# Feminist Philosophy

## Time, history and the transformation of thought

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# Chapter 16
# The Inner Landscape of the Body
## – Phenomenology of Thinking

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In many languages, we name specific landscape features after body parts. In Icelandic, for example, we speak about shoulder, neck, forehead, thigh, and nose in a landscape, and this can be seen in many Icelandic place names.[1] This connection between the concepts of landscape and body is interesting, not least in how it can shed light on the role of what Icelandic philosopher Páll Skúlason has called "the feeling of situatedness" in an environment[2], in the creation of knowledge. The feeling of situatedness refers, generally speaking, to our relations to the world; to how the base of our existence always already involves feeling and sensing our situation.[3] The feeling of situatedness, which I discuss here, refers specifically to the embodied experience of environment of situated knowers.[4] Feminist philosophies of situated knowing emphasize primarily the socio-political conditions that shape and determine knowledge. Taking feminist

[1] According to Valgarður Egilsson these place names can be found in Icelandic: Head, neck, forehead, eyes, nose, ear, cheek, mouth, tongue, back, shoulder, spine, chest, breast, nipples, fingers, elbows, hips, ass, crouch, testicles, thighs, knees, heel, toe, foot, man. See Valgarður Egilsson, "Örnefni við Eyjafjörð [Place names in Eyjafjörður]", *Nefnir-vefrit Nafnfræðifélagsins [Nefnir – The online journal of the Onomastics Society]*. https://www.arnastofnun.is/is/utgafa-og-gagnasofn/pistlar/ornefni-vid-eyjafjord. This tendency to name landscape features after body parts can be found in many other languages.

[2] Páll Skúlason, *Merking og tilgangur [Meaning and Purpose]*, (Reykjavík: University of Iceland Press, 2015), p. 52.

[3] Simone de Beauvoir, *Le Deuziéme sexe* (Paris: Gallimard, 1949); Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945).

[4] Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* Vol. 14, 1988, pp. 575–599; Sandra Harding, *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Thinking from Women's Lives* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

phenomenologies of embodiment on board, I pay attention to how embodiment is part of situatedness and how bodies are always embedded in landscapes and environments.

When examining the body-environment/landscape continuum, I notice a surprising connection between landscape and body in the earliest examples of the Icelandic word for landscape. *Landslag*, for instance, in the Icelandic Sagas, is written *lands**leg***. "Leg" in Icelandic refers to a place where something can lie and has been used both to refer to a woman's uterus and to a final resting place (*leg-staður* means resting place). This linguistic resemblance brings to mind a comparison between the fetus' being in the womb and our being in a landscape, as well as between the phenomenology of pregnancy[5] and the phenomenology of landscape.[6] As I will examine further in this paper, this comparison can shed light on a relational understanding of the human being, which, as I will argue, should be the basis of our understanding of knowledge creation. My goal is not to go into a detailed etymological analysis of the connections between the words landscape and body. Instead, I aim to use this interesting use of words as a starting point for examining an understanding of the human being as a relational knowledge-creating being. The basis for this examination is a phenomenological understanding of landscape and body. I aim to deepen this understanding by exploring the connection between these concepts that appear in the aforementioned use of words.

I start by sketching out shortly how these concepts are understood through the lens of phenomenology. Then, I go on to explore the understanding of landscape that appears in the word *lands**leg*** in the Sagas and its connection to the phenomenology of pregnancy. Finally, I show how connecting these two perspectives allows for a deeper understanding of the role of the aesthetic in our sensing and thinking. The underlying aim of

[5] Jonna Bornemark, "Life Beyond Individuality: A-subjective Experience in Pregnancy" in Jonna Bornemark, & Nicholas Smith, (Eds.), *Phenomenology of Pregnancy* (Huddinge: Södertörn Philosophical Studies 18, 2016).

[6] Guðbjörg R. Jóhannesdóttir, *Icelandic Landscapes: Beauty and the Aesthetic in Environmental Decision-making* (Reykjavík: University of Iceland, 2015).

the approach presented here is to re-evaluate some of the qualities of human thinking and being that have been rejected in the past as being feminine. As feminist philosophers have pointed out, the Western philosophical tradition has neglected in understandings of the human being the aesthetic, sensuous, and bodily dimensions of our being and thinking.[7] Shining a new light on these dimensions can thus be seen as an essential part of the feminist epistemological project of challenging limited notions of rationality and knowledge creation.

## Landscape and Body: A Phenomenological Perspective

Looking at landscape from a phenomenological perspective and acknowledging the relationship between the concepts of beauty and landscape leads to a relational understanding of landscape. Accordingly, landscape is an environment perceived aesthetically and thus includes the relation between subject and object, human and environment.[8] Landscape refers to our perception of land or space as a whole (whether it is a physical or mental space) and how all its qualities, visible and invisible, come together in one's perception of it. As I have written about elsewhere, this type of perceiving is aesthetic perception – when we perceive only to perceive. We use the word landscape when we are referring to the aesthetic values or qualities of the land; when we are grazing our horses, we call it pasture; when we are building a factory, we call it a construction site, when we perceive only to perceive we call it landscape.[9]

At the core of a phenomenological account of the body is Husserl's differentiation between the body as *Leib* and *Körper*.

[7] Richard Shusterman, *Thinking Through the Body: Essays in Somaesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Peggy Zeglin Brand & Carolyn Korsmeyer (Eds.), *Feminism and Tradition in Aesthetics* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010).

[8] Jóhannesdóttir, *Icelandic Landscapes,* p. 154. See also Joachim Ritter, "Landschaft. Zur Funktion des Ästhetischen in der modernen Gesellschaft", in *Subjektivität,* pp. 141–163 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1989).

[9] Jóhannesdóttir, *Icelandic Landscapes*.

While *Körper* refers to the objectified body that can be measured and evaluated by scientific methods, *Leib* refers to the lived body, the lived experience of an embodied being.[10] This lived body has often been forgotten in philosophical thought, as many feminist philosophers have emphasized and, for their part, feminist phenomenologists have thus elaborated on embodied and embedded being in their research.[11] From the point of view of feminist phenomenology, the body is central to our understanding and practice of philosophical thought, since the body is precisely what allows us to experience, perceive and think about the world in the first place.[12] My agenda in discussing landscape and the body is, among other things, to direct our attention to the importance of not forgetting that we are bodies; just like plants and other animals, we are living organisms that are constantly interacting with different environments.[13] I aim to bring out and explore why it is vital to speak about the fact that we are always already bodies in landscapes when we try to understand what characterizes human sensing and thinking. To shed light on the interaction between inner and outer landscapes and further examine the connection between the sensing and

[10] See Sigríður Þorgeirsdóttir, "Heimspeki líkamans og heimspeki í líkamanum og hvers vegna hugsun er ekki kynlaus" [Philosophy of the Body and Philosophy in the Body and Why Thought is not Gender-free], *Hugur*, Vol. 27, 2015, pp. 65–80; Gústav Adolf Bergmann Sigurbjörnsson, "Líkamlegar hugverur: Líkaminn og líkamleiki í fyrirbærafræði Edmunds Husserl" [Embodied Mind-Beings: The Body and Embodiment in Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology], *Hugur*, Vol. 27, 2015, pp. 48–64.

[11] Sara Heinämaa, *Toward a Phenomenology of Sexual Difference: Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Beauvoir* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004).

[12] Sigridur Thorgeirsdóttir, "The Torn Robe of Philosophy: Philosophy as a Woman in The Consolation of Philosophy by Boethius", in Sigridur Thorgeirsdottir and Ruth Hagengruber (Eds.), *Methodological Reflections on Women's Contribution and Influence in the History of Philosophy* (London/New York: Springer, 2020), pp. 83–96; Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain* (New York: G.P. Putnam's sons, 1994); George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenges to Western Thought* (Michigan: Basic Books, 1999); Mark Johnson, *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

[13] Eugene Gendlin, "Arakawa and Gins: The Organism-Person-Environment Process" in Donata Schoeller and Edward Casey (Eds.), *Saying What We Mean: Implicit Precision and the Responsive Order* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2017).

thinking involved in this interaction, I start by looking at how the word *landscape/landslag* or *lands**leg*** was used in early Icelandic manuscripts.

## Landslag or Lands*/eg*

The earliest examples of the Icelandic word for landscape, *landslag*, appear in the sagas from the 12–13th century, where it is written lands*leg,* i.e., with *leg* instead of *lag*.[14] This ancient way of spelling landscape also occurs in later examples from the 17th–19th century. From this etymological observation, we can conclude that landscape, in Icelandic, refers to how everything "lies" or connects as a whole in a certain place or a certain situation and to how we can, as bodies, "lie" within this whole or connect to it. As can be seen from the following quotes from *Eiríks saga rauða* (Saga of Erik the Red) and *Vatnsdæla saga* (Saga of the people of Lake valley), the landsleg, its beauty, and other qualities are examined in the context of exploring the situation that the land offers the settlers to dwell (or lie) within:

> The Finns' prophecy must be coming true, for I now recognise the **landsleg** from their account of it, hither we are being directed, and things are now getting much better; I see now extensive land and if it is accompanied by resources, then perhaps this is a good site to build. (*Vatnsdæla saga*)
>
> They called it Straumfjord. They carried their things from the ship and settled. They had all kinds of livestock. There was beautiful **landsleg**; they paid attention to nothing other than exploring the land. (*Eiríks saga*)[15]

A few examples of the word *lands**leg*** can be found from the 17th–19th century, but after that, landscape is always written *landslag*. In these examples, *landsleg* always seems to refer to

[14] Edda R. H. Waage, *The Concept of Landslag: Meaning and Value for Nature Conservation* (Reykjavík: University of Iceland, 2013), p.100.
[15] Waage, *The Concept of Landslag*, p. 113 and 115.

"how things are – how they are arranged".[16] From this, we can see that *landsleg* is something that one can explore and examine; one knows how it is and can compare it with something else. The word *leg* can also be found in examples from the 17th century onwards, where it is always used to refer to a place where something can lie – *leg* is the place where the fetus can lie in the mother's womb, and it is also a place where one can have a final resting place – *legstaður*, as well as a place where for example a boat can lie on the beach or a machine part can lie within the machine. However, it also seems to refer, like *landsleg*, to how things are, how they lie.

By referring to how things lie, *landsleg* refers to how everything lies together and connects as a whole. It also relates to a human's possibilities of connecting to the landscape. In other words: What possibilities do we have to make it our home? In the examples from the Icelandic sagas above, the word *landsleg* is used to describe, for example, what happens when you sail to a new place and sense the land ahead. You see the land in front of you that lies before your feet, and you perceive it as if for the first time because it is the first time. As we saw in the example from *Eiríks saga*, it is suggested that when you are "paying attention to nothing other than exploring the land," you perceive its beauty or its aesthetic qualities: "There was beautiful **landsleg**; they paid attention to nothing other than exploring the land". This is what you do when you experience a place for the first time; you perceive just to perceive, to feel *how you feel* there, whether you find the landscape beautiful, whether you can imagine yourself dwelling there, making it your home. In her writings on the importance of landscape beauty, the German philosopher Angelika Krebs, discusses the German concept of *Heimat*,[17] which is an equivalent to *heima* in Icelandic but has

[16] Ritmálssafn Orðabókar HÍ [The University of Iceland Written Language Archive]: https://ritmalssafn.arnastofnun.is/daemi/283716

[17] Roger Scruton uses the Greek word oikos for the same purpose. See Roger Scruton, *Green Philosophy: How to Think Seriously About the Planet* (London: Atlantic Books Ltd, 2014).

no exact match in English.[18] Krebs claims that being able to experience beautiful landscapes is an "essential part of the good human life. We humans cannot fare well without it. The reason for this is that the experience of beautiful landscapes makes us feel at home in the world. Their great and irreplaceable value lies therein".[19] This is the value of landscape beauty, according to Krebs. And why is it so important to be able to feel at home in the world? For her, beautiful landscapes and the feeling of being at home teach us to dwell on the earth with respect and care for it. A beautiful landscape calls for us to put our roots down and feel that we care for the landscape as our special home.[20]

This connection between landscape beauty and feeling at home is interesting in light of how the concept of *landsleg* is used in these early examples from the Icelandic sagas. In these medieval texts, *landsleg* is almost always accompanied by judgments of beauty and judgments of whether one can imagine making the *landsleg* one's home, as is evident in this example from *Vatnsdæla saga*:

> Then the team moved up the valley and saw that there were good resources from the land with regard to grass and wood;

[18] The word *heimat* in German has two meanings according to dictionaries, it can have the historically problematic meaning of home as in hometown, homeland, motherland, native land and it can mean home as in living somewhere/having a home and being at home. The Icelandic word *heima* has only the second meaning of being at home or living somewhere, it does not refer to homeland without adding to it, heima*land*. When I say that *heimat* and the Icelandic *heima* are not exact equivalents of home in English I'm referring to how the words are used in the context of being at home/living somewhere. In Icelandic we can say: *Ég er heima/ég á heima* where *heima* does not have the connotation of only the space/object you are *at* or *have* like it is in English: I am *at* home/I live in/*have a* home in. The only occasion you would say I'm home in English is when you are arriving, as in I'm here. Where home in English seems to refer to an object/a space, *heima* seems to include both the space and the being in the space as one whole contained in one word. To translate home as an object/space into Icelandic we would use the word *heimili*, but *heima* includes more than the objective space *heimili*, it includes the act of being in space as well. As Krebs also points out, *heimat* means "'being at home' or living in a 'place' as opposed to a space", see: Angelika Krebs, "Why Landscape Beauty Matters", *Land*, 3(4), 2014, p. 1257

[19] Angelika Krebs, "Why Landscape Beauty Matters", *Land*, 3(4), 2014, p. 1251.

[20] Krebs, "Why Landscape Beauty Matters", p. 1262.

> there was beautiful to look around; people then felt in a much better mood. ... Ingimundr chose his dwelling in a very beautiful hollow and established a farm. (*Vatnsdæla saga*)

When we speak of a beautiful landscape, we are describing that moment when we perceive just to perceive, which is like asking oneself: "Could I live here? Does this phenomenon pull me towards it? Am I attracted to it? Can I relate to it?" This experience of choosing a *heima* is also going on when we are experiencing art. For example, when we go to concerts or other art events; then we choose to "live in" or "have our home in" this artwork; pay attention to it in the same way as we pay attention to a place we are considering as a future home. When we choose a home, we sense inside ourselves to see how we feel there and ask ourselves: How do I feel in this space/this situation? What possibilities of relating to it can I imagine? Can I lie here within these walls? What qualities does it have that make me attracted to it or not?

What all this reveals is that landscape (or *landsleg*) does not only refer to what is there: it does not only involve listing the objects or phenomena that create the whole of the landscape; mountains, valleys, fjords, buildings – it also refers to how you sense this whole, whether you could see yourself living there; in other words, it relates to how you could lie within this landscape. So perhaps the gap we are used to seeing between beauty and utility is not as big as is often implied. Let us leave that question open for now. The understanding of landscape that can be derived from this examination of word use is the following: Landscape (*landslag*/*landsleg*) refers to our perception of how everything lies together as a whole within a particular situation or a space that you can perceive as a whole, and how you sense in your body your relation to this situation or space and the processes that create it.

We use the word landscape to describe our being in touch with the world when we sense how we connect to it as a possible home. This is the touching of the world that we sense and direct

our attention to in aesthetic perception; when we perceive only to perceive – to receive how that perception makes us feel. As Merleau-Ponty repeats after the painter Paul Klee, he sometimes felt that he was receiving meaning from the forest:

> That is why so many painters have said that things look at them. As André Marchand says after Klee: "In a forest, I have felt many times over that it was not I who looked at the forest. Some days I felt that the trees were looking at me, were speaking to me... I was there, listening... I think the painter must be penetrated by the universe and not want to penetrate it... I expect to be inwardly submerged, buried. Perhaps I paint to break out". We speak of "inspiration", and the word should be taken literally. There really is inspiration and expiration of Being [...] it becomes impossible to distinguish between what sees and what is seen, what paints and what is painted.[21]

This is an excellent example of this type of being in touch with the world, where we receive meaning rather than project it onto the world. It is important to keep this touching of the world in mind when we speak about philosophical thinking and knowledge creation. Merleau-Ponty used the word flesh (fr. *chair*) to describe this pre-discursive level of being, and it is in my mind no coincidence that he chose to use a word that has such a strong connection to the body as nature.

So, what happens if we move beyond the flesh, further into the body, and use the word *leg* (uterus) or *landsleg* to describe this relation to the world, and which Merleau-Ponty used the word flesh to describe? Can we use the meaning of the word *landsleg* as an encouragement to think about the commonalities between our being as bodies in landscapes and the being of the fetus in the womb? As feminist philosophers have pointed out, pregnancy and birth have been neglected within philosophy, and paying attention to these fundamental aspects of life can

[21] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind", in Galen A. Johnson (Ed.), *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader: Philosophy and Painting* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1961/1993), p. 167.

help us understand our situatedness and relationality more profoundly. The pregnant body, as a body nurturing and sharing life with another one within it, with its own intentionality, has more than anything else challenged traditional, disembodied philosophical conceptions of subjectivity that do not include how the self is always multiple, interdependent, and interrelational.[22] The phenomenologist Jonna Bornemark has written about the phenomenology of pregnancy,[23] and her understanding of our being in the womb and my understanding of our being in landscape share a common core. Björn Þorsteinsson has also discussed how the human condition is, from a phenomenological perspective, like being in water – our movements in the world create currents and waves that influence others at the same time as we are influenced by the currents and waves that others make.[24] What can we learn from this metaphor? To be a sensing and thinking being always involves already being a part of all the others with whom we share the world. Being in the world is like being in water – splashing onto others and being splashed at by others. As mentioned above, Jonna Bornemark has written about a related metaphor in her chapter in the book *Phenomenology of Pregnancy*, where she examines the experience of pregnancy both from the perspective of the mother and the perspective of the fetus to shed light on our being and sensing in the world. What was it like to be in the womb? In just a few weeks, we have already started perceiving. Hearing is the first sense to kick in around the 26th–28th week, but as Bornemark remarks, "perception is of another character in the womb":

[22] See for example, Alison Stone, *Being Born: Birth and Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019); Johanna Oksala, "The Birth of Man", in Dan Zahavi, Sara Heinamaa and Hans Ruin (Eds.), *Metaphysics, Facticity, Interpretation: Phenomenology in the Nordic Countries* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2003), pp. 139–153; Robin-May Schott (Ed.), *Birth, Death and Femininity: Philosophies of Embodiment* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2010).

[23] Bornemark, "Life Beyond Individuality".

[24] Kristján Guðjónsson, "Þurfum meiri hugsun og færri skoðanir" [We need more thought and less opinion], DV, February 26, 2017, https://www.dv.is/fokus/menning/2017/02/26/thurfum-meiri-hugsun-og-faerri-skodanir/

> Vision is less important, and hearing takes precedence. There is taste and smell (of the amniotic fluid) – but not connected to feelings of hunger.
>
> There are no objects in the sense of autonomous and thematized "things" that are identified as one and the same in the stream of perceptions. The perceptions are thus not understood as belonging to objects, but flow in a stream, intertwined with other perceptions. These perceptions also linger, in what Husserl calls retention: i.e. non-thematized memories. As retentions they linger and affect the following experiences. The layers of perception are still few, and each moment is more filled by its presence than by earlier perceptions or expected later perceptions. Patterns are formed through what Husserl called passive synthesis, in which layers of experiences through retention are put on top of each other and form patterns. Some of these patterns are continually there: the rhythm of the mother breathing, of her heartbeats, of the foetus's heartbeats, and more sporadically of the mother's intestines. These rhythms are felt and heard in a perception where touching and hearing are not separated. Every sound or pulsation is also magnified through the amniotic fluid. The kinaesthetic feeling of movement is not yet connected to movement in a world, and there are no bodies experienced as entities that would be held together, neither of the self nor of others. Instead there are a lot of motions going on, though these are not yet separated into inner and outer.[25]

So, what can this description of what it is like for the fetus to be in the womb/leg tell me about the concept of *landscape/landsleg*? As our use of the words neck, shoulder, foot to describe features of the landscape suggests, we can perceive the landscape and our bodies as one and the same flesh, just as the fetus perceives the womb and itself as the same flesh. Imagining what it was like to be in the womb gives us a feeling for what is involved in a phenomenological understanding of how we are sensing and thinking beings in the world: we sense the world as whole

[25] Bornemark, "Life Beyond Individuality", p. 255.

bodies, not as separated sense organs. The field of perception that is awakened first, where sound and touch are not yet separated, is the field of perception that is the basis of all perception – the field of perception that never stops being there. However, we might forget to pay attention to it. This is the basis for all our more complex perceptions – and that is why it is so important to remember this field of perception and pay attention to it. This field of perception is at play in the aesthetic perception of environment, which is what we are referring to when we use the word landscape. This is the perception of how we take everything in that we are immersed in – whether it makes us feel at home, whether it makes us feel connected.

It is now time to return to the questions with which I started this paper: Why is it important to connect the concepts of landscape and body? How does the meaning of these concepts affect our understanding of philosophical thinking and knowledge creation?

## The Body and Landscape as the Zero Point of Sensing and Thinking

As sensing and thinking beings, we are bodies in landscapes; as bodies we are always already in an environment. We are always already as if swimming in water out of which we have no way out. We are always situated; we are always "heima", always in a landscape we are immersed in. As sensing and thinking beings, we are constantly experiencing the world through the field of perception that is first awakened in the womb, which I choose to describe with the word landscape. To examine this relationship between landscape and body further, it is useful to look into what characterizes the body as *Leib*. For Husserl, *Leib* refers to movement and action; it is the site of perceiving the whole of what is around us; the lived body is a kind of "zero point", as Husserl called it, which refers to the fact that the body always has a specific "here".[26] If we try to fit these qualities with the concept of landscape, we see that they are very applicable to what I have

[26] Sigurbjörnsson, "Líkamlegar hugverur", p. 56–57.

said so far about *landsleg*. The landscape is characterized by movement and action; when we speak about landscapes, we speak of being in the landscape, moving in it, and letting it move us. The landscape is the site of perceiving the whole of what is around us; when we speak of landscapes, we are speaking of perceiving environments aesthetically, which involves sensing how the landscape as a whole affects our senses and how it moves us and makes us feel. The landscape is a type of "zero point", which refers to the fact that the landscape always has a specific "here". The landscape is always somebody's "heima" – just like there is no "heima" without a body in, there is no landscape without a body – in the same way that there is no body without a landscape.

When we come into the world from the mother's womb or *leg*, we are born into the womb or *leg* of the land – *landsleg*. This characterizes us as embodied beings – the basis for all our perceptions is this synaesthetic field of perception that is always active, though we do not always pay attention to it. We are always already situated, always already swimming around in a landsleg. As Páll Skúlason describes, being has "always-already-felt-itself": "[…] being feels (good or bad) among things, feels its situation […] the feeling of situatedness is […] the background of our existence, it symbolizes one of the basic dimensions of human existence".[27] In my mind, the feeling of situatedness is *the body's inner landscape* – it refers to how the outer landscape we perceive resonates within us in the body's inner landscape. Most of the time, we don't notice this feeling of situatedness or synaesthetic field of perception. Still, in these moments that I refer to as aesthetic moments, we pay attention to this field of perception that is always there – which is why they are so important. These aesthetic moments can, I argue, give us a deeper understanding of the human being (more profound than a dualistic understanding of the human being), which is very much needed.

[27] Skúlason, *Merking og tilgangur*, p. 52.

According to this new understanding of the human being (which is perhaps, after all, an old one), we are relational embodied beings, just like plants and animals. This relational understanding of the human being is fundamental when it comes to understanding how we gain knowledge of the world. We are sensing and thinking bodies; we *feel-know,* as Jonna Bornemark remarked about how the fetus knows the world. We feel-know everything that the landscape/lands*leg* has made into the patterns that are always there – these patterns are the sediments of everything we have sensed and known through our journey in the world. Aesthetic perception allows us to open into these patterns or inner sediments of the body.[28] The following examples of the emergence of an artist's or a scientist's new ideas help to explain this further.

An artist once told me how she got the idea for a new artwork while sitting outside sketching the landscape during her travels around the Icelandic countryside. During the act of drawing, we are tuned into an aesthetic perception of our environment, of our outer and inner landscapes; we are tuned into perceiving only to perceive. When the artist tunes into this type of perception, a new thought is often born, a new idea, or a new connection. In a lecture given by an expert from NASA at a conference on the protection of the Icelandic highlands (where he regularly dwells with his team doing research), he showed us photos of the team of scientists sitting in the middle of a lava field or on top of a mountain in the highlands with their sketchbooks or diaries, seemingly very deep in thought and inspired. While showing these photos, he told us how they always made some discoveries and managed to think so well together during the weeks spent in the highlands doing their research.

These two examples captured my attention owing to their common thread. In my mind, the highland landscapes bring us very easily into aesthetic perception, perceiving only to perceive;

[28] Just as the sediments of earth are the geological foundation of the landscape, we could say that the inner sediments/patterns of the body are the biophysical and phenomenological layers of the lived body.

in the highlands, there are so many things that create a strong sense of wonder, so many things that draw our attention to our senses. In such situations, many of us are automatically tuned into this type of perception for which drawing calls and in which artists are trained. When we let all our attention go into our senses, an opening occurs into the body's inner landscape – we automatically tune our focus into the body. When we experience a beautiful or even sublime landscape, we start paying attention to what we are sensing and feeling because the outer landscape brings out such strong reactions. This scanning of the body's inner landscape begins with us focusing on what the outer landscape makes us sense or feel. However, when we stop focusing on the details we are perceiving, we still hold our attention on what we are sensing. Then we start scanning the inner landscape of what we are feeling, what we sense and what we know at this moment, and perhaps what is important to us at this moment. What happens in this scanning is that when the inner landscape opens up (all everyday thoughts disappear, and the mind is emptied for a while), then thoughts, memories, visions, and ideas start popping into mind. We can see all these thoughts, memories, and visions (rooted in the *retentions* of lived experience) as sediment after sediment, layer upon layer, thread upon thread, that are woven together and lie within the body. And what is in these sediments? Everything we have perceived before, even since the very beginning, in our mothers' wombs.[29] When we are given the space to scan the body's inner landscape, we are afforded an opportunity to look separately at each thread and layer and how they are related. Just like when we are walking in a landscape, and we name what we see around us or try to speculate about what it is, what story it tells, we do the same when we examine the inner landscape of the body – perhaps we recognize some things that we find there im-

[29] Studies have shown that a trauma that a mother experiences during pregnancy can affect the baby after birth. See for example: Sarah R. Brand, Stephanie M. Engel, Richard L. Canfield, and Rachel Yehuda, "The Effect of Maternal PTSD Following in Utero Trauma Exposure on Behavior and Temperament in the 9-Month Old Infant", *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1071:1 (2006), pp. 454–458.

mediately, but others we have to examine more closely and listen to their story.

Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and other philosophers have emphasized how dwelling alone in nature, or hiking and walking, supports independent, critical, philosophical thinking. In recent years the philosophy of walking has gained greater attention,[30] where stories are told of how philosophers such as Rousseau, Nietzsche, and Kant often did their philosophizing while walking. In my view, it is not only the walking, the movement itself, that creates this connection between thinking and walking. Instead, it is what happens when we are walking: that we direct our attention to the landscape we are walking in and let our senses be in the foreground rather than our analytical thinking. In other words, we connect to the inner landscape of the body, the wisdom, and knowledge that resides in the sediments and threads of our lived bodily experience, and let our thinking rise freely from there. We need to pay more serious attention to this in the context of thinking in philosophy. We do not think as detached brains but as bodies. We need a phenomenology of thinking, and this is my suggestion: As sensing and thinking beings, we are made in such a way that thoughts, memories, visions, and ideas pop up in our minds when our attention is focused on the inner landscape of the body. These are reactions that we sometimes express when we say out loud how something makes us feel or we write down what we are thinking at such moments, but if not, they just settle in the body and become one of the layers or threads that creates the whole of the being I am and knowing what I know. Just as the sediments and layers of stories, events, and human structures generate the whole of what it is to be the landscape of a specific place, the landscape that is somebody's "heima".

To acknowledge the body as the source of thinking is essential for philosophy because philosophy has the role of thinking what it is to think, and it has the role of helping us get our heads around the emerging new understanding of the human

[30] Frédéric A. Gros, *Philosophy of Walking* (New York: Verso Books, 2014).

being. Philosophy's role is to think about the world and to help us think about ourselves in relation to the world. This acknowledgment is also important in the context of education systems based on a dualistic understanding of the human being where reasoning and sensing, reason and emotion, mind and body, and human and nature are seen as separate.[31] Furthermore, these systems have mostly ignored the bodily source of knowledge, emphasizing more what is called rational thinking while neglecting intuitive, sensuous, embodied thinking. This neglect of the dimensions associated with the senses, emotions, the body, and nature is a reflection of how the systems on which our societies are built are based on deeply ingrained gender hierarchies, where the qualities associated with the feminine are seen as inferior to the qualities associated with the masculine.

However, there are some signs of changes on the horizon, not the least because of the advances in cognitive science research. The interplay of body and mind cannot be ignored in education systems for too much longer, for the time has come to direct our attention toward the deep roots of all our knowledge and values in natural sciences, humanities, and the arts. The scientist's body is, as Claire Petitmengin writes, "at the source of meaning."[32] Similarly, Susan Stuart writes that verbalized ideas and notions are just the tip of an iceberg that hides the embodied conditions from which they emerge.[33] This change is, therefore, crucial for research in general because, like elsewhere in our education systems, universities have neglected this kind of sensuous know-

[31] Genevieve Loyd, *The Man of Reason: "Male" and "Female" in Western Philosophy* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2002).

[32] Claire Petitmengin, "The Scientists's Body at the Source of Meaning", in Donata Schoeller & Vera Saller (Eds.), *Thinking thinking: Practicing radical reflection* (Freiburg/München: Karl Alber, 2016), pp. 28–49. Petitmengin's research illuminates the dimension of creativity at the level of the body, "inter-action between people as well as within oneself, navigating between discursive, pre-discursive, trans-modal and gestural dimensions of experience" as "capacities involved in the maturation of an idea – as well as in its inquiry", p. 18.

[33] Susan A. J. Stuart, "Enkinaesthesia and Reid's natural kind of magic", in Schoeller & Saller (Eds.), *Thinking thinking,* pp. 92–111.

ledge and prioritized the "objective" natural sciences much more than, for example, research in the arts and humanities.

The knowledge that the arts and humanities provide is one of the most important types of knowledge societies create – the knowledge that the arts create, for example, is knowledge to which other areas should pay much more attention, especially in their trans-, inter-, or multidisciplinary projects. In such projects, the arts should not be seen as an add-on or a tool to mediate the knowledge that other fields create but rather as an active participant in creating and mediating knowledge.

In recent years, the crisis of philosophy, or even the crisis of the humanities as such, has been much discussed, suggesting that we have somehow lost sight of the importance of these fields. Among the criticisms of philosophy that feminist philosophers and phenomenologists have emphasized is the lack of attention and acknowledgment of the feeling of situatedness, a lack of acknowledgment that as thinking beings, we are always already situated in time and space as diverse bodies in complex relations. This criticism points to the need to strengthen philosophical thinking as embodied thinking. What does it mean for the practice of philosophical thinking and the teaching of this practice to take this relational understanding of the human being seriously?[34] There are methods available, in the arts, as well as in philosophy and the sciences, for example Petitmengin's microphenomenological interview method[35] and Gendlin and Hendrick's Thinking at the Edge method.[36] These methods allow us to closely examine the body's inner landscape and engage in conversation with and about what we find there. This inner landscape has been shaped by what we have felt and, what we know, what we feel-know. Traveling around this inner land-

[34] This is one of the questions asked in the research project *Embodied Critical Thinking*. For further information, see: http//www.ect.hi.is. This chapter was partly written as part of *ECT*.

[35] Claire Petitmengin, "Describing one's Subjective Experience in the Second Person: An Interview Method for the Science of Consciousness", *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 5 (2006), pp. 229–269.

[36] Eugene Gendlin, "Introduction to Thinking at the Edge", *The Folio* 19:1 (2004), pp. 1–8.

scape, for example, while walking, is probably familiar to many of us, although we might not be aware of it. But we can also do this consciously by directing our focused and open attention to our thoughts and feelings of situatedness.

Directing our attention toward our feeling of situatedness, how we at each moment sense our situation in a bodily way, is a key aspect of embodied critical thinking. However, this does not mean that practicing such thinking involves unconditionally trusting one's own emotions, sensations, and intuitions. Directing our attention to the bodily dimensions of thinking does not imply that we use the feelings and sensations that occur, for example, while hearing an argument or reading a philosophical text, as a basis for critical thinking without any filters. If, for example, I'm reading a philosophical text and my bodily reactions, the feeling of situatedness that I sense, is characterized by a feeling of agreement, I do not stop there and simply accept the argument in the text. Rather I go further, engage with this feeling of agreement, and ask what it is about this text that creates this particular sense of the situation, then analyze this feeling further and then build my argument about the text on this basis. In this process, I might find out that what creates this initial feeling of agreement is some experience that colors my opinion in an unacceptable way. If I then read another paper that brings out a strong bodily response of resistance, I also do not stop there but instead ask, what is it that creates this resistance, what it is in my experience and perception that causes me to disagree with what I am reading? The answers to these questions then form the basis of my criticism of the paper. In this manner, we can critically reflect on our feelings and bodily responses to what we are working with instead of ignoring them as dimensions of thought. Critical thinking is this movement between embodied sensing and thinking with words, a process of examining and analyzing our responses to the situations we find ourselves in at each moment. The linguistic turn needs to

be supported by a turn toward lived experience.[37] Practicing critical thinking is an experience of using words and sensing how they fit our experience of reality.[38] Contemporary cognitive science shows us how close the interaction is between language and feeling and how vital the role of our bodies, sensations, and experiences is in our thinking processes.[39]

In our contemporary technological environment, where it is undoubtedly easy to manipulate our feelings and perceptions of reality, it is even more important than ever that we acknowledge the part that feelings and sensations play in our thinking and build our critical thinking on this fact rather than imagining that we can separate our logical thinking from our sensing of the world, or in some way put our feelings aside and apply some sort of pure rationality that has nothing to do with our feelings, sensations, and experiences. There is no such rationality. On the contrary, rationality is closely connected to sensation, as the Icelandic word for rationality, *skyn*semi, implies, where *skyn*, refers to sensing. Using our rationality or skynsemi means paying attention to one's sensing, examining, and analyzing it. In that way, we can distinguish between those moments where our sensing is shaped by outside forces, in contrast to when it is built on our independent analysis of all sides of the matter in light of the most trustworthy and detailed information we obtain. It is time to direct our attention to the bodily roots of knowledge and values. Doing so enables us to see the potential of feminist philosophy that includes and celebrates the body, the senses, and emotions to transform philosophy.[40] Signs of more balance between logical and intuitive thinking in the future can also be

[37] Donata Schoeller & Sigridur Thorgeirsdottir, "Embodied Critical Thinking: The Experiential Turn and its Transformative Aspects", *PhiloSOPHIA* 9:1 (2019), pp. 92–109.

[38] Donata Schoeller, "Somatic-semantic Shifting: Articulating Embodied Cultures", in Schoeller & Saller (Eds.), *Thinking Thinking*; Donata Schoeller, *Close Talking: Erleben zur Sprache bringen* (Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2019).

[39] Damasio, *Descartes' Error*.

[40] Sigridur Thorgeirsdottir and Ruth Hagengruber (Eds.), *Methodological Reflections on Women's Contribution and Influence in the History of Philosophy* (London/New York: Springer, 2020).

seen in emerging discussions about the value of art education in our education systems in recent years. Many national school curriculums now put more emphasis on the role of creative thinking, and discussions of the implications of the fourth industrial revolution suggest that there is a transformative era ahead, where our education systems may be adjusting to a new way of thinking about their role. Their role is no longer only to pass information, to fill our minds with pregiven ideas that we can learn by heart, but rather to educate us in a way that makes us more human; more able to sense our environment with full attention and respond to it in a responsible and reasonable manner, find our own solutions and find our own voice.