Title: Double-body Ownership Experience and the Bodyguard Hypothesis

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Abstract: 1.36

When someone touches my hand, not only am I aware of being touched on the hand, but I am also aware that it is my hand which is touched, rather than someone else’s. This is the sense of body ownership. To explore its nature, the bodyguard hypothesis is one of the accounts that tackles comprehensively the body ownership experience and its relationship with bodily self-awareness, holding that the sense of body ownership is exactly one’s affective experience of the body of which one is aware of its need to be protected (de Vignemont, 2017; 2018). However, the theoretical consequence of the bodyguard hypothesis conflicts with the empirical evidence of the double-body ownership experience (DBE), a subjective experience of owning two bodies at the same time (Huang et al., 2017; Liang et al., 2015; Heydrich et al., 2013). The presence of DBE may indicate that it is possible for a subject to experience two distinct bodily spaces at the same time, whereas the hypothesis precludes the possibility. This presentation aims to argue for the true conflict, and then the bodyguard hypothesis should be revised in virtue of the empirical fact. The argument is formulated as followed: (1) The bodyguard hypothesis implies that every subject can experience only one bodily space. (2) It is possible for a subject to experience DBE. (3) If DBE is a robust phenomenon, then it is possible for a subject to experience two distinct bodily spaces. Therefore, due to the robustness of DBE, the bodyguard hypothesis is incorrect. Finally, for a better understanding on the nature of body ownership, further studies regarding DBE are still called for.