violence and relational existence: its significance for our understanding of trust as fundamentally intercorporeal
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INTRODUCTION

While the subject of trust has received increased philosophical attention of late, and phenomenological accounts have been developed,[1] what continues to be overlooked is the role of the lived body in our trusting behaviour. While approaches to trust that emphasize its intersubjectivity imply openness and what Merleau-Ponty understands as the reversibility[2] of the lived body, this intercorporeal experience is not directly explored. In this paper, I argue that Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the lived body—in particular, his account of perception as embodied, and thus having motor-perceptual implications, and the body-subject as emerging through and remaining open to the dimension of depth[3]—is crucial to understanding trust.

The pre-personal beginnings of trust raise particular problems for any account of trust. Much of my lived awareness of trust comes in moments when its 'presence' is questioned, often through conscious attention being drawn to circumstances I am in, the trust that got me there, and the sorts of risks I face. Where some form of my trusting may have developed and been lived pre-reflectively, I now must decide whether I want to make a commitment to trusting. This process of coming to awareness of trust is an important phase of what Annette Baier calls trust's

"natural order." Baier argues that while trust begins imperceptibly and involves some innate capacity, for trust to be trust *proper*, the situated context of trust must also come into my awareness as a situation of risk that requires evaluation and commitment by me, while the trust that seemingly got going without me, is maintained. At no point, however, can trust be willed. For Baier, there must be some form of basic trusting that provides the basis for other forms of trust to develop.[4]

My lived awareness of trust can also come through some form of breach that shatters my sense of having a shared world with an other or others, and disrupts my sense of self. In such times, the sense of my trust as *having existed* irrupts from my pre-reflective experience and my trust 'being in question' creates a lived tension that punctuates my meaningful experience. I am dislodged from the meaning of my world *and* from the smooth flow of time; my attitude as an orientation towards others, and my sense of past, present and future are disrupted. Such experiences can lead to my ceasing to trust and eventually to my restricting the field of who, when or how I might trust. Baier argues that explaining these experiences of trusting are key to making sense of the imperceptible beginnings of trust.[5]

There are a number of ways that focusing on the domain of intercorporeal being can support our understanding of the range of experiences that we know as trusting. In the first section of this paper, I present a brief description and critique of two recent accounts of the phenomenology of trust: the understanding of trust as an orientation developed by Gry Ardal,[6] and Anthony Steinbock's[7] argument for trust having a distinctive temporality. In each case, I identify how including a phenomenological examination of the genesis of trust as being in the domain of the intercorporeal can add to our understanding of how trust is possible as lived experience and how it emerges from a deeper life subtending our perception of the world.

In the second section of the paper I take up an important case of trusting behaviour that indicates damage to trust's condition of possibility. Here I focus on the case of distrust as an incapacitating ability to trust that can develop post trauma. Gry Ardal has developed important insights into distrust as a manifestation of the impact of experiencing violence, arguing that the experience of an all-pervasive distrust post trauma is not only a loss of orientation towards when, who and how to trust, but is experienced as a damage at the level of our capacity to *take up* an orientation.[8] The phenomenology of violence has been described by James

Mensch[9] who provides insights into the depth of the impact of such experience and it as having intercorporeal significance. I then draw this discussion together through Merleau-Ponty's account of the lived experience of repression post trauma. Merleau-Ponty presents this as fundamentally intercorporeal and having an impact on our sense of selfhood and our temporal experience. I argue that investigating distrust, as the corrupted form of trusting Ardal describes, through Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the lived body, allows us to pursue the significance of the body's role in the subject as inseparably instituted and instituting. For Merleau-Ponty, this subject is not a 'constituting subject' but one for whom there is "a certain inertia — [the fact of being] exposed to ... —but [this is what] puts an activity en route, an event, the initiation of the present, which is productive after it ... 'posthumous productivity'—which opens *a* future."[10]

In the third section of the paper I demonstrate the significance of using Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of 'intercorporeity'[11] to developing an understanding of the condition of possibility of trust. The dimension of depth is understood by Merleau-Ponty as primordial. It is the dimension through which we experience an embodied intertwining, and in which we are bodily moved by still relatively indeterminate things in the world. Depth is the dimension through which spatiality emerges as *inhabited*—as both affective and bodily proximity—and temporality is experienced as the intercorporeal intertwining of embodied being through differing rhythms of duration. I suggest that the condition of possibility of trust is intercorporeal existence, and, as such, the ground of trust is itself not a given, but always a product of our reversible and open being in the world. The condition of possibility for trust is thus in the reversibility of our intercorporeity.

1. THE PRE-PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF TRUST

The many forms of our experience of trust as relationality give rise to continued discussion of its paradoxical nature; it is both distinctive and amorphous, and while experientially we know what trust is, philosophically we find it difficult to characterize exactly. While much has been said about trust as affective and intersubjective, and trust is clearly identified as being about our relationality, what has been overlooked is our lived experience in all these cases as being fundamentally embodied. In my lived experience, I remain an openness to the world and thus vulnerable in my relationality. At the same time, it is this openness and relationality that is the condition of possibility of my freedom. This is significant to Gry Ardal's phenomenological investigation into the nature of the

judgements made in trusting and so I begin this section with a brief overview of Ardal's arguments.

In her essay, "Judging about Trustworthiness," Ardal emphasizes the intersubjective ground of trust, and argues that this provides a way of thinking about a pre-reflective relationality and a form of pre-reflective judgement that remains relevant to all the ways we experience trust. This type of judgement is, she argues, analogous to Kant's model of aesthetic judgement, which, when understood in the context of Emmanuel Levinas's phenomenological ethics, can provide a way of understanding trust as an orientation towards others. For Ardal, what is key is that trust needs to be understood as a type of judgement that is somewhere between subjective feelings and objective knowledge, and as deeply embedded in the fundamental relationality between self and world.[12]

Drawing on Levinas, Ardal describes that the experience of our intentionality differs between our experience of objects and other people, and this, in turn, means that we experience ourselves as being oriented in different ways. Where in our experience of objects our intentionality has a meaningfulness that is associated with our mastery of the object and its use for us, others draw us forth in the world differently. The relationship that Levinas calls responsibility is central to Ardal's thinking here. The alterity of the other is absolute. Thus, intersubjectivity for Ardal means that the other is understood as absolutely separate and in an asymmetrical relationship with regard to the self. It is as such that the other is experienced as an interruption to my being the centre of my world, the feeling of which is that of familiarity and being 'at home.' This interruption comes because the alterity of the other exceeds my being and eludes my grasp.[13] The other, in also being a freedom, does not lend itself to my mastery over her, but refuses and challenges my grasp. Yet it is through this discontinuity that a gap is created that does not destroy my nascent self, but, rather, supports my self emerging as singular and determinate.[14] Thus, for Ardal, subjectivity emerges as intersubjectivity through a sensibility of the other that has a mode of meaning other than the form of intentionality.

This understanding of intersubjectivity grounds Ardal's suggestion that Kant's notion of aesthetic judgement can provide a model for the form of pre-reflective judgement made in trusting. Of particular interest to Ardal is that aesthetic judgement has for Kant a focus on orientation in its most basic sense[15] and is, thus, a form of judgement that is "neither cognition nor mere sensation."[16] What Ardal achieves here is to identify our fundamental intersubjective relationality

as grounding our experience of trust as orientation. However, while the Kantian aesthetic judgement is characterized as being an activity, the origins of this activity in the intercorporeal are not explored. Ardal mentions in passing that this capacity is, for Kant, "rooted in our bodily selves,"[17] but does not go on to take up the intersubjective relatedness as fundamentally intercorporeal. To understand how we might be moved to take up an orientation, we need to shift the focus from Levinas's intersubjectivity to Merleau-Ponty's account of embodied subjectivity where our intersubjective relationships emerge out of the reversibility of our intercorporeal existence.

While intersubjectivity is a primordial experience of the other through which we are given a sense of self, and differs from our primordial experience of objects, what is resisted in a Levinasian account is how in this there is an intertwinement of our embodied intentionality with the other. It is the case that in the intercorporeal relationship I am moved by the other's orientation and her embodied intentionalities. Indeed, I am caught up in them and it is through this bodily intertwining that differentiation and individuation evolve as an ongoing process of lived experience. In providing this critique I draw on Merleau-Ponty's understanding of the body schema. The body schema refers to the pre-reflective integration and readiness of the body to anticipate and incorporate a world. The body schema involves all of our bodily senses and incorporates into its structures the synergy of our movement, affect and perception. It develops pre-consciously through sedimentation of experience and habituation and while it provides actual movements, gestures and comportment, it also encompasses our openness to developing ways of being. It is the body schema that precedes and provides for the subject a sense of self as individuated and self-governing, and supports the subjective experience of familiarity and being 'at home' in our body and in the world. (Merleau-Ponty, 205-206)

The intentionality of the other, as expression of their freedom, is perceived directly by me through the other's embodiment, and this draws forth not only an affective response, but also my motor responses towards it. It is as such that my responses are called forth as an orientation towards the other. I will not only be drawn affectively, either towards or away from the other, but my bodily motor responses will be in play as part of my continuous stream of bodily intentionality. I will move my body accordingly and thus communicate my willingness to remain within the sphere of the other. My orientation is experienced as an immediacy of communication and response through my body schema. Thinking about the

condition of possibility of trust through this lived experience of intercorporeity allows us to conceive of this orientation more fully, in particular, in the sense of our orientation towards the future and so I consider this aspect next.

In a similar vein to Ardal, Steinbock argues that trust is "most deeply interpersonal,"[18] and the characteristic orientation of a trusting relationship is grounded in each party to the relationship experiencing the other as a freedom. Steinbock goes on to argue that trust is also distinctive in that I give myself over to the other, freely, towards their freedom and this is realized as "being bound to another."[19] If we understand this as an orientation, it is exploratory and, as such, trust has a *unique* structure with regard to its temporality. Where reliance concerns the building up of past experience towards an expectation of the future, trust has no such relationship with the past; rather, it has a unique intersubjective temporalizing that opens a future.[20]

For Steinbock, reliability has a temporal density such that what I experience now opens up past experiences that are relevant as the history to this experience. Trust is distinguished from reliability through trust's uniqueness in having its own bearing on the future. In the sense of 'proffering' that Steinbock describes as giving ourselves over to the other, trust is an interpersonal act that is like love.[21] What Steinbock means is that trust and the intersubjective space of relationality (experienced through a variety of what we might otherwise consider ordinary actions and gestures) manifest an alternative form of futurity without ourselves experiencing a sense of being threatened with destruction.

While we retain our sense of selfhood as originary, we are at the same time affected by the other's futurity and this is prior to all forms of expectation and anticipation. Thus, Steinbock appears to be focused on trust as a more pure form of receiving and becoming; trust is not directed towards the instrumental needs of the other but, rather, trusting is a mode of moving towards the future as exploration and experimentation. This is an important point that draws attention to our experience of temporality as integral to our selfhood rather than being something outside that I 'join into'. Nevertheless we still need to consider how the past as belonging fundamentally to the experience temporality might play a role in the institution of trust. This problem can be addressed by considering the genesis of trust and its role in the institution of experience.

While Steinbock's account is phenomenological, that is, taking us back to the structure of our experience of trust, it does not make primary the way that seeing the other is within the corporeal dimension that itself harbors a history that is both a remembered past and immemorial—as Merleau-Ponty says, "a past which has never been present." (Merleau-Ponty, 242) For Merleau-Ponty, "time is the very model of institution"[22] and institution is the key to understanding the subject who is able to co-exist with others; "the instituted exists between others and myself, like a hinge, the consequence and guarantee of our belonging to one selfsame world."[23] Despite Steinbock's focus on an intersubjective temporalizing, the openness of intercorporeity and the dimension of depth, both of which support such a temporalizing movement, are not explored. In order to take up this issue more fully, we need to examine instances where our experience of trust expresses a problem with, or even a damage to the condition of possibility of trust. In doing so, we find that Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the lived body supports our developing understandings of trust.

2. THE IMPACT OF VIOLENCE

For Ardal, distrust is an important form of trust and is therefore also an orientation. Ardal tells us that distrust reveals the same discriminating capacity as trust and that appropriate trust and appropriate distrust are essential for living as a self. But while there can be strong grounds for distrust warranting action, there are also cases where distrust becomes a sort of default position with others and the world, which can inhibit our capacity for forming relationships and expressing our selfhood and our freedom. Here, Ardal refers to victims of violence and trauma who experience harm, such that distrust as well as trust is lost. While it appears that it is distrust's overwhelming presence that marks trauma's aftermath, as much as the loss of capacity to trust, Ardal argues that there is also a loss of the capacity for appropriate distrust, and that these two losses are symptoms of a damage or loss of the condition of possibility of trust. Thus, Ardal claims that the experience of violence can shatter not only the trust we have but also damage the condition of possibility for trust or distrust. In setting this context, Ardal refers to Jean Amery's reflection on the impact of torture and his certainty that: "with the very first blow that descends" there is the loss of "something we will perhaps temporarily call 'trust in the world'."[24] Apart from Amery's explicit linking of violence and a loss of trust, further exploration of his writing finds that this means particular things, and these particularities can guide an exploration into how we could further understand the loss of trust. Amery says the experience of violence

"remains in the tortured person", and that it "blocks the view into a world in which the principle of hope rules."[25] Importantly, his reflections also include the observation that experiences of other lesser forms of violence can leave deep marks[26] and impact all forms of our trusting. If, as Amery says, violence *remains in the person* and *blocks the view into a world* where there is hope, and, if hope is, as Margaret Walker says, "as basic to us as breathing, and basic in the same way: it is something we must do to live a human life,"[27] then the view is blocked to a world where the future (which is not yet known, and thus what I must risk) is, nevertheless, a future for me and a place where I might dwell. That is, the view is blocked to a future that belongs to my orientation or the scope of my life.

How the experience of violence might remain in the person is thus an important question. James Mensch argues that violence is operative in intercorporeal sense-making, including having the capacity to corrupt and be destructive of the body's role in sense-making.[28] Mensch argues that at the extreme where there is a collapse of the 'I can'[29] into the basic senselessness of the body, the strong emotional affect generated by such violence is a felt experience of a kind of suffocation or threat of extinction.[30] The experience of violence is such that it reverberates through to a founding level of existence which has no level of sense-making beneath it, the felt experience of which is a kind of suffocation or threat of extinction that comes from being cut off from our basic mode of self-transcendence.[31]

The affective experience of being threatened with extinction suggests that our temporal experience is impacted; not only our futurity as having projects in the world but also, and most specifically, in the way that we live time through the manifestation of our own possibilities. The affective experience of being threatened with extinction comes from being divided from the very condition of possibility of having my own projects in the world. The sense of suffocation as an impending experience of senselessness comes from being divided from my capacity for sense-making as intercorporeal subjectivity with this tied to the emergence of my intentionality.

This damage at the level of the emergence of the body's 'I can' is key to interrogating how violence can remain in the person and block the view into a world where 'hope rules.' I contend that violence corrupts the body's intentionality through its undoing, on multiple levels, of what has been created through lived experience—it undoes what has been *instituted* through the body's role in sense making. And to undo the institution of living meaning, in this specific sense, is at the same

time to undo the institution of a past to this meaning. It is as such that I am disoriented with this 'first blow' and, in this, divided from my own possibilities. To understand how this can become a corruption of the condition of possibility of trust, I turn directly to Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the lived body in order to make explicit how this impact on sense-making affects our experience of futurity and re-shapes our body schema.

Merleau-Ponty says that in the aftermath of trauma my vision of the future can become blocked in the sense that I "retain through time one of the momentary worlds through which I have lived, and make it the formative element of my whole life." (Merleau-Ponty, 84) In this, my freedom to choose another future, for example, to choose in terms of my hopes and dreams, is eclipsed. Merleau-Ponty argues that the person who has experienced trauma remains open to the traumatic experience not simply in her feelings, as fear or anxiety, nor simply in her thoughts as something remembered, but bodily. (Merleau-Ponty, 83) For Merleau-Ponty, this is "an advent of the impersonal":

> Impersonal time continues its course, but personal time is arrested ... this fixation does not merge into memory; it even excludes memory ... Traumatic experience does not survive as a representation in the mode of objective consciousness and as a 'dated' moment; it is of its essence to survive only as a manner of being and to a certain degree of generality ... [it] loses its substance and eventually becomes no more than *a certain dread*. (Merleau-Ponty, 83)

Often, post-trauma experience is marked by the overwhelming presence of distrust, and this includes a loss of self-trust. The case of overwhelming distrust as loss of orientation indicates that I have also lost self-trust in that I can no longer find a place where I am willing to rest in my own pre-personal judgements of when, whom and where to place my trust. I have lost not only my sense of the world as a world *for* me, but also my sense of my self in it.[32] Merleau-Ponty's argument is that we lose, to an extent, our first person sense of existence and become a sort of abstraction of that existence. (Merleau-Ponty, 83) The loss of ability to discern when, where or how to trust, is lived as a certain manner of being that could be characterised as a particular form of anxiety or, as he says, a certain dread. We are no longer able to orient towards the world as a distinct and free subjectivity. As a manner of being, this state has become part of my body schema. My bodily being, as intercorporeal, now gears into the world in a particular way.

I would argue that what this means in terms of our experience of trusting is that this form of anxiety can also be lived as an incapacitating distrust. What becomes particularly difficult post trauma is to, on a daily basis, attempt ordinary engagement in the world, which includes the experience of trusting or otherwise. When ordinary trusting (which previously had a familiarity such that it was taken for granted, and just got itself going, so to speak, seemingly without me) does not 'get going,' even ordinary trust is a confrontation. I can no longer undertake many ordinary and familiar actions that invite trust into my experience. Instead, I act to protect myself from a world that I have learnt is not for me. Through a new manner of responsiveness to the world, I manifest an incapacitating distrust. Also significant here is Merleau-Ponty's claim that as an advent of the impersonal, such repression post-trauma reveals the temporal structure of being in the world. He says:

> [t]o the extent that I have 'sense organs', a 'body' … I become the meeting point of a host of 'causalities' … my life is made up of rhythms which have not their *reason* in what I have chosen to be, but their *condition* in the humdrum setting which is mine." (Merleau-Ponty, 83-84)

We must now consider how, in my intercorporeal existence, my life is made up of rhythms, and how this might help explain the genesis of trust.

3. MERLEAU-PONTY AND THE DIMENSION OF DEPTH

Firstly, I believe it is important to consider another way of differentiating trust from reliance that can preserve the important distinctions about how we intend the other, but at the same time allow for the complexity of trust's temporality. I contend that trust can be differentiated from reliance through the differences in depth of the experience. Sue Cataldi's work on emotion and depth is useful here. She says that while clusters of kinds of related emotional experience have a "close family resemblance" to each other, our language choices when articulating these experiences will reflect significant differences in depth that are being expressed.[33] These differences in depth refer to differences in the way the emotions engage us both morally and cognitively, with one example being the differences between irritation and anger. We can also see this as applying to the differences between relying on someone and trusting someone.

An "immemorial depth of the visible,"[34] Merleau-Ponty says, is the inexhaustible field out of which things and others appear, and the possibility of the image we have formed of someone being shattered is the condition for there being things and others for us. (Merleau-Ponty, 361) Trust is thus implicated in this condition, and we can consider depth as the dimension of trust's imperceptible beginnings. Immemorial depth is the ground through which being *in* depth and emerging *through* depth can occur. It is also that whereby *gestalt* shifts such as those occurring in breaches of trust can occur and why they can feel so shattering to our selfhood. This dimension also signals the depth of the moral and cognitive significance of trust. Depth is that through which we find ourselves oriented.

Also important to recognise is the expression of the sense of depth as both spatial and temporal. While Cataldi tends towards seeing the expression of the deepest of our emotional experiences participate in a depth that is "proximity through distance" or with "intimately near distance,"[35] Glen Mazis also says that this proximity is about "the temporality of envelopment" that for Merleau-Ponty is "both distinctness and distance temporally and spatially, [but] also the way that they 'slip into one another'."[36] While trusting is often associated with affective distance in relationships and thus spatial metaphors of being close to or creating withdrawal and distance,[37] this tendency perhaps contributes to ways that trust appears to be a choice we make to be 'in' or proximate to relationships of vulnerability or dependency. Yet trust is primarily an expressive act, saying something about how we see others as participating in or reflecting our own meanings. Because our own meanings are always evolving and are not truths about our pre-existing being but are instead the very laying down of being, trusting is always co-mingled with the laying down of being and thus characteristically is involved with the articulation of both meaning as ongoing, and meaning as displacement. It is this sense of futurity that Steinbock is arguing for; trust as about the unfolding of things into a future of which we are never certain. Because we are always in a process of laying down of being and there is no 'stepping outside' of times unfolding, we are always in an ongoing "unfoldment as displacement."[38] The disturbances to our capacity to trust identified by Ardal, and the extreme case described by Mensch, not only disclose a deeper life subtending consciousness, but suggest what Merleau-Ponty identifies as an "extreme case of a more general disturbance of the process of relating phenomena to each other" because

> one's own body has ceased to be a knowing body, and has ceased to draw together all objects in its one grip; this debasement of the body into an

organism must itself be attributed to the collapse of time, which no longer rises towards a future but falls back on itself. (Merleau-Ponty, 282-283)

Perception of both objects and others implicates a bodily temporality, where both the perceiver and the perceived emerge as an unfoldment of being from the living dehiscence or deflagration of sense that is its condition. Where the whole perceptual field, in its entirety, motivates spatial perception "suggesting to the subject a possible anchorage" (Merleau-Ponty, 280) and this primary act gives us the world as already familiar, it is the perceptual field as also being an emerging temporality that has, in this same familiarity, my experiences in this world flow in a relationship that implies and explains each other. As Merleau-Ponty says; "My body takes possession of time; it brings into existence a past and a future for a present; it is not a thing, but creates time rather than submitting to it." (Merleau-Ponty, 240)

4. TRUST AND DURATION

This temporalization of existence, articulated in Merleau-Ponty's developing thought, is lived through the body as intercorporeity, and the primordial genesis of our sensing of the other is through the differing rhythms of duration. For Merleau-Ponty, the sensing subject is a power, born into the world and simultaneously synchronized with a certain existential environment. (Merleau-Ponty, 211) In *The Visible and the Invisible*, Merleau-Ponty claims that all thought and reflection is motivated by the intertwining of my life with others and significantly "by the blending of my duration with the other durations."[39]

Alia Al-Saji's sensitive reading of the development of Merleau-Ponty's thinking brings forward dimensions of thought that are more suggestive or anticipated rather than fully developed but are towards understanding our fundamental intertwining as being one of "inter-temporality."[40] Al-Saji contends that where in his early work Merleau-Ponty posited *sameness* and an exchangeability of perspectives as the basis for recognition of, and understanding of, the other (something that seems to be central to the experience of trust), his later recognition of the duration of perception opens up further the sense of there being a beckoning and a negotiation that situates recognition as an encounter that exists over time (again, a crucial dimension of the trust relationship).[41] Clearly these insights are important for understanding trust through the dimension of depth.

The duration of the body as a sensing body refers to Merleau-Ponty's understanding of the lived-body as an openness that is able to *live others* as resonances of the body, but at the same time never duplicating the duration of the other. This means that resonance does not implicate a merged being, rather, the experience of the resonance will always include a tension. (Merleau-Ponty, 211) This resonance is one that retains the experience of relative indistinction of being, while at the same time supports my individuation as open and able to experience accord with others. Al-Saji's explication of Merleau-Ponty's understanding of duration draws on the following aspects of his early work. For Merleau-Ponty, in sensation, including both perception of objects and perception of the other, there is an openness of the body that has been described as an expectation of a sensation, and before my body synchronizes with the sensible, what is sensed is nothing but a "vague beckoning". (Merleau-Ponty, 214) In sensation there is a lived passivity that is not entirely passive but within which there are virtual movements which are the body's attempts to take hold, or lend form from its own being (Merleau-Ponty, 214) in order to take hold. In this, a final patterning of a tension is felt throughout the body, (Merleau-Ponty, 211) as I (that is not yet 'I') "surrender a part of my body, even my whole body, to this particular manner of vibrating and filling space." (Merleau-Ponty, 212)Al-Saji claims it is duration that allows the lived body to be open to sensing the world of objects and others, that is, open to things of differing durations and rhythms that beckon to us and situate us in a negotiation.[42] Further, Al-Saji argues that there is always a call and a response and a negotiation, and thus sensation is always a becoming in which we reside. The lived body is thus a carnal being vibrating and resonating with other beings, synchronizing with objects and others, whereby there is always a resounding of the world around me as that through which I emerge. Importantly, this becoming in duration is also a place of overlapping rhythms of existence that stand prior to and beyond the singularity of subjective existence. Our duration inaugurates the place of our temporal dwelling, its affective primacy and its vulnerability as lived space. In lived space, Merleau-Ponty says, "a 'lived' distance binds me to things which count and exist for me, and links them to each other. This distance measures the 'scope' of my life at every moment." (Merleau-Ponty, 286) I can be away from those I love and those I trust, but they will still form the centre of my life, no matter where they are. What we have seen in the impact of violence is the contraction of lived space, such that there is no room for my relations with things or others to appear as a manifestation of my freedom. (Merleau-Ponty, 286)

Living such resonances means that I live my sensations as tensions felt throughout my body. In my encounter with another sensing subject, the rhythms of the other are also responding to my rhythms, just as my rhythms are responding to hers. Al-Saji points out that, as such, communication is based on our differences as expressive bodies and singular durations.[43] Importantly, also, when we perceive the other, the synchronization occurs on both sides "with the result that I can experience an internal resonance with the other when our experiences harmonize, or the shattering disappointment of a miscommunication when the attempts fail."[44] We experience such shattering disappointment with breaches or failures of trust.

5. MARKING THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF DURATION

I am going to suggest that the experience of violence, at the primordial level, is registered in our experience of duration and thus, through its dimensions of genesis and historicity, is generative. Alia Al-Saji argues that in Merleau-Ponty's account "[s]ensations are becomings which impart to the lived body a duration that is directed to the future" and, further, that "this body is susceptible to all the experiences that such an openness to the future implies—to waiting, synchronization, hesitation, and wonder."[45] It is important to recognize that the body's susceptibility, as openness, is also towards the lived experience of trust, including distrust in its overwhelming, incapacitating form.

As we have seen, beyond disappointments of communication, we experience the other through acts of violence that can result in an incapacitating inability to trust that manifests as an overwhelming sense of distrust. Violence situates me, but reduces if not eradicates the negotiation in synchronizing. The sense-making that is the becoming in which I reside, possible through the blending of durations, is now a rhythm of call and response and negotiation that is not for me. I am caught up by the other's intentions and through them, the object of these intentions, which is my embodied being, takes on a "fresh significance." (Merleau-Ponty, 353) My body is no longer simply 'mine,' known through my experience of 'it'; it is now also what this other pattern of behaviour is about to make of it. The "virtual movements" which are the body's attempts to take hold or lend form from its own being, are withdrawal from the sense that is being made, for my body is being taken as form towards an other's ends. My withdrawal is my not lending my body to this form. If I surrender a part of my body, even my whole body, to this particular manner of vibrating and filling space, I experience a resonance

or tension as discontinuity that fills my body and threatens me entirely. Even in my withdrawal of intentionality (as my attempt to lend my body to myself) the intent of the other sweeps me along, not only contracting my space, but eradicating my future. The internal resonance I experience is an undoing of what has been synchronized and sedimented; what has been instituted by me. In *this* sense–making of my own undoing, I also experience my own negotiations as a failure to synchronize; a failure to take hold. In this experience of sense genesis there is no world that is my world, as the past to what has been instituted by me has been undone. This collapsing of my world is also experienced as a failure of my 'I can.'[46] Failure is then also part of the call and response, the negotiation, and, ultimately, sensation as a becoming in which I reside. The meaning that *is* instituted is marked by this violence.

If I have experienced violence, I am open to experience that can reshape my body schema as marked by prolonged hesitation, a resistance to lend form from my own being or to surrender my body to trust as a particular manner of vibrating and filling space. I am disoriented in being alienated from my own possibility of slipping into the pre-personal being with another as familiarity. The affective of hesitation is experienced as failure, which in turn registers as an inhibition to synchronization, not only with others, but the world that is inhabited, and my self within it. This form of delaying synchronization is experienced in my subjectivity as an apprehension towards the world that is a particular form of anxiety experienced as overwhelming distrust; synchronization must remain tentative in order to avoid the future as the expected experience of failure, while at the same time, delaying synchronization affirms and repeats the sense of failure. This experience of overwhelming distrust is also towards me. The future always has the form of anticipation and provocation, and in this, while I might continue to sense, I no longer trust my deepest knowing of things and others and life has become a problem for me.

6. CONCLUSIONS

By marking our lived experience of duration, we can thus see that violence can remain in the body, and this can block the view to a world as one of lived space for me. The undoing of what I have instituted undoes the scope of my life, and contracts lived distance such that I experience the sense of suffocation that Mensch identifies. If there has been corruption of the intentionality of my lived body, then it is in our relation of reversibility that violence leaves its mark. What

becomes a corruption reflects that what is instituted, through my experience of alterity, and bears the hallmarks of the violence that has occurred. This is significant for how we think about the manner of being that becomes. Being divided from my own possibilities reshapes my body schema towards the world and alters the ordinary actions that I undertake that may or may not invite trust, and may or may not recognize trustworthiness when it is offered. In particular, therefore, in the corruption of the body's role in sense making, the condition of possibility of trust is corrupted.

Something must be said on how this account is relevant to our reflections on the trusting relations that we have in our lives. As I noted earlier, for Annette Baier, trust will emerge from its anonymous beginnings into our consciousness and we must reflect on its conditions and risks. In making such reflective judgements, we respond to others and affirm when there is inner conflict between what is sensed and what is being asked by the other person. As we have seen, through acts of violence one can lose the capacity to distrust appropriately. From damage to the condition of possibility of trust, there is developed not only a damage to our capacity to trust, but also to reflect on trust and its circumstances, and ultimately to respond to our sense of any situation as we live it.

Reflection, Merleau-Ponty argues, is a distinct act of recovery of brute experience. Reflections "neutralize" and "transform" the thing that I have experienced directly. This neutralization and transformation of the immediacy of my lived experience into "perception-reflected-on and the-thing-perceived-within-a-perception-reflected-upon" makes use of powers obscure to me, just as my exploring body does; and, significantly, it spans the cycle of duration that separates the brute experience from the reflective examination.[47] This "cycle of duration" is a temporality created through my primordial contact with the world. My reflective being is exploratory and creates time in a particular mode – the mode of reflection that neutralizes and transforms. This time is a prolongation of the powers of my sensorial and corporeal exploration. In this prolonging of my intentionality in reflection, I maintain both the perceived and the perception, and this capacity to hold things and our perception of them open is crucial for our thinking about trust in order to make decisions about when this trust is warranted. When violence is experienced, my sensorial and corporeal being is situated, in that moment, *through* a world that does not support me. When I attempt to reflect on any situation in terms of how to trust, this opens up associations that mean that I withdraw from holding these experiences, and my perception of them, open. In reflecting on any

situation of trust, I have no desire to prolong the associations with my failure to be.

The experience of incapacitating distrust needs to be understood more radically through an intercorporeal framework if we are to come to grips with the depth of damage that can occur, as well as the potential for healing such experience. It is important to remember that, as Mensch says, while the intentionality of my body is still possible, sense can still be generated and a future remains possible. This is possible through the disclosing of the world, and myself in it, anew, through my contact with others,[48] and this is possible because my body is the potentiality of this world. (Merleau-Ponty, 350)[49]

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NOTES

1. Along these lines, and across a range of disciplinary perspectives, trust's operation at the pre-reflective level has been explored. For example, Lagerspetz and Hertzberg claim trust as a "pattern in the weave of life", with this patterning "under the aspect of meaningfulness and purpose" (Olli Lagerspetz and Lars Hertzberg, "Trust in Wittgenstein," in *Trust: Analytic and Applied Perspectives*. Eds. Pekka Makela and Cynthia Townley (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2013), 36. For an excellent range of philosophical explorations of trust that all in some way make this point see: *Trust, Sociality, Selfhood*. Eds. Arne Grøn, Claudia Welz. (Tübingen: Moir Siebeck, 2010). The intangibility of trust has also led to it being explored as an "atmosphere" (Jeffrey Courtright, "Is Trust Like an 'Atmosphere'? Understanding the Phenomenon of Existential Trust," *Philosophy in the Contemporary World* 20:1 (2013, 39-51), or as being "operational" (Martin Endreß and Andrea Pabst, "Violence and Shattered Trust: Sociological Considerations," *Human Studies* 36:1 (2013, 89-106).

2. Merleau-Ponty's notion of reversibility encompasses ambiguity and intertwining and refers to the fundamental encroachment of sensing/sensed that takes place in and through the body. He says: "There is a double and crossed situating of the visible in the tangible and of the tangible in the visible; the two maps are complete, and yet they do not merge into one." Also: "since vision is a palpation with the look, it must also be inscribed in the order of being that he who looks must not be foreign to the world he looks at." [Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*. Ed. Claude Lefort. Trans. Alphonso Lingis. (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 134].

3. This and all parenthetical references to Merleau-Ponty are taken from Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*. Trans. Colin Smith. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962).

4. Annette Baier, *Moral Prejudices: Essays on Ethics*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1994), 99-111.

5. Baier, *Moral Prejudices*, 110-111.

6. Gry Ardal, "Judging about Trustworthiness," in *Trust, Sociality, Selfhood*. Eds. Arne Grøn, Claudia Welz. (Tübingen: Moir Siebeck, 2010), 115-133.

7. Anthony Steinbock, "Temporality, Transcendence, and Being Bound to Others in Trust" *Trust, Sociality, Selfhood*. Eds. Arne Grøn, Claudia Welz. (Tübingen: Moir Siebeck, 2010), 83-102.

8. Ardal, "Judging about Trustworthiness," 129-130.

9. James Mensch, "Violence and Embodiment." *Symposium: Canadian Journal of Continental Philosophy* 12:1 (2008, 4-15).

10. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Institution and Passivity*: *Course Notes from the College de France (1954-1955)*. Trans. Leonard Lawlor, Heath Massey. (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2010), 6.

11. Merleau-Ponty uses the term 'intercorporeity' in his discussion of reversibility and the lived body in his chapter "The Intertwining – The Chiasm." (Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 141) While the term 'intercorporeality' is also found in the English translation of his earlier work, [Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*. Trans. Richard C. McCleary. (USA: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 168], in this paper I use the term intercorporeity.

12. Ardal, "Judging about Trustworthiness," 116-117.

13. Ardal, "Judging about Trustworthiness," 121.

14. Ardal, "Judging about Trustworthiness," 121-122.

15. Ardal, "Judging about Trustworthiness," 129.

16. Ardal, "Judging about Trustworthiness," 124. Ardal says that the link between Kant's thinking and Levinas is most clear in Levinas's claim that aesthetic judgement "consists precisely in the fact that it calls a thing beautiful only in accordance with the quality in it by means of which it corresponds with our way of receiving it." (Kant quoted in Ardal, "Judging about Trustworthiness," 125). It is this way, Ardal says, that we judge about the character of those we trust or distrust.

17. Ardal, "Judging about Trustworthiness," 123.

18. Steinbock, "Temporality," 87.

19. Steinbock, "Temporality," 87.

20. Steinbock, "Temporality," 89-91.

21. Steinbock, "Temporality," 87, 93.

22. Merleau-Ponty, *Institution and Passivity*, 7.

23. Merleau-Ponty, *Institution and Passivity*, 76.

24. Jean Amery in Ardal, "Judging about Trustworthiness," 129.

25. Jean Amery, "Torture" *At the Mind's Limits: Contemplations by a Survivor on Aushwitz and its Realities*. Trans. Sidney Rosenfeld, Stella P. Rosenfeld. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 40 (my italics).

26. Amery, "Torture," 26-27.

27. Margaret Urban Walker. *Moral repair: Reconstructing Moral Relations after Wrongdoing*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 44.

28. Another recent phenomenology of violence is developed by Michael Staudigl who contends that violence is understood as relational and operative in intercorporeal sense-making, "making its way into human life forms, shaping them and settling in these often undetected." Michael Staudigl, "Towards a relational phenomenology of violence," *Human studies* 36 (2013, 46). Staudigl undertakes to establish a broadened concept of violence that is concerned not only with the experience of victims of violence, but also with the actions of perpetrators and the experience of witnesses to violence. In all cases, questions of vulnerability and the capacity to primordially form sense are significant. While this is clearly of interest, for the purposes of this paper, I restrict myself to engaging with Mensch's focus on the impact of violence on victims.

29. While Mensch does not reference Merleau-Ponty in his use of this phrase, we do find the term used by Merleau-Ponty, who argues that the life of consciousness is subtended by an intentional arc" and that we need to understand "motility as basic intentionality. Consciousness is in the first place not a matter of 'It think that but of 'I can'" (Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology, 136-137). Merleau-Ponty adds a footnote to this text stating: "This term is the usual one in Husserl's unpublished writings." I take it up in the sense that Merleau-Ponty expresses.

30. Mensch, "Violence and Embodiment," 12-13.

31. Mensch, "Violence and Embodiment," 13.

32. Trudy Govier also argues for self-trust as a kind of trust or a dimension of trust, going on to argue that core self-trust is essential for functioning as an autonomous human being. See Trudy Govier, "Self-Trust, Autonomy, and Self-Esteem," *Hypatia* 8:1 (1993, 99-120).

33. Suzanne Cataldi, *Emotion, Depth, and Flesh: A Study of Sensitive Space*. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 7.

34. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind," in *The Merleau-Ponty Reader*. Eds. Ted Toadvine, Leonard Lawlor. (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 376.

35. Cataldi, *Emotion, Depth, and Flesh*, 11.

36. Glen Mazis, "Time at the Depth of the World," in *Merleau-Ponty at the Limits of Art, Religion, and Perception*. Eds. Kascha Semonovitch, Neal DeRoo. (London: Continuum, 2010), 122.

37. I deal with this sense of depth as spatial in a previous paper looking at the experience of falling in love as an irruption of trust. See: Fiona Utley, "Considerations Toward a Phenomenology of Trust," *Symposium: Canadian Journal of Continental Philosophy* 18:1 (2014, 194-214).

38. Mazis, "Time at the Depth of the World," 121.

39. Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 49.

40. Al-Saji, "Merleau-Ponty and Bergson: Bodies of expression and temporalities in the flesh," Philosophy Today 45 Supplement (2001, 114).

41. Al-Saji, "Merleau-Ponty and Bergson," 110.

42. Alia Al-Saji, "'A Past Which Has Never Been Present': Bergsonian Dimensions in Merleau-Ponty's Theory of the Prepersonal," *Research in Phenomenology* 38:1 (2008, 50).

43. Al-Saji, "Merleau-Ponty and Bergson: Bodies of expression and temporalities in the flesh," Philosophy Today 45 Supplement (2001, 114). She refers to Merleau-Ponty's claim that we are "two temporalities [which] are not mutually incompatible, because each one only knows itself only by projecting itself into the present, and because they can intertwine there" (See Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology*, 457).

44. Al-Saji, "Merleau-Ponty and Bergson," 114.

45. Al-Saji, "Merleau-Ponty and Bergson," 112.

46. Also of note is that Merleau-Ponty refers to an experience of inner conflict or a "sort of spasm" that occurs when I try to not synchronize with what my sensation is undergoing. (Merleau-Ponty, 214) My argument is that in this trying not to synchronize with the violence that my sensation is undergoing, the inner conflict takes a distinct form.

47. Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 38.

48. Mensch, "Violence and Embodiment," 13.

49. I would like to thank the audiences at the 2015 ASCP conference and the UniSA School of Communication, International Relations and Languages Seminar Series for their questions and generous discussion around issues raised in this paper. Some of the background thinking around this paper was also presented in an earlier form at the 2014 OPO Conference. I also want to thank the anonymous reviewers whose comments were extremely valuable in the revision of this paper.