

Sevi Emek Önder

PhD student in Dept.of Philosophy
Institute of Social Sciences, Dokuz Eylül University
Campus Tınaztepe, Buca, İzmir, Turkey

s.emekonder@gmail.com

THE EMBODIMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL SELF: A CONCEPTUALIZATION OF BODY
IN HEGEL'S *PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT*

The primary purpose of this paper is to investigate and conceptualize the notion of “body” in the context of certain sections of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Although the sphere of influence of Hegel's *Phenomenology* is taken into account in terms of certain notions, such as life, desire, recognition or death with which his *Phenomenology* proceeds, the notion of the “body” is unexpectedly glossed over by most commentators. Certainly, the notion of the “body” arises as a logical presupposition of every experience of consciousness in the *Phenomenology*, but this issue is not explicitly taken into consideration in Hegel's work.

By relying on this problem, I will try to thematize and give a comprehensive account of the “body” in the context of certain chapters of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and my purpose is to comprehend the embodiment of the individual self that appears in the certain chapters of the book. Moreover, while investigating the notion of “body” in the study, my intention is to see the possibility of reading the *Phenomenology* as “the science of the embodiment of consciousness”.

The reading I propose here, which depends on Hegel's immanent examination of the shapes of consciousness, mainly focuses on probably the richest chapters of his work, namely, on the “Consciousness” and “Self-Consciousness” chapters of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In both these chapters I claim that Hegel implicitly writes about the body. Thus, this study depends on not only what Hegel says with respect to the question of body, but depends on what he should say about the body. In other words, I will investigate the ways in which this question is systematically implied by his phenomenological analysis of the experience of consciousness.

My concern is to reveal how the bodily existence of consciousness is implicitly carried out as a phenomenological concept in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and the effort here will be directed to revealing the key phenomenological steps that make the comprehension of embodiment of consciousness possible. In this regard, here, the notion of body will be made explicit by introducing an interpretation and implications of the movement of consciousness. At the same time, it is also shown that the movement of consciousness cannot be separated from the bodily existence of consciousness. Therefore, my interpretation also aims to show how the internal dynamism of the self-transforming consciousness simultaneously paves the way for the transformation of the phenomenological meaning of the bodily existence.

Throughout this paper, I will show how the experience of consciousness requires a relation to its bodily existence, and how the journey of consciousness consists in a constant configuration of this relation in terms of the manifestation the truth with its various significance, i.e., as “here and now”, as the unity of a perceived thing, as force and its expression, or as the world of a desiring, struggling, laboring, serving self that finds itself in its relation to the other.

Keywords: Hegel, phenomenology, consciousness, self-consciousness, body

Short Biography

I have received my B.A. degree in February 2014 from the Department of Philosophy at Middle East Technical University (METU). In January 2015, I have been admitted to the M. A. program in Department of Philosophy at METU and now, I have fully completed my M.A degree requirements in June 2018.

During my M.A period, mainly fed by the post-Hegelian theory, I conducted a research on the philosophy of Hegel and its connection with the evolution of the main problems of post-Kantian idealist philosophy in 19th century. Specifically, I have focused on Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and Hegelian relation to the notion of the “body”. In September 2018, I have started PhD in Philosophy at Dokuz Eylül University. For my PhD research, I am planning to expand the limits of my M.A study.

Bursary Application

I would like to apply for a bursary to attend your conference. I do not have any accommodation problem in Birmingham, but I need to receive reimbursement for my travel expenses such as airfare including round-trip ticket. My estimated airfare will be around 2500 TRY/ 360 GBP/ 415 EUR in May 2019.