to phenomenally conscious states), we can see that phenomenally conscious states are those which the subject is aware of in an intransitively self-conscious way and *as-subject*. The basic sense of self can plausibly be thought of as the phenomenological expression of this mode of self-consciousness.

As I explained in Chapter 2, Zahavi's phenomenological view states that as long as there is something it is like for the subject to have experiences, there must be some awareness of these experiences themselves, i.e. there must be self-awareness and this is not to be understood as awareness of *a* self but as the first-person aspect of experience. And this self-awareness is not seen as a sophisticated, propositional kind. The discussion of self-awareness is not a discussion of how consciousness is aware of *a self* (a numerically distinct polarising self) but of how consciousness is aware of itself:

the question of self-awareness is basically taken to be a question of how consciousness experiences itself, how it is given to itself, how it manifests itself. On this account, the only type of experience which would lack self-awareness, would be an experience I was not conscious of, that is, an 'unconscious' experience. (1998:689)

Zahavi and Parnas (1998) also rightly rely on the explanatory power this implicit self-awareness has in distinguishing someone else's experience from one that occurs in my stream of consciousness, as they say that it is the case that something is my experience precisely because it is *mine*, i.e. given in the first-personal mode of presentation (cf. Kriegel, 2004), whereas the other's experience is *not* given in a first-personal mode for me, and therefore it is not a part of my mental life. This purports to the claim that, if the experience is given in a

first-personal mode of presentation, it is implicitly given as my experience, and is therefore a case of self-awareness.

My theory attributes more phenomenological aspects to the basic sense of self (as I explained in Chapter 2) in addition to the first-person viewpoint/mineness, and therefore, I propose that the sense of *unity*, *individuality* and *boundary* are also implied in the self-awareness of phenomenally conscious experiences.

My definition of individuality (i.e. self/no-self) can plausibly be understood as that which works like ‘mineness’ for Zahavi, as, as I pointed out in Chapter 2, we have good reason to think that the implicit sense of distinction between experiences which I am the subject of and someone else’s experiences is due to a separate phenomenal aspect, i.e. individuality. Therefore, while accepting that the sense of mineness (or perspectival ownership) is essential for an experience being an experience for-me, my sense of this being a different experience to someone else’s is provided by the sense of individuality. The sense of unity can be seen here as that which implicitly grounds the sense of individuality in virtue of providing the sense of unity between the different contents of consciousness, therefore these two aspects cannot be brought about in the absence of one another.

Lastly, the sense of boundary, also closely related, can be legitimately thought to be part of every phenomenally conscious experience, as whenever I am first-personally aware of an experience (which is in every phenomenally conscious state), I am also (peripherally or implicitly) aware of the limits to which this experience extends, as it were, e.g. when I have a visual perception of my living room as I am sitting on the sofa, I sense that my experience extends up to a certain ‘point’ where it ends (so excluding all that is behind the walls), or, when I have a headache I sense the boundaries of this experience and it ends somewhere (inside my head).

It can be seen that the kind of (separately standing) self Hume was looking for in the previously quoted passage could not refer to the intransitive self-experience and hence the basic sense of self, as these do not render the self as a separately existing entity (or an object) and yet, they provide the mode in which what we experience appears *as ours* (cf. adverbial theories and experiencing ‘*selfly*’).

Tye on the other hand seems to have missed the fact that the kind of experience he requested, i.e. ‘of your experience itself, inside you, apart from its objects’ implies a form of awareness

that is transitive (in Kriegel's sense). However, this type of explicit or reflective self-consciousness is not required for awareness of the experience, as we can also be aware of it in a self-conscious *mode*, intransitively, i.e. not 'apart from' the experience and its objects.

I shall now move on to discussing two views which offer an account of how the structure of a numerically single conscious experience can have self-awareness.

3.3.1. Theories of self-awareness

This section aims to give possible explanations as to how we can conceive of the structure of a conscious state which, apart from having an object also has the basic sense of self as-subject built into it.

There are three prevalent lines of thought regarding self-awareness in conscious experience that I take to be relevant when it comes to accounting for the structure of self-experience or self-awareness. In what follows I shall discuss the relevant elements of these and assess them from the perspective of whether they can provide logical and/or phenomenological support to the description of self-experience I gave.

The phenomenological and the same-order theories both leave room for understating self-awareness on a non-reflective level and hence make no appeal second- or higher-order representation. There are however many different views and further theories within each of the three main directions, which means that I shall be rather selective when it comes to their presentation.

Despite the fact that the term 'higher-order' already suggests that the basic sense of self understood as entailed within the experience e.g. of an object will be out of the question, it is important to make at least a brief note of how higher-order theories think of consciousness in order to make the differences between a higher-order account and one that does not refer to two separate states for self-awareness clearer.

Higher-order theories maintain that phenomenal consciousness can be explained in terms of cognitive representations (either experiences or beliefs) that are 'higher-order'. The term 'higher-order' involves that phenomenal consciousness consists in a kind of intentional or representational content that figures 'in a certain distinctive position in the causal architecture

of the mind' (Carruthers, 2007). The highlight here should be on the term 'distinctive', as it denotes a numerically distinct state.

Naturally, higher-order theories aim to account for other aspects of consciousness besides self-awareness, but what they claim to make mental states conscious *per se* is the fact that they are represented to the subject of these *in a separate state*, which is of relevance because looking for the basic sense of self in conscious experience suggests that we look at the phenomenological and the logical structure of our experience very closely.

As we have seen, one option is to take a modified version of the phenomenological stance and look for the sense of self within the phenomenal qualities of a conscious experience. On the other hand, higher-order theorists (i.e. higher-order representation or HOR) about self-awareness choose a more complex account. In addition to the first-order state of e.g. perceiving the different plants, trees and animals in the autumn woods, they postulate an 'extra' or higher-order thought or perception representing the presence of or 'monitoring' the first-order state, thereby rendering it conscious. (This view may be motivated at least partly by observations of an abundance of unconscious and repressed states which unknowingly direct or at least influence behaviour. By making these conscious, i.e. bringing them to the fore by directing a numerically different, monitoring state at it, the subjects make these conscious and subsequently learn about the reasons behind their seemingly inexplicable actions or behaviour. This means that what makes a (previously unconscious) state or experience conscious is that there is another state directed at it, taking it as its intentional object. However, as we have seen, a state that is capable of directing behaviour but is not 'felt' or experienced phenomenally by the subject can also be conceived of as access-conscious.)

There are many questionable points in the higher-order account, and my painfully short summary admittedly fails to do justice to the rich literature on HOR theories, but the main point about there being a *numerically separate* state which allows for self-awareness has now been made explicit. Since I aim to expand in more detail on the rival theories instead, I shall turn to the first of these now.

a) Phenomenology

Firstly, there are the accounts of 20th century Continental philosophy as revived and interpreted by contemporary Phenomenologists, one version of which aims at giving an account that goes against any theory of consciousness that makes reference to representation of the higher order kind.

Similarly to my considerations, Zahavi and Parnas (1998/1999) argue that there is a more fundamental feature of experience than the representational one posited by higher-order theories, which they call the *first-personal mode of givenness*. This refers to a subjective and *pre-reflective* awareness of the experience, which precedes any kind of reflection upon the experience itself or the judgment that it is I who has the experience.

This view leads to a very basic kind of feature that is removed from the ‘personal’ nature of experiencing, and indeed the authors call attention to the fact that

self-awareness is not so much a discussion of how consciousness is aware of *a self* (understood as a distinct pole of identity, the one *having* or *possessing* the different experiences), as it is a discussion of how consciousness is aware of *itself*. (1999:255)

(In virtue of the above sentence we may call this kind of account of self-awareness *non-egological* (cf. Sartre, 1957), i.e. without the positing of an organising thought or self, an ego that would exist over and above the experience and would structure it into a unified whole.)

Since self-awareness is present in every (conscious) experience and the point under discussion is how self-awareness is related to phenomenal consciousness, the thesis that all experience is phenomenal is here presupposed by the authors.

As I explained above, I do not think that it is necessary to hold that every conscious state is phenomenally-conscious in order to posit a basic sense of self to feature in the multitude of experiences each person undergoes at any moment in time. We may accept that there are purely access-conscious states with no phenomenal character, such as a piece of information about the environment which guides behaviour, as long as we view the subject from a time-slice perspective, where at any moment in time there are plenty of phenomenally salient (perceptual, emotional etc.) states that can ‘house’ the basic sense of self. This however is a point that phenomenologist such as Zahavi would most likely refuse to concede.

Phenomenal consciousness, as I read, it is identical to a basic form of self-awareness for Zahavi and Parnas, as the experiences I happen to undergo always occur to me, i.e. they are given in the first-personal mode of presentation. This ‘givenness’ then constitutes the self in its primitive form.

There are various claims and suppressed premises at work throughout the argument in Zahavi and Parnas’ discussion, the most important of which can be reconstructed as follows:

1. Conscious experiences are phenomenal (have ‘what-it-is-likeness’).
2. ‘What-it-is-likeness’ renders conscious experiences subjective. (cf. Nagel, 1974)
3. Every (phenomenal) experience is essentially presented to the subject in the first-person mode (as given to me, experienced first-personally).
4. The phenomenology or ‘what-is-it-likeness’ of conscious experiences *entails* that they are had in the first-person mode.
5. The first-person mode (i.e. the mode in which an experience is given to me first-personally) is identical to self-awareness (or how consciousness manifests itself).
6. Self-awareness is not of a separate self but the experience’s awareness of itself.

Conclusion:

Every experience is self-aware/has self-awareness in virtue of being phenomenal.

A similar conclusion is reached by Flanagan (1992), who says that first-person experience need not involve a conscious marking on the subject’s part in language, or in thought of her involvement in perception. What he coins ‘low-level self-consciousness’ only involves a weak sense that ‘there is something it is like for the subject to have that experience’. He supports this claim by referring to observations of childhood development, according to which it is unlikely that the difference between children’s saying ‘there is a red ball’ and ‘I see a red ball’ (which is used less often) is that the latter involves ‘appreciably more self-reference’.

As I stated, I agree that we should be looking for the basic sense of self in the phenomenal feature(s) of a conscious experience, but it seems to me that Zahavi and Parnas’ account is on the hasty side and leaves too much room for further enquiry. More specifically, it is not entirely clear how we get from (2) to (4), as the what-it-is-likeness, as we have seen can be plausibly construed to be subjective in the sense that there is a certain *species specific* viewpoint (Nagel, 1974) from which the world is experienced and this would not grant that

the what-it-is-likeness or phenomenal quality entails the first-person mode, i.e. how the experience is there for me in the first-person way.

In addition, more needs to be explained on the connection between (3) and (4).

(4) does not seem to be granted without further premises by the fact that experiences have what-it-is-likeness. As we saw in Chapter 2, Zahavi (2005) explains that there is a certain type of non-reflective access (construed in virtue of experiential properties) which is responsible for rendering the experiences as mine. This line of thought brings subjectivity very close to the issue of first-person perspective in that my experience of or access to an object is in the first-person mode only to *me*, i.e. it entails a ‘primitive experiential self-referentiality’ (2005:122).

It could be argued however that the what-it-is-likeness of an experience of an object is not identical, phenomenologically-speaking to the first-person access to an experience, which is an option that the above argument leaves room for. In other words, we can agree that every experience I have is an experience that is presented *as mine* (as discussed in the previous section), but it is not entirely clear how this presentation has to be constituted solely by the phenomenal qualities (or ‘what-it-is-likeness’) of the experience, e.g. do the phenomenal qualities of the smell of frying bacon (in virtue of sensory qualities) account for how *I* access this experience or should the access be something separate from the pure phenomenal qualities of smelling bacon? Zahavi says elsewhere (2005) that it is the access to the experience which is essential for the first-person mode (i.e. how *I* experience something) but it seems that the connection between this (experiential) access and the phenomenal qualities of experiencing an object should be made clearer. i.e. how the phenomenal quality *is* the access, or if it is separate, how it manages to entail it nevertheless, especially if the phenomenal quality is seen as the sensory qualities of the experience/object (which the account leaves room for).

I should emphasise that, in line with how I presented the sense of self in Chapter 2, while the basic sense of self *is* phenomenal, as it is experienced in terms of the implicit/inbuilt features of our experience such as point of view and unity, it is phenomenologically *separate* (but subtle) from the pure phenomenal (e.g. sensory) qualities of an object of experience.

At the same time, the aspects which I postulated as being those of the basic sense of self, though working together in experience, are kept separate from each other (as well as the what-it-is-likeness of an experience) on the conceptual level.

In general it seems as if it is premise (1) that is doing most of the work throughout the above argument, as, if we grant that there can be singled out experiences without phenomenal qualities, we would need some other element or intrinsic feature that would grant that the given experience is mine.

As I explained previously (in Chapter 2), Zahavi, in the course of employing Sartre's and Husserl's theoretical framework equates first-personal givenness with 'mineness' or ownership, which in turn is also identical to subjectivity, a point to which I now have to return.

The above use of subjectivity may be confusing, as there needs to be a more specific definition of subjectivity over and above mineness in order for the identifications to work, viz. if 'subjectivity' can also mean something to the effect that my experience of being on a beach holiday is subjective in terms of probably being completely different to my father's experience of the same holiday due to differences in our thinking, self-image, emotions, memories and so on, then we arrive at a more inflated notion of subjectivity that clearly requires more than just the fundamental, non-conceptual and non-reflective first-person mode in which the experience is given. This latter, primitive mode may infer a difference in experiential *perspective*, which means the term 'subjectivity' is superfluous and can be reduced to perspective. This deflated sense fails to go any closer in accounting fully for my and my father's completely divergent experience(s) of our shared holiday, a task that 'subjectivity' should be able to perform. As I pointed out in Chapter 2, I see no need to employ the term 'subjectivity' in my own account of the basic sense of self, precisely because 'point of view' and 'individuality' are well-suited to explain the kind of difference between my perspective and another one on the level Zahavi means to do so by referring to 'subjectivity'.

It seems like the abundance of terms Zahavi and Parnas deploy, such as 'mineness', 'subjectivity' and even 'what-it-is-likeness' all boil down to the exact same thing, namely the first-person mode of experience (i.e. how the experience is presented to me first-personally, as my experience). I prefer to keep these close but most of them separate as much as possible,

and I would rather conceive of phenomenal character or ‘what-it-is-likeness’ as a concept that covers a much wider dimension of conscious experience than its first-personal mode.

As we saw, one way to think of how self-awareness or the sense of self is built into an experience is to insist that it is in virtue of the phenomenal qualities of the experience, which as I pointed out, leaves room for further questions. I on the other hand claim that the (elements of the) sense of self can be found *as* phenomenal features, but it is not to be given account of purely in terms of the what-it-is-likeness or phenomenal (e.g. sensory) quality of an experience of an object (e.g. the what-it-is-likeness of seeing a red tomato), but as subtle but distinct features.

b) Same-order theories

Having encountered a phenomenological view and the higher-order view briefly, one way to categorise these is to say that while the higher-order view postulates an ‘extra’ state which renders the first-order experience conscious, the phenomenological view does no such thing.

However, how are we to understand a first-order view of self-awareness (of which the phenomenological one may or may not be an example) in terms the structure of an experience, to the effect that the first-order conscious state is such that it also *contains*¹⁴ an awareness of itself on the ‘same order’? Also, how does our view of the basic sense of self benefit from the structure and definitions presented below? I shall answer these questions in what follows.

The relevance of same-order representation (SOR) theories for my own view come from the fact that they offer a way of answering how the very same, first-order experience can be an experience of its obvious object and *at the same time* the experience of the subject. On the face of it, this may seem to require two separate states, however SOR theories provide a plausible account of the structure of first-order states as those which also imply an awareness of self.

Awareness in this sense is thought to entail representation of (it)self (SOR).

¹⁴ I use this more encompassing and somewhat vaguer term here on purpose, as there are different versions as to the ‘containment’. The development on how the first-order state can be represented within itself will follow shortly.

A potentially helpful diagram of representation in HOR versus SOR can take the following form:

HOR:

SOR:



Diagram 1.

How are we to make sense of the structure of a conscious experience in the SOR case?

According to the HOR theory, the original mental state and the monitoring state are logically independent of each other. SOR theorists however, such as Kriegel (2006), Caston (2002) and Smith and Ford (2006) developed accounts of a different interpretation, which includes a constitutive or non-contingent relation to be held between the original and the higher state.

Therefore, (and in contrast to Lycan's (2001) argument), SOR claims that the higher-order representation of the original state is not a sufficient condition of the state being conscious. This state also has to be 'appropriate' or 'suitable' in order to represent the first-order one.

(At this point I have to note that my taxonomy of the theories of self-awareness does not correspond fully to the one presented in the literature. In fact, the phenomenological view is seen by Kriegel et al. (2006) as a potential version of same-order monitoring theories. On Carruther's account on the other hand, the same-order monitoring theory is seen as version of representational theories (including HOR) of consciousness. Confusingly enough, he claims that SOR theories are actually also HOR and refers to these as 'self-representational' higher-order theories. This is due to the fact that the distinct representative state is supposed to be *constituted* by the first-order one, which in and of itself does not render them identical. This might be a partially legitimate claim, but since the point of an SOR theory is to go against any HOR, and SOR₁ states that the two states are actually identical, so I refer to them as non-HOR (as do its advocates). I should also add that since phenomenologists argue against

representation as the act which would make a state conscious of itself, I see no compelling reason why the phenomenological view should here be presented as a version of SOR.)

In Kriegel's (2006, 2008) summary, the most important points about how one state may be able to be represented by another one or alternatively, represent itself can be summarised in the following definitions¹⁵:

HOR: A mental state M of a subject S is conscious iff S has a mental state M*, such that (i) M* is an appropriate representation of M, and (ii) there is *no* constitutive relation between M and M*.

In opposition,

SOR: A mental state M of a subject S is conscious iff S has a mental state M*, such that (i) M* is an appropriate representation of M and (ii) there *is* a constitutive relation between M and M*.

Among these we find a weaker version which appeals to part-whole relation:

SOR₂: A mental state M of a subject S is conscious iff S has a mental state M*, such that (i) M* is an appropriate representation of M and (ii) M* is a (proper) *part of* M.

Kriegel points out that parthood is meant in the logical sense here.

The basic sense of self, in virtue of being aspectual, non-reflective 'awareness as subject' which *ipso facto* does not imply another state being directed at the first-order one, is evidently more likely to benefit from one of the SOR accounts, or the phenomenological view instead of HOR. As I presented in Chapters 2 and 3, the basic sense of self has made no reference to representation, and whatever role representation may play for others, the main point of my phenomenological enquiry is not to give a theory of consciousness. However, there is a part of the definition SOR₂, i.e. '(ii) M* is a (proper) *part of* M' which could also be used to shed light on an important aspect of my phenomenological approach in that the features which I named as characterising the basic sense of self collectively form a logical part of the conscious experience. Kriegel (2008) explains the sense of logical parthood referred to in the definition:

¹⁵ my rendition does not include all of the versions on Kriegel's list. I narrowed down my selection and re-numbered the versions so as to best fit my own enquiry.

When I am glad that the weather is nice, I necessarily also believe that the weather is nice; it is impossible to be glad that the weather is nice without believing that this is so. But my belief that the weather is nice is not an extra mental act, which occurs in addition to my gladness. Rather, the belief is somehow inherent in, or built into, the gladness. In other words, my belief is part of my gladness, in a logical sense of “part of”. (2008: 4-5)

We can conceive of the phenomenal features that make up the basic sense of self in a similar logical manner, as in when I have a conscious experience, I also sense myself as the subject of my experience, but this sense is not an *extra* act added to the first state, but is built within the experience at hand. SOR₂ includes this point, but it also includes that the built-in part has to represent the original experience, which I do not aim to follow here.

I shall now turn to the *phenomenological* investigation of the structure of first-order conscious states in order to reveal how the basic sense of self may be built into (the original) experience in a peripheral manner.

3.3.2. Attention and periphery in a conscious state

While the definition of SOR₂ seems to lend logical support to the characterisation of the basic sense of self, I shall now investigate the phenomenological structure thereof. I shall discuss a version of how to conceive of the periphery/background of a conscious state and conclude that my view of the basic sense of self implies a certain type of peripheral awareness, as was hinted at in the section on self-awareness of phenomenally conscious states. Since the basic sense of self does not include reflection or an extra state directed at a first-order experience in order to be built within it, we should give an account as to how, even if accepted to be logically unseparate, we can actually experience the sense of self in the state in question, i.e. when I play the piano, I obviously have visual perception of objects, tactile and auditory sensations, thoughts, feelings etc. but *how* in the myriad of objects do I also have a sense of self if I am not the object of my conscious state?

In order to answer this question, I shall examine an account which explores the periphery of consciousness in detail (Evans, 1970). Consciousness is seen here as a ‘field of experience’,

which is structured into a background/periphery and a focal poin/foreground by attention, as shown in the following diagram:

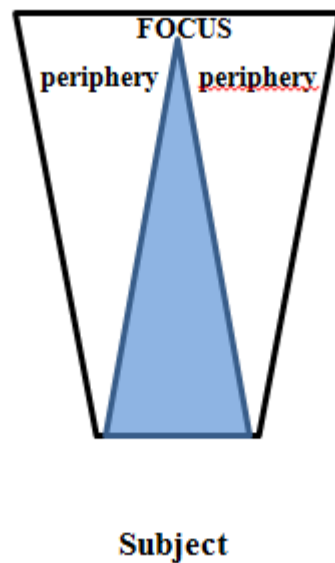


Diagram 3. The field of attention, structuring consciousness

This structure is characteristic of any normal experience.

I pointed out previously in multiple places that the basic sense of self is necessarily awareness *as-subject*. One way to understand this was the way Kriegel (2004) gave an account of intransitive self-consciousness, i.e. in terms of the mode of being aware of an object (self-consciously). It was also indicated that the *as-subject* awareness is not a state where the subject is in the focus of the conscious state (as that would make her the *object* of the state, as is the case in transitive self-conscious states), instead she is in the periphery or background. More needs to be said now on how to conceive of the background of consciousness, as, in contrast to the focus of attention, it is much more difficult, due to its inherent nature to be conceptualised and given a proper exegesis of. One elegant account which manages to achieve these demanding objectives is by Evans (1970), parts of whose view on the structure of attention and ‘unprojected consciousness’ and the ‘experiential self’ I shall discuss below.

Before going into the details of those elements that make Evans’ view compelling for my considerations however, I should note that Evans does not make any reference to the phenomenological views that ‘split’ the experience of self into separate experiential levels

either. Consequently, he makes no mention of pre-reflective or core levels of the sense of self, which is a point where his and my views diverge significantly. However, since his elaborate discussion of how self-awareness is present within the structure of an episode of consciousness, I find it supports the part of my view which has to include an explanation of how the basic sense of self may be present in consciousness. Besides, even though he himself makes no distinction between different levels of self-experience, there is no compelling reason why the discussion I presented of the sense of self on the basic level could not be put to use in his intricate structural account of self-experience.

The account however still manages to remain faithful to the experiential dimension of selfhood I pointed to as that which frames my whole discussion in Chapter 1. Evans starts by reviewing the prevailing metaphysical theories of self and concludes that the ‘fruitlessness of the attempt to reach the self experientially has led some philosophers to the conclusion that the self must lie outside experience, and must be unknowable in itself.’ (1970:30) As a critic of the metaphysical accounts (such as the Humean or the Pure Ego theory), he claims that in virtue of his native knowledge of the self, he can tell when a theory of the self does not receive the support of his experience of being a self, which purports to saying that a theory of the self should be judged on the bases of the experience of being one. In light of this, he proposes to build a theory of self-identity that *does* rest on our native knowledge of the self; ‘The self must be shown to be knowable by means of experience.’ (ibid:37)

Evans explains, along the lines of Williams James (although by improving on his particular notion of non-attention) that consciousness expands beyond the scope of directed attention (effectively the ‘mind’s taking of possession of an object in a clear and vivid form’) and is divided into a ‘*foreground* and a *background*’ (ibid:76).

Interestingly however, by extending consciousness beyond the bounds of directed attention, Evans does *not* mean that there are ‘parts’ as it were of consciousness that are not attended to in *some* manner. Rather, he claims that a minimal form of attention is always present in consciousness. Cashing out what this ‘minimal form of attention’ amounts to takes up a considerable amount of space within his work. This question is dealt with before any talk of the self occurs at all, as he sets out to argue that there cannot be elements that lie ‘outside’ of consciousness, as it were, but instead, and along James’s lines, every element is one way or another included in consciousness (a point I shall return to when discussing proprioception in 6.1).

In fact, he goes on to qualify his examination of the workings of attention by stating that whether or not attention demands an effort, whether or not it is voluntary, and whether it is spontaneous, are not factors that are intrinsic to specific types of attention. (ibid. 97.)¹⁶ What does turn out to be a vital criterion to distinguishing different types of attention for Evans is whether they have failure or success conditions.

The first type of attention on his list, a form that does not require any conditions of success is ‘unordered attention’. This refers to states of consciousness which may seem to be attention-free at face value, but which are argued to consist of a background and a foreground nevertheless.

The elements of such a state of consciousness are not all equally and fully placed in the background. The example to illustrate such attention is that of a sunbather, who whilst having different sensations and perceptual experiences of lying on the beach does not attend to any particular object *per se* in the field of her consciousness. Evans adds that our sense-organs are always arrested by the most novel stimulus in the environment. Thus if the increasing intensity of the heat of the sun on one’s back is

the most novel feature of the environment for the sunbather, that sensation will spontaneously occupy the foreground of consciousness. (...) It might be the sudden break of a wave, or the shrill call of a sea-gull. Attention will then spontaneously transfer to the sound, and the sound will take the place of the previous sensation, and itself occupy the foremost position in consciousness. (ibid:87)

If we accept that sense-organ attention is indeed a state where the structure of consciousness is the same as in cases where attention is clearly being directed at an object, the famous example of the long-distance truck driver who is so used to driving his car that even though he gets to his destination without any problems, he cannot recall the exact way he was driving

¹⁶ In more detail: if there are three types of attention - A, B, and C - it will be true on some occasions that A demanded effort, B was due to an act of will, and C was the result of a desire; and it will be equally true on other occasions that A was effortless, B was the result of desire, and C was due to an act of will. (ibid.)

Where Evans thinks it is easy to be misled is in the assumption that if a certain type of attention must originally have had a certain motivation, it must always keep the same motivation afterwards. This assumption commits the *genetic fallacy* he says, according to which the ‘nature of a phenomenon is determined entirely by its origin.’ (ibid.)

would then qualify as being in the state of attention. This is a contentious claim, as one could argue either that the driver literally paid no attention to where he was going, the turns he was taking etc., so in that sense he also was not *conscious* of his driving, or; one could claim that despite the fact that he was not paying attention, he was indeed conscious of his driving, not because attention still somehow lurks as a feature of his consciousness, but because the nature and structure of consciousness allows there to be instances where consciousness is present without attention (as I shall argue in 6.1. with regards to proprioception).

Another ‘unordered’ state discussed is reverie, i.e. where the mind wanders from one idea to the next haphazardly, an experience everyone must find familiar. As I travel on the tram sometimes, my mind wanders off and thoughts about the people I know or the things I am about to do come into my stream of consciousness one after another, without my voluntary control or direction over them. Evans notes that this is certainly the case where the subject would ordinarily be described as a person in a state of non-attention. Some of the elements of consciousness found in a state of reverie may however correspond to those belonging to a pure sense-organ consciousness, they have already been shown to fall into the pattern of foreground and background. This leaves the other elements comprising a state of reverie: viz. recollections, mental images, and thoughts. Probably no one would dispute the testimony of introspection, suggests Evans, which supports the claim that consciousness exhibits the typical structure of foreground and background in the state of reverie. In reverie there is always some element, albeit rapidly changing in some cases, in the centre of consciousness, being presented to the subject. This is a plausible point which also relates to my previous example (in Chapter 2) of someone who is ‘somewhere else’ while cooking dinner. Similarly to reverie, in this case the object of attention may seem to be missing (as the person does not seem to be fully aware of her own actions) but as I pointed out, it is the division of her attention which makes it seem like she is not present or does not pay attention to her surroundings. In fact, her immediate surroundings, actions etc. stay in the background compared to the (distant) contents she focuses on, but this does not mean that she does not experience both of the above at the same time and within the same experiential space.

All in all, states that may be suspected to be free from attention also seem to showcase the structure of background versus foreground, which supports the claim that attention still plays a role in these cases, albeit a subtle or very rapid one.

Unordered attention is contrasted with two types of attention which are typically accepted to be varieties of attention. The first of these is ‘interrogative attention’, the attention of a probing intelligence in search of the answer to some question, or the solution to some problem’. (ibid.:101) The second is called ‘executive attention’. This is the attention we pay to those of our performances that require ‘a technique for their execution; a technique that cannot be applied unless one has one’s mind on what one is doing. Executive attention differs from interrogative attention in that although for its success it is often necessary to bear things in mind, what one has in mind need not be in any way problematic.’ (ibid:102)

Having argued that attention is universally characteristic of consciousness due to its polarizing activity of placing elements into foreground and background, Evans moves on to discuss those aspects of the background of attention that make it highly relevant for my own discussion. (I shall argue in 6.1.1. that attention is not necessary for a phenomenon to qualify as conscious experience. There my occupation is with Gallagher’s (2005) use of attention, which is mostly reminiscent of Evans’ executive attention.)

Evans gives the name ‘unprojected consciousness’ (UC) to those elements of consciousness that ‘together make up the background of consciousness when attention is paid to an object’. (ibid:105) This background turns out to be not unrelated, but in fact essential for there to be a foreground. Paying attention *to an object* makes it sensible to talk about attending. If there was only the object of attention (and hence the foreground) and nothing else, we could not be aware of attending, says Evans, for the lack of contrast between what we attend to and what we do not.

If someone has a terrible toothache, this could in theory constitute an example of a ‘total temporary state’ containing one element. If this were possible, it would be an entirely ‘homogeneous consciousness’ according to Evans and ‘it would be impossible on logical grounds to distinguish between attending to the toothache and having it. The sufferer could only distinguish the two possibilities if attending to the toothache were something over and above having it.’ (ibid:106)

The elements of attention change according how attention changes. We can have something as the object of our attention one moment and something else the next, which shift would place the previously attended object or element in the background in turn (or it could leave consciousness altogether). Unprojected consciousness must not be thought of as ‘a solid unchanging mass of elements’ according to Evans, for as attention switches, elements may be

detached and later returned to unprojected consciousness. However, in addition, the elements that at the time do not engage attention may change, disappear, or be replaced by new ones.

The idea, which I need not go into further details about, is that the elements of unprojected consciousness (UC) have a defining relationship with the foreground of attention. This means that different types of relationships of the elements of UC have different relationships to the objects of attention, which relationships render them as elements of unordered ('mere juxtaposition' of the elements of UC to the object of attention), interrogative (the elements of UC 'guide' the object of attention) or executive attention (the elements of UC exercise control over the object of attention via 'bodily doings' such as kinaesthetic sensations). Whether this correspondence between relationships of elements and types of attention is accepted or not, the fact that UC is essential for there to be an object of attention is what we need to hold on to in order to follow his line of thought.

Evans moves on to stipulate that *the self is identical to unprojected consciousness*. (ibid:146, my italics) He insists that this identification does not lead to a self which is unknowable and does not lead to a self which is a mere construct. The self in question is explicitly claimed to be the *subject* of consciousness, by virtue of which it is not experienced as an object of consciousness would be.

This is perfectly in line with the methodological problem of self-as-subject versus self-as-object, which I posed at the beginning of forming the central enquiry of this chapter. The highly interesting idea here is not that there are, among the objects of the periphery of awareness (or UC) objects that represent the self in different forms or that *one* of the objects of marginal awareness is the self (Gurwitsch) but that it is the *whole* of the periphery that is the subject of experience, or self. Essentially for my own view and relying on Evans' suggestion, we could posit that the basic sense of being the subject/self (the phenomenal experience of being the subject and hence *inter alia* of perspectivity and unity) is not just something that is an aspect of the phenomenal quality of our conscious experiences (cf. Zahavi and Parnas, 1998), but in fact it appears (in phenomenally conscious states) as the embedded phenomenal element(s) of the *background* against which the objects of our conscious states occur. The description 'unprojected consciousness' refers to a logical aspect of the structure of consciousness for Evans, and it is on this account 'not to be confused with the particular content of unprojected consciousness at any one time.' (ibid:167)

What elements is UC typically made up of? It will usually contain elements of perceptual awareness; namely, those elements of perceptual awareness that are not at the time directing attention. Evans notes that this implication of the theory could be paradoxical, since it could be understood as proposing that the self is ‘partly made up of background noise’ and peripheral visual awareness etc. If that was true, one could rightly argue that the self was not made up of indistinct noises and indistinguishable visual objects, and so on for the other sense modalities. Thinking this would be a misunderstanding however. The perceptual awareness in question is our *experience of* noise and not the noise *per se* and the same goes for the other senses. This is also highly compatible with my understanding which sees the basic sense of self as specific experiential elements of (the background of) a conscious state which allow us to experience the world ‘*selfly*’.

Self-awareness for Evans as well becomes an aspect of all awareness, and as so conceived self-awareness accompanies all our experience. This allows us to view experiences as ‘experiences *to* the self’. It is only because there is self-awareness independent of the particular experience holding attention that the experience is *to* such a self in his theory, as distinct from being merely *of* the self. It is in this sense that the subject is present alongside of the experiences. This point is consistent with my theory to the extent that while my own view does not entail the *identification* of the periphery or background of conscious states with the self, it presents a highly illuminating way which enables me to substantiate the claim that the phenomenal features in terms of which we have a sense of self are implicit but do appear. As we saw previously, intransitive self-consciousness, which the basic sense of self is a phenomenological expression of, implies peripheral awareness as-subject, which can appear similarly to how Evans describes it, i.e. as *built within* the background of conscious experience, and as that which renders the experiences as ‘to a subject’ by virtue of entailing the phenomenal elements (perspective/mineness, unity, individuality and boundary) I described.

One objection to the above identification reads that unprojected consciousness is itself said to be composed of elements, and they also require a self whose elements they are. But, on the theory, no self exists to which the elements comprising unprojected consciousness could be ascribed. Thus, after all the theory is unable to escape postulating experiential elements which are subject-less.

Evans' reply to this (and all other) objection(s) is that they arise out of 'a failure to distinguish the *self-approach* from the *persons approach*.' (ibid:175) (The *person-approach* versus the *self-approach* was explained in Chapter 1, whereby the *persons-approach* implies a third-person concept of what a person is and what personal identity consists in, whereas the *self-approach* implies the question about what we are aware of in self-awareness, i.e. experience of self.) The objection makes the mistake of asking '*persons-approach* questions from the *self-approach*, and arguing for the incoherence of a *self-approach* theory on the ground of its inability to handle such questions.' (ibid.)

The objection is based on what it does and does not make sense to say in ordinary language according to Evans. At the level of ordinary language, if the statements about unprojected consciousness are understood as statements about persons, they will be paradoxical. The reason for this has to do with the fact he says that

the conceptual scheme we use presupposes that we are talking about persons as distinct from subjects of states of consciousness - where it is characteristic of our talk about persons that we are concerned with questions of identification. Now in terms of a subject's enjoying a particular experience, there is no question of his either identifying himself to himself, or of his referentially identifying his experience to himself. (ibid.)

By using the personal pronoun one presupposes the concept of a person. This means that the identification of the subject with unprojected consciousness is not the same as the identification of the referent of the personal pronoun 'I' with unprojected consciousness (I made a similar point about what I take the subject to be in Chapter 1 and 2, i.e. the subject of experience, which is not taken as being identical to the referent of 'I' sentences). It is for that reason that any such substitution is nonsensical. All in all, we have here the explanation of the fact that the *self-approach* is characterized by a refusal to treat the subject of inner experience as the referent of first person sentences. Due to its unreflected and implicit nature which makes no reference to linguistic capacities or reference, this is also true of the basic sense of self.

While his explanation is plausible, it seems that the distinction made and relied on in the previous chapters between the two different levels of self-experience could also provide an opportunity for Evans' theory to separate the referent of a statement of consciousness such as 'I have UC' from the referent of the subject on the 'basic level'. The basic sense of self, due

to its lack of a propositional or linguistic form can also provide the grounds on which the subject of unprojected consciousness may escape referential qualification while accommodating all of the logical characteristics of the background of attention Evans describes. Therefore, the peripheral or background awareness he theorizes about is a perfect candidate to be the ‘special kind of awareness’ I referred to in the previous sections when describing how the basic sense of self forms a part of (phenomenally) conscious experiences. Since we have no explicit awareness or experience in every conscious state of the basic sense of self but, as I postulated, it appears on a subtle level in every (phenomenally conscious) experience, we can now fill in the structural details of this subtle, basic awareness of the self as-subject by employing Evans’ concept of unprojected consciousness. I believe that the essential experiential features which characterise the basic sense of self are to be found within unprojected consciousness.

3.4. Conclusion

In this Chapter I started my discussion of the basic sense of self by ‘zooming in’ on phenomenally conscious states and examining which states can be called such. I stated that the basic sense of self is thought to be a part of every phenomenally conscious state in virtue of being experiential itself. I also argued that it is plausible to think of non-phenomenally, purely access-conscious states which, for lack of phenomenal features, would not have the sense of self built into them. However, I also argued that this does not pose a threat to my account, as if we decide to keep our theory close to how experience happens in reality and we deploy a time-slice view of the subject, we can see that there will always be phenomenally-conscious states with a sense of self at whichever point in time we examine the subject (with the exception of completely unconscious episodes of course).

Next I discussed why every phenomenally conscious experience entails self-experience by presenting Kriegel’s (2004) and Zahavi and Parnas’ (1998/1999) views and concluded that the basic sense of self is the phenomenological expression of intransitive self-consciousness. I then considered phenomenological and same-order views in order to see how the basic sense of self can be built into conscious experiences without it having to be represented on a higher level/order and concluded that whilst one SOR definition proves useful, the basic sense of self makes no reference to representation but relies on phenomenology instead. I

took a closer look at how the phenomenal structure of a conscious state can allow for intransitive self-consciousness, i.e. the basic sense of self through the division of conscious states into focus and background by the workings of attention. I filled in the details of how the basic sense of self is place within the structure of a conscious state with the help of Evans' account, as he understands the entirety of the background of attention as the *subject*-self. I stated that my *basic* version of the sense of self can also have explanatory power in replying to objections to his identification of unprojected consciousness with the self.

In the next chapter I shall take a look at a much-studied and heavily discussed pathology, namely schizophrenia in order to highlight how the basic sense of self functions and what happens when it arguably goes missing.

Chapter 4. Loss of the basic sense of self

In Chapter 2 and 3 I discussed the basic sense of self with respect to its phenomenological characterisation, its place within different types of conscious experience and how the structure of a conscious state may allow for the unreflected, basic experiential sense of self to be built within it.

I would now like to move on to considering accounts of the subjective experiences of schizophrenic patients which report that the sense of self is ‘lost’ in schizophrenia. I shall do this with the purpose of supporting my main thesis of this chapter, namely that an essential aspect and function of the basic sense of self, which fails in this type of disordered self-experience, is to *individuate the subject by way of giving a sense of experiential boundary* between self and world/others. In order to do this, different experiential features of the sense of self will have to be put into the larger context of the different levels of sense of self. In line with the subject of the current chapter, I shall again focus on the experiential features of the basic or, as coined in the psycho-pathology literature and other relevant discussions, the ‘minimal’ or ‘core’ sense of self. (In fact the majority of the literature refers to the ‘minimal self’ instead of the sense thereof, however consequently to my considerations about why we should prefer the term ‘sense of self’ to ‘self’ *simpliciter*, I continue to refer to it in this part of the discussion as much as possible.)

I shall firstly introduce medical definitions and characterisations of the disorder, and then turn to articles and some 1st-person reports, which, in virtue of being from the subject’s viewpoint, allow us to have a far more interesting and informative insight into what may happen to one’s sense of self around the onset of schizophrenia than the diagnostic criteria can tell.

In the last part of the chapter I shall explain how the basic sense of self and its function to individuate the subject on an experiential level seem to be affected and lay out my overall conclusions regarding the basic sense of self.

4.1. Schizophrenia

Empirically-informed characterisations of personality disorders and psychopathologies often make reference to the ‘sense of self’ in general in their terminologies, thereby offering a way of connecting their insights to phenomenology. One such reference involves the loss of one’s sense of self.

What exactly is meant by this in descriptions of psychopathology is far from clear however. Someone suffering from Borderline Personality Disorder, (the essential features of which include ‘a pervasive pattern of instability of interpersonal relationships, self-image, and affects, and marked impulsivity that begins by early adulthood and is present in a variety of contexts’ (DSM IV: 679)) for instance can be said to have lost their sense of self, meaning that they have reached a level of depression whereby they feel emotionally empty, distant from others and unmotivated to make plans for the future. They lose sight of who they are and what they want.¹⁷ This type of the loss of the sense of self reveals the lack or disintegration of a more elaborate sense of self that can distinguish the person as an individual in society and give her a sense of identity in terms of personal characteristics, preferences and goals.

Although important, this sense of self is not as fundamental and basic as the one clinicians and patients normally refer to in descriptions of schizophrenic episodes. My contention is that the sense of self in question taps into identity-issues on a more fundamental level. More specifically, I think that the basic sense of self individuates the subject of experience by providing the experiential boundaries that ground the sense of being the subject of a certain experience. In the literature I review below, this effectively boils down to the already-discussed sense of ownership of experience, or ‘mineness’, but it can also be plausibly viewed as a defect that occurs in more than one aspect of the sense of self than just mineness, such as the one I called ‘sense of boundary/delineation’ in Chapter 2.

Schizophrenia is a complex psychopathology which can be characterised by psychotic episodes (the term ‘psychotic’ refers to delusions, any prominent hallucinations, disorganized speech, or disorganized or catatonic behaviour), and which gives various food for thought to philosophers, as it involves severe disturbances in perception and thought processes (such as

¹⁷ these problems are also referred to as ‘identity issues’ and quoted as one of the core symptoms of the disorder.

thought-insertion). Among the many complex symptoms and areas of functioning affected in this condition, I shall only focus on and narrow my discussion down to those that may point to a fundamental disturbance in subjective experience, or loss of the basic sense of self.

Schizophrenia is defined at length in DSM IV. Diagnosis is established mostly by the duration of certain classified groups and sub-groups of symptoms. One part of the description says it is characterised by ‘a loss of ego boundaries or a gross impairment in reality testing’ and it is

a disturbance that lasts for at least 6 months and includes at least 1 month of active-phase symptoms (i.e., two [or more] of the following: delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech, grossly disorganized or catatonic behaviour, negative symptoms). Hallucinations are present for at least a month. The characteristic symptoms of Schizophrenia involve a range of cognitive and emotional dysfunctions that include perception, inferential thinking, language and communication, behavioral monitoring, affect, fluency and productivity of thought and speech, hedonic capacity, volition and drive, and attention. (DSM IV: 303)

The characteristic symptoms listed in the entry are broken down into negative and positive categories, whereby ‘negative’ refers to the diminution or loss of normal functioning (including the diagnostic affective flattening, alogia [i.e. decreased thinking reflected in less productive and less fluent speech] and avolition), and ‘positive’ refers to the excess or distortion of normal functions. (The DSM IV also mentions that in certain cases a positive symptom, such as paranoid hallucination causes the subject to be in social isolation, which is a negative symptom, which means it is hard to draw a clear line between what is defined as ‘negative’ and ‘positive’.)

I have to note that whilst the loss of one’s sense of self is in this sense is clearly a negative characteristic, I suspect it would not be classified as one of the diagnostic symptoms. Instead it implies a fundamentally different way of looking at the disorder, which goes beyond the naming of symptoms and which was developed by scientists and researchers with a somewhat alternative approach to mainstream diagnosing.

Four different phases can be distinguished within the duration of the condition (Lieberman et al., 2001):

Premorbid Stage.

The clinical features of this phase occur in infancy or childhood and include mild physical anomalies, poor motor coordination, mild cognitive impairments and social deficits.

Prodromal Stage.

The first stage refers to the year(s) before the onset of the psychotic phase. People in the prodromal stage of schizophrenia often isolate themselves, stay alone in their bedroom a lot and stop spending time with family or friends. Some of the symptoms include mild psychotic episodes and magical thinking, as well as cognitive impairment in attention and concentration. This is also the time which seems to be less studied by mainstream psychiatry but which includes the period when the first crucial though arguably mostly non-diagnosable symptoms occur. These include the fundamentally different ways of experiencing oneself and the rest of reality.

Progressive Stage.

When someone is experiencing psychotic symptoms such as hallucinations, delusions, or display grossly disorganized behaviour, they are said to be in the acute or active stage of schizophrenia. The active phase indicates the full development of the disorder. When patients are in the progressive phase, they appear psychotic.

Residual Stage.

The final stage of schizophrenia is called the residual stage. The features of the residual phase are very similar to the prodromal stage. Patients in this stage do not appear psychotic but may experience some negative symptoms such as lack of emotional expression or low energy.

Whilst keeping the medical diagnosis and the stages of the disorder in mind, I am more concerned with an understanding of schizophrenia that holds that it is not simply identical to the (rather large) sum of its symptoms. This understanding is inspired by patients' reports of their *felt experience* of themselves and reality, as well as by those clinicians and researchers who utilise phenomenological descriptions of distorted self-experience in their studies and clinical practice. These accounts have a different angle on the onset of psychosis, as they see it essentially as *a disturbance or disorder of the (sense of) self*, which, importantly, is also characterised by the loss of the sense of reality. It is this interpretation of the disorder that is helpful for my discussion of the basic sense of self.

4.2. Phenomenological qualifications

In accordance with the above understanding, I aim to use the relevant literature to demonstrate the following:

1. we can distinguish between different but simultaneous levels of the experience (senses) of self, the most fundamental of which is the basic or minimal sense. These senses seem to typically work in an integrated manner and may only come apart in psychopathology (or as a result of certain meditation techniques, which I shall not discuss in my dissertation).
2. an essential function of the basic sense of self is to individuate the subject in an elementary way, namely by providing the subject's experiential boundaries. (The more elaborate individual and/or narrative senses of self individuate the subject on more complex, psychological levels, which I shall discuss in the next chapter.)
3. the loss of this level of the sense of self in schizophrenia distorts this basic delineation or individuation in essential ways.

(1.) is a point stipulated by a number of researches, the most prominent of whom may be Parnas, along with his team studying schizophrenia from a phenomenologically-informed perspective and in close co-operation with philosophers at the Center for Subjectivity Research run at the University of Copenhagen. I shall present relevant views of theirs and others inspired by them and compare these to my view.

(2.) is a trickier and more tentative claim, which is inspired by the negative features of schizophrenic experience. I hope to support it with researcher's thoughts and subjective reports of patients who attempted to describe their experiences from the prodromal as well as the progressive stage.

(3.) is also a point which is supported in some of the relevant literature, but my version of it is more selective and has a single focus.

The reason why the premorbid and prodromal stages seem to have received traditionally less attention than the progressive one is because the symptoms are harder to diagnose, nevertheless the first symptoms of disturbed experience take place during this phase. These

symptoms, though more subtle than the full-on psychotic ones, are more informative for research which, among others, aims to study the phenomenology of self-experience (and for neurobiological reasons, viz. to identify the alterations in the brain linked to the onset of symptoms).

Nelson et al. (2009), following the footsteps of other phenomenologically-informed scientists, propose that ‘a disturbance of the basic sense of self is a psychopathological trait marker of psychotic vulnerability, particularly of the schizophrenia-spectrum disorder.’ (2009: 808) The essential and remarkably difficult question of course is what exactly the ‘disturbance of the basic sense of self’ consists in. The authors claim that in order to understand the type of self-disturbance referred to in schizophrenia on the phenomenological level, we first have to distinguish between the different types of selfhood (which I also mentioned in Chapter 2).

Parnas (2003) identifies three such types, these are:

the *pre-reflective*, referring to the first-person givenness or perspective of experience, which is an implicit form of direct awareness – this is referred to as the minimal self or ‘ipseity’. In another place it is also referred to as ‘a bare locus of consciousness, void of personality’. (Cermolacce et al., 2007:704)

the *reflective* self, which is a relatively more explicit awareness of the self ‘as an invariant and persisting subject of experience and action’ (Nelson et al., 2009: 808). This sense of self pre-supposes a), i.e. the knowledge that the moment-to-moment experience is mine. (I shall not be concerned with this sense of self at all in my work.)

the *social or narrative* self, which refers to individual personality traits and habits etc.

Nelson et al. align the above levels of self with the selves distinguished as different neurobiological processes in the brain, as demonstrated in the table below (ibid.):

Level	Experience	Phenomenology	Neurobiology
3	Reflective	Narrative self,	Autobiographical,
2		Reflective, extended	Extended self
1	Pre-reflective	Minimal, basic self (ipseity)	Core self
			Proto self

It may be confusing to conflate the notion of the minimal level of subjective experience and perspective with the Strawsonian ‘bare locus of consciousness’ (as indicated in a), as the latter refers to a metaphysically characterized and categorised entity, viz. ‘a *single* (hiatus-free) *mental thing*’ (1999:106), whereas the concept of the pre-reflective minimal self does not serve to pick out any particular ontological category but rather to point to the very nature of subjective experience (in terms of it constituting ‘mineness’ or ‘ipseity’). I shall therefore refrain from employing or accepting the Strawsonian definition.

Nelson et al.’s main suggestions include that the disorder of the self experienced in schizophrenia occurs at the (phenomenologically) first level of self-awareness, i.e. at the level of the minimal self or ipseity; is independent of symptom manifestation and remains present throughout all of the stages of the disorder.

The characterisation of the disturbance of the sense of the basic/minimal self includes intertwined disturbances in the following (2009:809):

- the sense of presence (the experience of being absorbed in activity amongst a world of objects and this gives us a sense of ‘inhabiting our self in a pre-reflective and automatic fashion’),
- corporeality (anomalous bodily experiences),
- the stream of consciousness (anomalous cognitive processes),
- self-demarcation/delineation (the ability to differentiate self from the world) and
- existential reorientation (reorientation with respect to worldview, such as self-reference).

These senses are intimately related to one another, but first and foremost, interestingly Nelson et al. make a difference between the ‘sense of presence’ (i.e. mineness) and ‘delineation’, which is a division I also suggest should be made (as I explained in Chapter 2). This of course does not preclude that these are connected and that both of them are severely affected in schizophrenia simultaneously.

The authors claim that one of the most critical features of ipseity that is affected in the prodromal stage is the sense of presence. ‘Presence’ is described as the feature which

provides the automatic sense that our experiences are ours, i.e. the sense of ‘mineness’, which for them constitutes a basic form of (pre-reflective) self-awareness.

It seems the conceptual line can seem to be somewhat blurred between the sense of presence and the minimal self *per se*, as ipseity is once defined as the sense of *mineness*, which would ‘include’ the sense of presence, but later on the claim is that the sense of presence is what *provides* the sense of mineness. The authors explain however that they intend to follow Merleau-Ponty in thinking that these two features (and hence the concepts) are ‘co-constitutive’, an adjective that does not take us too far on the way of creating conceptual clarity. Be that as it may, accepting their notion of mineness or ipseity will suffice for laying the grounds for my conclusions as well.

The sense of presence is the background against which objectifying conscious activities (such as intentional states I take it) are supposed to take place, and it is what primarily seems to be disturbed in the early phase of schizophrenia. A rather peculiar experience is described, viz. it is as if the sense of presence (or mineness) was detached from an experience that the subject has. The subject’s first-person perspective becomes distorted and she may feel that she is alienated from her own experience (despite knowing that they are her experiences). The subject may also feel that there is a temporal delay between an experience and her ownership or sense of mineness of it. There may also be a feeling of actual spatial separation from the experience, and a diminished sense of being able to be affected by objects, other people, events etc. (These experiences are also told to be paired up with hyper-reflexivity of aspects of conscious activity that normally stay in the background, such as sensations and kinetic experiences.)

4.3. Subjective reports

Cermolacce et al. (2007) discuss the case vignette of Maria, a 22 year-old woman who describes her anomalous experiences. She feels as if she was ‘living in a fog’ and was ‘only 70% conscious’, indicating that her awareness of her own thoughts and her environment is not fully articulated. She often feels that among her own train of thought there are alien ones, ones she feels distant from herself. The authors claim that she has a pervasive problem of identity at the most fundamental level, which is symptomatic of schizophrenia spectrum

disorders. This effectively means that the immediate or unmediated, automatic sense of being the owner of one's experiences breaks down.

Let me turn to more patients' reports of their felt experience of the onset of the disorder at this point and attempt to connect these to the phenomenological level of the basic sense of self. There are a number of reports of how patients feel and what they go through when they claim that they lose a certain sense of self. One of these is a deeply insightful article by Clara Kean (2009), an undergraduate student of Physiology and Pharmacology, who reports that

I was totally separated from myself, not knowing what action I was taking, let alone how to communicate to others. I was unaware of myself and my psychiatrist was unaware of me. (2009:1034)

'Not knowing' here, as can be seen, is a tricky phrase, as it does not seem like the patients are completely unaware of their own actions as if they were doing something while sleep-walking for instance (at least not in the early stages of schizophrenia), rather, this has to do with the alienation from or lack of identification with and an underlying lack of the sense of ownership of their actions in a deep and basic way.

In another place we read that

The medication helps the observing self dominate over the suffering self, but the real 'me' is not here anymore. I am disconnected, disintegrated, diminished. Everything I experience is through a dense fog, created by my own mind. (...) I feel that my real self has left me, seeping through the fog toward a separate reality, which engulfs and dissolves this self. This has nothing to do with the suspicious thoughts or voices; it is purely a distorted state of being. The clinical symptoms come and go, but this nothingness of the self is permanently there. (...) My thoughts, my emotions, and my actions, none of them belong to me anymore. (...) I am an automaton, but nothing is working inside me. (...) In my opinion, schizophrenia is ultimately a disorder of the self, a disturbance of one's subjective self-experience and the external, objective reality.

She goes on to discuss how the diminished sense of relatedness to the world and through it to oneself, or as she calls it 'existential permeability' is responsible for the destruction of one's sense of self. Disturbed permeability in essence seems to mean that the external world can penetrate through the subject and the subject can incorporate the external world into herself,

i.e. one's *boundaries* or *delineation* of experience of self (as suggested in Chapter 2) and world become altered:

My sense of self is totally crushed when the 'bubble' surrounding my self-consciousness is destroyed by this unstable permeability. (ibid. 1035)

In relation to this disturbance, she describes three types of distorted self-experience, the second of which is particularly useful for my discussion;

- i. When there is an 'excessive amount of permeability' between self and others/world, this causes the subject to feel as though she is empty, flat or even non-existent ('dissolved self'). These experiences are enhanced by the voices that tell someone they are not real or that they are already dead (the so-called 'Cotard delusion').
- ii. When permeability is 'unstable', meaning that the subject is unsure of how to relate to the world ('disoriented self'). This involves the dissolution of boundaries between oneself and the world and one's confused sense about whether an action originated in her or somewhere/someone else. (Kean, 2009)

A description of such an experience can also be found in another self-report, written in form of an autobiography by Renée (1951), a young schizophrenic patient:

in my first attempt to secure a distant object, I had signalled with my hand and was impatient if it did not come to me. There followed along learning period until I began to understand that it was I who had to do the moving. This was equally true in body functions. When I urinated and it was raining torrents outside, I was not at all certain whether it was not my own urine bedewing the world and I was gripped by fear. A comparable problem was posed with Mama.¹⁸ Sometimes I did not know clearly whether it was she or I who needed something. For instance if I asked for another cup of tea and Mama said teasingly "But why do you want more tea; don't you see that I have just finished my cup and so you don't need any?" Then I replied, "Yes, that's true, I don't need anymore," confusing her with myself. (1951:119)

¹⁸ her therapist

Renée subsequently went through phases where she was incapable of delineating herself from her disturbed (un)reality and only had immense feelings of guilt and shame, which, according to her analyst was projected onto her environment, objects, other people and even nature.¹⁹ She also dissociated herself from painful parts of her body, which had to be referred to in the third person.

Cermolacce et al. (2007) suggest that *all* of the symptoms of full-fledged psychosis deal with the notion of ‘ego-boundaries’ (although to avoid a mixed terminology I should refer to the boundaries of self, as the ego could refer to the full-blown person and her reflective experience), that is the patient feels that the outside world has access to his inner life and his thoughts are publicly available and although ‘ownership’ as such may not disintegrate completely, it is disturbed.

As we can see from Renée’s report, this can also mean the confusion of the experiential boundaries of the self (where ‘I start’ and where ‘I end’, as it were). At the same time however, this also refers to disconnection from one’s own body and thoughts (which could be comprehended as the inverse of the felt projection of the subject’s boundaries onto the environment). Arguably, this kind of disturbance goes beyond the well-known illusion of phantom limbs, whereby the subject feels as if his missing leg was still a part of his body because here the defect in ownership of experience is not limited to the experience of bodily ownership. It also includes a defective or disturbed sense of experience of the environment (as in the confusion of rain with her own urine) and/or misidentification of self with other people. In addition, it does not only consist of the extension of one’s boundaries to where the body is not, as in phantom limb cases, but the reverse can also happen, i.e. the self does not extend to the boundaries of the actual body.

The third aspect Clara refers to is the following:

- iii. This type of disturbed self-experience refers to a state where existential permeability is ‘constantly shut down’ (‘disembodied self’). This means a ‘total alienation’, a separation whereby the actions and mental activities are no longer attributed to the self but subsequently to a third agency that controls her actions and thoughts. (Disembodiment here does not seem to refer to the experience that one is a

¹⁹ Since however hers is the only case of which I have knowledge in full, I will refrain from making general comments about these episodes of self-deprecating emotions.

disembodied ego, but rather a lack of ability to connect to the world, or to the mental processes one has.) (2009:1036)

Cermolacce et al. (2007) note in their discussion that in the second type of experiences (ii.) the patients *know* that the interfering thoughts are the products of their own mind, but that they are *felt* as not belonging to them.

There seems to be an ongoing debate in the literature as to how to account for the experience that one's thoughts or actions are felt not to belong to the subject but are recognised as one's own nevertheless. Gallagher (2000 and 2004) on the one hand criticises a model put forward by Chris Frith (2000), which involves

the breakdown of the comparison between the intention to think and the thought itself, whereby thinking a thought is preceded by an intention to do so. A putative monitor module allows its comparison with the actual version of the thought. In the case of a mismatch because of a breakdown in the system, the patient will not recognize the thought as his own and he will be confronted with the phenomenon of thought insertion. (M. Cermolacce et al., 2007:709)

As an alternative, Gallagher makes a distinction between what he calls the *sense of agency* and the *sense of ownership* in order to make sense of what goes on in such an experience. (I shall discuss these senses in detail in the chapter on bodily awareness.) The sense of agency, i.e. the feeling that *I am* the initiator of a certain action or thought is what goes missing in these episodes, but the sense of ownership is retained, since the subject still identifies the thought as belonging to her own stream of consciousness. However, the fact that the sense of agency is missing may not seem pervasive enough. (As I shall discuss in the relevant parts of Chapter 6 on the sense of agency) the missing sense of agency could consist in so little as having someone else lift up my arm for me. Or I could have a disturbing, involuntary but fleeting thought about jumping off as I am standing on top of a tall building, which would seem like an idea that I did not call for or initiate. These cases certainly do not present cases of pathological symptoms, which prompts us that we need a deeper and more extensive 'sense' to be lost in order to fully account for the strange symptoms of schizophrenic patients.

The lacking sense of agency view is not accepted by certain researchers convinced of a more profound phenomenological aspect. They insist that firstly, patients' reports of their diminished field of awareness and spatially separated ownership experience suggest that the

sense of ownership is in fact fundamentally disturbed in schizophrenia, and secondly, if the lack of sense of agency is studied in other disorders such as obsessions, we can see that while there is a clear lack of the sense in question (unwilled fantasies and thoughts the subject tries to suppress), the sense of ownership stays intact. However, similarly to what I pointed out above, such a case does not involve any remotely similar complaints to the separation and disturbance described by schizophrenic patients. Thought insertion (which presumably also involves confabulation regarding the imagined source of the alien thoughts) and lack of agency are first-rank symptoms, but there are many other such symptoms in the emotional, perceptual and mental domains, which all relate to the concept of boundaries of self, according to Cermolacce et al., a point which supports my view.

The experiences in question, i.e. the sense of alienation of one's own thoughts from oneself and the feeling of emptiness and nothingness are motivated by an *incomplete sense of instantaneous self-identity* that precedes the onset of psychosis (i.e. occurs in the prodromal stage), which does also affect the experience of one's body, as the vignette of Maria suggests:

Looking at her own hand may surprise her and she may stare in the mirror, sometimes for hours, inspecting her facial appearance. (ibid.)

The feelings of unstable self-identity (Maria feels as though she is not 'quite human', as if she were a thing or object, instead of a subject), as said above, point to a fundamental disturbance of the self, the withdrawal of the sense of 'mineness'.²⁰ In effect, the unmediated first-person perspectival awareness of experience seems altered. It is important for the understanding of 'mineness' to remind ourselves of Zahavi's view, in which it is thought of as a mode in which the experience articulates itself as a first-person perspective. It is a primordial, structural moment of experience. (ibid. 710) Experiences in this sense are 'removed' from the subject despite the *reflective knowledge* that she is the one who has them.

In summary, the disturbance of the sense of 'mineness' has been characterised in numerous ways, such as:

- a sense of inner void
- decreased or temporally delayed sense of mineness to experience

²⁰ 'mineness' understood this way denotes the same phenomenon as 'presence' defined by Nelson et al.

- pervasive difference between self and experience
- decreased ability to be affected by objects, people, events as though the person is no longer fully present in the world
- intense reflectivity of one's thoughts or aspects of the environment (later evolving into delusions of influence)
- loss of common sense²¹

Out of the numerous descriptions, I would argue that the third and fourth point (i.e. pervasive difference between self and experience and decreased ability to be affected by objects) also emphasise the (perhaps integrated) loss of the sense of boundary.

In the remarkable and very moving account of such full-fledged symptoms in the *Autobiography of a Schizophrenic Girl*, descriptions of Renée's experience are abundant, such as the one below:

I fell into a state of all-embracing stupor and indifference. Everything passed as in a dreary dream; nothing was differentiated, no reaction was possible. Neither the doctors, nor the nurses assumed any comprehension of their orders and questions. Yet, they were mistaken; I was perfectly aware of what went on, of what was said about me. Indeed, everything had become so totally irrelevant, so devoid of emotion and sensibility that in truth it was the same as though they were not talking to me at all.(...) I was myself, a lifeless image.' (1951:119)

If self-disturbance on the level of the basic sense of self occurs and this denotes alterations and loss in the phenomenology of mineness and boundary (in the senses explained above) and the experiential boundaries of the self, then this may well be due to, *inter alia*, the failure or breakdown of the aspect and subsequent function of the basic sense of self to delineate the subject among other subjects and in the world. In addition, the fact that patients can reflect

²¹ 'common sense' has a number of interpretations, one of which is 'a capacity to gauge, without explicit, self-conscious reflection, what any given situation demands' (Blankenburg & Aaron, 2001). It is important to note that these episodes mark the beginning of psychosis as opposed its full-fledged onset but once these phenomena lose their 'as if' nature, as Nelson et al. call it, they set in and crystallise into diagnostically criterial psychotic symptoms.

and report on this experience only shows that the reflective sense of the self is separate from the basic one, not that it is not affected by it.

4.4. Conclusion

The reports, characterisations and studies all suggest that the basic sense of self (understood as consisting of the sense of mineness and experiential boundary among others) is disturbed or even lost in certain stages of schizophrenia, but that reflection on this experience is still possible. In order to understand how this works, we need to distinguish between different levels of self as well as between *judgments of ownership* from *feelings of ownership* (de Vignemont, 2007) very sharply. In order to judge that something is mine or belongs to me, is my experience one may not need to also have an underlying feeling of accompanying mineness, as may be the case with schizophrenic patients. Since a judgment of ownership may involve more of the reflective levels of experience, it can be plausible to know or judge that something belongs to the subject without their fundamental feeling of ownership. This means that while it may be very hard to conceive of, it is possible that a subject, despite losing her fundamental sense of ownership and boundary and hence feeling like she ‘lost her self’, she can still reflect and report on this disturbed experience (as happening to her) due to the fact that the experience itself and the reflecting or reporting thereon occur on different levels of self-experience.

This, taken together with patients’ descriptions shows that different (although normally integrated) levels of the sense of self can be distinguished on an experiential level as well, which actually come apart in some psychopathologies, and that the loss of the basic sense of self constitutes in the disintegration of first-person experience and the severe alteration of experiential boundaries of self (and as I pointed out in Chapter 3, this does not seem to happen in depersonalisation). We can view this as the failure of aspects of the sense of self to *individuate* the subject in the normal or usual way.

As far as the more elaborate sense (or senses) of one’s self is concerned (which I shall say more about in the next chapter), this failure may take the form of an emotional detachment from oneself to an extent where the dispositions to entertain certain feelings and thoughts would go awry or take radically different directions. (The commonly coined ‘narrative sense

of self’, since it also entails a reflection on one’s first-person experience of reality and one’s actions may also be affected.)

The points discussed in this section underlie the view of phenomenology that the ‘sense of self is less a matter of introspection than a phenomenon that accompanies, perhaps even arises out of worldly engagements’ (Lysaker & Lysaker, 2010:335) to a certain extent (which makes it all the more difficult to provide characterisations that are based on introspection).

So far then and to recap, in the course of examining the basic sense of self in conscious experience, I have hopefully managed to establish the following:

- the basic sense of self is to be found in phenomenally conscious experience (and my preferred time-slice view allows that the issue of whether access-conscious or non-phenomenally conscious states can have it as well is sidestepped)
- the basic sense of self as-subject does not necessitate a higher-order conscious state to be directed at it and it can be accommodated within the logical and phenomenological structure of same-order conscious states, supported by the division between focus/attention and periphery/background.

In the present chapter I aimed to complete the above points with the following conclusion:

- reports and studies of schizophrenic patients suggest that an essential aspect and subsequent function of the basic sense of self, in virtue of ‘providing’ the sense that the self is extended only up to certain borders, is to individuate the subject by way of giving a sense of experiential boundary between self and world/others.

In the next chapter I shall move on to the subject of the elaborate, individual sense of self and explain what it consists of in terms of experiential features on my account.

Chapter 5. The individual sense of self

I noted in the previous chapter that the characterisation of the basic sense we have of ourselves is particularly difficult because of its non-reflective, non-linguistic nature and is to be found in the background of conscious experience, which is intrinsically elusive and hence difficult to tap into on a conceptual level. In this chapter I move on the more elaborate or complex level of the *individual* sense of self and argue for the following points:

- a narrative sense of oneself, although possible but is not criterial of having an individual sense of self in terms of who one is
- the constituents of the individual sense of self are:

self-concept (whether it implies a narrative or not);

a *sense of agency/authorship* interpreted in a looser sense than Frankfurt's original account suggests, and

personality (understood in terms of traits).

One may hope that once it comes to the characterisation of a more elaborate sense of self, we will have an easier task, as this one is a more tangible experience to bring under the microscope of phenomenology. Most people have a more or less clear sense of who (they feel) they are, which should give us much clearer ideas about what one's sense of self on this level of experience consists in. Unfortunately, this is not the case precisely because the self-experience in question encompasses so many potential domains and is so rich and varied that it seems to be an incredibly ambitious enterprise to tap into. There is of course a vast amount of theorising about what one's sense of self consists in, which includes disciplines such as the philosophy of mind, moral psychology, the philosophy of action and phenomenology as well as psychology. I shall not try to give a comprehensive view of what every theory has had to say about this subject, but suggest what I consider to be the central elements of the individual sense of self. I shall argue that the main elements of our individual sense of self are a concept of ourselves as a certain individual, our sense of agency and authorship of our actions and decisions, and our sense of our personality and personality traits.

The chapter is structured as follows. I shall firstly explain the object of my enquiry and place it within the broader context of the problem(s) of personal identity. I shall discuss the

diachronic/narrative and episodic views of selfhood and comment on whether choosing between these two views is necessary for my discussion. I shall subsequently conclude that a narrative sense of self is not necessary to have an individual sense of self, especially if we take a time-slice view of the subject. I shall then move on to Frankfurt's (1988) view of self-creation and conclude that his theory of identification, while being an important element of agency/authorship and hence the individual sense of self, is insufficient in giving us a complete picture of who we are in terms of this sense. I shall complete this picture by naming personality traits (informed by Kupperman (1991) and Goldie (2004), whose views I partially amend) as formative of our sense of individual self. I shall argue that these are essential to how we *experience* ourselves as individuals, even if in contrast to how (as what type of person) we may think of ourselves. Finally, I shall discuss and deal with the challenge of social psychology (or 'Situationism') which states that personality traits are not reliable indicators of human behaviour.

5.1. Personal identity and the individual sense of self

In the first Chapter of my dissertation I set out an argument as to why we should refrain from conflating the concept of 'self' from the concept of 'person' at least for the purposes of this discussion on the grounds that 'self' provides us with a phenomenologically richer, 1st-person understanding of our experience of ourselves that the dimensions of 'person' cannot possibly cover. I would like to keep this, perhaps somewhat arbitrary distinction in mind throughout the present discussion as well, despite the fact that most (if not all) authors I review take these concepts to be interchangeable. This also entails that my characterisation of the individual sense of self is going to attempt to be *descriptive*, i.e. I shall make no reference to any moral requirements of how an individual *ought to* experience themselves etc. in terms of who they ought to be. Instead I shall try to stick to those ideas that describe the constituents of the sense of self on the basis of psychological characteristics. I can foresee two benefits of keeping the concept of self distinct from that of the person, namely;

Firstly, as I indicated towards the end of Chapter 1, we shall be able to have different, experiential-based identity criteria for subjects to qualify under the two concepts and hence distribute selfhood more widely than personhood, which in turn allows for more informative connections to be made between pathological cases and philosophical concepts of personal

identity. The second advantage does not concern distribution of personhood or selfhood but the hope that more clarity can be achieved via the conceptual separation regarding most people's 'regular' sense of self as well.

One objection against my approach that may already arise could be that I lay so much emphasis on 1st-person experience and accounts that this will render my discussion essentially subjective and useless in anyone else's case but my own. To someone who may think this I can reply that, first of all, that meaningful conclusions can be drawn on the basis that I am built similarly to other human beings and therefore there is reason to assume that I can generalise from my own case.

Secondly, my emphasis may be misleading in the sense that it might seem to suggest that subjects (such as myself) should be viewed in separation from other people or their surrounding 'world'. I neither assume, nor intend to imply that my (or anyone else's) individual sense of self is constituted in separation from other people's or that it could even be hoped to exist if e.g. I was the only human being on the planet. I do not intend to downplay the role socialisation and intersubjectivity play in the creation and evolution of anyone's sense of who they are, in fact, these seem to be empirically crucial for there to be any kind of experience of self as separate from the other. How we interact with others and communicate with them have a crucial role to play in how we arrive at an individual sense of self in a variety of ways. However, the emphasis of my dissertation is indeed pushed towards this 'experience of self as separate from the other', as what I would like to see is what those constituents of the sense of individual self arrived at probably as a result of socialisation and intersubjective communication and behaviour which render individuals as 'singled out' unified subjects of (self-) experience are and how they can be characterised, and to some extent, what this experience amounts to in terms of psychology. In other words, the point at which I intend to examine the sense of self, it has already been formed and developed and the subject already has a sense of being a distinct individual.

The consideration of how individuals are singled out leads me to the question of how to read the problem of personal identity. As I understand it, following Olson's (2009) useful breakdown of the different topics, we can safely distinguish the following issues in personal identity;

1. *Persistence* – what are the necessary and sufficient conditions under which x at t^1 is identical to x (or stg) at t^2 ? In personal identity discussions, this is normally interpreted as 'what is it about your past 'self' that relates to you now to make you one and the same'?
2. *Personhood* – what are the necessary and sufficient conditions of personhood?
3. *Who am I?/Individuality* – what makes me the distinct being I am?
4. *What am I?* – what is my fundamental ontological nature?

While the traditional philosophical enquiry mostly concerns no.1, i.e. the 'Persistence question', number three is what is of more interest here. In the sense I intend to work with, individuality is closely tied to the concept of individuation in the phenomenological sense, i.e. my guiding question is; what does one's *experience of being a single individual* consist in?

This approach is also inspired by a more psychological interpretation of 'individuation', although, confusingly enough the purely psychological reading concerns those psychological *processes* whereby the undifferentiated tends to become individual, or those processes through which differentiated components become integrated into stable wholes (see Jung, 1939). 'Becoming' and 'process' however indicate the time-component, which is a contentious issue in the present-day philosophical definition of the sense of self (more on this to follow shortly). In my understanding, individuality is connected to the subjective experience of selfhood (which of course is also compatible with the psychological processes of becoming an individual).

5.2. The individual sense of self

As a recurring theme of this and the previous chapter, I connect the experience of selfhood, whether it be basic or more elaborate, to individuation, i.e. that which draws the boundaries around or singles out the subject, as it were. As we have seen, especially in the case of disordered self-experience, the basic sense of self is thought to carry this out on a fundamental and primitive level in virtue of distinguishing between the experiences someone feels to be the subject of, whether these take place within the physical boundaries of the body

or not, and experiences which she does not. Ownership, as we saw plays a significant role in constituting the basic sense of self, and it will have an important place in the individual sense of self as well, however it shall receive a more restricted meaning in some authors' views. Whilst I maintain that the sense of self is a more fundamental concept for a phenomenological enquiry than that of the self *per se*, the literature treats the problem of what the self is as the more pressing philosophical issue, which means that I again need to be selective and filter some of the contents of the main veins in which the general discussion goes.

It seems that the following preliminary claim can be made without any obvious initial objections;

there are unique (clusters of) features or properties (I use these potentially vague terms on purpose, as my enquiry is aimed at unearthing what these 'features' or 'properties' amount to in terms of an individual's sense of self), which in a trivial understanding make someone sense who they are, i.e. a distinct and individual being.

I will refer to the considerations falling under this claim as those made about individuality.²²

5.2.1. Diachronic/narrative versus episodic selfhood

Since we are essentially talking about the psychological elements or constituents of the experience which provide the sense of who I am and feel I am as an individual (I shall distinguish the question of who we *feel* we are from who we think we are at a later point), in order to answer the questions I posed above, I shall discuss views which give an account of individuality in terms of *personality*, *character*, and *narrative* and conclude that, as my time-slice view implies, while personality traits can be seen as one of the constituents of the sense of self, a narrative sense is not criterial. However, before doing that I owe an elaboration on the question of the temporal dimension of the individual sense of self.

In philosophical parlance it is common to talk about two different dimensions of selfhood, that is the *episodic* and the *diachronic* ones. A person, or a self, is living a life, and her life unfolds in certain successive events. It is a natural assumption that the same self or the same

²² which is essentially meant to guide my view of the phenomenological/psychological reading of individuation

person continues to exist through this succession of events, as the diachronic view suggests. Indeed, some philosophers suggest that a person or a self is constituted by a narrative that unfolds in a diachronic manner. At the same time, we can have contradictory intuitions about what the thing (self, person) is that persists throughout the events of a life. If we think it is the human body, we may find it difficult to give an account of a person's continuity who e.g. has amnesia and no recollection of any of his life events and information about herself. Is she really the same person now as she was before her amnesia occurred? This may lead us to think that it is a more psychological notion of the person, e.g. one that postulates the essentiality of memory or continuous consciousness that is necessary for diachronic identity. Alternatively, we can abandon the view that there is anything at all that actually persists throughout all the different events of a life and claim that the self or consciousness is fragmentary in the sense that my self at 2 years of age has no real identity with who I am today, i.e. the self is *episodic*.

This seems to be a dividing line of arguments between philosophers (such as Richard Wollheim (1984), Alasdair MacIntyre (1985) or Marya Schechtman (2007)) in favour of a so-called *narrative* view of personhood which holds the diachronic dimension to be crucial on the one hand, and those who argue against the narrative view and hence the diachronic aspect of selfhood on the other.

It seems obvious that a life is lived or led as a diachronic 'enterprise', a person who was born at a certain point in time and successfully became an autonomous individual later on normally sees his or her life as one the past events of which relate to the present and the future. Does the truth of this statement preclude the attempt to examine the sense of being this autonomous individual from an a viewpoint that is episodic in the sense that it only focuses on what the case is at one specific point in time (as opposed to continuously)? I am tempted to answer in the negative.

It is quite another thing however to think that there is *no* narrative sense or experience of self in some people at all. Such a view is held by Galen Strawson (2004), who argues that his is a case that testifies to the almost brute fact that not every person has the continuous, diachronic sense of living a life/being a person. He however thinks that the narrative/non-narrative distinction does not map exactly onto the episodic/diachronic distinction, though they correlate. (In fact he splits the narrative thesis into 'psychological' and 'ethical' versions. I

only to intend focus on the psychological version here, so when I refer to the ‘narrativity’ thesis I always imply this version.)

Strawson differentiates between ‘one’s experience when one is considering oneself principally as a human being taken as a whole, and one’s experience of oneself when one is considering oneself principally as an inner mental entity or ‘self’ of some sort’ (ibid. 430). The first would drive us toward the diachronic form of experience, while the second suggests the episodic view. The reason why this is the case is that people do not tend to think of themselves as whose persistence conditions are not identical to those of a human being taken as a whole in his view. Essentially, the episodic self-experience entails that

one does not figure oneself, considered as a self, as something that was there in the (further) past and will be there in the (further) future. (ibid.)

Long-term continuity *per se* is not denied by Strawson but only attributed to the ‘human being as a whole’ and not the self, which is episodic both in the phenomenological and the metaphysical sense. This way of thinking may seem somewhat unnatural to some, so he brings up his own example as an episodic person, who has no narrative sense of his life, any special interest in his past or concern about his future. As long as this is the report of a genuine experience of a person, I suggest it should be acknowledged (even if not universalised) as a legitimate way of how one’s self is experienced.

His past is indeed that past of Galen Strawson, the human being, but it is not the past of the self who he currently experiences himself to be. This does not preclude autobiographical memories, or the 1st-person character of these, which he says can detach from the sense that he is the subject of the experience (in the present moment). What is more, even the emotional respect of a 1st-person memory does not infer that the memory is experienced as something that happened to the (present) self for Strawson. Just as with past events and memories, he also fails to have a sense that his present self will be there in the future, though he knows he will experience it as ‘something immediately felt’. (ibid.434) I find Strawson’s description plausible in the sense that when I remember something in my secondary school years for instance, it may seem so detached and distant that I feel that *I*, the person sitting here typing these words was not really there when it happened. For instance, I used to be very good at chemistry and enjoy working on equations but now I cannot seem to recall most of the chemical symbols etc. and I cannot identify with solving chemistry problems either. So it

seems like it was not really *I*, the individual I am right now that knew and worked on chemistry problems.

In sharp contrast to the episodic intuitions and experience Strawson describes (and which other people may also attest to), the narrative camp more or less agrees on insisting that one's life does have to exhibit a certain structure, that of a narrative, or a self-told story. The narrative is something that connects the events and memories of the past with that of the present and the future, thereby threading the life of a person. (In fact, forming this narrative and striving for narrative unity of life are essential to leading a 'good life', according to the more ethically-minded narrative thinkers, such as MacIntyre (1985) or Rudd (2012).)

Although the proponents of the narrative view refer to 'self' and 'person' in essentially the same sense, I find that most of what they have to say applies to a full blown notion of 'person', which is why I shall use 'person' in giving account of their views as far as it is possible. They see the lives of persons as coming about in a narrative form, i.e. that of a more or less coherent story that is consciously or subconsciously narrated by and to the person. In fact Wollheim and Schechtman both agree that the life lived by a person and a sentient being qualifying as a person are tightly connected. More specifically, only someone living (or leading) the life typical of what we call the life of a person could qualify to belong in the category of persons. Wollheim thinks that we intuitively and conceptually think of a person's life as a diachronic expansion of what we identified as a person in the first place, so to know what a person's life is and what it is for a particular person to have a life derives from our knowledge of the concept of the person. (In fact, Wollheim wishes to distinguish between two different but often conflated questions. The first, 'What is a person?', enquires after the identity conditions of an entity of some sort. The second, 'What is a person's life?' is an enquiry about the identity of a process of living, or, within our philosophical terminology, persistence. He believes that many philosophers have been so preoccupied that they have not always noticed whether they were talking about a person and his identity or about a person's life and its identity. They reveal this when they take what they have convinced themselves is a perfectly satisfactory unity-relation for a person's life and re-employ it, without adjustment, as the criterion of identity for a person, and thus finish up with a view of a person as a collection of events spread over time, which he claims cannot be right. (1984)) This is informative, because it gives us a (more life-like) dimension to consider about the problem of personal identity (understood as persistence) which is normally lacking in the strict philosophical (animalist and neo-Lockean) accounts of how to think about persons.

Strawson's criticism of this rather idealistic or normative view of narrativity is well-placed in the sense that maybe the influential philosopher's highly scholarly way of thinking about life and continuity seems feasible to himself, but other, less perfectionist people (even philosophers) do not have such high expectations of themselves and their lives. Unity *as created by a narrative act* may not be essential for someone's life to be a whole, and this would not make it less worthwhile living. Strawson downplays the role of memory in one's sense of continuity as well. It is not the past as such that matters but the effect it had on the present self. As long as I have the personality, outlook and moral identity I did before, my actual memories might as well be lost. This, as we will see is actually not in opposition with a certain version of the narrative view.

The linear unfolding of a person's life and the potentially diachronic sense of self do not have to stop me (or anyone else) from 'grabbing' or singling out one point in time, preferably at a point when the individual is no longer a child and examine what experience of self it is that *at this time* makes this individual a single unified person and sense herself as such. The experience may still be constituted by past memories or events that had a personality-shaping effect on the individual in question, or expectations of the future he or she may have, it just so happens that our view is from a time-slice perspective of this person (again). I am fairly certain that the more restrictive advocates of the narrative view would argue with me in thinking that an episodic view of a 'narrative person' is reasonable, but since I am after the experience(s) that render the subject a singled-out individual at a certain but non-specific point in time, I shall maintain that this 'grabbing' of the experience in question does not have to happen at the expense of giving up the narrative sense of self.

This 'episodic look' we may take at a person is used to identify those elements in her experience that constitute her sense of individuality or elaborate sense of self. Would it make any crucial difference to pick a person who, in Strawson's reading is 'episodic' or someone who has a more diachronic experience of self? It may seem counter-intuitive at first, but my answer would be 'no'. If I were to pause Strawson's life, as it were and examined all those personality traits, emotions, beliefs etc. that give him the sense of who he is, I do not think I would find anything strikingly different to the case where I happen to pick a more narrative-minded person. They would have traits, beliefs and emotions that constitute their sense of who they are, just like the episodic person. Their opinion would of course sharply differ on what is in the background of these individuating traits etc. (a narrative) or whether they sense

their continuity as the same self, but the question at this point seems to become more metaphysical than phenomenological.

Let us keep in mind that Strawson himself agrees that as the ‘whole human being’, he is perfectly aware of his continuity, he just does not sense that he is identical with his past self. I cannot see any reason however why this lack of a sense of connection should interfere with a time-slice view of what it is that constitutes the sense that he is the individual who he is (at a certain point in time). Overall, it seems like both approaches have their intuitively appealing aspects; the episodic view warns us that not everybody lives their lives as a constant effort to achieve narrative unity, while the narrative view highlights that we do indeed sense continuity of identity as persons.

The narrative view may come in its strongest form as combined with the view that holds that persons are self-creating. Schechtman (2007), in her elaboration of a theory that she laid out as ‘a highly plausible account of personal identity’ (2007:93) claims that this self-creation happens via forming an autobiographical narrative. Not all human beings can or do live the life of a person, and the main difference between the life of a person and another sentient creature lies in how they organise their experience. Some of them ‘weave stories of their lives’ (ibid.) and this activity is what makes them persons. The *contents* (traits, actions, etc.) of these stories, included by the person, constitute the person’s identity (or individual sense of self in my terminology). The self-narrative in question has constraints placed on the kind of narrative it has to be in order to constitute the person’s identity. Identity is something that a person has in virtue of acknowledging personhood, which needs to be understood within the cultural context of the subject and applied to herself, and certain actions and experiences thereby qualifying as one’s own. The claim is actually one that says that unless one has a narrative self-conception (which creates personhood), one is not a person. The attitude one takes towards one’s experiences and actions is going to be crucial for creating one’s identity. The person’s self-conception takes a narrative form, that of a linear story. The reason why it has to be linear is that it is this kind of self-conception which ‘underlies the attitudes and practices that define the life of a person’. (ibid:105) Evidently, this will also imply that the experiences and events a person undergoes are not seen in isolation, but as forming parts of a bigger whole, the person’s life story. Schechtman expects that this narrative self-conception should cohere so as to make up a well-defined character, which can come in degrees and is therefore not a *categorical* demand on a person’s narrative. The perfect coherence is an ideal but generally it should be legitimate to question someone who has acted ‘out of character’ on

some occasion and expect him to see this as a legitimate thing to do, given the coherence of his narrative self-conception.

A pressing question is what kind of action or process this narrative forming or arrangement of experiences actually involves. Schechtman mentions the Lockean-sounding word ‘appropriation’ in connection with the activity, but she also claims that it does not have to be ‘self-conscious’ by which she seems to mean that it may not constitute a conscious effort on the person’s part.

Using the Lockean term is no accident, as she renders Locke’s views on personal identity as self-constitutionalist. When Locke points to the ‘same consciousness’ as the creator of ‘the same personal self’, i.e. personal identity through time, most interpreters take it for granted that he means memory. Schechtman on the other hand calls our attention to the fact that Locke never actually mentions memory as the criterion of personal identity and turns to Noonan’s (1989, 2003) interpretation, who concludes that ‘consciousness’ may instead refer to knowledge, viz. as long as the past and present self share the knowledge of an experience, they are the same person. (ibid. 108) Knowledge in this sense however seems to collapse back into the notion of memory, as what the two ‘selves’ share is actually the memory of an event. Schechtman thinks that Locke’s general discussion of the self in the Identity Chapter suggests that he is more concerned with the affective reading of consciousness, i.e. the faculty by which pain and pleasure are experienced. Appropriation is also tied to this reading of consciousness in terms of bodily feeling ‘from the inside’, which essentially means that so long as I feel a certain body part, I can call that as a part of my *self*. Concern and sympathy for body parts is what makes them part of us, and this is compared to our past actions and experiences. Schechtman emphasises sympathy and concern for these as the tools of appropriation or the extension of consciousness, which get cashed out in terms of *feeling their effects* (ibid:109). A useful alternative distinction could be introduced between ‘affective’ and ‘cognitive’ senses of the past, which could account for the difference between the way Strawsonian and Schechtman-type people relate to their pasts. I do prefer to understand ‘sense’ in the first sense of the word however, as the second one does not do justice to the 1st-person character of memories of past experiences to the same extent.

While the above reading of Locke is perfectly plausible and even appealing due to its emphasis on the affective, more experiential aspect, there is no reason to think that someone who does not happen to have a narrative sense of self should be banned from feeling the

effects of past deeds in the present. In fact, one does not have to be a person, or even a human being in order to feel the effects of past experiences on their present identity. There are (unfortunately) countless examples of animals that were treated with cruelty at some point in the past and they exhibit signs of fear, distrust or aggression later on in their lives. Surely, their past leaves an effect on, conditions, as it were how they react to someone's approach or attempt to control them in the present. This is obviously not self-conscious in the non-human case, but this was dropped as a constraint on self-formation by Schechtman, who also brings up Freudian repressed and unconscious memories as those which can have a personality-shaping effect. The point here is that the observation about the past's influence on the present, whilst valid, is potentially too weak to have the merit of being criterial of narrative self-formation. It is also completely compatible, as Strawson points out with episodic self-experience (viz. I do not need the actual memory, so long as I carry its effects on my present self).

The sense of self is very tightly connected to the individual's past in Schechtman's and other narrative views. She herself admits however that this connection is not necessarily well-formulated or straightforward and may appear in the form of feeling. Appropriation in this sense does not prove to be a very powerful tool of arranging the different experiences of an individual into a linear narrative, or an identity.

In this section, I looked at two very different views of one's individual self, namely the diachronic/ narrative and the episodic ones. I showed that they both can be seen as valid theories of giving an account of what one's sense of who she is comes about, however I argued that while the narrative view and sense of self is illuminating from a psychological perspective, it is not a criterion of having an individual sense of self as I understand it. Episodic self-experience is, if properly understood, also explanatory of how the past influences and is connected to the present in one's existence and while Schechtman's rendition of Locke's theory in terms of the affective element of appropriation is appealing, it does not imply that the narrative sense of self is what necessarily constitutes such an affective appropriation.

In the next section I shall take a look at a view of self-constitution that has somewhat more to say on how experiences are organized to constitute or create the self, namely Harry Frankfurt's (1988a).

5.2.2. Self-creation

While it was not necessary for my theory to accept Schechtman's theory of self-constitution in full, in what follows I shall examine another way of conceiving of self-creation in terms of identification with certain desires, actions etc. This is informative, as it provides the grounds for building a view of the sense in which we experience that we are the authors of our thoughts, choices, actions etc. I shall argue that the theory I present below has useful elements but it is too restrictive and, instead of accepting it in its original form, we should incorporate the affective element posited by Schechtman to have a more realistic view of how we sense that we are the agents of our actions, choices etc.

Frankfurt's influential view of self-constitution initially rests on a vivid distinction between what he calls 'activity' and 'passivity' with regards to action, i.e. movements of the body which are 'mere happenings' in the person's history and those that are 'his own' activities (1988a:59). (I shall discuss our sense of being the agents of bodily movements in Chapter 7). This contrast also exists in the psychological domain, where it concerns our experience of ourselves, according to Frankfurt. The thoughts that occur in our minds but are not directed by us (e.g. as in the case of daydreaming) are seen as passive, whereas turning our attention to or systematically deliberating about something count as *activities*. Just as an involuntary jerky movement of my body is not something that I actively initiated, there are thoughts and desires that, although they occur in me, are not mine in the sense that I did not initiate them. (The expected central but implicit concept here is 'agency' or 'authorship', which may be missing in some cases of bodily movement and similarly in the case of mental happenings. It seems plausible to assume that there is an *experiential* difference in the way we have a desire that we have as fully our own and one that we do have but fail to identify with.)

Another example of *externality* (i.e. non-identified with states) is if someone loses control of his temper and does something that is not intelligible in terms of his former mindset. Most people probably experience an unexpected bout of anger overcoming them at some point in their lives, which may make them behave in a way does not seem to be granted by their former attitude or personality. They would feel the emotion as external to them. Frankfurt says that the distinction between external and internal passions/motives is *not* essentially along the lines of which ones we approve of/want to have/prefer and which ones we disapprove of/do not want/prefer not to have. These are the ones that seem incoherent with our preferred conception of ourselves: The motives we approve of are what we would like to

be identified with by people who know us. The reason why it is a mistake to think that approval is the condition upon which a passion or motive is seen as external is because the approval or attitude itself is subject to externality in the same way the passion itself is, and so the threat of an infinite regret looms in the background of any attempt aimed at naming approval as the condition of internality/externality.

Instead, what does seem to have a decisive bearing on whether a desire/passion is external or internal is whether the person *identifies* with it. Unfortunately, Frankfurt does not give us a complete explanation of how exactly identification works. He does illustrate it through an example, which basically compares and contrasts a case in which someone has two seemingly conflicting desires of ‘the same ordering’ (ibid. 66) (one is to go to a concert and the other is to go see a film), meaning that the satisfaction of one desire is only preferred to that of the other as long as it is open for the person to do so, but once he cannot satisfy the first desire, he will resort to satisfying the second one. Here his decision amounts to attributing a lower place to the first desire than the second one.

The other case in which someone has two actually conflicting desires implies that one desire will be rejected altogether. Initially it may feel like both of these are internal to the person, in which case it is not just the desires that are in conflict but the person himself (as he does not know what he wants). Instead of ordering the two desires, the person will withdraw from, i.e. *reject* one of them and by doing so the desire may only be experienced as external henceforth. The correct way to view this situation according to Frankfurt is not in terms of one desire being stronger (or higher in order) than the other, but in terms of the *person* being stronger than the desire to injure the acquaintance. In this way the person *identifies* with the one desire and places the second one completely out of his preferences/himself. Frankfurt hints at his emerging view of the importance of the act of deciding when he says that identification with one desire seems to involve a decision.

The deciding makes the desire fully his, and ‘to this extent the person, in making a decision by which he identifies with a desire, *constitutes himself*’ (1988b:170) and constitutes what he really wants. As we saw in the previous section, Schechtman named ‘appropriation’ in connection with the activity which leads to self-constitution, however she also claimed that it does not have to be ‘self-conscious’, meaning that it may not constitute a conscious effort on the person’s part. This is in sharp contrast to Frankfurt’s notion of the same act, as his view involves deliberation and a self-conscious step of identification. The self in fact is created out

of the 'raw materials of inner life' (ibid.) by the acts of ordering the occurring desires and thereby integrating into or separating them from ourselves.

Returning to the focus of my enquiry, i.e. what the experience of being an individual consists in, we may argue that Frankfurt's identification theory is too restrictive and attributes too important a role to deciding. While what he describes may happen in certain cases, it is plausible that sometimes we identify with a desire over a conflicting one on a more affective basis, i.e. we simply feel more drawn to one than the other. (This does not have to mean that it is not under our control, but I shall leave the moral conclusions about control and responsibility open.) In some cases this seems to be the case quite obviously, such as when we identify with an irrational or 'out-of-character' desire that does not necessarily cohere with our self-image, e.g. when I see a pair of outrageously expansive earrings that catch my attention and, despite the fact that I do not spend money recklessly, I feel so drawn to the idea of wearing the earrings in question that I decide to get them instead of paying for my piano lessons (which, let us say, I also find incredibly important). The Frankfurtian assumption seems to be that our character is identical to our self, which is created and built up by the processes associated with identification.

Another possible objection is that Frankfurt expects too much from integration and hence coherence. We are subjects to deciding to identify with desires or thoughts that can interfere with the coherence of our psychological make-up in a way that causes our experience of who we are to change. And it is not necessarily a conscious process, in fact it is how we tend to be in the course of life. Something 'life-changing' can happen to a person, such as losing a parent, which would mean that he identifies with different desires from then on, such as wanting to have a change in career, without this being capable of being explained in terms of coherence, i.e. integration and separation.

It is certainly plausible that self-conception or self-image is constitutive of how I experience myself to be. If however we view the whole person or individual as a subject whose self-conception and character do not cover all of the aspects of her individuality, we may extend the experience of self to include at least some of the elements of her psychology that she does not identify with. More specifically the misguided or random thoughts and desires we seem to have can also be part of how we experience ourselves as a whole person, as sometimes divided, undecided or torn between the desires or thoughts that form parts of us nevertheless. It could be a central element in one's sense of one's self that she is a torn and conflicted

person – just like the opposite could be central to someone else's sense of herself. Therefore, whilst accepting the thesis that identification as a process is crucially important for forming who we are in terms of our *self-conception*, we should add that this identification or rather *agency/authorship* (as in the sense that I am the source of a certain thought, desire, action etc.) may involve an active affective element besides conscious deciding and that we should look beyond the ‘created self’ if we want to put together a list of elements sufficient for self-experience, i.e. the constitution of the individual sense of self.

5.2.3. Individuality and Personality

From the above considerations we can get a sense of the importance of both self-concept and the affective sense of agency/authorship understood as an extended sense of the Frankfurtian identification with certain desires and courses of action as constitutive of the individual sense of self. I shall therefore name these, i.e. one's *concept of oneself*, whether it includes a narrative story or is completely devoid thereof, and one's *sense of agency/authorship* as necessary constituents of the more elaborate sense of self as seen from a time-slice perspective.

However, these two aspects cannot possibly exhaust the list of the elements sufficient for constituting one's individual sense of self. The question of *who* (we feel) we are is strongly connected to the question of *how* (i.e. the way) we are. More specifically, our individual personalities or personality traits also underlie our sense of self. Therefore, I shall now widen my horizon to include two theories of the other elements (personality traits, preferences, dispositions etc.) of what constitutes who we are and hence the experience we have of ourselves as individuals in order to aid my own understanding. In doing so I shall examine two different concepts of ‘character’ and ‘personality’ and try to pinpoint the most important aspects of these which may constitute the individual sense of self.

One important contributor to a more psychologically inspired discussion of how a sense of individuality is brought about is Joel J. Kupperman (1991), who, in his exploration of what character is states that there is a close connection between one's character and ‘what one is’ (i.e. self). In the same way I propose, Kupperman defines the sense of self in terms of individuality, viz. who one is. This sense of self includes but also goes far beyond what is contained in character for him. Consequently, someone's sense of who they are can include

occupation, family circumstances, ethnic or sexual identity, national identity and even physical appearance.

This is in line with William James' original view that

In its widest possible sense, however, a man's self is the sum total of all that he can call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank account. All these things give him the same emotions. (1890:291)

Kupperman suggests that changes in any or all of these aspects of the self would induce a change in one's sense of identity (i.e. who one feels one is) without a change in his character (i.e. his person), but this observation is not very convincing, for it seems that neither has to change. I can easily imagine myself moving abroad, getting a job somewhere new and gaining new interests and making new friends and essentially having a different life, but my sense of who I am (understood here as my individual sense of self) in terms of my sense of agency, traits, preferences and tendencies of thought, emotion etc. can remain the same. For this of course, we need a deeper understanding of the sense of self as opposed to the variable aspects named by Kupperman. While a surface report of someone's sense of self may suggest that it can be subject to radical changes, (such as found on the various TV programmes where they change the appearance of someone, (usually by making them look much younger) and all of the happy subjects report that they 'feel like' a different person, which mostly means that they acquire a more positive outlook on themselves and their lives) but this can be misleading for a philosophical enquiry. My view therefore involves a somewhat more rigid concept of the sense of self.

The tendencies or dispositions which I want to emphasise and which may constitute our elaborate sense of self are termed 'personality traits' in Peter Goldie's (2004a) theory. An understanding of the sense of self and individuality come close to each other if we utilise Goldie's terminology, the aim of which was to provide a conceptual analysis of personality traits. These can also serve as the quality or 'assemblage of qualities which makes a person what he is, as distinct from others' (OED). This clearly points to individuation as I read it. Talk of personality traits or 'personality discourse' is very common to all of us and serves the following purposes according to Goldie: to describe people, judge them, predict what they will do and explain their behaviour/action/thoughts/feelings etc. In addition to this I suggest it

also serves the purpose of distinguishing one individual from another, e.g. if someone asks ‘Which one (who) is Jane?’, one might answer ‘You know, the girl who is really shy but very kind, always eager to help.’ (This is not to say that we do not use names and physical descriptions more often than not to discriminate individuals, but it is possible that failing these, we can describe their personality traits.)

This description, in addition to giving us a third-person perspective of individuation also leads to the conclusion that personality (traits) constitutes the individual one experiences oneself to be. This does not mean that we have to accept the traditional divisions of different types of personality. Goldie is correct in pointing out that this division is mistaken in trying to pigeon-hole the various traits under e.g. neuroticism, extroversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness. In fact, the variety of traits we can encounter in people seems to admit of a much more colourful scale than the one offered by personality types.

Traits are relatively enduring *states* (as opposed to occurrent events) of the mind (e.g. an aversion to flat hats or a liking of Parmesan). Yet, these examples sound too particular for a personality trait, therefore we need more general preferences and tendencies, i.e. *dispositions* to feel, act and think in certain ways in order to explain how a particular trait can turn into a ‘personality’ trait, or in other words become part of one’s personality. The phrasing ‘relatively enduring’ leaves room for a trait’s flexibility and openness.

Dispositions are to be understood in terms of ‘if-then’ conditional statements for Goldie. (e.g. solubility is a disposition of sugar, therefore, if it is immersed in warm fluid, it will dissolve (ibid:09) Despite not knowing about the underlying explanatory properties of a specific thing, it is still of practical use to know about a disposition. Personality traits include:

- ways of acting (e.g. behaving in a polite or charming way)
- habits (tendencies to repeat a certain kind of action/movement)
- temperaments (more embedded and enduring than moods, e.g. being gloomy, phlegmatic)
- emotions (e.g. being envious, acting out of a certain emotion more often than not)
- enduring preferences and values (capacities and enduring preferences)

(Character traits are different from personality traits in the sense that these are deeper (the etymology of ‘personality’, which points to ‘persona’ as a mask, suggests surface traits).)

While this is a useful division of personality traits, one may wonder if it is possible to establish a potential causal hierarchy among these. One reading of such a hierarchy could be that emotions can bring about temperaments (which are essentially to do with certain ways to feel) and also of ways of acting (especially since Goldie explains point 4. in terms of acting out of a particular emotion more often than not). To think of a clear example, if there is someone who often feels angry (either for no apparent reason or due to an underlying history), this can develop into a more general temperament of irritability and cause the person to generally act in an irritable way.²³

Character traits, as opposed to personality traits are all reason-responsive (they are dispositions to be reliably moved by certain kinds of reason). His definition in terms of if-then statements of a character trait ‘kindness’ is the following:

If Susan is in a situation where kindness is appropriate, then she will reliably have thoughts and feelings that are characteristic of kindness and thus act reliably in the way a kind person should. (ibid: 15)

This may also involve the role of a personality trait to have certain emotions more often than not, as ‘kindness’ in my understanding presumes that I feel moved by other people’s concerns or circumstances.

This qualification of character brings it closer to morality, which we may or may not agree with, as Kupperman shows that character can be a concept that goes beyond the moral connotations. He does admit that ‘character’ has less to do with distinctiveness and individuality than ‘personality’, but there are plenty of non-moral decisions that we make that affect our happiness and the happiness of other people.

While there is no single, unified meaning of ‘character’ in all its uses, Kupperman does have a definition:

X’s character is X’s normal pattern of thought and action (i.e. predictably in appropriate circumstances), especially in relation to matters affecting the happiness of others and of X, most especially in relation to moral choice. (1991:13)

²³ A causal relation between dispositions to have emotions and to have enduring preferences on the one hand and habits on the other may be less obvious, but still viable, although I will not pursue this point further here.

This definition points to the idea that there are numerous situations we find ourselves in, over which we have no control, and character (including the affective tendencies as I implied above) has a vital role in how we act in these cases. To have character in this sense is to act in such a way that the person you are has a major role in explaining your action. The concept also implies stability, as it refers to ‘normal’ patterns of thought and action, not just patterns that last for a certain period of time.

Kupperman’s understanding of character and Goldie’s concept of personality (with the exception of Kupperman’s reference to moral choice and the happiness of others, which for Goldie needs a deeper explanation than allowed for by personality traits, which, as he calls are ‘surface’) can benefit from borrowing certain elements from each other, firstly because Kupperman’s own version of the sense of self renders it too elusive and changeable and secondly because Goldie’s account of personality makes personality traits seem too weak to be responsive to reasons. We should attribute personality traits as those which constitute the sense of self and think of character in his and not Goldie’s sense. Hence, Kupperman’s understanding of character, as long as it encompasses the traits that form parts of our personality, could provide important elements of the sense of self. Actions and words accord with thoughts and feelings over a period of time, which implies a parallel with the stability of character in his view. My proposal is precisely to postulate an important constituent of the individual sense of self to be *the fabric of relatively stable personality traits which are expressed in our emotions, thoughts, actions, opinions and behaviour*. (Stability of the sense of self in this case could go along with the stability of personality, which also means that Kupperman’s account can be more illuminating for my view than if I had accepted his understanding of the sense of self as an easily changeable aspect of identity.)

For instance, if I am an animal-lover, I experience or sense myself as someone who is moved by the sight of suffering animals and who has thoughts about how to help them, or even do something to help if the situation allows. Or If I am a depressive person, I sense myself as someone who tends to have negative thoughts and feelings about activities and as someone who is hard to motivate to be out and about. Importantly, this does not necessarily involve that I have explicit knowledge or awareness of myself as depressive but I will be likely to experience myself as an unmotivated and pessimistic person. In fact, there may be an important difference or divergence between *who I experience myself to be* and *who I actually am*, as it can happen that I entertain thoughts about my personality as always being upfront and honest with people (which I may be proud of or tell others about boastfully) when in fact

I am sneaky and make snide comments about my friends behind their backs. In this case, my *self-conception* and my *sense of self* will be divergent, as despite all the praiseworthy traits I (wrongly) imagine myself to have, I will still *experience* myself (in my tendencies to act and think etc.) as someone who e.g. cannot help talking about a friend behind his back. I may not acknowledge this, but I will have first-hand experience of the traits that lead me to be a sneaky type of person. In such a case, the two constitutive elements of the sense of self (i.e. self-conception on the one hand and personality on the other) contradict each other, which means that the stronger element may overwrite the weaker one when it comes to reporting on who I am (though I still experience those traits which make me be a certain way, e.g. sneaky). Whether one can realise this or overwrite her self-conception taps into questions of self-knowledge and self-deception, which my current subject does not aim to cover.

We have now arrived at a complete list of the necessary constituents we need in order to characterise the individual sense of self. As I explained in this section, *who* (we feel) we are is strongly connected to the question of *how* (i.e. the way) we are. More specifically, this means our individual personalities or personality traits also underlie our sense of self. Therefore, I have included two theories (by Kupperman and Goldie) of the other elements (personality traits, preferences, dispositions etc.) of what constitutes who we are and pointed to the merits in each theory in constructing an experiential account of how we sense ourselves on the level of individuality. I shall now deal with an objection to attributing character traits to people and thinking of these as explanatory of one's actions.

5.3. Scepticism about character traits

An important counter-argument cannot be avoided when we define personality traits as those which allow the prediction or at least the expectation of someone's actions. A number of social psychology experiments (such as the famous Stanford prison experiment (Haney, Banks and Zimbardo, 1973) whereby students who voluntarily signed up were split into prison guards and prisoners and displayed unexpectedly cruel and sadistic behaviour towards each other, or the Milgram (1963) experiment, in which volunteers had to obey an authority figure and administer electric shocks to a (pretending) subject upon the subject's wrong answer to a question. A shockingly large amount of people (65%) administered the experiment's final massive 450-volt shock (though were very uncomfortable doing so).)

These and a number of other manipulated scenarios are thought to show that ordinary people can behave in ways which would not be expected of them, and more precisely, how much we underestimate the power of the situation (Ross and Nisbett, 1991). Ross and Nisbett (among others) claim that people make what has been named the ‘fundamental attribution error’ (ibid. 4), i.e. the error of thinking that personality and character traits are all-important and of ignoring the importance of situational factors. In fact, scepticism rooted in these ideas can go so far as to say, like Gilbert Harman does, that

the psychologists’ research calls into question not only folk psychology but also virtue ethics. For, Harman’s argument goes, a character trait is a “relatively stable and long-term disposition to act in distinctive ways,” but “empirical studies designed to test whether people behave differently in ways that might reflect their having different character traits have failed to find relevant differences.” Thus, “ordinary attributions of character-traits to people may be deeply misguided, and it may even be the case that there is no such thing as character. (as quoted in Kamtekar, 2004: 459)

Without having to go into detail about the debate about how reliable character traits should be thought of as being, or about the plausibility of virtue ethics, we can see that the variable that a certain situation induces in predicting someone’s behaviour is to be taken seriously. And this does not even have to involve an experimental situation (although these are even more interesting and informative), it is enough to consider that people’s behaviour cannot always be calculated or predicted to be in a certain way. They may surprise us and we may surprise ourselves too.

Goldie explains this not in terms of there being no character or traits but to the contrary, by thinking that most people’s characters are ‘round’ (2004b:2), i.e. they are not composed of all-or-nothing one-sided traits, as we sometimes find in fiction (where someone can predictably *always* act in a certain way). So, people will sometimes behave in one way and sometimes the other thanks to having round characters. In addition, there can be all sorts of other factors which figure in our behaviour, such as

(1) being drunk, being under the influences of drugs, having a bad cold, and being deprived of sleep, which all change how we might act.

(2) emotions like being angry and being jealous, lead people to act contrary to what we would otherwise expect and in an unjustified way.

(3) moods, relatively short-term states like being depressed, tense, irritable, which helps to explain why someone had the thoughts that she did (and thus goes beyond the belief-desire explanation). And lastly and most relevantly for the challenge of social psychology,

(4) ‘the explanation of an action that surprises us appeals to the influences of the particular situation that the individual finds himself in: his being in that situation brings about a surprising influence on thinking.’ (ibid: 5)

Goldie makes a very plausible and valid point about how people are more complex in their psychological make-up and more prone to other influencing factors than their personality or character traits when it comes to predicting (and explaining) their actions and we may not fully understand what biases and illusory prediction mechanisms are at work when we expect someone to behave in a certain way due to their character traits, but this in and of itself does not mean that traits are not reliable indicators of how a person is and how they will behave approximately, unless influenced by (weak or strong) extra-personal factors. Importantly, the manipulated situations may be seen as pressuring the subject into behaving in a certain, even alien way, which in his ‘normal’ life would never happen. In his ‘normal’ life, his personality traits are normally at work. This is also in line with the point I made in the previous section about Frankfurt’s theory, as it seems that sometimes (often) we act on beliefs and desires that are not explicable in terms of identification, but perhaps one or more of the factors listed above.

5.4. Conclusion

In this chapter I moved on from examining the basic sense of self and focused on a more elaborate, individual sense of self. I put my understanding within the context of personal identity topics and pointed out that I am driven by a psychological reading of individuation. I presented the narrative and episodic views of selfhood and concluded that having a narrative sense of self may not be criterial of having an individual sense of self. I discussed Frankfurt’s view of identification, which I deemed insufficient in giving account of the richness of our

experience of ourselves as individuals. I postulated that the kind of person we are is essential to how we sense ourselves as individuals and pointed to personality as that which also constitutes our sense of self. I discussed Kupperman's and Goldie's studies in personality/character and concluded that while they both have valuable insight to lend to an experiential account of the sense of self in terms of explaining what traits and character are, certain elements in their respective views can be replaced. I ended that chapter by dealing with the challenge presented by social psychology.

Before moving on to the next Chapter, I would like to conclude the present one by highlighting the constituents of the individual sense of self, i.e. the experience of the individuality a full-blown person may have at any point in time we wish to characterise him;

- a *concept of oneself* as a certain individual
- a *sense of agency/authorship* of actions and decisions
- *one's personality* and personality traits

This list may seem short, but we should remember that it was compiled with the explicit intention of avoiding any reference to bodily aspects of self-experience and in the hope that it serves the purpose of examining the correlations between the senses of self and the different (yet to be discussed) senses of the body in the clearest possible way, which could become a risky enterprise if I were to have a list more like William James'.

Chapter 6. Experiencing the body

This chapter marks a clear and distinctive departure from the first subject (i.e. the sense of self) of my dissertation. So far I have attempted to characterise the experience we have ourselves firstly as the subjects of experience and secondly as individuals. While the lines along which the distinction between the basic sense of self and the individual one was hypothetical and mostly reliant on phenomenological accounts, I believe that their usefulness will be clearly shown in the remainder of my thesis, especially in relation to the second subject.

The second and more extensive issue of my enquiry concerns the nature of our experience of our bodies. As stated in the previous chapters and the Introduction, I aim to revisit the problem of self- and bodily experience by distinguishing the experience of self from the experience of the body (both which I aim to give a largely phenomenological account of) and examine the connection between elements of bodily awareness and the basic and the elaborate senses of self in the course of analysing the senses of the body. Accordingly, I shall begin this section by introducing the concept of bodily experience and clarifying the concept of embodiment which I aim to investigate. I shall then explain the different, relevant forms of bodily awareness and introduce Husserl's original distinction between the different ways of experiencing one's own body. I shall end this section by specifying the subjects I shall focus on throughout the rest of Chapter 6 and Chapter 7.

Philosophical enquiries surrounding the body include a very wide range of important questions and the connection of self to body has been under scrutiny for centuries. The crucial metaphysical question can be summarised, as it was done by Quassim Cassam (2011) as follows:

(M) What is the relation between a person and his or her body?

The emphasis is on 'relation' here, as someone interested in (M) would consider the nature of this relation, viz. whether it is identity, constitution or neither. As tempting as it may be, I am *not* concerned with the metaphysical issue here either. I intend to leave it open and separate it as much as possible from the *phenomenological* question:

(P) What is the nature of the awareness (or experience)²⁴ that each of us has of his or her own body from the inside?

Arguably, one response to the phenomenological question is of course by Descartes, as presented in his famous passage in Meditation VI;

I am not merely present in my body as a sailor is present in a ship, but that I am very closely joined and, as it were, intermingled with it, so that I and the body form a unit. If this were not so, I, who am nothing but a thinking thing, would not feel pain when the body was hurt, but would perceive the damage purely by the intellect.
(MM VI: CSM II: 56)

While the passage clearly presupposes the metaphysical distinction Descartes makes between *res cogitans* and *res extensa*, it highlights the special nature, to wit, the ‘what-it-is-likeness’, of the relationship between the two and indicates that Descartes thinks our mental life would have a different phenomenology (or perhaps no phenomenology at all) if there was no special relationship between the mind and the body. As an added value, it may remind the advocates of anti-Cartesian philosophy of mind (who insist that the separation of the self from the body runs into implausible conclusions when accounting for bodily experience) that Descartes did indeed realise how closely tied together the experience of my self and the experience of my body have to be. the passage

The phenomenological question, though related, should also be distinguished from the epistemological considerations about bodily experience, summarised in (E):

(E) What, if anything, is special about the knowledge we have our own bodies (and the properties thereof)?

Before moving on to an introductory characterisation of bodily experience, I am going to make a conceptual detour. In the vast (and mostly contemporary) literature on bodily

²⁴ My addition which aims to extend to notion of awareness.

experience, an incredibly rich term has gained momentum, namely ‘embodiment’. This highly attractive term is used widely by many thinkers from neuroscientists to philosophers of mind. ‘Embodiment’ is used to mean a number of different things to include physiological, phenomenological as well as metaphysical issues, which I suggest should now be separated clearly from one another.

Firstly, ‘embodiment’ can act as more of a claim than a mere concept, to imply that we are embodied creatures, i.e. creatures with physical bodies (as is implied by animalists, such as Olson or Snowdon). This is a claim with metaphysical weight, as it suggests that we are essentially human animals, in virtue of having the bodies of such creatures, therefore our identity conditions (understood as persistence) are the conditions of the identity of the human animal, i.e. our bodies. This view does not aim to explore how we are to experience our bodies or how we come to know the world through our bodies but is concerned with what we are fundamentally.

Secondly, ‘embodiment’ has been used as a central concept in numerous phenomenological discussions (the most prominent historical representative of which may be Merleau-Ponty) to describe either our essential nature as agents who are situated and act in the world or the special kind of experience we have of being embodied, or both. There might even be an implicit intention to gradually replace common parlance of ‘having a body’ with ‘being embodied’, which may be part of a larger conceptual agenda aiming at naturalising the concept of body/mind. For my own purposes, I would like to clarify firstly that I see ‘embodiment’ as a somewhat fuzzy concept that is normally tailored to the underlying convictions and assumptions the respective user of the term seems to have. Secondly, I shall *always* use ‘embodiment’ in the present work to mean *the experience of* having, feeling, acting with or knowing my own body. As I will present in the subsequent chapters, this conceptual fuzziness actually has serious repercussions for certain phenomenological views that define themselves in sharp opposition with the Cartesian view of subjective experience.

Thirdly, there has been a growing interest in and subsequent works on the embodied nature of perception and cognition in recent years, as advocated by Clark (1997, 2008), Noë (2004) and Thompson and Varela (2001) among others. As a rival to other (e.g. connectionist, representational) theories of cognition which lay emphasis on the role of the brain in cognitive processing, the embodied view suggests that many of the specifics of cognition are

embodied, meaning that they are deeply reliant on characteristics of our physical body, such that our (beyond-the-brain) body has a significant causal or constitutive role in our cognitive processing. There are many directions into which research into embodied cognition has developed, however my intention is only to give a preliminary overview of the different uses of ‘embodiment’, which means that I shall not present any of the particular views of embodied cognition here. I should note however that the phenomenological view of embodiment and recent work on embodied cognition are strongly connected in the views of a number of thinkers, such as Gallagher (2005) and Varela, Thompson and Rosch (1991), who introduced the concept of *enaction* to present and develop a framework with a strong emphasis on the idea that the experienced world is defined by mutual interactions between the physiology of the organism, its sensorimotor circuit and the environment. The structural coupling of brain-body-world is the cornerstone of their program of embodied cognition, which rests on the idea of Phenomenology that agents bring forth a world by means of the activity of their *situated living bodies* (Foglia and Wilson, 2013). Despite this very close association of phenomenological insight to cognitive science, since I shall focus on the *experience* of being embodied, I shall make no reference to the above claims or the implications thereof.

Embodiment, as understood from the phenomenological perspective involves ‘zooming in’ on the many ways in which we experience our bodies, some of which extend purely first-person experience. Therefore, in trying to catalogue the different forms of experience, despite the general phenomenological guideline of keeping the first-person perspective in mind, I shall also refer to the third-person perspective experience of our own body.

The analysis of these different perspectives of bodily awareness has a fairly long and rich history in philosophy, mostly inherited from Continental thought. They make a more original distinction than just ‘first-person’ and ‘third-person’ forms of experience, namely between the *subjective* and *objective* body, which I shall keep making reference to in the subsequent parts of this chapter.

Instead of making an ontological distinction like Descartes did in his *Mediations*, Merleau-Ponty (and Husserl) introduced a more informative, phenomenological one along the lines of the originally Husserlian distinction between what he called *Leib* and *Körper*. The latter

means the *objective* body and the former the *lived* one, thereby indicating ‘two different ways of experiencing and understanding the body’. (Gallagher and Zahavi, 2008:136)

The ‘objective body’ represents the body as seen from the outside point of view, which can be another person’s or even perceived by the subject herself ‘as if from the outside’. The ‘lived body’ on the other hand is seen from the embodied first-person perspective. It is this, experiencing, sensorimotored body that enables us to view the body from the outside, as an object. I can perceive myself from a third-person perspective, such as when I catch a reflection of myself in a shop window as I walk past it, or a third-person experience of my hands (as opposed to how they feel ‘from the inside’) when I simply look at them typing these words on the keyboard of my laptop.

The *lived* body is the body seen from the phenomenological perspective, i.e. in one sense it is the way the body *appears* in my experience. This includes the experience I have of my body ‘from the inside’, viz. the way I feel my body is situated in space for example, or how I have bodily sensations. It also encompasses my tactile experience of my body parts, such as when I touch/scratch/hold a certain part (from the part’s viewpoint, as it were, but more on this will follow). It can include the body as a whole (such as in kinaesthetic sensation) or singled-out parts, such as an itch in my eye or a long and dull pain in my neck.

In addition to this however, it is also what *structures* our experience and shapes our primary ‘being-in-the-world’. Husserl makes this idea clearer when he says that we cannot first explore the body by itself and then subsequently examine it in its relation to the world, as it is already in the world, and the world is given to us ‘as bodily revealed’. The lived body is our point zero when we enter into contact with the world. Sartre emphasises that the world is presented to us as bodily by stating that ‘to say that I have entered into the world, ‘come to the world’, or that there is a world, or that I have a body is one and the same thing.’ (ibid.137) In the discussion that follows, whilst keeping in my mind the original distinction, I shall refer to the ‘subjective’ and the ‘objective’ body mostly to indicate the difference between how one’s body feels ‘from the inside’ and how the actual, physical body is ‘from the outside’.

The issues in relation to bodily experience which I am going to discuss in the sections below are the following:

- i. Our overall sense of our bodies ‘from the inside’, i.e. the characteristics of proprioception.
- ii. I shall present a view of subjective versus objective experience of the body which calls into question the incompatibility of the Cartesian view of subjective experience with phenomenology.
- iii. Another important issue is to expose the nature of the sense of ownership, i.e. the experience that a body part (and the whole body) is mine. As Quassam (2011) puts it:

What is hard to dispute, however, is that to be aware of a particular body from the inside is to be aware of it as one’s own body. This sense of ownership is something that a satisfactory response to (P) might be expected to acknowledge and explain. (2011:142)

- iv. Another heavily discussed and studied aspect of experiencing the body ‘from the inside’ is the sense of agency, i.e. our sense that a certain bodily action was initiated by me, voluntarily.
- v. Lastly and similarly to the methodology of the chapters concerning the sense of self, I shall present and discuss a disordered bodily experience, namely the lack of proprioception (or ‘deafferentation’) and examine the conclusions that may or may not be drawn with respect to our overall sense of the body.

(My above points of enquiry do not by any means suggest that there are no further, important and highly relevant issues surrounding bodily experience, such as the question of whether we experience our bodies *qua* subject or object of awareness or whether our awareness of the body is perceptual or non-perceptual awareness. While these topics should without a doubt be included in a comprehensive discussion of the problems of bodily awareness, my methodological focus (and my limited space) only allows me to discuss those *experiential/phenomenological elements* which constitute the sense of the body ‘from the inside’, in virtue of which the above issues are excluded.)

6.1. Awareness of my body ‘from the inside’

Since the subject of bodily experience is, due to the varied nature, physiology and multi-functionality of our experiences of our bodies is a very extensive one, including but not limited to questions about the taxonomy of bodily experiences; the spatiality of bodily sensations; the role of bodily awareness in the coordination of action; mental representations of the body and so forth, I shall use this introductory section to firstly make an important point about the self-body connection stipulated by many authors of the Phenomenological tradition and to limit my discussion to the aspects that I find the most relevant for the discussion of the sense of the body. I shall and provide an introductory overview of the taxonomic elements of bodily awareness and then move on to discussing our overall sense of our bodies ‘from the inside’, i.e. proprioception.

My enquiry deals with the phenomenology of experiencing ourselves as the subjects of experience and as individuals on the one hand, and the phenomenology of how we experience our bodies *qua* our own bodies on the other, and the relationship between these. To someone who is familiar with the literature of bodily awareness, and especially the phenomenology thereof, it may seem peculiar or even unwarranted to distinguish the sense of self from the sense of the body. Many prominent authors on the subject, especially (but not only) in the phenomenologist vein such as Gallagher and Zahavi (2008), Légrand (2011), as well as the more analytically-minded Bermúdez (2011) and Thompson and Henry (2011) argue for one or more of the following claims: that the self is essentially embodied (Gallagher and Zahavi); that embodiment is constituted by the bodily subject (Légrand) or that bodily awareness is a form of self-consciousness (Bermúdez).

While these claims may be partially or fully accepted, my whole project rests on the idea that it is worth giving an account of the sense of self and the sense of the body in separation first and then examine, partly through the revelations of studies of disorders of these senses and partly through the conceptual analysis of self- and bodily experience, which elements of the sense of the body contribute to which elements of the sense of self.

Firstly, I hope to contribute to the experiential and conceptual analyses of the above experiences in a way that may be useful for working towards a complete characterisation of what our sense of self and sense of our bodies consists in without any metaphysical

commitments or baggage. Another reason why this is a worthy enterprise is because the intention on the part of phenomenologists such as Merleau-Ponty and the more contemporary authors mentioned above to give an account of the self and self-experience in sharp opposition to the Cartesian view of subjective experience seems to preclude the possibility that the *experience of* self and of the body can be studied in and conceived of in separation, which, as I shall argue in what follows, is misguided. My approach therefore suspends the unconditional acceptance of the claims which take the (sense of) the body as that which fully constitutes the (sense of) self.

In addition to these preliminary observations, I should also re-emphasise that since I am not involved in a metaphysical enquiry *per se*, I shall not look for an answer to the issue of whether the self is bodily (i.e. the self is identical to the body). The enquiry is neither epistemological, which means that I am not going to tap into questions about how we acquire knowledge about the properties of our bodies and whether this knowledge is of the self *qua* physical agent (as was argued for by Evans (1982)). To a certain extent, it is inevitable to mention the epistemological aspects of bodily awareness and as much as I touch upon this subject, I shall try to keep the discussion within the frames of relevance to the phenomenology of the sense of the body.

My discussion will not explicitly entail the consideration of issues related to particular sensations such as pains or, following David Armstrong's (1962) taxonomy, bodily feelings such as hunger or nausea (although these will figure in some parts of the explanation), even though these are obviously not ownerless experiences as such. Instead, as a good starting point my suggestion is to look at the rather *overall* sense of one's body one has, which, under normal circumstances allows one to feel (and judge) that 'this is my body' (and consequently the feeling and judgment that 'this (something) is not by body'). I am interested in the phenomenology of this experience and therefore I shall mostly frame my discussion within the phenomenological literature, although this does not mean that I shall (or could) leave out some analytical considerations about the nature of overall bodily awareness 'from the inside'.

However, despite the relatively limited extents of my discussion, I should say a few preliminary things about the different conceptual treatments of the elements of bodily awareness. Generally speaking, there is a wide variety of ways in which we are aware of our bodies, such as perceptually, kinaesthetically as well as conceptually and emotionally. There

is in addition a very wide variety of disordered bodily experience resulting from *deficits*, *distortions* and a reduced degree of *recognition* of certain body parts (supposedly indicating which faculty/aspect of awareness is damaged), which means that the categorisation of all of the types of bodily awareness is a difficult and rather complicated enterprise for both neuropsychologists and philosophers.

A number of influential taxonomies are based on what is called the ‘principle of double dissociation’, a principle aimed at classifying bodily disorders, which applies in cases where

a patient or group of patients is impaired on A but not on B, and if another patient or group of patients is impaired on B, but not on A. If A and B are two body-related tasks, then there must be two independent processing systems of body information, which can be functionally dissociated (...) (de Vignemont, 2009:3)

The distinct types of bodily experience may be arranged on the basis of the above principle into a *dyadic* taxonomy. The dyadic categorisation refers to two broad categories, namely the ‘body image’ and ‘body schema’. (I shall expand on what these consist of when unpacking Gallagher’s view in particular.) The body schema can be seen (by representationalists) as that which consist of sensorimotor *representations* as opposed to sensorimotor *functions* (as defined by advocates of the so-called ‘sensorimotor view’, as referred to below), which guide bodily actions, whereas the body image includes all of those representations which are not sensorimotor (i.e. conceptual, perceptual, affective, etc.) Viewing bodily phenomena in terms of representation involves an internal structure which functions to track the body’s state and encode it, which renders the ‘body schema’ as a cluster of sensorimotor *representations* including both short-term and long-term body properties that guide action.

As opposed to this account, someone who follows the *sensorimotor* view instead (such as Noë, 2004; Thompson, 2005 and Gallagher, 2008), inspired by the works of Husserl, Merleau-Ponty and Gurwitsch, conceives of the body schema as a sensorimotor *function*, which does not need to be represented. (Representation is generally seen by the sensorimotor view as unnecessary and avoidable.) This view, which is strongly connected to the view of the body as the *lived body* (which I introduced in the previous sub-chapter) examines the body as was suggested by Merleau-Ponty (1945), i.e. *not* as an object which can be represented; as present in the world and which we come to know in action.

Due to the varied experiences and disorders, there seems to be a long-standing practice of attributing a variety of meanings and properties to the widely used terms ‘body image’ and ‘body schema’ (although the uses of ‘body image’ lack unity to a much greater extent) across the different disciplines that discuss bodily experience from a number of aspects (i.e. neuropsychology, phenomenology, analytic philosophy and interdisciplinary studies). This practice is so prominent that almost every author has their own taxonomy (Gallagher, 2005; Schwoebel and Coslett, 2005; O’Shaughnessy, 1995 and Bermúdez, 2011 to name but a few). The confusion is even found in English translations of Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception*, where the Colin Smith translation renders ‘schéma corporel’ as ‘body image’, as noted by Taylor Carman (1999). (However, there have been efforts (Gallagher, 1986; de Vignemont, 2009) aimed at drawing up a collective taxonomy of bodily phenomena and reviewing the conceptual confusions, which so far seem not to have been decisive.)

Despite the fact that the different taxonomies of bodily phenomena are high in number and that they present significant conceptual issues when e.g. accounting for a disorder in terms of damage to either body image or body schema, I only involve the issues surrounding the varied uses in my discussion to the extent that they are relevant. My focus is on how the subject experiences his/her body ‘from the inside’ in terms of types of phenomenal awareness and in some anomalous cases, which means that discussing the lines along which the taxonomies of bodily experiences are drawn will only be partially relevant.

6.1.1. Proprioception

I shall now turn to a characterisation and conceptual analysis of our overall sense of our bodies. I aim to show that we can think of the conceptual categorisation of proprioception in a way which allows it to be thought of as experientially conscious and hence ‘elevated’ to the level of experience. This is a claim we should hold on to when accounting for how we sense our bodies ‘from the inside’. I shall point to our sense of our bodies in general terms as which, while may not be attended to or reflected on can still legitimately be thought of as conscious.

As I presented in the beginning of this chapter, a useful distinction was made by Husserl and further developed by Merleau-Ponty between two different ways of experiencing one’s own

body. I place my discussion for this section within the *subjective* or *phenomenal* body's dimensions. Our general sense of our own bodies is constituted by first-person, internal experiences of where our arms and legs are located in objective space and on a certain bodily frame of reference (which kind of frame of reference, viz. an egoistic or a non-egoistic one, is concerned remains subject to debate); kinaesthetic senses of whether the parts of my body are moving or are resting in a certain position, as well as an internal sense of balance. The nature of this complex sense seems to be somewhat elusive in the sense that it is not as sharply or distinctly felt as a pain in my ear for example. It is more recessive than bodily sensations *per se*, as Merleau-Ponty noted, 'my body is constantly perceived' but 'it remains marginal to all my perceptions' (1962:90).

One way to understand this overall, constant and unmediated marginal sense we have of our bodies 'from the inside' referred to above is to turn to accounts of our sense of posture, balance and movement, i.e. the multi-aspectual sense that is normally called 'proprioception'. What does this sense consist in and how best to characterise it from an experiential viewpoint?

Proprioception is conceived of as the sense which gives information about the position and movement of the body. The mechanisms of proprioception include 'muscle spindles, which are sensitive to muscle stretch, Golgi tendon organs, which are sensitive to tendon tension, and joint receptors, which are sensitive to joint position.' (de Vignemont, forthcoming) From a physiological viewpoint, proprioception occurs within the cerebellum, which is facilitated by monoamine cells.

Before analysing the phenomenological accounts of proprioception, it is important to take into account the fact that the overwhelming emphasis on the internal character of proprioception and its contrast with the external senses has been contested recently. de Vignemont claims that any theory of bodily awareness

needs to take into account recent empirical evidence that indicates that bodily awareness is infected by a plague of multisensory effects, regardless of any dichotomy between body senses and external senses. (forthcoming)

She argues that the internal body senses, such as the multi-source proprioceptive one do not do justice to the content of bodily experiences and hence these exist *in excess* of the information channels that feed the proprioceptive sense. In particular she argues that auditory and visual information in addition to somatosensory feedback on the location, size and position of one's limbs is also necessary to have full-fledged bodily experience and use it for action, as these cannot be derived purely from the body senses:

to know how far one can reach with one's hand does not indicate the respective size of one's fingers, palm, forearm and upper arm. Active exploration of each body part by haptic touch seems to fare better and to be more specific. (ibid.)

de Vignemont makes reference to empirical evidence including the so-called Rubber Hand Illusion (RHI), whereby patients sit watching a rubber hand being stroked simultaneously with their own hidden hand and this causes the rubber hand to be attributed to one's own body, i.e. to feel like it's their own hand. (Tsakiris, 2010; Botvinick & Cohen, 1998) In another experiment, when subjects saw a hammer hitting the rubber hand, they had a strong reaction to it, as if it was directed at their real hand. (Ehrsson et al., 2007)

Although the experiment is aimed at creating an illusion by misdirecting the proprioceptive sense of where one's hand is by visual information, multisensory interactions take place in paradigmatic action as well, and de Vignemont lists further studies (Tipper et al., 1998 and Kennett et al., 2001) to show that external, especially visual information, such as seeing the limb one is touching allows for more acuteness of touch as well as judgments made thereabout. Her claim is that bodily experiences take place and in fact are constituted by information arriving from multiple sensory sources, *both* internal and external.

The relevance of this thesis for my enquiry lies in the fact that firstly, the experiments it partly relies on tell us interesting characteristics about one's subjective experience of one's body as opposed to how (and where) the objective, physical body may be, about which I shall say more in the subsequent chapters. It is also informative for a discussion of proprioception in itself, but the fact that external sources of sensory information feed into one's internal system does not seem to jeopardize an adequate *phenomenological* characterisation of the internal experience one has of one's body. The fact that *I feel my body from the inside* is

compatible with there being multiple sources which build up my experience of how and where my body is placed.

Despite the fact that the term ‘proprioception’ originated in physiology, it is often employed in philosophical explanations of what one’s bodily awareness consists in, which is why it is important to understand what the meaning of proprioception can be applied to in such an explanation. Therefore, we should acknowledge the fact that the meanings of ‘proprioception’ are different in neuroscience and in philosophy/psychology.

In neuroscience it refers to a sub-personal and non-conscious function that delivers *information* about body posture and limb position which is generated in physiological/mechanical proprioceptors located throughout the body (Sherrington, 1907; Bermúdez, 2011). The vestibular system, which monitors balance and spatial orientation, is typically non-conscious (although disturbances of the vestibular system make their presence felt within consciousness). What is maintained by proprioceptive information is our *body schema*.

In contrast, we typically are aware in a certain way of how our limbs are distributed and whether they are moving. This *awareness* is coarser-grained than the non-conscious information exploited in the online control of action according to Bermúdez. If my legs are crossed for example, I do not have to look at my body to be informed about this fact but am already in possession of this information ‘from the inside’. (Bermúdez, 2011). On the one hand, there exists a range of information systems that yield information about the state and performance of the body but this arguably has no immediate implication for the existence of a dedicated body sense (Bermúdez, 1995) (cf. Vignemont).

The phenomenological reading of the possession of proprioceptive information regarding bodily position which I present below understands it as the ‘pre-reflective awareness of our body in very general terms’ (Gallagher and Zahavi, 2008). Due to the emphasis on phenomenology, it is this sense of proprioception that I work with throughout this section.

Since ‘awareness’ was a term and concept under discussion in the chapters dealing with the sense of self, I shall now focus on one relevant aspect of the notion of proprioception, namely consciousness. I aim to come to a clarificatory conclusion regarding the question whether

proprioceptive awareness should be thought of as a form of consciousness in the phenomenological reading and if so, what this means for a taxonomy of bodily awareness that divides bodily-related phenomena into two main categories.

As I indicated above, I shall take the notion of bodily awareness as understood in the phenomenologically-inspired and empirically informed works of Gallagher in terms of *body schema* (BS) and *body image* (BI) (Gallagher and Cole, 1995) and qualify the constituents of BS from the point of view of whether they are conscious or not. (I shall subsequently claim that ‘consciousness’ is qualified over a number of different dimensions in this taxonomy.)

In order to do this, I juxtapose ‘our sense of our bodies from the inside’ (or proprioceptive awareness) with three distinctions within ‘consciousness’ and ‘awareness’ and subsequently show that proprioceptive awareness should either be argued to be a form of intentional consciousness (and hence an aspect of BI) or given a conceptual status that is separate from BS, as the elements of BS are not even candidates for consciousness.

In his analysis of embodied experience Gallagher explains that

we have a sense of the body in what it accomplishes. I have a tacit sense of the space that I am in (...). Likewise, I have a proprioceptive sense of whether I am sitting or standing, stretching or contracting my muscles. Of course, these postural and positional senses of where and how the body is tend to remain in the background of my awareness; they are tacit, recessive. (Gallagher & Zahavi, 2008:137)

It is this ‘tacit, recessive’ awareness that I am concerned with below.

6.1.2. Body image and Body schema

As indicated above, Gallagher and Cole (1995) sort the functionally and compositionally different elements of bodily awareness into two groups. They make a conceptual distinction along the following lines:

A body image is composed of a system of intentional states where the intentional object of one's state is one's body.' The intentional elements are normally one of three kinds, namely:

- a subject's perceptual experience of his/her body
- a subject's conceptual understanding of the body in general, and
- a subject's emotional attitude towards his/her own body.

They note that while the perceptual states are always conscious, the latter two need not be, as they can be thought of as dispositions (which are generally understood to be unconscious in the philosophy of mind).

The body schema, by contrast is characterised in the following way;

- it involves the close-to-automatic system of processes that constantly regulate posture and movement to serve intentional action without the necessity of perceptual monitoring. (Gallagher and Zahavi, 2008)
- it functions on a sub-personal level
- it is not under conscious control
- it structures consciousness but is not explicit therein
- it plays a role in the production of the body image, and body schema and body image may be interrelated on the level of motor behaviour.

In order to grasp the above concepts, we have to bear in mind that the 'distinction between body image and body schema cuts across a number of other distinctions, such as conscious/non-conscious, personal/sub-personal, explicit/tacit, and willed/automatic'.

In fact Gallagher states that

in contrast to the body image, a body schema is *not* a perception, a belief, or an attitude. In most instances, movement and the maintenance of posture are accomplished by the *close to automatic* performances of a body schema, and for this very reason the normal adult subject, in order to move around the world, neither needs nor has a constant body percept. In this sense the body tends to efface itself in

most normal activities that are geared into external goals.’ (Gallagher and Cole, 1995:132, my italics)

A body schema is not itself a form of consciousness but a *performance* that helps to structure consciousness. By contrast, conscious perception of my own body (BI) can be used to monitor and control my posture and movements. This line of thought suggests that there is an intimate connection between the control of bodily movement and consciousness thereof.

As opposed to the non-conscious schema, one is conscious of the environment, and the location of things that one needs to reach will guide movement, and will help the body gear into that environment in the right way. The fact that my body manoeuvres in a certain way around in the environment, the motor facts of my reaching and grasping, and so forth, are not the subject-matter of my consciousness (Gallagher, 2007).

It is also noted in the description of the body schema that we should bear in mind the difference between ‘being marginally aware’ of our body and consciously ‘attending’ to it. In everyday actions such as walking, or even goal-directed ones such as grabbing a cup to have a sip of our drink, we do not direct our attention to our bodies, which means that such awareness is not included in the body image. The question is, whether during these actions there still is a constant and minimal sense of bodily awareness, to which we can only answer once we have a clear conception of ‘awareness’, according to Gallagher. If we decide on the ‘being attentive’ interpretation, we may conclude that we are not continuously aware of the movements of the body. He claims that even if we mean a global awareness of our bodies, that would still only refer to the general outlines of our bodies instead of every body part and organ. In certain situations however, some of which are termed ‘limit-situations’, such as fatigue, pain or sickness and some pathologies, the body, or some aspects of it ‘appear in consciousness’ in an object-like fashion (Gallagher, 2005). In these cases however, we have already entered the realm of body image.

If we equate attentiveness with consciousness then, we are only ‘conscious’ of our bodies once our attention is directed to some aspect of it. Since *attentive* awareness only manifests itself at the level of the body image but *marginal* awareness is supposed to be present in proprioceptive awareness understood as the felt experience of bodily position and movement,

it becomes difficult to judge where this type of ‘awareness’ finds its place in Gallagher’s taxonomy if the body schema, as shown above, is non-conscious and sub-personal.

6.1.3. Alternative qualifications

Within the rich and informative characterisation of the body schema and proprioception, the following descriptions are recruited to explain the body schema:

- sub-personal
- non-conscious
- not under conscious control
- automated / close-to-automatic.

Proprioceptive awareness is characterised as follows:

- pre-reflective
- marginal, minimal awareness
- pre-conscious
- not attended to

On the other hand, the features of body image are accounted for in the following terms:

- monitored
- in awareness
- attended to
- conscious

The interesting question is whether proprioceptive awareness *per se* should be thought of as conscious or not and if so, does that make it rightly belong under body image? This is particularly difficult to answer if we hold on to the phenomenological interpretation of the ‘pre-reflective sense of myself as embodied’ which claims that such a sense is not directed at an object and hence is not a form of intentional consciousness. (Gallagher, 1995) The body

image entails intentional forms of consciousness but body schema is said to operate ‘in excess of consciousness’ (Gallagher, 2005).

Despite the fact that body schema and body image are not distinguished in terms of being conscious or non-conscious by default, I think that some distinctions can be introduced within the above features that have been bracketed under the non-conscious side of bodily awareness on the bases of interpretations borrowed from analytic philosophy (the fact that we are faced with conscious and non-conscious elements under the collective name ‘bodily awareness’ may seem confusing in itself). This may shed some light on an alternative way to characterise the notion of proprioceptive awareness.

On the basis of Gallagher et al.’s categorisation, the dimensions along which proprioceptive awareness is argued *not* to belong under BI are; *attention*, *control* and *reflection* (since it lacks all three). (Attention here is reminiscent of Evans’ (1970) notion of ‘executive attention’.)

I now propose to separate two readings of a phenomenon qualifying as non-conscious (a.) and two readings of it qualifying as conscious (b.). I place the body schema and proprioceptive awareness within these readings and show that proprioceptive awareness can plausibly be thought of as conscious, as we have good reason to extend the notion of consciousness beyond the above three dimensions.

a. non-conscious (because not even a candidate for being conscious):

i) (neuro-)physiological process as such – proprioceptive and neurological processes that produce balance, bodily movement and maintain the body schema would be placed under this reading.

ii) sub-personal process (algorithms, heuristics, etc.) – sensorimotor functions, motor habits and abilities that underlie the body schema would be placed under this reading.

*b. conscious but not necessarily attended to*²⁵, *controlled or reflected upon*:

i) awareness¹ (or awareness *of*) versus awareness² (or awareness *that*) (Dennett, 1986) Dennett distinguishes between the intentional and non-intentional uses of the terms ‘conscious’ and ‘aware’ (whereby intentional implies ‘conscious *of*’ and ‘aware *of*’ and non-intentional implies simply being conscious as opposed to unconscious) and groups all and only the intentional senses of the two words under ‘aware’ and all and only the non-intentional uses under ‘conscious’ (the non-intentional use of aware (as in ‘He is so aware!’) refers to ‘alertness’). This results in consciousness being a different phenomenon to awareness.

Talk of awareness is twofold; it may refer to our dependence on awareness of the environment (as well as our bodies I assume) for manoeuvring in that environment, or it can refer to our ability to make introspective reports, which amounts to a mode of access to the contents of our awareness.

One example highlighting the different types of awareness is of the driver who knows his way home very well but who, upon questioning would say he was not or was hardly aware of where he was going despite his successful drive home. (Alternatively, we can also conceive of his situation as one in which he is aware of what he is doing but he quickly forgets and this quick forgetting is an important factor in his driving performance. However, I shall assume an interpretation that sees him as ‘hardly being aware’ here.)

This indicates that control is separable from this subtle form of awareness, as he managed to take the right turns etc. without being fully aware of these. (ibid:117) The conceptual distinction between the two types of awareness is made by re-naming them respectively; the first type is named ‘awareness *that*’ (or awareness²)²⁶ and the second is called ‘awareness *of*’ (or awareness¹)²⁷. Awareness² refers to experience explained on a sub-personal level (i.e. incapable of being reported on), whereas awareness¹ denotes a personal one. Only speech-

²⁵ In the stricter sense of attention, as defined by Evans, 1970.

²⁶ whereby A is aware² that *p* at time *t* iff *p* is the content of an internal event in A at time *t* that is effective in directing current behaviour

²⁷ whereby A is aware¹ that *p* at time *t* iff *p* is the content of the input state of A’s speech centre at time *t*.

producing systems (people) are capable of awareness¹ (introspective reporting) and most living creatures are capably of awareness².

Dennett's illuminating suggestion is to not try to determine the 'real sense' of awareness in relation to control, as if this relation is taken to be essential, then it must be an exceptional coincidence that we can infallibly introspect what we are aware of, and if it is this infallibility of expression (only I can tell for sure what I am aware of) is what is essential, then it is only usually true that we are aware of the information important to the control of behaviour. (ibid:125) It is one thing to have to be aware of something in order to report it and another to do *anything* with it (such as using it to manoeuvre in the environment).

Under this interpretation and if we set up an analogy with bodily awareness, the constituents of BS do not qualify under any kind of awareness, as we are neither aware *that* the automatic processes and systems are maintaining it, nor aware *of* these systems.

Proprioceptive awareness however can qualify as awareness type 2, as in the paradigm case we do experience our bodies (from the inside) and control it within the environment without introspecting about it. We are aware *that* our legs are crossed but this need not be introspectively reported (although of course it can be). This qualification makes proprioceptive awareness an intentional form of consciousness, hence a form of body image, which is a contentious issue, as an argument has to be provided in support of the claim that there is an intentional object in proprioceptive awareness (or awareness²). Dennett himself does not provide such an argument but takes both types of awareness to be intentional. (Note that the non-intentional use of 'conscious' is understood to mean the capacity to be aware², which also means that, in the Dennettian sense, most living creatures are conscious. This however does not affect our qualification of BS as non-conscious here.)

On a different note, contrary to Gallagher's emphasis on how our everyday actions are not controlled by explicit consciousness of our body, i.e. the fact that a certain phenomenon or behaviour is not controlled by us may *not* mean that we are not aware² of said behaviour.

The other, similar distinction is provided by Peter Goldie (2000), who calls upon

- ii) unreflective consciousness v. reflective consciousness to explain how we can have an emotion without being aware of it.

The former here is consciousness of an intentional object in the world we are engaged in, the latter is our awareness of this consciousness, such as being reflectively aware that I feel a certain emotion. (simply put, being aware to the effect of *realising* it) Accordingly, looking back at a dangerous situation I could say that ‘I was obviously afraid whilst it was going on, but I did not feel any fear’ (ibid:65), which would point to my failure to be reflectively aware of my own feelings.

In this reading the analogy suggests that proprioceptive awareness, i.e. our *felt* (but not explicitly realised) experience of our bodies in the paradigm case is not reflected upon but is experienced on the level of Goldie’s unreflective consciousness and therefore can be seen as qualifying for consciousness. Another question is whether it takes an intentional object, which, again should be argued for. If one understands PA as awareness ‘of an object’ (one’s body), this can be the case. (The topic of whether proprioceptive awareness is awareness of an object or a subject is a much-discussed issue in phenomenology, which, however important goes beyond my scope here. The point of the present discussion is to re-assess the aspect of consciousness with regards to bodily awareness.)

From the above interpretations it seems clear that physiological information and sub-personal processes maintaining our body schema, in virtue of failing to be even candidates for consciousness should definitely be qualified as non-conscious.

Our *sense* of our bodies however can be interpreted as conscious in the sense(s) I presented above, without this qualification necessitating attention, control or reflection. This conclusion demonstrates that proprioceptive awareness may not be seen as an aspect of BS and, depending on our view regarding the status of the body as an intentional object in bodily awareness, we can either qualify it as an aspect of body image or as a notion deserving a separate conceptual status. Importantly however for a phenomenological account, this categorisation and characterisation highlight that our overall sense of our bodies ‘from the inside’, while not necessarily attended to, reported or reflected on, is experientially conscious. This is a claim I suggest is important to hold on to when accounting for how we sense our bodies ‘from the inside’ on the level of phenomenology.

In the next section I shall turn to the role proprioception plays for phenomenologists as the source of our ‘subjective body’.

6.2. The subjective body vs. the objective body

Whether proprioception is thought of as a form of pre-reflective awareness or as a form of conscious experience, the special significance of this complex and constant sense for phenomenologists lies in its being partly constitutive of the ‘lived body’ (along with other sense modalities as well as social and environmental aspects), i.e. the subjective or first-person character of experiencing our bodies. Therefore, it is inevitable that I also unpack the subjective-objective distinction with regards to the body and bodily awareness in this section.

At the same time as emphasising the distinction between the different ways the body appears in experience, embodied theorists and phenomenologists (such as Merleau-Ponty (1962) Gallagher (2005), Valera (1996), Légrand (2011) and Thompson (2005)) also seem to stress, though by using different terms respectively, that the subjective and objective body actually refer to the same body, which statement deserves closer attention if we were to expect the distinction to be informative in cases of anomalous bodily experience or dissociations. The dichotomy I shall point out in what follows also sheds light on how ‘embodiment’ is open for interpretation and application differently (as I indicated in the introduction of this chapter) in the context of subjective experience on the one hand, and metaphysics on the other. I shall subsequently argue that ‘embodiment’ is most informative and safest to use in a phenomenological account if it is meant to describe subjective *experience* as opposed to objective bodily conditions.

I should note that this section is an somewhat of an exception to the rule employed in the previous ones in that it goes beyond the studying of experience and makes some claims about the physical body and a Cartesian approach as well. This is necessary and useful because, firstly, even though it is not the main point of phenomenological theories to make claims of identification between first-person experience and physical objects (such as bodies), this is actually implied in a significant portion of the phenomenological literature (by the above-mentioned works of Merleau-Ponty, Gallagher and Zahavi, Légrand and Thompson to name

but a few). Secondly, in studying experience and especially anomalies in how we experience our bodies we should not ignore the fact that there are divergences between the objective and the subjective body, which enable our *phenomenological* enquiry and conclusions to be housed under, rather unorthodoxly, a Cartesian framework. Disordered bodily experiences, as I explained in the beginning of this chapter are actually used as a starting point from which taxonomies of bodily experience are developed on a large scale in the literature, but this is not the reason why I consider them here. Instead, it is that an all-important philosophical conclusion with respect to the nature of subjective bodily experience can be drawn by looking at cases where the subjective and the objective body diverge.

This may seem to be a point that is at worst controversial and at best orthogonal to my general discussion, but since I aim to explore certain ways we experience the body and the self, it is important to see that everything that can be said about experience is actually more open to be placed within more diverse philosophical frameworks than traditional phenomenological views would have us believe. (Also, staying within the boundaries of discussions of bodily awareness but extending it beyond the *sensorimotor* view held by phenomenologists namely to *representationalist* approaches (e.g. those of O'Shaughnessy, 1980; de Vignemont, 2010 and Schwoebel and Coslett, 2005), requires that we take into account how either approach is equipped to explain at least certain instances of dissociative bodily phenomena.)

Firstly, I shall provide a rendition of the Cartesian view of subjective experience, then I shall point out the most relevant views of Phenomenology and move on to considering two empirical examples in order to demonstrate the following:

- i) the *subjective* (experience of) body and the actual, physical *objective* body may diverge in certain cases, and
- ii) that a Cartesian framework, as well as a representationalist view of bodily experience, is better positioned to explain this divergence than the phenomenological view.

6.2.1. The Cartesian view

Besides the many other elements of the world, our own bodies also appear to us in a certain way. According to the Cartesian view, this means that it *seems* as if we have bodies, i.e. each of us has one body. We *appear* to ourselves as having bodies, therefore the body is something we experience and which we are conscious of. Our own bodies, in the same way as the other elements of the world, are the objects of our mental states. Our bodies are represented to us just as the rest of the elements of the world are, but they are represented in a different mode. This means that there are objects of representation in both cases, but the difference between representing the objects of the world on the one hand and the body on the other is to be found in *how* the object is given (which can be conceived of either as intentional representation or as something else, such as in terms of qualia). (Balogh and Tőzsér, 2013)

However, all of this does not entail that an advocate of the Cartesian view would not acknowledge the unique nature of our relation to our bodies; i.e. that it would not presume a fundamental difference between how our bodies appear to us and how another thing, for example, a different body, appears to us (as presented by Descartes in the passage I quoted in 6.1.)

A crucial consequence of the Cartesian view is that there can be two, numerically different conscious bodily sensations, such as in the case of phantom limb sensations, which have the same phenomenal character and which are *a fortiori* indistinguishable from the subjective viewpoint. On an intentionalist interpretation for example, both of these bodily sensations have the ‘apparent’ or ‘subjective’ arm or leg as their object, although only one of these objects exists in physical space. Consequently, the objects of different bodily sensations are not constitutive of these sensations. The occurrence of a bodily sensation as conscious experience *does not* presuppose the existence of the body part in question.

A further step of the Cartesian argument would be that in the same way that we can have pains which are subjectively indistinguishable from non-phantom pains, we could have conscious experiences of the body that are subjectively indistinguishable from experiences of a body that does not actually exist. It would be possible to *seem* to have a body without actually having one; that is, even if only our minds, their contents and an evil demon existed in the world, or if we were brains in a vat, it would still be possible to have a conscious

experience of a non-existing body which would be subjectively indistinguishable from the experience of an existing body. (Balogh and Tőzsér, 2013, my italics) Arguably, this *experience* is essential for being and living as a human subject.

I should also make a point of clarification here; the fact that we could have the same mental life we have now if the outside world did not exist infers only that only those things are included essentially in the subjective perspective even if there were only our minds, their contents and the evil demon in the world. However, this does not entail that the mind is not physical. As Katalin Farkas (2008) explains:

The demon's intervention reduces the world to the enquiring subject. In my understanding, the role of the demon hypothesis is not to reduce the world to an incorporeal subject, but rather to reduce the world to a unique centre of enquiry: to a subjective viewpoint (and whether this needs corporeal existence or not is an open question). What survives the introduction of the demon hypothesis is the subject, and the portion of reality that is uniquely revealed from the subject's point of view. (2008:18)

Keeping in mind the primacy of the first-person perspective on bodily (as well as other types of) experience for both the Cartesian and the phenomenological/embodied view, the main difference between them does seem to boil down to how their proponents consider the *metaphysical nature of the subject's perspective*. In contrast to the Cartesian view, the advocates of the embodied mind theory do not believe that the subjective perspective being embodied is a contingent fact of the world, but that (physical) embodiment is essential. (Légrand (2011), Thompson and Henry (2011))

6.2.2. The Phenomenological view

The distinction between the 'objective' and the 'subjective' body, as I briefly mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, goes at least as far back as Husserl's notions of *Leib* and *Körper*. The embodied mind theorists, following in the footsteps of Husserl (1912/1989, 1935-8/1970), make a phenomenological distinction between the *objective* body and the *lived* body. This distinction, of course, does not indicate that we have two different bodies in some

sense, but rather that there are two different ways of *experiencing* and understanding the numerically single physical body.

On the one hand, the *objective body* represents the body as seen from an external point of view without the accompanying experience ‘from the inside’. The external point of view can be another person’s perspective (e.g. we can just think of how, when a physician examines the body, she sees it from an impersonal perspective) or even perceived by the subject herself, as if from the ‘outside’, such as when one looks at a part of her body and observes it or sees it in a mirror or a photo. The body parts seen or observed in these cases are rendered from an external viewpoint, e.g. upon looking at her hair in the mirror, someone could think ‘How odd that my hair is going grey!’ without having an experience of it happening ‘from the inside’.

On the other hand, according to phenomenologists, the *lived body* is seen from the embodied first-person perspective. It is how the body is experienced by the subject and it enables us to view the body from the outside. The lived body is the body seen from the subjective viewpoint; that is, it is the way the body *appears* in experience to us, or to put it more crudely, how we *feel* the body ‘from the inside’. This means that the subjective perspective is essentially an embodied subjective perspective. One’s own lived body does not appear to one, but the world appears *to the lived body itself*. The subject does not ‘inhabit’ the body, but *her own lived body* itself is the one which *experiences* something. The lived body is not the intentional object of conscious experience, but the lived body *has directedness* at the world. (Gallagher and Zahavi, 2008)

To recall, the sensorimotor view, which entails the phenomenological works cited, in general can be articulated into three claims, according to which (i) the body is not an object that can be represented; (ii) the presence of the body is the presence of the body in the world, and (iii) the body we experience is the body in action (de Vignemont, 2010a).

Claim (i) is found in Gallagher and Zahavi in the following form:

Phenomenologists deny that the body is a mere object in the world. The body is not merely an object of experience that we see, touch, smell, etc. Rather, the body is also

a principle of experience, it is that which permits us to see, touch, and smell, etc. (2008:135)

In contrast to the Cartesian view, these views see ‘the body as subject, as experiencer, as agent, rather than the body as object, as thing experienced’ (ibid:136). That is, the lived body determines the subjective perspective; the subject’s point of view is the body itself (Légrand, 2011).

Therefore, a phenomenologist cannot put the body ‘into brackets’ as Cartesians would suggest is possible. On the contrary:

The phenomenological investigation of the body is not the analysis of one object among others. That is, it is not as if phenomenology in its investigation of a number of different ontological regions (the domain of logic, mathematical entities, utensils, work of art, etc.) also stumbles upon the body and then subjects it to a close scrutiny. On the contrary, the body is considered a constitutive or transcendental principle, precisely because it is involved in the very possibility of experience. (Gallagher and Zahavi 2008:135)

6.2.3. Divergences between ‘subjective’ and ‘objective’

Having seen the importance of the subjective viewpoint’s connection to the body (and the world) on embodied theories, I shall now present two empirical cases of anomalous bodily experience²⁸, in light of which the essential embodiment of the subjective perspective becomes questionable. My conviction is that these cases undermine the correspondence between our *experience* of the body understood as the *lived body* closely tied to proprioception as I explained (hence involving no representation or reflection on the embodied view) on the one hand and the *actual* physical body on the other.

²⁸ an exhaustive list of such experiences can be found in de Vignemont (2010a).

The concept of embodiment entails that the subjective or first-person perspective from which we view the world and experience ourselves is physically embodied. However, we have seen that there are different ways that the body can be experienced; viz. subjectively and objectively. The phenomenologist assumes, in virtue of stating that the lived and the objective body are not two different bodies, that the subjective or lived body and the objective body actually refer to one and the same body. (Gallagher and Zahavi, 2008) As we will see, there are both hypothetical and actual cases where the two can diverge. This means that our experience of the body and the actual body become separate, which leads to the conclusion that the Cartesian view (as well as the representationalist approach), which essentially builds on our subjective experience of the body independently of what goes on with physical constitution, is well-positioned to accept the phenomenological findings of these hypothetical and actual cases. (Importantly, Descartes places essential significance on the *experience of the body* for a human subject (as opposed to e.g. non-human creatures such as angels or God, as attested to in his *Meditations*.)

I shall consider two examples below. The first is of out-of-body experience (OBE), and the second is the neuropathology known as ‘Alien Hand Syndrome’²⁹. These examples serve to question an aspect of the embodied view of the mind and support the view that it is the subjective *experience* that is definitive, rather than one’s actual body and its physical condition.

At the same time, each example approaches the experience of divergence from a different angle. In the first case, one’s awareness (and viewpoint) of the body is from outside the boundaries of the actual body, and in the second, one’s awareness of the body fails to extend to the actual boundaries of the physical body.

²⁹ there are a variety of discussions of these anomalous experiences in the literature but since I merely aim to present these cases as counter-examples to an understanding that sees the subjective and the objective body as essentially identical, I only refer to one source per case here. However, an extensive review of relevant experiences is also found in Knoblich et al (2006).

i. Out-of-body experience (OBE)

My first example is that of out-of-body experiences (OBEs). OBEs have a complex nature and there are different types of sensations in which people have been reported to feel like they are somehow placed outside of their physical bodies. For my present purposes however, the neuroscientific overview of these phenomena is not necessary. What we need is the phenomenological description of such an experience and its interpretation in relation to the first-person (or subjective) perspective.

Metzinger (2009) provides such descriptions, one of which is by Ernst Waelti, who presents his experience as follows:

I forced myself to lie in bed motionless. For a while, I dozed, then felt the need to move my hands, which were lying on the blanket, into a more comfortable position. In the same instant, ‘I realized that... my body was lying there in some kind of paralysis. Simultaneously, I found I could pull my hands out of my physical hands, as if the latter were just a stiff pair of gloves. The process of detachment started at the fingertips, in a way that could be felt clearly, with a perceptible sound, a kind of crackling. This was precisely the movement I had intended to carry out with my physical hands. With this, I detached from my body and floated out of it head first, attaining an upright position, as if I were almost weightless. Nevertheless, I had a body, consisting of real limbs. You have certainly seen how a jellyfish moves through the water. I could now move around with the same ease. I lay down horizontally in the air and floated across the bed, like a swimmer who has pushed himself off the edge of a swimming pool. (2009:90)

Metzinger himself notes that in such a case the physical body ceases to serve as the ‘locus of identity’, i.e. the first-person viewpoint from which one directs one’s attention. At the same time the person still *recognizes* the physical body as his own, although he does not recognise it *as subject*. The spatial location of the viewpoint from which the experience is lived through and from which the physical body is seen, is outside the person’s body. The subjective body, however, is not seen, but only *felt*. (ibid.)

From the description above it is clear that OBEs present a challenge to the embodied view; namely, if the subjective perspective is essentially embodied and the objective and subjective body is actually numerically the same body, how can it be that people who have these experiences testify to the opposite? Those who undergo such an experience have a sense that their physical body does not match their subjective sense thereof. At the same time, the *spatial location* of the subjective perspective also diverges from the actual location of the body; as if one left one's body behind entirely, but one is still able to visually perceive it from an external viewpoint. (In this case the subjective body is the one that is experienced as moving and the objective body is the one that is lying in bed motionless.)

OBE cases present difficulties for the embodied theorist, as now we have a subjective perspective that is not only constituted by the experience of something else than the physical body, but is actually located somewhere else than where the physical body is. Therefore, one's subjective sense of embodiment and the first person viewpoint are not essentially tied to embodiment. Importantly, however, this does not entail that the subjective sense is that of a *res cogitans*; i.e. a disembodied ego, as in most cases it seems that the subject still has a certain sense of being an embodied person. It is just that his body *feels* different phenomenally; lighter, easier to move etc. Again, if one holds a version of the Cartesian view whose emphasis is not on substance dualism but on the point of view and experience/appearance of the body to the subject, we will have no problems accepting the truths of out-of-body experiences.

In addition, we should note another important aspect of bodily experience, namely the principle of *immunity to error through misidentification (IEM)*. The principle suggests that there is a certain type of mistake that seems out of the question when we form judgements on the basis of internal bodily awareness.

The dominant view on *bodily IEM*, as there are many other versions thereof, was defended by Evans (1982) and others (such as Bermúdez, 1995 and Dokic, 2003), states that experiencing one's body through bodily senses grounds bodily self-ascriptions which are IEM. There are supposed to be no other bodies than one's own with direct access to bodily senses (one hypothetical counter-example to this statement could be presented by so-called 'cross-wiring' cases where one's brain is connected to someone else's body). We can do away with identifying *whose* body one experiences when one experiences it 'from the inside', as it is

supposed to always be one's own body. For instance, we cannot doubt that the arms which are crossed are our own when we know the position of the arms through our proprioceptive sense. (Most theories reject vision as an appropriate candidate for bodily IEM, as in the majority of cases, visual experiences of one's body do not guarantee bodily IEM.) Therefore, when I judge that 'I have a toothache', I seemingly cannot be wrong about *whose* pain this is, even if I may be wrong about other aspects of this experience. This is the claim that internal bodily awareness judgements are *immune to error through misidentification* (IEM). (The original idea was introduced by Wittgenstein (1965) in the *Blue Book*, where he distinguished between the uses of 'I' as subject and 'I' as object.)

Importantly, in cases of perception, such as when I see my body in the mirror, I can be wrong about whether it is *my* body I make a statement about (since I could be mistaken about what I see, it could be someone else's body). If however my knowledge is of the proprioceptive/internal bodily sort, then I cannot say that, for example, my legs are crossed and be wrong about *whose* legs are crossed, or that they in fact *feel* crossed. But am I necessarily correct about my physical legs actually being crossed? Gallagher himself says that we have to be careful here, and in this case being careful means distinguishing between *objective* self-reference and *subjective* self-reference (Gallagher 2003:63). The claim cannot be that through proprioception we cannot be mistaken about whether or not our legs are crossed *objectively*. Proprioception can be fooled in this regard. What we cannot be wrong about though, is how we feel the body is *subjectively*, for us. Therefore, the argument is not that proprioception is immune to error through misidentification because it necessarily delivers veridical information about *objective* limb position. In the same way that I can be wrong about the rain in the sentence 'I think it is going to rain', I can be wrong about the objective posture of my body. Proprioception is immune to error through misidentification, however, because it necessarily provides a form of non-observational access to the first-person or '*mineness*' experience of embodiment; that is, it provides *a sense of ownership* (Gallagher 2003:67) for the body and its movements. (I shall discuss the question of ownership in the next section.)

Without having to go into more detail about the bodily IEM debate, it is evident that subjective self-reference here is reference to the *sense* or *awareness* of the body, which can diverge from what goes on with the actual body. This confirms (again) that it is our *experience* of how our bodies are situated etc. and not the physical body itself (or its

objective position), that grants us the notion of the first-person perspective and the experience of embodiment. However, whilst subscribing to the distinction between objective and subjective self-reference, Gallagher does not seem to concede that subjective reference in this case is *not* to the physical body, which questions his (and other phenomenologists') claims made elsewhere about the mind's necessary embodiment.

If one identifies the subjective perspective with the physical body, the judgments made about how one feels one's body is will not stand the test of IEM, as the judgment e.g. 'I am floating' will be erroneous with respect to the physical body. If however we identify the subjective perspective with the *felt* location of the experience, we can also resist the challenge that IEM is violated in these cases, as the body whose properties I have direct access to is my *subjective* body (and not the objective and physical one). If one insists that what we cannot be wrong about when we use 'I' as subject is the physical body, one will have a difficult job trying to defend IEM in light of OBEs.

ii. Alien Hand Syndrome

As for my second example, this one concerns a certain neuropathology called Alien Hand Syndrome, which is a condition associated with the denial that a body part belongs to the subject, called asomatognosia. (Asomatognosia is broadly defined as unawareness of ownership of one's arm, while somatoparaphrenia is a subtype in which patients also display delusional misidentification and confabulation (Feinberg et al., 2010)). Feinberg describes individuals whose relatedness to parts of their bodies is severely altered. The condition's Greek name translates into 'a lack of recognition of the body' (Feinberg, 2002:8). In addition, someone suffering from such a disorder not only fails to recognise a body part as his/her own, but may even reject it.

Feinberg introduces patients who have all suffered strokes and subsequently lost sensation in one or more of their body parts on the left side of their bodies due to injury to the right hemisphere of their brains. These patients seem to systematically deny that the body part in question belongs to them, a problem that only arises when they have to identify their own body parts and not when they have to identify other people's. Another significant fact is that this misidentification is not due to any failure in the patients' linguistic abilities, as they can

correctly identify other body parts on themselves. A very puzzling but also crucial feature of this condition is that even upon informing the patient that the limb in question is in fact hers, they cannot be convinced of the truth of this fact. One such patient is reported to have had the following experience:

She denied that the affected limbs were hers and said that ‘yours’ or another’s were in bed with her. When she was shown that they were attached to her and that the arm in question merged with her shoulder and that it must be hers, she said: ‘But my eyes and my feelings don’t agree, and I must believe my feelings, I know they look like mine, but I can feel they are not, and I can’t believe my eyes.’ (2002:11)

It seems from this report that in such a condition, a part of one’s own body does not *feel* the same way it used to. It does not feel as if it is an integral part of the subjective body due to the loss of bodily sensation in that part. The phenomenology of this disorder involves that one’s subjective experience of one’s body or bodily awareness ‘from the inside’ somehow fails to extend to the arm in question. We have the physically integrated and intact limb on the one hand and the *experience* of it not belonging to/not being integrated into the rest of the body on the other.

This is another example of a mismatch between the actual (objective) body and the phenomenal (subjective) one. The difference between this and the other example is that phenomenologically-speaking, here the subject seems not to ‘fill out’ the physical body, i.e. the experience of the body has different borders than the actual body does. Therefore, for these subjects, when it comes to identification it does not matter whether their embodiment actually includes having the arm in question, as this is not supported by their *felt* experience of this body part. Is the subjective perspective essentially embodied in this case? One cannot answer this in the affirmative because what is confirmed here is, again, the fact that it is the subjective *experience* which counts and not the actual physical composition of the body. The physical composition, i.e. the objective body is intact in this case as there are no injuries to the arm itself (and it is not missing in the objective sense). The subjective *feel* of this objective body however is damaged as the arm in question is not incorporated into the subject’s overall bodily awareness.

Here the IEM dilemma rises once again. These subjects would definitely state that the arm in question does not belong to them. Are they wrong to claim so? According to the embodied theorist, they must be; but since the alternative Cartesian-minded view I presented above allows for the subjective perspective to diverge from the actual body, one does not have to face the IEM challenge here either. Or, if the embodied theorist says (as in the case of cross-wiring) that *subjective* self-reference can diverge from *objective* self-reference, then he has no choice but to grant that subjectivity does not have to be constituted by the objective body.

The embodied mind view assumes that the subjective perspective is constituted by the lived body and that the lived body is numerically identical to the objective body. However, the above examples have shown that this cannot be the case, since it is plausible to think of situations where the objective body diverges from the *experience* of the body (lived body) and hence the subjective perspective.

However, the Cartesian model can incorporate all of the phenomena that these examples introduce, since it is the subjective *experience* of the body (that is, how it appears to me) that seems essential to the subjective viewpoint and not the physical body itself. Therefore, this perspective may either diverge from the body, or exist in the total absence of a physical body. And, on the basis of what was said above, this is plausible without having to adopt the thesis of substance dualism. A Cartesian view of bodily awareness is therefore suitable to explain and accommodate what is reported to happen to the subjective experience of the body in the three examples listed without having to defend the IEM thesis from a bodily perspective. This explanation is given in virtue of representations, as in each case the *representation* of the body departs from the *actual* body.

From the perspective of a representationalist account of bodily awareness, the body and its parts are represented as appearing in certain ways to the subject. The guiding principle for the advocates of the representationalist approach claim that an appeal to mental (cortical) representations³⁰ of the body is essential if we are to account for paradigmatic as well as anomalous or disordered bodily experience (as I have touched upon in the beginning of this chapter). The representations of the body and its parts have intentional objects and the cases

³⁰ the first definitive example of which is to be found in Head and Holmes' analysis of how the brain represents the body in Head, H. and Holmes, G. (1911).

in which these objects do not actually exist are subjectively indistinguishable from the cases in which they do. The reason why a representationalist view of the subjective body is also in a better position to explain the nature of dissociative bodily experiences than the sensorimotor/embodied one is because it can claim that either some or all of the properties of the physical body become *mis*represented in OBEs and Alien Hand Syndrome.

In the next chapter, I shall firstly turn to the discussion of whether the concept of the sense of bodily ownership is plausible and if so, how it may be supported by empirical research. Secondly, I shall discuss the sense of agency of bodily movements and its experiential constituents.

Chapter 7. The sense of ownership and the sense of agency

Out of the multiple aspects of the phenomenology of bodily awareness, so far I have discussed our overall sense of our bodily posture, movement and balance, i.e. proprioception. I have interpreted proprioception as a psychological notion which accounts for our overall sense of embodiment. I explained and criticised its place in Gallagher's taxonomy and, besides making a case for the suitability of the Cartesian interpretation of subjective experience, showed that this interpretation, (or a representationalist account) is well-positioned to account for cases of anomalous bodily experience, such as out-of-body experience and Alien Hand syndrome.

In the present section I shall discuss another phenomenologically crucial aspect of the nature of the experience of our bodies, namely the sense of ownership. The reason why it is inevitable to discuss the sense of ownership as a singled-out aspect of bodily awareness is because, arguably, it plays an all-important role in creating the experience of our body parts *as our own*. The sense of ownership, as noted by Martin (1995) may have the potential to put flesh on the bones of Descartes' claim that 'I am not lodged within my body as a pilot is within a ship'. In another sense it is also true that while we seem to think of a multitude of objects around or on us as 'ours' and feel strongly, even emotionally related to these, we seem to have a radically different feeling of ownership of our body parts.

The other such phenomenological aspect is the sense of agency. In the next two sections I shall discuss these two sense of experiencing one's body as one's own, 'from the inside' and give a characterisation of both of them in terms of phenomenology, supported by empirical studies. I shall argue for a positive sense of ownership and name the conditions thereof, and give a mostly empirically-based presentation of the sense of agency and its experiential components.

One of the questions about the phenomenology of bodily awareness we should have in mind when investigating the sense of ownership is 'what is the nature of the special way in which I experience parts of my body, and only my body, 'from the inside'?' I shall answer this question in this section in three steps. Firstly I shall give a characterisation of the concept of the sense of ownership, which I shall follow by asking whether there exists a distinct sense of ownership in the phenomenologically salient sense at all. I shall conclude that, while the

reductive accounts can seem plausible from the perspective of conceptual parsimony, we have convincing empirical reasons to accept that there is such a positive sense. I shall separate the concept of lack of ownership from the sense of disownership and lastly I shall look at the suggested conditions of the sense of ownership and conclude that we have reason to accept *multisensory integration*; *a constant body model* (thought of either as the body schema or as long-term body image) into which the objects become incorporated *in a self-specific way* and *proprioceptive and spatial matching* as the conditions to be met in order to induce the sense of ownership in someone. I shall finish this section by posing a further question about the relationship of the sense of control to ownership.

7.1. Sense of ownership of our body parts

In terms of experience, in ordinary bodily actions and sensations (I shall move on to non-ordinary or disordered bodily experiences of ownership in what follows), we seem to feel our bodies *as our bodies* from the inside, as belonging to us, as opposed to someone else. Whenever I reach out to pick up my papers from the desk, I can feel where *my* hand (body) is, where it ends, how it reaches out and where the paper touches my skin. I cannot seem to *feel* anyone else's hands in this way (which is not to say that cannot imagine, remember or represent it in various ways), no matter how much another person's movements resemble my own. (In opposition to this observation, there are studies which show that seeing someone else being touched can activate the same brain areas and induce tactile sensations in the same location on the observer's body part (Keyers et al., 2004 and Blakemore et al., 2005), but it is plausible to understand these cases as not presenting genuine instances of ownership experience, but rather of sensations that represent the touched person's sensation, without this confusing the observer as to who is the subject actually being touched.)

One important difference between the previous discussions which involved experiencing the body 'as a whole' and the discussion of the sense of ownership is that the latter also includes the ownership of particular body parts (mostly the extremities). Clearly, not all body parts are felt to be ours, i.e. internal organs are not generally felt at all, unless pain or another sensation occurs, thereby passing the threshold of consciousness, but even then we do not normally feel our organs *per se*, just that there is a pain, stretch etc. at the location where the organ is.

Arguably, sensations felt in internal organs may not render them as felt as *mine* the same way we feel this about a limb.

It is easy to see how the ownership we presumably feel of our arms, hands and legs is something we seem to experience on a continuous basis, but can we legitimately draw conclusions from the sense of ownership of body parts and apply these to the sense of ownership of the body as a whole?

A number of empirical studies carried out to study the ownership of hands (such as the Rubber Hand Illusion or RHI experiment (Tsakiris and Haggard, 2005; Botvinick and Cohen, 1998) and (much rarer) studies aiming at the investigation of ownership of the whole body (Ehrsson, 2007; Lenggenhager et al., 2007) suggest that

the necessary conditions for the experience of ownership over a body-part seem to be the same as the ones involved in the experience of ownership for full bodies.(Tsakiris: 2011:197)

This conclusion allows the discussion of the sense of ownership of body parts to be also informative for the ownership of the whole body.

I can come to know that parts of my body are mine in a multitude of ways (e.g. by seeing them, being able to move them) but the sense of ownership is thought to be a unique, immediate and phenomenologically salient way in which we have first-person experience(s) of our body parts.

7.1.1. A distinct sense of ownership?

When talking about the experience of ownership, one may be extending one's propensity to name bodily phenomena to include a sense that is rather recessive, elusive and difficult to characterise, which can be argued to be due to the fact there really is no such separately-existing, phenomenologically salient experience, just the mere *fact* that experiences such as bodily sensations take place within one's bodily confines. In fact, one may go further, as Ayer (1963) did to claim that these sensations actually *define* the borders of the body.

The fundamental question about the *sense* of ownership therefore seems to be whether there exists a distinct sense of ownership in the phenomenologically salient sense at all. (de Vignemont (2010) places a very similar question within the psychological, as opposed to epistemological, ethical and ontological issues concerning the body and the self.) Similarly to all of the questions concerning the currently heavily studied bodily sense of ownership, this one will have to make reference to empirical evidence as well.

We may state there is no such sense, and all there is to ownership is the brute fact that our sensations occur within our bodily boundaries. Bermúdez (2011) for one says, that some so-called *deflationary* accounts of the sense of ownership admit to a minimal sense of the term, i.e. the sense of ownership is really just a label for a higher-order property of somatosensation; the fact that the objects of proprioception and interoception are experienced within the confines of the body. This is a descriptive *fact* about the phenomenology of bodily awareness and not a ‘phenomenologically salient’ sense.

One way to think about Bermúdez’s *deflationary* notion is to see it as purely judgment-related or ‘doxastic’ (Dokic 2003; de Vignemont, 2007), i.e. I can tell whether this sensation is in my body in virtue of the fact of having it, but without this implying any ‘additional’ experience on my part. A body part on this view belongs to me or is mine simply by virtue of having sensations in it:

Bodily experience gives us a *sense of ownership*. Whatever property we can be aware of „from the inside” is instantiated in our own apparent body. Bodily experience seems to be necessarily short-sighted, so to speak, since it cannot extend beyond the boundaries of one’s body. The very idea of *feeling* a pain in a limb which does not seem to be ours is difficult to frame, perhaps unintelligible. (Dokic, 2003: 325, italics in the original.)

The *deflationary* accounts of Dokic (2003) and Martin (1995) both see the descriptive fact of sensations occurring within the boundaries of our bodies as that which can be analysed in terms of the (spatial) content (or representation) of bodily sensations, which in virtue of representing the state of the body at certain locations have the higher-order property of somatosensation we can call the ‘sense of ownership’. This higher-order property, besides

consisting of the *facts* of bodily sensation, also consists in *judgments* about ownership of body parts and sensations. Martin in fact states that what is at issue here is not a type of self-awareness but a sense of ‘boundedness’, to be accounted for on the level of spatial content.

Inflationary accounts on the other hand (such as Gallagher’s (2005), de Vignemont’s (2007 and 2010) and Tsakiris’ (2011)) attribute a *positive feeling* to the sense of ownership, a feeling of *my-ness*, as it were. In terms of the experiential/cognitive level on which this sense occurs, the *deflationary* view actually posits an extra layer of cognition by referring to a higher-order state, whereas the *inflationary* view is called that (somewhat misleadingly) due to the fact that it attributes a positive experiential aspect to the sense of ownership.

Proponents of this view, such as Gallagher, who claims that it is a ‘first-order phenomenal aspect of experience’ (2010:174), normally refer to either the experience of the Rubber Hand Illusion (RHI) or other anomalous bodily ownership experiences whereby the subjects either fail to feel the body part in question as their own (i.e. a lack of ownership) or specifically feel that it is ‘alien’ to them (‘disownership’), importantly despite still having sensations in them. I shall argue below that disownership, while presupposing the presence of the lack of ownership, can be thought of as a phenomenologically separate experience from the lack of ownership. Instead of disownership cases, it is more useful to find cases where a sensation occurs without the accompanying sense of ownership and cases where there is a sense of ownership without sensation (i.e. ‘double dissociation’) in order to argue in favour of the inflationary account.

Traditionally there are two reasons for positing the phenomenologically salient notion. One is, as I explained in 6.2.3. above, in Alien Hand Syndrome some subjects feel like their body part belongs to someone else, i.e. they experience *disownership*. Whilst accepting the positive phenomenology of disownership, Bermúdez (2011) rightly thinks that there is no convincing reason why we should conceive of the feeling of disownership as the absence of the feeling of ownership. The assumption however that the sense of disownership is not identical to the lack of ownership does not in and of itself suggest that there cannot be a (separate) sense of ownership. Bermúdez’s claim only amounts to the denial that the two are unified or identical. The lack of ownership however can either be *independent* from disownership or be related in a way that does not necessitate that they always appear in unity. One such way suggests that

my lack of ownership only becomes a feeling of disownership if I detect or become aware of the disruption:

Patients with anosognosia for hemiplegia are paralyzed, and yet, they deny being paralyzed and claim being able to move, and even being actually moving. According to Levine and coll. (1991), sensorimotor deficits are not phenomenologically salient and need to be discovered by perceiving discordant information. One needs to monitor one's performance to detect anomalies. (de Vignemont, 2010b:10)

The sense of disownership, which can extend to just one body part or several or even the whole body in depersonalisation, is a psychological notion which covers a range of different feelings (de Vignemont, 2010), such as

- feelings of unfamiliarity, e.g. differences in how the unaffected and the affected limb feels (temperature)
- feelings of unreality, e.g. the body part feels dead or fake
- feelings of uselessness, e.g. the body part feels lazy or worthless, and
- feelings of disownership, pertaining to the body part *feeling* like it belongs to someone else, despite positive judgments of ownership or in some cases along with erroneous ownership judgments.

In contrast to the above positive instances of phenomenology, the lack of ownership may simply involve the feeling that the body part in question is not integrated into the rest of my body. If however the two experiences are thought to be completely independent from each other, ownership and disownership should be able to coexist according to de Vignemont and there should be patients who report that their body feels disowned while simultaneously feeling as their own. (ibid.) Also, cases of body alienation would not be informative for investigating the sense of ownership. We can accept this conclusion and still hold that there is a causal relationship between two, phenomenologically (and numerically) separate pieces of experience.

Another reason for positing a positive sense of ownership makes reference to former amputees who received prostheses and who feel like the artificial limb belongs to their body now. Others do not have this experience, a phenomenon we can make sense of by

distinguishing between having the sense of ownership and not having it. Bermúdez says there are three possibilities with regards to where they (mistakenly) have the feeling of ‘myness’;

It might be felt in the prosthesis. It might be felt at a determinate location elsewhere in the body. Or it might be a non-localizable feeling (comparable to the feeling of depression, for example). (2011: 164)

He rejects all of these options for lack of plausibility. Firstly he finds it unlikely that they feel a feeling of myness in their prosthesis, as this would disregard the descriptive fact that feelings and sensations are experienced only within the confines of the body. If however by the body we mean the physical body, Bermúdez seems to be in ignorance of the empirical findings which support the fact that it is indeed possible to have bodily sensation outside of the borders of the actual body, as the RHI (Haggard and Tsakiris, 2005) and OBE cases show. The subjects in this experiment report that they do feel as if they were touched on the rubber hand when stroked simultaneously on their own hand and the rubber one and they even locate their actual, hidden hand closer to the rubber one than it actually is. The feeling of ownership in the rubber hand is also concurrent with a diminished sense of ownership (measured by subjects’ reports and temperature drops in their hidden hand) in the biological hand. How and why this can happen is of course the subject of numerous studies carried out to investigate the sources and components of bodily ownership (to be discussed below). Importantly, the subjects of the experiment do not make erroneous judgments about whether the rubber hand is their hand, the point is that they know it is not but they still *feel* otherwise. Moreover, judgments and more generally knowledge of ownership is strongly informed by vision, as visual input can overwrite somatosensory information. (de Vignemont, forthcoming)

On the phenomenologically-inspired inflationary view:

the sense of ownership depends on ‘non-observational access that I have to my actions, an access that is most common with a first-person relationship to myself (...) I do not need to reflectively ascertain that my body is mine, or that it is *my* body that is in pain or that is experiencing pleasure. (Gallagher, 2005:29)

This kind of treatment of the experience of ownership in terms of immediacy and an unchecked sense can contribute to the understanding of it in terms of experience which may come apart from knowledge and explicit judgements.

As for the other two options, Bermúdez does not go a long way to explain why they should be rejected. It seems indeed implausible that someone would feel a prosthetic leg in another location in his body, just as we do not feel our fingers in our calves for example. A non-localizable feeling of myness of the prosthesis also seems out of the question, purely because the ownership of any particular body part seems to be strongly related to the body-relative and/or objective location thereof. (I feel my hand in virtue of where it is relative to the other parts of my body and/or in space).

On the basis of the above claims and studies, it is plausible to hold ‘there is something it is like to experience parts of my body as my own’ (de Vignemont, 2010b:3), which phenomenal experience is also showcased in the RHI experiments.³¹

7.1.2. Double dissociation

The fact that the body that I feel is necessarily my body does not imply that I necessarily experience the body that I feel *as mine*, e.g. some patients suffering from asomatognosia feel their own limb as not belonging to them, despite having tactile sensations in the ‘alien’ limb.

In addition, there are other empirical cases which showcase, contrary to the deflationary account, that bodily sensation can exist in body parts which one does not feel to be one’s own, such as where an extrapersonal object or tool is attached (one way or another) to someone’s hands. One might argue that the phantom limb cases where subjects wear prostheses belong to this category, but it seems like the experiences prostheses wearers report do not form a homogenous category. Some people do indeed feel ownership over their artificial limb, whereas others do not, which still does not preclude some sensations occurring in the prosthetic leg or arm. In much more everyday cases of tool use, such as holding

³¹ I should note that the RHI only works when the rubber hand is stroked synchronously with the biological hand but it does not induce feelings of ownership when there is a delay between the two events (Tsakiris, 2011:182).

cutlery or gardening and DIY tools for instance, we do seem to feel pressure, resistance and other sensations in the tip of the tool at hand, which experience is more immediate than the actual experience we have of the tool occurring in our hands at the time. However, we do not feel the tools as ours, as actual parts of our body (otherwise we would not stick our teaspoons in hot liquids). Also, empirical studies carried out by Sposito et al. (2012) show that while

own body metrics appears to be one of the more stable features of body representation, body-space interactions requiring the use of tools that extend the natural range of action, entail measurable dynamic changes in the representation of body metrics. (2012:1014)

Although potentially less clear-cut, it is also worth considering what happens (to me or anyone else who has had this experience) when my leg ‘falls asleep’ after I have been sitting in a steady pose for a prolonged period of time. I normally have a sharp, tingling almost ticklish feeling in it but it is insensitive to touch (it actually feels as if I touched someone else’s leg) and non-responsive to my intention to move it, which does temporarily amount to the experience that it does not feel ‘mine’, i.e. I lack the sense of ownership despite the funny sensations I am having in it.

Also, whereas a pain in my stomach may be accompanied by another, higher-order state which renders it as happening in my body, the proprioceptive sense I have in my right hand seems to induce some kind of intuitive awareness of body ownership, which accounts for the phenomenological difference between the sense of ownership of internal organs and the sense of ownership of other parts of the body like hands, i.e. we *know* that this is our kidney, but we *feel* that these are our hands. Our body parts are manifested to us in a more primitive experiential form than judgments. (Vignemont, 2010b)

It may also be informative for driving out the phenomenological difference between having sensations in an organ, contra sensations of ownership to investigate aspects of the loss of sense of ownership in cases where one of a subject’s internal organs is removed and compare these to cases where a limb is amputated. I have not come across such studies in the literature, but on the bodily sensation/deflationary account, the accompanying pain after the removal of an internal organ should indicate that it is ‘my organ that hurts’ when in fact the sensation is constituted by the physical fact of not owning it anymore.

The opposite of cases where there is sensation without ownership (i.e. ownership without sensation) do not seem too heavily discussed. One example of such is presented of subjects who were administered somatosensory anaesthesia, which, as was shown does not necessarily lead to the lack of the sense of ownership. In a study with normal subjects who have been locally anaesthetized, only 5 out of 36 subjects denied the ownership of their limb (Paqueron et al., 2003). (The loss of sensation in a hand due to severe nerve damage characteristic of leprosy (which is one of the diagnostic symptoms according to the WHO) may not lead to the denial or loss of ownership in either, although I have not found specific empirical studies aimed at the investigation of this aspect of the disease.)

The above cases all point to the claim that having sensations in a body part may not be sufficient for it to feel as mine. So the question is, what (else) do we need to have an integrated sense of ownership; visual experience, proprioception or both? The second important question about the sense of ownership refers to the conditions thereof.

7.1.2. Conditions of the sense of ownership

In what follows I shall point to the following conditions on the basis of empirical theories and studies as those which are necessary for the sense of ownership to occur: *multisensory integration*; *a constant body model* (either conceived of as body schema or short-term body image) into which only anatomically shaped and placed objects fit in a self-specified manner and *proprioceptive and spatial matching*. I shall also note that while the sense of control may not be a necessary condition of ownership, it contributes significantly to one's sense that a body part belongs to her body.

As I noted above, an important difference between how a temporary tool is experienced and how the rubber hand is experienced in the RHI is arguably that there is no sense of ownership in tools, whereas the participants of the experiment felt that the rubber hand was actually theirs (interestingly enough the participants did not report to feel as if they had an 'extra' hand, hence three hands altogether, but that their default hand was now the rubber one.) (Botvinick and Cohen, 1998). If sensation is not sufficient to induce the feeling of ownership then we should look at what may be.

Extrapersonal tools, artificial limbs and the rubber hand are all represented in relation to the experience of body parts in a way that enables the subjects *either* to feel sensations *or* some degree of ownership ‘in’ them. But how the representation of tools etc. differs from the representation of the rubber hand is subject to certain theorising guided by the idea that while tools *extend* the body, rubber hands are *incorporated* into it. (de Vignemont and Farnè, A., 2010) (However it seems that there are distinctions between the modes of representation of even one object, the rubber hand, as it has been suggested, that the location of the hand is not ‘motorically embodied’ whereas its position is (Kammers et al., 2009).)

We may appeal to the formerly discussed distinction between the body schema and the body image (Gallagher, 2005) to explain the way in which extrapersonal objects are represented. In this understanding body schema, as we have seen, amounts in part to a non-conscious, systematic sensorimotor map of the anatomy of the human body, whereas the body image only involves different kinds of intentional representation of the body. Gallagher himself says that ‘the body image, as a reflexive intentional system, normally represents the body as *my own* body, as a personal body that belongs to me’ (2005:28, italics in original). Extrapersonal tools are incorporated into the body schema on this account, therefore this would not be sufficient to deem the tool as a body part that belongs to me.

It is however also possible to conceive of the embodiment of extrapersonal tools in terms of the body image. On Brian O’Shaughnessy’s (1995) account of the short-term and long-term body image, the short-term image entails that which is available for perception, and the long-term body image is an innate and constant map of one’s body, which is also informed and updated by developmental and acquired, gradual changes. If we accordingly attribute the representation of extra-bodily tools to the realm of the body image or the short-term body image, we may be able to explain why these do not *feel* as if they were parts of our bodies, as they do not become incorporated into the anatomical map or the long-term image of one’s own body.

A recent, neurocognitive model of bodily ownership (Tsakiris, 2011) sets conditions for what may or may not be experienced as a part of one’s body. This theory argues that in addition to the condition that the synchronous visual and tactile events should be located close to the real hand for the experience of ownership to be induced, we also need the rubber hand to be

anatomically shaped and located, as well as visual congruency between the seen and felt body part (Tsakiris and Haggard, 2005). The body model relied on here entails a reference of the constant visual and anatomical structure of the body which

operates offline and more interestingly, it seems to be normative (...) for one's own body, because its modulatory influence allows for an external body-part to be considered as a potential part of *my* body or not. (2010:191)

This is conceived of as a test for 'incorporeability', which will decide whether the extra-bodily tool or object are experienced as parts of one's body or not. Besides the anatomical test, if the posture of the seen and the felt hand does not match, the sense of ownership will not be induced despite multisensory stimulation.

Another aspect emphasised by the body model theory, which is learnt from studying somatoparaphrenia (which involves feelings of disownership) is the hypothesised central role of proprioceptive impairment played in breakdowns of ownership (Vallar and Ronchi, 2009).

In summary, versions of the RHI experiment investigate the conditions under which we can imitate the experience/induce the illusion of a real hand by replacing it with an artificial one. These conditions entail *multisensory integration*; a *constant body model* into which only anatomically shaped and placed objects fit and *proprioceptive and spatial matching*, which we therefore have reason to accept as the necessary conditions of the sense of ownership.

However, the fact that an object is represented as that which fits into the body model does not suffice to explain why the rubber hand feels not just as part of a body but a part of my own body. de Vignemont emphasises it has to be processed like 'only one's own body is' (2010b:8), i.e. in a 'self-specific' manner. Self-specific processing or 'full embodiment', as opposed to 'neutral embodiment' indicating processes that do not make a difference between processing properties of one's body and those of other bodies (such as visual processing of eye colour) is a necessary condition of the experience of ownership in her view.³² This

³² To account for the differences between the degrees of experiences of ownership of extra-personal objects, she differentiates between different types of embodiment, such as: 'embodiment': 'E is embodied if and only if some properties of E are processed in the same way as the properties of one's body' and 'full embodiment': 'E

condition, i.e. the mode in which the external object has to be incorporated into the existing body schema or image is a plausible way to narrow down and specify the difference between experiences of tool integration and actual ownership, but more empirical evidence is needed to support it.

Interestingly, the original experiment (Botvinick and Cohen, 1998) did not include the examination of the *control of movement* as an inducer of ownership and at this point it becomes somewhat unclear where exactly one should draw the conceptual line between the sense of ownership and the sense of agency, as it is the latter one that is inherently related to movement. However, it seems as though the sense of movement control should elicit feelings of ownership, at least in the experiments, if not in pathological conditions, such as the Anarchic Hand Syndrome, in which subjects experience alien movements of their arm despite accepting the behaviour as their own (Balconi, 2010). In fact, one study was carried out by Kalckert and Ehrsson (2012), who found that movement of the index finger of a wooden hand by moving one's own index finger caused participants to have strong feelings of ownership. This suggests that although the sense of control, similarly to bodily sensations, may not be a sufficient element on its own either for the induction of feelings of ownership, it has the potential to corroborate the existing experience induced in the first place by multisensory stimulation and visual, tactile and proprioceptive congruence.

As the experiments and the studies of disordered bodily conditions show, the sense of ownership is a *positive* phenomenological, multi-compositional aspect of how we feel our bodies from the inside as our own, which can be induced by a combination of *multisensory integration*; a *constant body model* (thought of either as the body schema or as long-term body image) into which the objects become incorporated *in a self-specific way* and *proprioceptive and spatial matching*. The sense of movement control also seems to contribute to corroborating the induced sense of ownership.

is fully embodied if and only if all its properties are processed in the same way as the properties of one's body'.(2010:3)

7.2. The sense of agency

In this section I shall discuss the sense of bodily agency from the following viewpoints: its phenomenology; the levels of (motor- and cognitive) processing it involves; the distinction between feelings and attributions of agency; the models of agency and its components. My heavily empirical discussion and cited works aim to show that, instead of being a clearly definable and explicable internal sense, the sense of agency is a complicated compound both on the phenomenological and the neuropsychological level. It is a compound of more elemental processes and higher-order mechanisms, which involves the integration of internal, sub-personal action-predictions (whether preceded by explicit intentions or not) with both internal sensory and external perceptual clues, in order to induce the *feeling* of agency.

7.2.1. Ownership and agency

Besides the sense of ownership, the other heavily studied aspect of our experience of our bodies from the inside has to do with the fact that bodies do not just ‘serve’ as it were the purpose of undergoing internal sensations induced by external stimuli and integrating different channels of sensory perception in order to create a sense of my body and its parts, but we also move them to act on and in the world. This makes it a crucial aspect of bodily awareness, as we are conscious of our bodies in virtue of them being the space in which our conscious will to do things becomes realised. The sense of bodily agency is intimately connected to this fact, i.e. *we have a sense of being the initiators and controllers of our movement* (this is, although closely related to but arguably distinguishable from ‘action awareness’. i.e. the sense we know what we are doing. (Pacherie, 2007)).

The sense of agency can safely be distinguished from the sense of bodily ownership, despite the fact that in most everyday movements they operate in an integrated, recessive manner, causing the agent to have one continuous experience of being the actor who moves his own body. In some situations however, the two can come apart, such as when someone pushes me or a car I am a passenger in comes to a sudden halt and my upper body makes an unexpected move forward. I still feel it is *my* body that is moving but I did not start the movement and possibly have no control over it. This distinction is also drawn out by experiments using movement simulation as well as in neuropathologies such as schizophrenia or anosognosia.

7.2.2. Phenomenology of the sense of agency

Before examining what the experience of agency amounts to and whether it can be broken down into more elemental components on the experiential level, I should note that the sense of agency naturally extends beyond the scope of bodily movements, into the realm of the mental. Besides experiencing that we are the initiators of a bodily movement, we also have a sense that we are the authors of our thoughts and intentions (as I discussed in Chapter 5 on the individual sense of self). Importantly, we have intentions to physically do things in the world, and this kind of intention is normally tightly connected to bodily movement. On an even more complex level, agency has a moral connotation and a strong connection to questions of responsibility, which, however significant, is not the subject of my present enquiry. Therefore, I shall only discuss the particular sense that we are the initiators and actors of bodily movements here.

Let us consider a simple example similar to the previous one, such as sitting on a chair and raising an arm. In a basic sense, the sense of the movement *per se* may not be sufficient to induce experiences of agency, as if I am not the origin thereof, I will not feel like I am the initiator or the agent of the action. If the person sitting next to me is the one who grabs my arm and pushes it up in the air, I would feel my arm raising but I would lack the sense that it is I who started the action. If, however, I decide to raise my arm and this intention is immediately translated into motor action, I have a sense that I am the agent of this bodily action. One important aspect of this example is that the sense of agency may only be present in *voluntary* movement, where I am the source of the movement in terms of my body's action given in response to my intention to raise my arm.

However, one possible counter-example to this could be the category of automatic bodily movements such as blinking, sneezing or breathing, as I surely do not consciously initiate or normally control either of these, yet I do have a sense that I am the agent who blinks or breathes. To this objection I reply that the sense of agency one may have in these movements controlled by the autonomic nervous system is so weak that it seems not to cross the threshold of consciousness at all (and when it does it is due to our intention to control it). In moving our body parts in order to act however involves a subtle but positive sense of agency, which is what I aim to discuss here. Therefore, I understand the scope of the concept of 'bodily movement' to extend only to non-automatic movements.

Despite the fact that actions involving a conscious sense of agency only cover non-automatic movements, it seems that I do not (normally) need to think explicitly (consciously) of what my intention is and what to do with my arm, instead I automatically raise my arm as soon as I form the intention of doing it, whereby ‘it’ may range from a simple movement to a complicated intentional action such as cooking dinner (which inevitably consists of a series of smaller movements). Voluntariness of action, i.e. the sense that *I decided/deliberated* about it on some (later explained) level is therefore indeed a necessary condition of having a sense of being the agent of an action. At which level of motor- or cognitive processing this sense is induced is what is at issue below.

7.2.3. Levels of processing

The sense of agency is presented in terms similar to how I did above for the phenomenological view, but the nature of the awareness is emphasised as ‘the pre-reflective sense that I am the cause or author of the movement’ (Gallagher, 2007:2). The ‘pre-reflective sense’ refers here to the claim that it precedes conscious thought or an ability to report on it, which, as I have shown in the section (6.1) on proprioception and the taxonomy of bodily awareness, may also be conceptualised as an extended sense of conscious experience (which amounts to a broader category than that of the ability to report on these experiences).

The *bottom-up* theory of the neurology and phenomenology of agency, such as Gallagher’s (2007) or Frith, Blakemore and Wolpert’s (2000) puts the first-level experience of agency down to motor control mechanisms. According to these accounts, it is the neuronal processes which generate the first-level or basic experience of agency. Consequently, neuronal dysfunctions cause disruptions in the sense. A disruption amounts to either the loss of the experience of agency or the generation of experiences of alien control, which is a symptom not uncommon in schizophrenic patients. However, we should be careful to keep these two symptoms at ample distance from each other, as a disruption may not be sufficient on its own to induce senses of alien control. Balconi (2010), among others convincingly argues that the sense of alien interference or control also requires belief-formation and confabulation.

A number of neuroscientists and psychologists have already indicated the different neural correlates of the sense of agency (Balconi, 2010) and ‘there is evidence of different neural correlates for the sense of agency, which might reflect different agency indicators and/or sub-processes or levels of agency processing.’ (2010:4). The two different groups of areas (sensorimotor and association-cortical) of the brain correspond to different levels of processing. It is indicated that the first group is responsible for the transformation of motor commands and the second is for cognitive functions of attributing agency. Within the first level we can distinguish different components, i.e. the motor copy of an intention to move and the movement having taken place in accordance with the intention. Whether the *phenomenal* experience of agency originates on the lower, automatic level or on the higher-order, cognitive or attributive one is a question that neuroscientists and philosophers have opposing theories about.

7.2.4. Comparator models of agency

On models of the first-level approach, such as *forward models* (Jeannerod, 1994; Frith, Blakemore, Wolpert, 2000), the experience of agency consists in the interplay between sensorimotor processes and sensory feedback. This means that when there is a motor command of movement sent to the body, a copy of this (called the ‘efferent copy’) command is sent to a self-monitoring system (Gallagher, 2005) which compares the predicted outcome of an action to the actual end-state, which the system is informed about through a ‘reafferent’ sensory feedback signal sent to the relevant brain areas. In *inverse models*, (Blakemore, Wolpert, Frith, 2001) the motor commands that have to be carried out to move a system from its current state to the desired one are computed.

Common to these two models is the concept of *comparator*, which comprises the mechanisms that compare two signals and use the result for the system’s regulation. The predominant explanation of the sense of agency of our actions is the ‘*central monitoring theory*’, (the comparator model), which postulates that the monitoring of central and peripheral signals arises as a consequence of the execution of an action. In this theory, (central) efferent signals at the origin of an action are matched with those resulting from its execution (the re-afferent signals), with the comparison providing cues about where and when the action originated’ (Balconi, 2010:7)

The underlying argument for the comparator is that

Since there is no intrinsic difference between sensory signals arising as consequences of our own actions and sensory signals arising as results from events in the outside world, we need to resort to an internal central signal, i.e. the internal prediction, and compare it with the actual sensory afference in order to distinguish between externally produced and self-produced events. (Synofzik, Vosgerau, and Newen, 2007:3)

This means that an important function of the sense of agency is to be able to tell movements caused by me from movements caused by others apart. In cases where the predicted and the estimated real state are *congruent*, the sensory event is attributed to oneself. If the sensory feedback is *incongruent* with the prediction, the causation of the sensory stimuli is attributed to an external source, which allows the system to differentiate between self and other in terms of the source of an action. This mechanism is ecological, as it does not require a form of higher-order perceptual monitoring of action, as the monitoring is done by the same sub-personal process which generates the action.

However convincing the positing of a comparator is, Synofzik, Vosgerau, and Newen (2007) argue that while the model contributes significantly to accounting for the sense (feeling) of agency, it is neither necessary, nor sufficient to explain *attributions* or *judgments* thereof.

Experiments aimed at the temporal distortion between movement and its consequences (e.g. Blakemore et al., 1998; Frith, 2005) have shown that some degree of deviation of the sensory consequences of action is allowed, meaning that self-attribution of action still applies in these cases. If however, despite the same degree of deviation the subject in one case attributes the movement to herself while in another to an external agent, the explanatory power of the comparator becomes compromised and attribution has to be complemented by other mechanisms, such as multi- or inter-modal sensory feedback (e.g. visual *and* proprioceptive), which is needed to be fed into the comparator to induce the sense of agency. (Synofzik, Vosgerau, and Newen, 2007)

It is also argued that the necessary existence of the comparator can be questioned on the basis of patients' reports, who claimed that they had complete sensations of movement in their formerly amputated limbs. (Ramachandran and Hirstein, 1998) This should not be possible on the comparator model, as an efference copy that has not adapted to the new bodily context even months after the amputation would have to be sent to the comparator. However, as the simulation experiments in normal subjects found, such copies are modified rapidly in the face of bodily changes. The conclusion of these findings that is drawn is that there is a *continuous multi-modal weighting process assessing intentions and perceptual consequences* that underlies the feeling and judgment of agency as opposed to a 'mere' comparator, which although contributes to having a sense of agency, in many cases fails to be either necessary or sufficient. (ibid.) I shall discuss how intentions and consequences are monitored in what follows.

7.2.5. Attribution versus feeling of agency

The suggested alternative model contains two separate levels, corresponding to two different aspects of the sense of agency;

On the first one,

the *feeling of agency* (FoA) is the non-conceptual, low-level feeling of being an agent of an action is represented. At this level, an action is merely classified as self-caused or not self-caused. In particular, the action is not attributed to myself - the self is only implicitly represented in the FoA. Therefore, no external attribution is possible at this level. (Synofzik, Vosgerau, and Newen, 2007:9)

On the secondary level,

the judgement of agency (JoA) is formed as an explicit conceptual, interpretative judgement of being the agent. Here, the pre-conceptual basic feeling of agency is further processed by conceptual capacities and belief stances to form an attribution of agency. For example, a mismatch between different authorship indicators (e.g. at the comparator) triggers (i) a primary basic feeling of not being the initiator of some

event and (ii) a second interpretative mechanism which looks for the best explanation, resulting in a specific belief formation about the origins of the change in perception. (ibid: 10) 33

This second level also has the capacity to overwrite initial feelings of agency in light of sensory evidence to the contrary.

To recap, the original, general low-level hypothesis is that the experience of agency is accounted for in terms of the automated processes of action prediction and (successful) execution, and if this level of processing is intact, there should not be a misattribution of agency. However, in the case of schizophrenic patients, the experiment that rendered the origin of the action executed as ambiguous (in such situations, ‘a conflict is created between the set of signals (central commands, visual and proprioceptive reafferences) that are generated at the time of a movement, and which are normally congruent with each other’ (Jaennerod, 2009:4)), the order is reversed, i.e. while their sensorimotor level processing of the intention or command is unimpaired, they fail to register the movement in question as their own on the action-representation or attribution level.

(Another way the difference between the two levels of processing is symbolised is by referring to the ‘how’ of action, i.e. the practice of adjusting hand movement in case of conflict between signals, and the ‘who’ of the action, i.e. the agent carrying it out. (Balconi, 2010; Jeannerod, 2009; Pacherie, 2007) When it came to conscious agency judgment, in experiments carried out by Daprati et al. (1997), ‘the rate of attribution errors in patients with first rank symptoms went up to 80%, as opposed to 50% in patients without such symptoms (and 30% in healthy subjects).’ (Jeannerod, 2009:5) Therefore, in these patients, it is the *lack of conscious attribution of agency* which causes them to experience thoughts and actions as failing to originate in them.

On the basis of certain experiments manipulating the action of a hand in contrast to with what subjects feel they are doing, Jaennerod reports that

³³ A visual representation of the two-step account of agency is the following:

subjects observing a delayed presentation of their motor performance experienced the bizarre sensation of having an “anarchic” hand. In both the examples, subjects experienced the illusion of a disturbed sense of agency when the feedback from their actions did not correspond to the expected effect. These observations seem to suggest a causal relationship between the action identification mechanism and the sense of agency. This relationship, however, will not be fully confirmed when we examine the disturbances of the sense of agency in patients with schizophrenia. (2009:3)

Other experimenters, in favour of the higher-order approach (Chaminade and Decety, 2002; Farrer and Frith, 2002) pointed to the *intentional aspect* of the action, i.e. whether the action is having the intended effect as what is essential for agency.

Firstly however, it does not seem to be always the case that an explicitly conscious, pre-formed intention is present for movement, such as in routine or habitual movements. Secondly, Gallagher (2007) draws attention to the fact that these authors acknowledge the involvement of motor areas of the brain in generating the sense of agency, which complicates the issue further. In another experiment, which is meant to explain this fact (Farrer et al., 2003) subjects moved their own hand, but saw a virtual hand projected on a screen at veridical or non-veridical angles. The virtual hand was either under their control, or not. Subjects were asked about their sense of agency for their bodily movements and the visual (virtual hand) representation of the movements. The less the subjects felt in control, the higher the levels of activation they had in the brain areas associated with attribution. When the subjects felt more control and hence agency, they had higher levels of activation in the areas associated with motor control. (Gallagher, 2007)

Another view in favour of top-down construction or ‘post-hoc reconstruction’ (i.e. taking place once the action has occurred) of the sense of agency is held by Wegner (2003), who interprets agency as an illusion of mental causation. For Wegner, the three conditions for agency are priority, consistency and exclusivity in the relation between thought and action. (However, it has been shown (Nahmias, 2005; Pacherie, 2007) that these conditions can be met without inducing the sense of agency in someone.) His studies on healthy subjects suggest that illusions of control, such as cases where we experience a sense of agency for actions someone else carries out and illusions of action projections, i.e. case where we do not

experience a sense of agency for something we do can be both be experimentally induced. In effect this can mean that

when several people's actions simultaneously aim to produce a single effect, a person may judge that he or she has agency over an event because he or she thought of making an action, even though the event was in fact caused by someone else. (Haggard and Tsakiris, 2009:2)

A sense of voluntary control is effectively a reconstructive illusion that one's intention has caused an external event, which to some extent resonates Hume's sceptical view of causation, whereby causation is seen as an illusory inference from the constant conjunction of cause and effect.

Upon considering opposing models of agency, it seems that the sense of agency is a multi-compound experience including

several contributory elements: efferent signals, sensory (afferent) feedback, and intentional (perceptual) feedback. If any of these contributory elements fail, or fail to be properly integrated, then we can get a disruption or disturbance in the sense of agency. (Gallagher, 2007:8)

This 'multi-aspect' view could explain why there is no clear causal direction between the level of motor processes and the cognitive function of attribution of agency, or that the disturbance can be of different types according to which level is affected. Gallagher presents the following helpful options (ibid.):

Very Top-down: problems with introspective higher-order cognition

Bottom-up: problems with motor control mechanisms: efference signals (Tsakiris and Haggard, 2005) or the integration of sensory and motor signals (Farrer et al.).

Intentional theory: perceived lack of concordance between intention and effects of action may generate a disturbance (Chaminade and Decety; Farrer and Frith).

Multiple aspects: the sense of agency is complex, and based on the integration of efferent, afferent, and intentional feedback (some sense that my action is having the

intended effect on the world), so a disturbance in any one contributory may lead to a disturbance.

One aspect of the conscious or higher-level sense of agency that is somewhat confusing upon studying the relevant literature is that ‘attribution’ seems to be used to refer both to the experience of agency (Jaennerod, 2009; Haggard, 2005) and the verbalisation thereof, as if these were conceptually inseparable. As we saw above however, these two can refer to different functional categories and their relationship may be asymmetrical: similarly to the fact that we do not always have or remember prior intentions to act and still experience agency, I would (barring cases of lying and self-deception) attribute agency only to those actions that I *feel* were initiated or caused by me, whereas I could experience something as an action I am the agent of without being able to reflectively report this fact, e.g. I could get dressed hastily without paying attention to which clothes I am putting on and someone, upon seeing my non-matching socks could ask me whether I put those on, to which, due to my initial intention of putting on matching socks and my recessive and faint experience, I could, without thinking about it, promptly say ‘no’. This is in accordance with the emphasis on comparing intentions of voluntary action to actual end-events, and in this case the intention would overwrite the perceptual consequence when it comes to attributing agency.

7.2.6. Components of the sense of agency

The authors who do differentiate between the ‘feeling of agency’ and the ‘judgment of agency’ (Synofzik, Vosgerau, and Newen, 2007; Haggard and Tsakiris, 2009) note that feelings of agency, although paradigmatically necessary (except for in special simulation environments involving multiple actors and the same movement to achieve the same effect), are not sufficient for judgements thereof. We need to check, either sub-consciously or not, whether the action has produced the anticipated effect in order to judge whether we did something. An important role is therefore played in the induction of the experience of agency by *prediction, monitoring and comparing the consequences of our bodily actions to our intentions*.

According to Haggard and Tsakiris (2009), the monitoring step may be sidestepped in some pathological conditions such as anosognosia (lack of recognition of paralysis/disability of

limb mostly in hemiplegia patients), whereby patients claim that they have moved their paralysed limb. In this case, as opposed to how Synofzik et al. account for it, judgment is solely based on the motor command to move.

Since actions take place in time (however a short span of it), the temporal aspect of agency is also telling in accounting for experiences of agency, as it may include:

a specific cognitive function that links actions and effects across time, producing a temporal attraction between them (Haggard, Clark and Kalogeras, 2002). Crucially, no such effects were found for passive involuntary movements, suggesting that intentional binding is a specific marker of agency. (Tsakiris and Haggard, 2009:4)

‘Intentional binding’ refers to the phenomenon of subjective shortening of the temporal interval between a voluntary action and its external sensory consequence, and it is what the above authors claim underscores the experience of agency, as shown by versions of experiments involving subjects pressing a button and hearing a tone afterwards. The perceived time of a tone that follows the participant’s voluntary action is ‘shifted earlier in time, back toward the action that caused it, relative to a baseline condition in which tone occurs without any action made’. (ibid.)

The idea is that the shorter the perceived time between action and predicted effect, the stronger the experience of agency. If there is no divergence between the anticipated and the actual state, we feel that we are the agents controlling the action. It is also suggested, as a result of experimental findings, that the experience of the body changes and gets attenuated through the sense of agency, viz. the spatial and temporal processing of proprioceptive information from bodily receptors is enhanced by the sense of agency. A version of the previously mentioned RHI involved passively displacing the participant’s hand and monitoring the movement over a video image of the hand. The effect here was confined to the individual finger that was passively displaced. In contrast, when the participant actively moved the same finger, the illusion transferred to other fingers as well, suggesting that voluntary movement integrates distinct bodily movements into experiencing it as a unified whole across time (Haggard and Tsakiris, 2005 and 2009).

Whereas the sense of control seems to be suggested by a number of influential studies and experiments as *the* essential aspect or component of agency, we can conclude from the necessity of temporal monitoring that it is plausible to think of the experience as an experiential compound of more than just one element.

In addition, even if we consider the sense of control to be a crucial element of the sense of agency, a fairly straight-forward case can be made in favour of thinking about the sense of control as that which comes in degrees (in terms of content, which can have perceptual information built into it, as suggested by Gallagher (2007) and Pacherie (2010)). An experience of effortful action is at the one end of the scale and a recessive, subtle awareness is at the other. Someone like a professional diver probably has a rich agentic experience as he jumps off the springboard and engages in complex body twists and turns, whereas if I simply get up from my desk I may only be marginally aware of controlling my movement.

As I mentioned in the introduction of this section, I can feel that I am the agent of an action also in terms of being the source or the *initiator* of the movement. However, the sense of initiation (which is not the same as the sense of ownership) may not be sufficient to induce the feeling of agency. I could pick up a paint brush and have someone else directing my movement on a canvas, which is in fact how someone tried to teach me (not very successfully) to paint when I was a child. I *felt* that I was the source of the movement even though I had no control over which way and how the brush was guided on the canvas, but this feeling does not seem sufficient to have a sense of agency.

Intentional binding may be necessary but may not suffice either to fully explain a sense of *authorship*, as shown by Wohlschläger et al. (2003), who demonstrated that the binding effect and the associated sense of intentional causation also occur when we observe other people's actions. Pacherie suggests that 'intentional binding of action and effect would seem to be associated with the agent-neutral experience of intentional causation, rather than with the experience of authorship' (2007:16), i.e. binding tells us about how intentional action is structured more generally as opposed to how *I* bring it about.

The claim that a sense of being the initiator of the action *is* an element of the sense of agency is supported by the finding that subjects who have delusions of control (Frith et al., 2000; Frith 2005; Pacherie 2007) seem to retain their senses of the action's goal; the intention to

move; the movement having occurred, but not their her having initiated the movement. This is also present in non-delusional subjects, as evidenced by reports of awareness of initiating a movement, which occurs between 80 and 200 milliseconds before the movement actually takes place (Libet, 1985). Pacherie (2007) suggests that the binding of intention and movement onset (not to be equated with intentional binding in subjective time of intention and consequence) gives rise to the experience of action initiation, including that the sense is not just of initiation but also of the fact that we started moving *as we intended*. This does not mean however that there would be a full sense of agency if control is not present.

In addition, a tentative list by Balconi (2010) involving distinctions regarding the concept of agency includes aspects well beyond the sense of initiation and control, namely ‘awareness of a goal, of an intention to act, and of initiation of action, as well as awareness of movements, sense of activity, sense of mental effort, sense of control, and the concept of authorship.’ (2010:3)

This list suggests, similarly to Gallagher (2007) and Synofzik et al. (2007) that there may be interaction among different levels of processing in order to induce the sense of agency. Nevertheless, when trying to pin down the necessary components of the experience of agency, the sense of initiation and control seem to be the best candidates. Pacherie (2007) suggests that the sense of control itself comes in different degrees and is broken down into further sub-categories, such as the sense of *motor* control, the sense of *situational* control and the sense of *rational* control. In all three cases, the degree to which one feels in control depends on a comparison and adjustment between predicted and actual states, where the better the match the stronger the sense of either mental or physical control.

The above-discussed, rather diverse approaches to what experiential elements, neural mechanisms and processes as well as degrees and types of distortion the sense of agency may involve suggest that, instead of being a clearly definable and explicable internal sense, it is a complicated compound of more elemental processes and higher-order mechanisms. It can plausibly be thought of as integrating internal, sub-personal action-predictions (whether preceded by explicit intentions or not) with both internal sensory and external perceptual clues in order to induce the feeling of agency. This interplay also seems to be able to produce different degrees of the sense of agency, but at the minimal level, it provides the sense that *I* carry out a *voluntary* bodily action, which results in my ‘expected’ outcome.

In the following, last part of this chapter on bodily awareness, I shall discuss what seems to be one of the most pervasive disordered case of bodily awareness, deafferentation.

Chapter 8. Loss of the sense of one's body

In Chapter 4 I discussed reports of schizophrenic patients who have severe disturbances of their basic sense of self and tried to present those descriptions which bring us closest to the phenomenology of such experiences. In agreement with certain researchers of these symptoms of schizophrenia, I drew the conclusion that the basic sense of self seems to be 'lost' in such experiences and the function thereof to individuate the subject on an experiential level fails to operate properly.

Similarly to the thematic structure I used in Chapter 4 on the disordered basic sense of self, in the present section I shall discuss a case (out of a great number of disordered experiences of the body) where the subject's overall sense of his body seems to be lost. I shall define what this means exactly in what follows and assess this condition from the phenomenological point of view of how the loss of proprioception affects the previously named components of the sense of ownership and the sense of agency, and then place the disordered experience into the frameworks of the body image and body schema. I shall conclude that the loss of one's proprioceptive sense affects one's overall embodiment as well as the sense of ownership and agency in a fundamental way.

8.1. Deafferentation

There are a number of conditions, such as asomatognosia or paralysis where patients cease to feel connected to parts of their bodies (mostly either one side of the body or a limb) in the 'normal' way. There are of course different neurological backgrounds and reasons as to the disruption of the sense of a limb or other body part, the details of which are not relevant for my present discussion, and while there are many interesting and informative cases and reports of experience, here I shall only present one. The reason for this is that in the condition I am about to discuss, the loss of the sense of the body does not only involve a particular body part, but the whole body (more precisely, from the neck down), which means that it has the potential to give us an insight into what it is like to not experience the body as a whole 'from the inside' and to help us understand the connections between the different forms and characteristics of bodily awareness, such as proprioceptive awareness, ownership and agency.

The condition I am going to discuss is called ‘deafferentation’, referring to the interruption or destruction of the afferent connections of nerve cells, which in the relevant cases amounts to the fact that one’s sensory nerves leading from the periphery of one’s body towards the brain do not function any more.

There are two well-known cases discussed in the philosophical literature, that of G.L. and I.W. (Ian Waterman), who both lost their sense of their bodies’ posture and placement, i.e. proprioception.

My present discussion is mostly informed by a BBC documentary (1998) in which the subjects report on their first-hand experience, and Shaun Gallagher’s book chapter on ‘The Case of the Missing Schema’ (2005), however Monica Meijsing (2000), in her philosophical discussion also gives a detailed description of the beginning of Ian’s condition:

Ian Waterman fell sick with viral diarrhoea when he was 19. He felt progressively weaker, but what worried him more was that his coordination seemed to be diminishing. His speech became slurred and he could not walk or maintain an upright position. (...) Ian was sent to hospital, where initially they thought he was drunk. His condition deteriorated, especially as they did not understand what was going on. He seemed to be paralysed, but there was nothing wrong with his muscles or motor neurons. Besides, the problem was not that he was not moving: even when lying in bed his arms and legs would move in all directions, sometimes painfully hitting anyone who came close. He had no control whatever over his movements. (2000:45-46)

Ian Waterman had lost all sense of touch and proprioception from the neck down. All large sensory nerves that send information from the periphery to the brain were destroyed, probably due to an immune response his body gave to the virus he previously contracted. He was left with feelings of deep pain, of heat and cold and of fatigue, but no feeling of the position and posture of his body, not a single feeling of touch on the skin. (2000:46)

The BBC documentary (1998) made about him reveals a lot of his personal experiences (which is why it serves as my primary resource for studying the phenomenology of the disordered experience), such as when he lied on his bed in the hospital, he did not feel his body at all. If he

was not looking, he did not know where his arms and legs were. He could not sit up, and if someone else put him in an upright position, which was a dangerous job because of those flailing arms and legs, he could not stay upright and collapsed in a heap.

Very slowly Ian learned to sit up, by thinking very hard how he would go about it:

At first, he only used the muscles of his abdomen, as in sit-ups, but that did not work. Then he realised that the weight of his head was keeping him back, so that he lifted that first. When he finally succeeded, he was so triumphant that he forgot to think and fell back. (ibid:46)

An astounding fact is that I.W. has by now almost completely re-learned how to ‘control’ his movements and is able to lead a very close-to-normal life today. It took (and still takes) him tremendous amounts of conscious effort however to co-ordinate and maintain his movements and body positions, meaning that he needs to deploy cognitive skills in order to first *think* about how he will achieve carrying out an intentional action by breaking it down into smaller details of movement of different body parts and maintaining his balance at the same time. By continuously monitoring and planning various aspects of his actions, from an outside point of view he seems to move almost as well as a person with regular bodily awareness, despite the incredible physical and experiential differences between them.

8.2. Sense of ownership

The phenomenological descriptions and the neurological facts about Ian’s condition can hopefully inform us when trying to answer the question; How are we to think about his extraordinary bodily awareness in terms of the discussed senses of ownership and agency?

Importantly, Ian could and can experience pain temperature, fatigue and deep touch, which sensations are never felt *outside* the boundaries of his body. How can the boundaries be present if one’s overall awareness, i.e. *experience* of the body understood as proprioceptive awareness is missing?

It seems that

his personal boundaries are visually maintained, that he has to keep an idea of the positions of his limbs and their relations to external objects in mind all the time and, by this visual monitoring and visual memory, keep alive both a knowledge of where he is and an awareness of body image. (Cole and Paillard, 1995:262)

In other words, Ian's sense where his body ends, his body parts are and where his body is positioned in objective space was gradually replaced by a higher level of conscious, visual etc. monitoring, which provided him *perceptual* awareness of his body as opposed to proprioceptive one. (One could argue however that proprioceptive awareness *is* a type of perceptual awareness, mostly relying on the role vision is argued to play in kinaesthetic perception (Gibson, 1979), but this point is orthogonal to the present discussion inasmuch as I aim to emphasise the *phenomenological* difference between knowing where the body is via vision versus feeling it 'from the inside'.)

Meijnsing notes that GL, the other deafferented subject (who in contrast has not managed to re-learn how to move her body to carry out actions) 'talks of her body as being a machine on which she imposes commands' (2000:45). This seems to be due to the lack of proprioceptive awareness, i.e. an overall sense of his body 'from the inside', which means that these patients are indeed almost disembodied in the phenomenological sense. (I say 'almost' because the conscious monitoring and the heightened sense of body image do seem to provide a sort of 'from the outside' awareness of the body.) I would argue that the 'replacement' awareness Ian deploys in order to move/use his body does not grant the positive sense of ownership I described in chapter 6.3., as failing to *feel* one's body 'from the inside' (i.e. the lack of proprioceptive awareness) eliminates the crucial, phenomenologically salient (to wit, '*inflationary*') aspect of sensing a body part *as owned by* or belonging to me. (This of course does not preclude other, non-salient elements, such as vision etc. to grant a *deflationary* sense that this is *my* body.)

8.3. Sense of agency

One interesting detail shown in the documentary is brought out by a conversation between Ian and a NASA astronaut. They compare the experience of his lost proprioception to that of

travelling in a space shuttle, where gravity does not take hold of one's body any longer. The astronaut emphasises that while on board, she cannot feel where her body parts are 'from the inside' but as soon as she moves them, she knows their position. This is in contrast to I.W.'s experience, who, even after learning to exert some degree of control over the movement of his limbs, still has no internal sense of where they are.

In my discussion of the sense of agency, I pointed out that the sense of control is necessary in order for someone to feel like he is the agent of a bodily action and in the previous discussion on the sense of ownership, I also stipulated that feeling control may corroborate this feeling. These points seem to be supported by the comparison between the space-experience and Ian's lack of bodily awareness, as the difference between the two types of experience seems indeed to be found in *the sense of control of body parts*, which grant's one's sense of agency and underline ownership over the body. From a phenomenological aspect (which is what is most relevant for my enquiry), the deafferentation case strongly suggests that losing one's proprioceptive awareness has a subsequently crucial effect on *the sense* (and *not* the fact) *of agency* by virtue of effecting the *sense of control* i.e. the feeling that a body part is responsive to our will.

One may object that a lack of control also occurs in paralysis, which does not necessarily lead to the lack of awareness of the body part, to which I reply by proposing a further qualification of a case in terms of lack of experience, namely whether the condition is a result of damage to the body schema or body image (Gallagher, 2005).

It seems that in general, paralysis does not represent the body schema as damaged or affected, which would mean that the sense of the body part 'from the inside' is still present despite the evident lack of the sense of control. If however, the damage involves the body schema (which is arguably the case in asomatognostic patients) as is the case in deafferentation, lack of awareness of the limb 'from the inside' may also induce the loss of sense of control. This kind of lack of awareness seems more basic and to effect one's sense of one's body in more profound ways than the lack of control in paralysis.

We should also consider that the kind of control I.W. did manage to learn to apply to his movements eventually probably does not resemble our normal sense of control. Its heavy reliance on Ian's mental powers means that it is prone to weakening depending on his mental condition (fatigue, illness etc.) Gallagher takes us closer to understanding the differences;

We learn from this case that mental control of movement is limited in four ways. First, there are attentional limitations: Ian cannot attend to all aspects of movement. Second, his rate of movement is slower than normal. The fact that movement is driven consciously slows motility down. Third, the overall duration of motor activity is relatively short because of the mental effort or energy required. Finally, complex single movements (such as walking across rough ground), and combined or compound movements (walking and carrying an egg) take more energy. (2005:54)

The crucial information about position, posture and touch (skin sensation) is missing. However, both deafferented subjects claimed that, although their body schema is almost non-existent, their sense of body image, their sense of how they look and how much space they occupy, has altered little as a consequence of the deafferentation syndrome.' (2000:46) This also underlies the previous point that damage to the schema and subsequently one's sense of control effects one's overall sense of the body from the inside in more profound and basic ways than damage to one's body image would.

The sense of agency is the sense that I am the source of the action, who initiated it. In the normal phenomenology of voluntary action, as mentioned previously, the sense of ownership and that of agency are indistinguishable.

(Ian's initial feeling of disembodiment was due to the fact that he has lost proprioception, control and hence volition over his movements but as soon as he regained a perceptual experience and conscious monitoring of his body, his sense of alienation disappeared, despite the fact that he had not regained motor control yet.)

I showed in the previous section that we can think of the sense of agency either in terms of bottom-up motor control or in terms of top-down attribution, so I shall not discuss this issue further here. I will only point out that the bottom-up view is in line with the fact that at the onset of his illness, Ian had no sense of agency (despite possibly attributing movements to himself). Due to his deployment of the body image as the framework informed heavily by vision, he gradually regained a sense of control, without this meaning actual motor control. This may be more easily understood from the viewpoint of the top-down account, i.e. if control is seen as an element of intentionality and intentional action. Gallagher also notes in his discussion that the sense of agency depends more on the 'processes that precede action and translate intention into

movement' (2005:67), which seems to support the idea that the sense of agency as construed by a top-down model is also supported.

Overall, the deafferentation case supports the idea that the loss of proprioceptive awareness induces the severely diminished sense of agency by way of inducing the loss of the sense of control.

8.3. Sense of the body as Schema and as Image

The successful capturing of Ian's body under his newly interpreted control also reveals a number of empirical points about the intermodal communication between body schema and body image (as well as supporting that the two are indeed separate functional aspects of bodily awareness) on the one hand and the conceptual relationship between proprioception and the body schema on the other.

To recap, the body schema is to be thought of in terms of close-to-automatic motor systems and habits and an offline schematic map of the anatomy of our bodies. The body image on the other hand refers to intentional forms of representing one's body, such as perceptually, emotionally and conceptually (Gallagher, 2005). From Ian's case we know that his body schema was damaged, or even lost, hence the failure of his ability to keep his balance or his body parts in place, let alone moving. The authors who had the chance to study and interview him (such as Cole and Gallagher) call attention to the fact that he never managed to regain or rebuild his body schema, but he managed to bypass the necessary peripheral nerve to brain connections by gradually learning to control his movements with the help of vision and thinking (about how to place and move his body parts), activities associated with the body image.

At this point it is worth revisiting the previously discussed place of proprioception within Gallagher's conceptual distinction between schema and image. The case of I.W. tells us that his *felt* sense of the body's posture, location and movement, i.e. proprioception was lost due to serious damage to the nerves that underlie his body schema. As I argued in the section on proprioception, one's *felt* sense of the body may rightly be given a separate status in the conceptual taxonomy of the aspects of bodily awareness on the basis that by virtue of it being subtle, not reflected on but nevertheless conscious, it does not fit under either the body image

(i.e. intentional forms of representation) or the body schema (i.e. processes and systems that are not even candidates for consciousness).

The deafferented case helps us refine two relevant points; one is that proprioceptive information, despite being a separate conceptual aspect of proprioception to proprioceptive *awareness*, which feeds into the body schema and updates it, is a necessary condition for there being proprioceptive awareness. Secondly, while we do not think of one's experience of one's body 'from the inside' as an aspect of body schema, its normal functioning is what induces the *felt* awareness of the body, in light of which it is useful to think of proprioception as a loosely-conscious experience that is conceptually separate but functionally tied to the body schema.

This functional connection however does not preclude a less evident but strong connection between proprioception (as awareness) and the body image. Gallagher notes that

the loss of proprioceptive *awareness* results in an impoverishment of, or possibly the restructuring of, the perceptual aspect of the body image. (2005:51)

This was also due to the fact that Ian lost the ability to carry out controlled voluntary actions.

Since proprioceptive feedback and 'sense' could not be regained, Ian managed to employ his body image to make up for the losses and gaps in his body schema. In terms of experience, this means that he is not aware of his body in the way that people with normal proprioception are, i.e. in a recessive and subtle but clear way, in the background as it were, but he is constantly perceptually aware (by visually monitoring) where his body parts are from a third-person perspective, which, instead of it staying in the background, takes up much of his attentional field.

This is in contrast to an otherwise seemingly not unsolicited 'necessity of bodily awareness for bodily action' (Wong, 2010) originally formulated by O'Shaughnessy (1980), pertaining to the claim that acting with a body part is inconceivable without feeling that body part 'from the inside'. O'Shaughnessy's argument, which I do not aim to present in its full form here, entails that the body is presented by bodily awareness as the 'target object' of the will to 'latch onto', which allows the mistakes we might have made (in trajectory, speed of movement etc.) to be corrected. The crucial point for my discussion is that without bodily awareness or feeling the

body ‘from the inside’, there is nothing for the will to latch onto, which in practicality means that the body could not even be ‘tried’ to move in the lack of bodily awareness.

This argument, as showcased by the story of I.W. seems to lack empirical support, as he was able to move his body parts without the underlying feeling of his body and its parts ‘from the inside’. The fact that he managed to find a new way to control (though not in the sense we do) his movements, as we have seen is partly thanks to continuous mental efforts and some degree of re-accessing or relearning of motor programmes he had developed before the onset of his illness at 19.

Gallagher remains somewhat obscure when he elaborates on the intimate connection between body schema and body image, stating his claims only in rather soft terms such as ‘contributes to’, ‘plays a role in’ or ‘supports’, which means it is hard to see how the connection between schema and image in terms of causality and dependence gets cashed out, which may at least partly be due to the difficulty of drawing theoretical conclusions from a multi-dimensional and relatively rare empirical case.

As we have seen, it is a reasonable conclusion to draw that I.W.’s missing body schema could in part be replaced by his body image, which would mean that, unlike control, proprioception *per se* may not be a necessary condition of voluntary bodily movement. (Note however that I.W. has lost his proprioceptive sense from the neck down and that the other patient discussed in the literature, G.L. who has not maintained any sense of body schema has never recovered to the same extent as I.W.)

In conclusion, I hope to have shown that, among many other important things we can learn from the deafferentation case (of which I only discussed a limited amount here), we can see that our *felt* sense of embodiment is more closely tied to the workings of body schema than body image, whilst being experientially and conceptually separate from it.

8.4. Conclusion

In Chapters 6, 7 and 8 I discussed the second out of the two main subjects of my dissertation, namely the *sense* of the body. I outlined my general understanding of what this experience, i.e. bodily awareness ‘from the inside’ consists in. I began by characterising the meaning of being embodied from a first-person and experiential perspective and presented different views of how the concept of bodily awareness is broken down into two sub-categories, the body image and the body schema. I introduced versions of what these two notions cover and went into detail about Gallagher’s taxonomy of the elements of bodily awareness.

I discussed three main aspects of bodily awareness which, from the general to the more specific experience, provide us with the sense that we are embodied; that our bodies are sensed as ours and that we sense that we move and act with our bodies to achieve simple as well as complex goals. I understood proprioception as our general sense of being embodied and argued that, in the sense that it is a form of awareness, it should be given more specification with respect to Gallagher’s taxonomy. I find it plausible to think of proprioception (as experience) as a form of conscious experience which extends well beyond abilities of reflection and reporting and which is crucial for our general sense of our bodies.

I argued that the *subjective experience* of our bodies can indeed be separated from our physical bodies as testified by empirical cases, which is an extremely important point, as it supports the view that a Cartesian understanding of our bodily experience is also compatible with and has explanatory power for phenomenological and empirical findings.

I discussed the sense of ownership and argued that it is the positive sense of being the owners of our body parts, which, as empirical studies and scientists suggest, can be theoretically extended to ownership over the body as a whole. As I explained, it is to be thought of as a complex sense consisting of multi-sensory integration, self-specific body model processing and visual/proprioceptive congruence, and as a sense which is adaptable in light of experimental manipulation.

Since our bodies and our sense thereof are not stationary but move around in space at will, I also included the discussion of our sense of bodily agency. I presented multiple points about how it may be induced at the motor-level or on higher order-levels of intentionality and

attribution. I presented different models of how it may work and what conclusions are drawn from disordered agency experiences. I presented that the experience of agency and the judgment thereof can be distinguished. I concluded that the sense of agency is a compound of at least two more elemental components; the sense of control (which is necessary and sufficient) and the sense of initiation (which is only necessary). These latter components may themselves come in different degrees and types.

Finally, I discussed a case of severely disordered bodily awareness of the whole body ‘from the inside’, i.e. deafferentation. I introduced the phenomenology of this condition on the basis of personal reports and drew the conclusion that the lack of proprioceptive awareness leads to a severely diminished and deeply altered sense of ownership and agency, the understanding of which is to be interpreted mostly by placing the distorted experience within the frameworks of body schema and body image. Finally, I concluded that our *felt* sense of embodiment is more closely tied to the workings of body schema than body image, whilst being experientially and conceptually separate from it.

Chapter 9. Connecting the senses of the body to the senses of self

The purpose of this last chapter is to answer the following question;

Which of the discussed aspects of bodily awareness (in Chapter 6 and 7) contribute to/ are included in the sense of self on the basic and the individual levels (discussed in Chapter 2 and 5)?

I shall go through the elements I named in Chapter 2 and analyse whether any of the aspects of the sense of the body I presented contribute to it, and if so, which ones and how. Similarly to my underlying intention throughout the previous chapters, I shall carry out this task by analysing certain phenomenological and empirical aspects. I shall also refer to the discussed (and other) cases of disordered self- or bodily experience where relevant.

9.1. Elements of sense of self and elements of the senses of the body

Let us start with the aspects of the basic sense of self.

i. Perspective/point of view

This is the sense of a certain standpoint from which the world always reveals itself and which in the normal case always turns out to be the first-person perspective, meaning that the experience feels as happening to me. The sense of the *subjective* body seems most closely related to our sense of being subjects with a certain viewpoint. As I have presented, the subjective body is understood, *inter alia* in terms of the ‘lived body’, i.e. the experience of the body as it is there *for* me, which is situated in the world and is *our point zero* when we come into contact with it (Gallagher and Zahavi, 2008), therefore the subjective body undoubtedly contributes the perspective where we experience the world from. We experience things in space in relation to this body, as over, next to, behind it, as well as close to or far from it. In normal experience, I cannot perceive an extra-bodily object from a perspective that is different from my (subjective) body’s perspective. Nor can I have a perspective that is partially from my (subjective) body’s perspective and partially from another source. Therefore the subjective body clearly contributes to my sense of the first-person perspective from which I view, hear, feel etc. the world. The first-person perspective of most non-bodily

phenomena arguably is not necessarily felt from the subjective body's viewpoint, e.g. my sense of perspective of feeling nostalgic is not shared with the felt perspective of my body.

What is important to point out however is that in some extraordinary conditions or circumstances, my subjective body may *not* coincide with my objective body. As I showed, in cases of out-of-body experience for instance, I perceive my environment from a perspective that is solely made up by my *subjective* experience of my body. As Metzinger (2009) explained however, the sense of the subjective viewpoint is not identical to a non-corporeal, immaterial locus of consciousness in these cases, i.e. the (subjective) body is *felt as a body*, but with different qualities. Therefore, while it is plausible to hold that the first-person perspective form which we experience the world, ourselves and others is, in the normal case fully constituted by the perspective of the felt or subjective body, this does not apply to the objective body's perspective.

ii. Mineness / perspectival ownership

While the sense of perspective and mineness may not be distinguished on a conceptual level, as I explained in Chapter 2, I prefer to discuss them separately inasmuch as I see mineness as the more phenomenologically loaded, un-reflected *mode* in which an object of experience appears to or is experienced by the subject, whereby the mode refers to 'as *my* experience'. OR: it is worth examining the connection between the sense of bodily ownership and mineness (understood as the un-reflected *mode* in which an object of experience appears to or is experienced by the subject, whereby the mode refers to 'as *my* experience'). Also, in many influential works of Phenomenology, the sense of mineness, in virtue of being the common feature of every first-person experience, is the pinnacle of the minimal self(-experience).

As I explained in Chapter 2 and 6 subsequently, 'ownership' is a crucial notion for both the sense of self and the sense of the body 'from the inside'. I also explained in Chapter 2 that while I am the subject of numerous bodily states (such as my circulation, heart beat etc.), I intend to understand the 'subject' inasmuch she is the subject of *experiences* and not just any kind of external or internal states. So, on the one hand we have the sense that the experiences I undergo are mine in a very minimal sense of the term and the sense that I positively own my body parts, as discussed in Chapter 6.

Since I have argued for and accepted the *inflationary* version of the sense of ownership, from a purely phenomenological viewpoint it seems that the sense of bodily ownership is a richer and more distinguishable feature of experience than the implicit, basic, sense of mineness is (if understood as a form of primitive self-referentiality which Zahavi refers to). Therefore, from a phenomenological viewpoint, the basic sense of mineness seems to fall short of the positively salient sense of bodily ownership. Also, cases of defective bodily recognition, i.e. asomatognosia can be seen as revealing that the fact that bodily ownership over a certain body part is affected and causes both negative and positive experiential components, as far as the studies inform us, does not affect the sense that the subject's experiences (e.g. her perception of external and internal contents) in general are felt as *hers* in a fundamental way. (de Vignemont explains, in some cases the subjects do not detect that their limb in question is paralysed etc., which means that its absence can remain unnoticed. If so, there is no feeling of disownership. In fact, she argues that 'one must *become aware* of the lack of ownership feelings or the disruption of self-specific embodiment to experience disownership.' (2010b:10, my italics))

Interestingly however, the studies and reports of schizophrenic and other patients revealed that aspects of their disordered experience included anomalous bodily experiences (which may be due to their loss of basic sense of self) affecting the body as a whole. Patients suffering from the psychiatric disorder of depersonalization 'experience a general alteration of their relation to the self', accompanied by feelings that their body does not belong to them or as if it had disappeared, 'leading them to compulsively touch their body and pour hot water on it to reassure themselves of their bodily existence' (ibid:9).

I suggest to place these cases in a different category from the point of view of disturbed bodily experience, as here the disturbed self-experience is what can be seen as being at the centre of the condition, as opposed to the lack of feeling a certain part of the body as belonging to the subject. Therefore in these cases, we have reason to connect the disturbed sense of mineness (as is argued for by the cited studies) to the disturbed bodily experience. As opposed to my point about the asomatognostic patient whose basic sense of experiences in general as *hers* are not affected due to her lack of body ownership in a certain body part, it seems that if someone suffers from disturbed self-experience explicable in terms of the loss of her basic sense of self, she will in fact experience her body in disordered ways too, as if it was not hers. Hence, the basic sense of mineness, whilst being phenomenologically less pronounced than the sense of body ownership may provide the necessary experiential

grounds for such a sense. (However, this may be a novel and hence untested idea, as, as far as I am aware, the sense of ownership of experiences and that of body parts are not treated as whose relationship should be examined in the empirically-informed studies I am familiar with.)

iii. Unity

This aspect, as I defined it, referred to the sense that perceptual states, sensations and cognitive and conative states are experienced in experiential unity both in terms of simultaneity and sameness of experiential space. On the face of things it seems that this sense may have little to do with our sense of bodily ownership or agency etc., but an important but so far unannounced fact about our subjective experience of the body is that it is, in the paradigmatic case, felt *as a single body*. One could argue, as Strawson points out (1997) that human experience of oneself as (mentally) single (whereby singleness is explained by referring to a ‘principle of unity’) is shaped by the experience of having a single body. For my theory, this could imply that the subjective experience of the single, unified body largely partakes in my experience of unity of the different contents of my conscious experience.

As Strawson also points out however, the fact that having (or experiencing) a single body shapes our experience of a mentally unified self (or experiential unity among contents as I defined it) does not mean that our experience of unity (or ‘singularity’) depends essentially on this experience. This is a plausible point, as we can bring examples where a person does *not* experience herself as a unified subject despite experiencing her body as a single or unified whole is presented by someone with Dissociative Personality Disorder (formerly called ‘Multiple Personality Disorder’), whereby it is legitimate and plausible to describe the subject as having ‘other selves or personality fragments’ (Hacking, 1995:17). The disorder represents extreme conditions under which the person (and presumably her experience of herself and the contents of her consciousness) as single and unified on the one hand and the (experience of the) body as single on the other can sharply be distinguished. The opposite case, i.e. someone experiencing more than one singular body ‘from the inside’ whilst having a sense of unity among her experiences may seem more extreme, but it is not implausible (as I shall explain under the next point). Therefore, the conclusion with respect to the sense of

unity and the sense of the subjective body *as a single, unified body* is that the latter, while normally co-occurring with the former may not contribute to it fundamentally.

iv. Individuality

Strongly connected to the sense of unity is the sense that unity becomes *one* single whole, which renders it distinguishable from the rest of the world and other ‘unities’ (non-self), i.e. it is individuated. The sense of self, as I explained, by virtue of including unity, also includes individuality in the sense of singularity (similarly to how Strawson understands it), implicitly distinguishing (on a basic level) my (sense of) self from the rest of the world.

What I have explained above about the subjective body experienced as a single body evidently applies to the sense of individuality as well, since unity and individuality can be seen as working together in this respect. It is however worth seeing whether there is any other sense of the body which enables me to distinguish my body from the rest of the world and other bodies and compare this to the basic sense of individuality as I described it.

One option is to turn to our overall sense of the body ‘from the inside’, i.e. proprioception, which amounts to the experience that the body is positioned in a certain way somewhere etc. By virtue of proprioception being an awareness of only my (subjective) body (at least in the normal case), it gives me the sense that *this* body is the one *I* feel ‘from the inside’ (which is arguably distinguishable from the sense that I experience the body as numerically single, as I could have proprioceptive awareness of two or more bodies at the same time, but then those would all be experienced ‘from the inside’ as the bodies which only *I* feel, i.e. what is essential here is that *I experience* the body(ies) in question and not whether the experience is of a single body) as opposed to someone else’s experience. Therefore, my sense of individuality or distinguishability is plausible to think of as being contributed to by my sense of the body ‘from the inside’.

It is conceivable however that someone would have a sense of individuality despite the fact that she fails to feel the kind of individuality provided by proprioception, such as in the case of conjoined twins. In this case, the subject could feel distinguishable from her twin in the sense that the contents of her consciousness are united into a whole which is distinct from her twin’s contents of consciousness, however, she would feel the same body ‘from the inside’ as

her twin does (leaving aside questions about ownership and agency for now), which means that on this level of experience, she could not safely distinguish *her* felt body from her twin's felt body.

On a more complex and reflective level, our body image is supposed to contain those intentional states directed at the body which provide us with a sense of being distinct from others, i.e. my sense of how my body looks, is shaped and how I feel about aspects of it definitely all contribute to how I sense it as individual. However, since these states all involve more complicated and higher-order levels of reflection (which is why I shall return to it in discussing the elements of the individual sense of self below), the sense of individuality that is described on the *basic* level must exist short of these relevant aspects of the body image.

v. Boundary

I defined this as the implicit sense that my experiential 'space' as it were only extends to a certain end and not beyond that. As we saw in the descriptions of schizophrenic patients and researchers, this sense is clearly violated and damaged in some stages of the disorder (which I argued in Chapter 4 was due to the failure of the function of the sense of self to delineate the subject by providing the sense of boundary in question).

The bodily sense of where my body ends is most clearly provided by the sense of the *subjective* body. As we saw in the case of Alien Hand Syndrome, the sense of the body (due to the lack of ownership, which is evidently intimately connected to it) fails to extend to certain parts of the body, thereby causing the subject to feel that she does not 'fill out' her body, as it were. This implies that the subjective body does constitute the sense of boundary as I explained it, but the more profound disturbances in schizophrenia suggest that the subject can feel that she experiences things as those which happen 'in her' but far beyond the boundaries of the subjectively felt body, as was the case with René, who reported that when it was raining outside, she felt that it was her urine 'bedewing the world'. This could not have been due to the experience that her bodily boundaries extended to the sky and the clouds, containing these as actual parts of her body, but more likely to the fact that the experiential space within which she felt her experiences were disturbed and her sense of self could not function properly to provide the 'correct' boundaries. Therefore, it seems again while the

subjective body may normally contribute to or be included in the sense of experiential boundaries, this is more fundamental and profound in terms of experience in general.

(I should note that, although I did not accept it, the *deflationary* sense of bodily ownership, especially Martin's version thereof which understands it as 'boundedness', is fully replaceable with the understanding of the subjective body as explained above, i.e. only as providing the felt boundaries of the body.)

We also saw that the sense of bodily boundary was, due to his failing proprioception, not provided by a phenomenal sense of the subjective body for Ian, the deafferented patient. Instead, he deployed (perceptual etc.) aspects of his body image to have a perceptual sense of where his body ended. His body image provided him with a sense of bodily boundaries, but we cannot safely conclude from this that his sense of experiential boundary was also replaced with perceptual states.

The analysis of the connection of aspects of the basic sense of self to those of the body cannot end without discussing the *manner* in which some of these are experienced, i.e. I gave a thorough description of how the basic sense of self is not reflected on, is non-linguistic and felt in a peripheral way, in the background of *every* conscious state (Chapter 3).

This is very reminiscent of how Phenomenologists understand the proprioceptive sense of the body, which is actually claimed to be the pre-reflective sense of 'myself as embodied' (Gallagher and Zahavi, 2008), as recessive and implicit. I should note that my theory does not preclude that the *manner* of experiencing specific aspects of self and body are the same and even that this sameness is what may lie in the background of the self's embodiment, but as I pointed out, the constituents claimed to be included in the discussed senses of the body do not without exception seem to contribute to the basic sense(s) of self.

In conclusion, my analysis reveals that while we have good empirical and conceptual grounds to think of a number of the phenomenological aspects of the sense of the body I presented as those which contribute to the basic sense of self, others seem more independent of it.

Let us now turn to the aspects of the *individual* sense of self and examine how the senses of the body may partake in these.

vi. Concept of oneself

I stated in Chapter 5 that in order to have an individual sense of self, one has to have a concept of oneself as a certain individual, whether this includes a narrative story of one's life or is completely devoid thereof. Who I conceive myself to be is a constituent of the sense of self on the level of individuality.

On the level of bodily awareness, having a concept of my body (as I indicated above) is a clear aspect of the body image. This can involve basic concepts such as my body's shape or extension, or more complex thoughts about how my body behaves or how I relate to parts of it on an emotional level. Having disturbed aspects of the body image, although I have not discussed in my dissertation, can lead to very serious consequences and have been shown to underlie conditions such as Anorexia Nervosa (e.g. Légrand, 2012). Therefore, there is a clear connection between how I see and think about my body and how I see or conceive of myself as an individual. In fact, for some people the two are deeply related and they may primarily define themselves in terms of being e.g. too thin, too fat, tall, short etc. However, most people have concepts of themselves that reach well beyond their thoughts about their bodies, i.e. I could have a concept of myself that includes my height, hair colour, left-handedness etc. as well as my personal tendencies, goals or life story. This means that while aspects of the body image do indeed contribute significantly to how and what we think of ourselves as individuals, our sense of self entails much more than that.

vii. Sense of agency/authorship

I defined the sense of agency as an aspect of our sense of individual self as that which renders the experience that I am the authors of decisions, thoughts and actions in my life. As I argued, I may or may not *identify* with some of my desires and thoughts, but the sense of agency goes beyond this conscious identification and should also reflect the reality that we are sometimes torn between choices and may go for one in favour of the other on an affective basis.

The obvious pairing of this sense of agency is with the sense of agency which was discussed as an aspect of bodily awareness. There must of course be an intimate connection between the two senses, as in order to carry out an action I deliberated about involves being the agent who

moves her body parts in certain ways. Strictly staying on the level of phenomenology (and refraining from making reference to the bottom-up or top-down mechanisms responsible for inducing it) requires that we see whether the *experience* of bodily agency can exhaust the sense of agency/authorship we have over our decisions, desires and thoughts etc.

I emphasised that at the minimal level, the sense of bodily agency involves the sense that *I* carry out a *voluntary* bodily action, which results in my ‘expected’ outcome, which sense, from a phenomenological viewpoint minimally involves the senses of initiation, control (keeping in mind that this may come in degrees) and intentional binding. The sense of authorship involved in the individual sense of self as I defined it however may be weaker than the bodily sense in that I may *not* have any sense that I initiated the thought or desire in question but I would still attribute it the fact of originating in me, i.e. as something I, in the more allowing sense of the word, authored. The same applies to the sense of control, as I may feel or have no control over e.g. my desires whatsoever but this would not make me question whether I was the person in whom these occurred and, again in the weak sense (without implying *identification* with these), I am the author. In the case of a conscious and identified-with decision however, I may do indeed sense that I initiated and controlled my thoughts, e.g. I decided, having weighed my options, to get a drink out of the fridge. In this case the *sense* that my body carries out a voluntary action of getting the drink by moving, walking and reaching my arm out etc. and my sense that I made a decision about doing so may be identical. In general however, due to the looser sense of agency in the individual sense of self, the sense of bodily agency may be included in but does not exhaust the sense of authorship.

viii. Personality (traits)

I understood the concept of personality traits to refer to the fabric of relatively stable, enduring states expressed in our emotions, thoughts, actions, opinions and behaviour. These, as I said are collectively the constituents of the *experience* I have of myself as an individual. Can any of the aspects of our sense of the body ‘from the inside’ contribute to my personality/traits?

Out of all of the aspects of the senses of self I discussed above, this element seems to be most removed from any of the aspects of bodily awareness. Personality traits seem so abundant and exist on a level which goes far beyond how we experience our bodies. For example, the trait that I am a good story-teller or not a morning person seem to have little to do with how my body is felt as positioned, moved or owned by me. This point is also underlined by the case of Ian Waterman, who, despite losing his overall sense of his body and arguably many other aspects of sensing his body, was not affected on the level of the kind of person he was. However, on certain levels, there can be very deep connections between bodily experience and personality traits, a hypothetical example (hypothetical because I cannot list any evidence of this being the case, but it seems plausible) of which is also Ian, who, in the face of his loss of proprioception and hence fundamental aspects of bodily experience might have become a more resilient, persistent and single-minded person in order to be able to rebuild his bodily existence.

There may be connections between aspects of the body image and personality traits as well of course, as, if I see my body as being way too short, I will probably not become someone who is very good at basketball. These are of course simple examples which certainly do not do justice to the complex causal and otherwise connections between disordered bodily experience, aspects of body image and personality traits, but my aim is not to give an exhaustive account of these. Instead I simply meant to showcase that, despite the apparent distance between these two aspects of experience (of self and body), there are countless and intimate connections between them. This unfortunately also means that it is difficult to see the extent to which senses of the body contribute to personality traits. It is more likely that these mostly exist in excess of the senses of the body, but this does not preclude the possibility that aspects of body image for example do in fact contribute to *some* traits.

9.2. Conclusion

In my concluding chapter I turned to the level of phenomenological concepts in order to answer the question about which senses of the body are included in or contribute to the senses of self (both on the basic and the individual levels). I went through the aspects one by one and examined whether they could be plausibly thought of as being contributed to by one or more of the senses of the body. I concluded that

- while the perspective of the felt or subjective body normally contributes greatly to the first-person *perspective*, this does not apply to the objective body's perspective without exception;
- from a phenomenological viewpoint, the basic *sense of mineness* seems to fall short of the positively salient sense of bodily ownership but importantly, mineness, whilst being phenomenologically less pronounced than the sense of body ownership may provide the necessary experiential grounds for such a sense;
- with respect to the sense of *unity* and the sense of the subjective body *as a single body*, the latter, while co-occurring with the former may not necessarily contribute to it;
- the sense of the body 'from the inside' contributes to the sense of *individuality*, and that the sense of individuality described on the basic level must exist short of the relevant aspects of the body image;
- the sense of *boundary* is more fundamental and profound than the sense of the subjective body in terms of its boundaries, which means that while the subjective body may normally contribute to the sense of experiential boundaries, this not be the case in certain conditions;
- aspects of the body image are indeed included in what we think of ourselves (i.e. our *self-concept*) as individuals (but this cannot be exhaustive);
- due to the looser *sense of agency* experienced in the individual sense of self, the sense of bodily agency does not exhaust the sense of authorship; and finally that
- *personality traits* mostly exist in excess of the senses of the body, but this does not preclude the possibility that people's aspects of their body image contribute to some traits.

Conclusion

My dissertation was concerned with the phenomenological investigation of two specific aspects of our experience, namely our experience of ourselves, i.e. the sense of self and our experience of the body, i.e. bodily awareness ‘from the inside’.

I started my enquiry by laying down some basic theses about what I take the experience of being a subject to be and how the experiential aspects of being this subject are more fundamental than the metaphysical occupation with whether the self exists and what it is. I claimed that our experience of being a self should be seen as independent of the metaphysical issues, which take us into lines of argumentation that will not be informative for the reality of our experience. A sceptical approach to the concept of self was deemed motivated and yet a clarification of our concepts (by relying on phenomenology) seems to be a hopeful enterprise. Sticking with the experiential, first-personal aspect of being a self also led to stripping the concept of self off associations with a third-person view of personhood. My focus ended up being narrowed down to the first-person experience of being a subject of experience, independently of the existence or metaphysical nature of the subject. Importantly, I pointed out that my theory is compatible with more than one metaphysical view of the self.

The experience of self was divided into different levels, the first of which was qualified as ‘basic’, i.e. unreflected, implicit and non-linguistic. It was claimed to entail specific elements of phenomenology, namely the senses of perspective/mineness, unity, individuality and boundary. The first (two) is heavily indicated in Phenomenology as well, but the rest of them were argued to be further, conceptually separable aspects of the basic sense of self. A conceptual clarification of widely used notions was also provided, with the aim of being able to place my own phenomenological concepts within the larger philosophical frameworks of the discussion of subjective experience. The division of the levels of the sense of self was shown to be similar to a number of already existing phenomenological theories of the self.

The nature and structure of our unreflected experience against the background of conscious experiences was discussed and, after a breakdown of conscious states into phenomenal and access-consciousness, I explained that phenomenal consciousness is necessary and sufficient to entail the basic sense of self. My novel view of the subject, which involves a so-called time-slice perspective, enables that the sense of self is found independently of whether we attribute phenomenal consciousness to cognitive states such as abstract thoughts etc. This is a

conclusion that is in disagreement with the views of Phenomenology, proponents of which claim that all consciousness is phenomenal, but the merit of it is that this claim does not need to be argued for independently in order for our sense of self to be built into our overall experience, since the time-slice view grants that a phenomenally conscious state (involving the sense of self) is always present in the subject's conscious experiential life.

The claim that every phenomenally conscious experience entails the sense of self was substantiated and argued for by explaining the workings of types of self-awareness in terms of awareness *as-subject* on the one hand and *intransitive* self-consciousness on the other. The basic sense of self was shown to be a phenomenological expression of this type of self-consciousness.

I answered the question of how to conceive of the unreflected sense of self (as-subject) to be built into phenomenally conscious states by inspecting the logical and phenomenological structure of first-order conscious states and concluding that there are plausible ways of conceiving how the basic sense is part of conscious experiences without postulating any additional states which would render the first-order one conscious or reflect thereon. The phenomenological structure was shown to involve the workings of attention, which structures our conscious experiences into foreground/focus and background/periphery. It was shown that the background/periphery of a conscious state is where the basic sense of self is found as a part of the experience.

A severe pathology of the sense of self was described and provided subjective reports of in order to draw the conclusion that the unreflected basic sense of self, in virtue of entailing the sense of boundary, functions as that which individuates the subject on a fundamental experiential level.

I argued that this individuation should be interpreted as a psychological notion on the more elaborate level of the sense of self, which consists in our sense of being distinct individuals with specific psychological make-ups. Our sense of who we are was argued to entail specific experiential elements, such as our concept of ourselves, our (potentially loose) sense of being the authors of our choices in terms of affective tendencies, thoughts and actions, and our personality or character traits. My novel conclusion in this part of the discussion was that a sense of our narrative self, i.e. that which contains a linear (consciously or unconsciously) told story of our life events was acceptable but unnecessary to have a sense of who we are from my time-slice perspective. Instead, the episodic sense of self was shown to be sufficient

to entail the constituents I find criterial to be parts of the individual sense of self. Personality traits were argued to constitute our sense of who we are by being expressed in our actions, preferences and thoughts etc. I argued that this does not entail that personality is necessarily explanatory of actions, as there are further factors which may influence or direct these.

The second main aspect of our experience, the experience of our bodies was also introduced by a general discussion of bodily awareness and the aspects which characterise one's awareness of the body 'from the inside'. I argued that the discussion of certain relevant aspects of this sense of the body is sufficient for the purposes of drawing phenomenological conclusions in my dissertation. In line with this, I examined our overall sense of the body's position, balance and movement; our sense of bodily ownership and our sense of being the agents of our bodily movements. I argued that, despite Gallagher's (2005) original dyadic taxonomy of body image and body schema, the overall sense is to be thought of as a form of experiential consciousness and that ownership is a phenomenologically salient, positive sense we have over our body parts. The sense of agency was argued to be multi-aspectual and constitutional, involving the senses of control and initiation. I made an important and seemingly controversial point about the compatibility of Cartesian thought with the experiences of the subjective body explained in terms of the Phenomenological views of the 'lived body'. This effectively means that our phenomenological findings and conclusions are not actually tied to a specific view of embodiment, but instead can be accommodated by Cartesian and representationalist approaches too.

The disordered bodily experience I chose to focus on involved the loss of the overall sense of the body, which was argued to entail valuable insights and conclusions with respect to the other discussed phenomenal aspects of one's sense of the body *qua* her body.

Finally, I drew conclusions as a result of analysing the connection between the particular phenomenal aspects of the sense of self and those of the body from the specific point of view of their described phenomenologies and drew specific conclusions with respect to each sense I described in the previous chapters.

Despite the fact that my focus had to be somewhat limited in parts of my dissertation and made omissions of many prevalent and heavily-discussed subjects of the literature, I hope that my extensive overall discussion of the aspects of our experience of ourselves as subjects and as individuals on the one hand, and our experience of our bodies *as our bodies* on the

other can contribute to both phenomenological and conceptual considerations of subjective experience and theorising about the self in general.

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