

CHAPTER 2

THING AND SPACE IN HUSSERL

Summary

The phenomenological reason shows how the space and the thing conceived by the scientific and natural thinking are a *construction* upon the unitary and meaningful world of everyday experience; therefore the aim of this chapter is to analyze, from an Husserlian point of view, the most foundational layers of “space” and “thing” beginning from the most fundamental stratum, called by Husserl “phantom”, the mere *res extensa*, and arriving at *kinaesthetic fields* in which the apprehensional character of the things depends from the interplay of sequences of *K*'s (kinaesthetic circumstances) and *i*'s (correlative images) which blend into a unitary and meaningful system of experience.

1. Introduction

Thing and Space is the title of a course held by Edmund Husserl in the Summer semester 1907 at the University of Göttingen; the German original was published posthumously in 1973 as volume XVI of *Husserliana*. The course began with five introductory lectures which were published in 1947, bearing the title *The Idea of Phenomenology*.

The specific matters at issue in this course are “thing” and “space” which he analyzes under the general frame of a “critique of reason”.

While for Kant the task of reason amounts to constitute the scientific reality of thing, for Husserl instead, the thing at issue is the thing of everyday experience; what we need, Husserl declares, is:

to clarify, from the side of experiential cognition, not only the lower levels of the experience which lies prior to all deduction and induction- in short, prior to all logically mediated cognition in the usual sense- but also, and *a fortiori*, we would need to clarify the higher levels.¹

In short, theoretical reason aims at showing how the things conceived by the scientific and natural thinking result from a *construction* upon the unitary and meaningful things of everyday experience.

The focus of the analyses concerning thing and space is then the constitution of the most foundational layer of the most foundational things.

This lower foundational stratum, called by Husserl “phantom”, is the appearance of a mere *res extensa*, that is, an extended structure filled merely with *sense qualities* and not yet with *substantial properties*.

To do this job, the investigations ought to solve the *riddle of transcendence*, making the phenomenological reduction effective in order to arrive at a sphere of “pure phenomena”.²

Husserl prefaces the proper analysis of the “Thing-Lectures” with a brief introduction in which he affirms that the matter at issue is the analysis of natural, pre-scientific experience which has primarily a *perceptual character*; in and through this *natural attitude*, we experience a world that is *familiar* and always *already there*:

In the natural attitude of spirit, an existing world stands before our eyes, a world that extends infinitely in space, that now is, previously was, and in the future will be. This world consists of an inexhaustible abundance of things, which now endure and now change, combine with one another and then again separate, exercise effects on one another and then undergo them. We ourselves fit into this world; just as we find the world, so we find ourselves, and we encounter ourselves in the midst of this world. A pre-eminent position in this world, however, is proper to us: we find ourselves to be centers of reference for the rest of the world; it is our environment.³

Since the end of the XIX century, Husserl aims at the clarification of the *scientific concepts* by returning to the *intuitive ground* from which they spring; for this reason Husserl retains that the analysis of the *geometric space* ought to be anticipated by the investigation of the intuitive space which constitutes the *genetic foundation* of the former.

In *Raumbuch*, Husserl declares that what distinguishes geometrical concepts from experiential concepts is the fact that the former are obtained through a *process of idealization*; in this sense, they cannot be considered as *morphological concepts*

which are apprehended on the basis of sensible perception which is, *per definitionem*, inaccurate and vague.

Geometrical concepts, instead can be viewed as *passages to limits*, ideas in a Kantian sense, insofar they are guided by essential processes which *go beyond* the experience.

Notwithstanding this relevant difference between space of experience and space of geometry, it is undoubted, in Husserl's view, that *geometry takes root in the intuition*, since geometry has a *content fundament*.

In a brief to Natorp, dated 15.3.1897, Husserl affirms that through mere formal determinations we cannot arrive at space, but only to an *Euclidean variety*.

In §70 of *Prolegomena to Pure Logic*, Husserl points out:

If we use the term 'space' of the familiar type of order of the world of phenomena talk of 'spaces' for which, e.g. the axiom of parallels does not hold, is naturally senseless. It is just as senseless to speak of differing geometries, when 'geometry' names the science of the space of the world of phenomena. But if we mean by 'space' the categorial form of world-space, and, correlatively, by geometry the categorial theoretic form of geometry in the ordinary sense, the space falls under a genus, which we can bound by laws, of pure, categorially determinate manifolds, in regard to which it is natural to speak of 'space' in a yet more extended sense.⁴

In this point of view, Euclidean geometry corresponds to the *most direct* idealization of the phenomenal space: it is, as a matter of fact, as *infinite, tridimensional, homogeneous, isotropic* as the space of intuition.

To avoid misunderstanding, it is important to underline that the processes of idealization, according to Husserl, don not occur "on" the ground of intuition, but are prepared "inside" of it through *passive synthesis* by virtue of which the world is constituted for us: idealization does not mean *construction* or even *abstraction*.

According to Husserl there is then a layer of experience which *precedes* language, historically determined cultures and science:

Thus one can put forward by itself the problem of the manner of being of the life-world; one can place oneself completely upon the ground of this straightforwardly intuited world, putting out of play all objective-scientific opinions and cognitions, in order to consider generally what kind of

“scientific” tasks to be resolved with universal validity, arise in respect to this world’s own manner of being⁵.

The world of experience is not a chaotic and disorganized world, but it has an *invariable style*, a particular spatial-temporal form.

To reach then the common layer of experience, we may begin with the leitmotiv represented by the constitution of the spatial thing.

2. *The thing in Ideas I*

In § 150 of *Ideas I*, Husserl considers how the region “physical thing” could serve as a *clue* for a phenomenological investigation.

We can arrive, Husserl notes, to the region “physical thing” through the attitude of *ideation*, proceeding like the geometer in the “freedom and purity” of his geometrical intuition.

He continues stating that the *regional idea* of the physical thing, that is, its identical X with its sense-contents “prescribes rules governing the multiplicities of appearances”.⁶

In this sense, Ullrich Claesges notes, *transcendence* reveals itself as a *noetic-noematic structure*, that is, as *modus* by virtue of which natural consciousness, through “Abschattungen”, posits the self manifesting object.

The totality of the essence of the thing remains transcendent, falling out from the field of the transcendental subjectivity:

Die Totalitaet des Wesens scheint in der transzendentalen Reflexion nicht einholbar. Das Wesen wird zu einem X, das in unaufhebbarer Diskrepanz zu dem steht, was von ihm zur adaequaten Gegebenheit kommen kann.⁷

Notwithstanding the inaccessibility of the totality of the essence “physical thing”, we can note, through eidetic variation, that each physical thing-appearance necessarily includes in itself a stratum called by Husserl “physical thing-schema”:

...it is the spatial shape merely filled with “sensuous” qualities- without any determinateness of “substantiality” and “causality”...⁸

Adopting this way of investigating the problems concerning phenomenological constitution, Husserl concludes that all the troubles regarding the origin of the idea of space can be *reduced* to the phenomenological analysis of the essence of all noematic and noetic phenomena in which space is intuitively presented and constituted as the unity of appearances; for this reason we comprehend the *intimate link* which ties thing and space in phenomenological investigations.

Through originary experiencing consciousness we can arrive at determining the different levels and the strata of physical thing-constitution:

Every level, and every stratum in the level, is characterized by the fact that it *constitutes an own peculiar unity* which, on its side, is a *necessary middle member* for the full constitution of the physical thing.⁹

To begin with, we ought to consider that in pure *phenomenological attitude* there are groups of features which are not represented in the apprehension; the thing which appears at rest and unchanged qualitatively shows us only its schema, so that it is not yet so much as a thing, that is, a thing in the usual sense as *material-real*.

It is also remarkable to note that the concept of *schema* (the concept of *phantom*) cannot be restricted merely to a single sense-sphere:

A perceived thing also has its *tactual schema*, which comes to light in tactual grasping. In general, *there are precisely as many strata there to be distinguished in the full schema as there are to be found classes of sensuous data* which are spread over the spatial extension (appearing as something identical) of the thing.¹⁰

If up to now, we have taken the thing in isolation, it is time to consider that it is in relation to “circumstances” that the thing is what it is.

Reality, called also “materiality”, as a matter of fact, does not lie only in the mere sensuous schema; there are in fact some *functional connections* which relate the schematic modifications of one aspect to those of other aspects.

So long as the circumstances remain unchanged, the schema remains unchanged as well; at any rate, there is a rule according to which to *similar circumstances belong similar functional dependencies*:

A steel spring, once struck, executes certain oscillations and runs through certain successions of states of relative change of place and deformation: the spring has the real property of “elasticity”. As soon as a certain impetus is given, there occurs a corresponding deviation from the state of rest and a certain corresponding mode of oscillation.¹¹

The apperception of real properties include, as a matter of fact, not only the articulation in circumstances but also the functionally dependent changes of the schemata in such a way that this dependency holds in any given case.

By virtue of a “realizing apprehension”, that is, of a kind of apprehension which constitutes the real thing as *substrate* of real properties, the schema or phantom acquires the character of a real determinateness:

Over against the real unitary property, in our example the unchanged Objective color, there stands the momentary real *state*, which corresponds to the “circumstances” and which changes according to rules. The state coincides with the schema; yet it is not a mere schema (the thing is indeed not a mere phantom).¹²

The thing-apprehension then considers the schema not exclusively as an extension filled merely sensuously but also as primal manifestation or “documentation” of real and causal properties; causal dependencies, according to Husserl, come to originary givenness, that is, they are not merely supposed, but also *seen* or *perceived*.

Thus is possible to have various grasping of the thing, even if it is the *identical substrate* of states related to different circumstances:

There are as many directions of unity prefigured in the causal apprehension of the schema (i.e., directions for possible series or perceptions in functional relation to series of perceptible circumstances) as there is multiplicity in the way in which the reality-thing, the unitary material “substance”, is determinable according to *properties* corresponding to the apprehended sense itself.¹³

3. *Systematic constitution of space*

Each body is constituted, according to Husserl, in an *orientation* and this means that each body is given to intuition in a kind of “quality”, in a location which has its dimensional modifications.

A body, as it is discussed above, is constituted as a sensuous schema by the sense of *sight* and *touch*, but this is not the end of the story: every sense in fact is a sense only “through an apperceptive conjunction of the corresponding sense-data with kinaesthetic data”.¹⁴

The kinaesthetic field is, in Husserl’s point of view, a field of *continuous* data; a kinaesthetic field is variable *immediately* and *freely*.

The kinaesthetic field is introduced by Husserl for the purpose of penetrating as deeply as possible into the phenomenological constitution of the three dimensional spatiality: all spatiality, as a matter of fact, comes to givennes in movement, that is, in the movement of the object itself and in the movement of the Ego. It is, as a matter of fact, a *phenomenological law* of constitution that the unity of the object demonstrates itself only in the unity of *synthesis* continually joining the manifold of perceptions:

In our case, it means that an identical and unchanged spatial body demonstrates itself as such only in kinetic series of perceptions, which continually brings to appearance the various sides of that thing.¹⁵

Visual contents are not sufficient in themselves to serve as apprehensional contents for visual spatiality and for a thing in general even if only visual and tactile contents have the peculiarity of *coalescing* into fields, capable as they are of bringing a thing to presentation; classes of sensation that have no fields are therefore incapable of a *projective presentation*:

I am naturally thinking here of the sensations of movement. They play an essential role in the apprehension of every external thing, but they are not themselves apprehended in such a way that they make representable either a proper or an improper matter; they do not belong to the “projection” of the thing. Nothing qualitative corresponds to them in the thing, nor they adumbrate bodies or present them by way of projection. And yet without their cooperation there is no body there, no thing.¹⁶

However, according to Husserl, the incapability of the sensations of movement to present any matter does not apply to the Ego-Body into which these sensations are *inserted* as appearances. If, as a matter of fact, the Body is also a thing, a physical

thing like any other, on the other hand it is the *bearer* of the Ego: which has sensations that are *localized* in the Body.

The touching hand “appears” as having touch sensations. If we turn to the touched Object, smoothness and roughness appear as belonging to it. But if I attend to the touching hand, then it possesses the sensation of smoothness and the sensation of roughness, and it possesses them on or in the appearing finger tips. Likewise, the sensations of location and of movement, which have their Objectivating function, are attributed immediately to the hand and to the arm, as encased in them.¹⁷

4. *The correlation between the visual field and the kinaesthetic sequences*

Every field is, according to Husserl, a fixed system of locations and this means that every element of sensation has its corresponding location, its “here”; more particularly, the visual field is a two-dimensional manifold which is in itself *congruent, continuous, utterly coherent, finite and bounded*.

All the terms that are appropriate to the visual field, such as line, point, location, shape cannot be, in Husserl’s point of view, understood in the spatial sense:

We already said earlier that the visual field is not some sort of surface in Objective space, which makes no sense, any more than points and lines in the visual field are points and lines in Objective space or even have any spatial relation whatsoever to spatial points and lines.¹⁸

A *concretum* in the field can change “*quasi-materially*” (“quasi” means here that the parameters involved are not empirically objective, but phenomenological law-like) according to variables like quality, brilliance, saturation and so on; it can also change in size, shape or location by virtue of kinaesthetic sequences.

Kinaesthetic sensations lack an *essential relation* to the visual sensations, “they are connected to them functionally but not essentially”;¹⁹ kinaesthetic sensations form continuous multidimensional systems in which continuous unities appear only as sequences, that is, by filling a span of time.

For instance, we assume that a kinaesthetic ocular sensation K_1 is at first constant, the thing remaining stationary too, during the stream of time t_0-t_1 ; in this streaming time then the visual image i_1 remains also constant. If then K_1 changes, in a continuous sequence, into K_2 , then the image i_1 , during the new span of time, changes also into i_2 .

If K_2 reverts back to K_1 , then also i_2 changes into i_1 in the same time span:

In every appearance of a stationary thing, these two factors or sensation are involved, the K-factor and the i-factor. Their relation is one of dependence, as we have just attempted to determine. And the dependence is reciprocal. The same K-sensation is accompanied by the same image, and the same image also by the same K-sensation.²⁰

To a complex of K's and i's is attached an *apprehensional character* which refers to the possible sequences of *i* in the total system under the possible kinaesthetic circumstances; *ideal possibilities of fulfillment* then arise in the elapsing of such system:

In every such nexus of fulfillment, the images are subtended by the consciousness of unity, which is and remains the same, where the appurtenant appearances are fulfilled, under the relevant kinaesthetic circumstances, in the sense of the general type.²¹

The consciousness of unity constitutes the one identical thing as is presented identically *through* the images and *under* the relevant circumstances; the continuity of images is a *linear manifold* "extracted out" of a *multidimensional* manifold of possible images which are linked to K's through the unity of the continuity of apprehension: the latter unites the K's and the i's belonging to every temporal phase into an apprehensional unity.

According to Husserl, there are two important and essential components belonging to the temporal elapsing of each apprehensional phase: the *i*-component and the K-component.

The former supplies the "intention toward," the latter the motivation of this intention. The "intention toward" is differentiated and directed in such and such a way under these circumstances K. More precisely, the stream of the K's or, to be exact, the stream of these K's, determines by way of motivation the type and form of the "intention toward" in its elapsing. Every phase of the *i*-component is an "intention toward" in such a way that it penetrates the next phase, i.e., penetrates its image, by referring to it and referring through it: here the *i*-component fulfills itself, but it again penetrates the next phase and again is fulfilled, etc., such that every I is both fulfillment and fulfilling and is so natural by means of its apprehensional function.²²

The system of *K*'s becomes more complex when we expand the system of movements: besides the elapsing of kinaesthetic sensations of the eye, designated above as *K*, there might elapse kinaesthetic sensations pertaining to the *head*, the *trunk* and so on. In this respect, we are provided, as it were, with a complex of variables (*K*, *K'*, *K''*, ...) that, as Husserl notes, are *independently* variable in relation to one another but in such a way that they form a system where each of the variables has a definite value:

Nevertheless, since the change in the images, i.e., the character of the delimitation and fulfillment of the visual field, is not merely dependent on the individual *K*-variables, but also on the manifold system (*K*, *K'*, *K''*, ...), and since the variation of the *K*'s (a name for the "*K'*, *K''*, *K'''*, ..."), in the case of the constancy of *K*, determines new occurrences and manifolds of images of a new type, the intentional system from the very outset is therefore a complicated one.²³

5. The constitution of space: the stationary thing

Let us start from an absolutely stationary world of things, a world, as it were, which lacks qualitative or phoronomic changes of its Objects; *qualitative discontinuity* is what gives the oculomotor image separate existence: the figure or object is distinguished by the fact that its coloration does not blend into that of the surroundings. Change in *orientation* and in *expansion*, in the continuity of the oculomotor fields, creates unities of appurtenance and contains principles of conjunction; notwithstanding such changes, an *identity* penetrates every constant modification so that "every part which has arisen as continuous out of one part of the original image presents the same image".²⁴

The same holds for the *concealment*: if an image constantly obliterates another image then, according to a *rule*, the image that is not yet obliterated remains a presentation of the same thing; when nevertheless the movement is reversed the Object is continuously built back up:

This constant demolition and rebuilding due to such a concealing Object is a system of modifications which is strictly motivated by the kinaesthetic circumstances.²⁵

When an Object is constantly concealed, its full intentions, as a matter of fact, become empty, even if they do not lack the character of perceptual intentions, motivated in the *motivational nexus*.

Let us now proceed to the class of modifications included under the term “expansion”; it can apply unitarily to the whole field or to different pieces of the same.

It holds, according to a phenomenological law, that what pertains to the unity of a continuous expansion also pertains to the unity of a presentation; admittedly, it is possible that different types of expansion can indeed be joined into the unity of an object:

Think, for instance, of the case of two mutually bounded surfaces. Let us take simultaneously visible and mutually bounded surfaces of a polyhedron which present themselves in different expansional modifications. Yet the two series of modifications belong together; they pertain to the same kinaesthetic circumstances, they stream on together, and they form in this unitary stream a determinate type of unitary modification.²⁶

Expansion moreover can be mixed with concealment as in the case of an undulating surface which undergoes kinaesthetic change.

Under the heading of the modification of *turning*, we require that concealment and unconcealment are in play in a way different from that in which the acquisition and loss of presentational content have their source in the entering and exiting of parts of images into or out of the oculomotor field.

Husserl distinguishes between “pure receding” which is a *linear modification*, that is, a kinaesthetic system in which the motivating circumstances vary infinitely in a *linearly orthoid* manner form, and “pure turning” that is a *cyclical modification* where the kinaesthetic circumstances vary cyclically, bringing back the turning series of images.

When an object undergoes a modification of *remoteness*, the image contracts *in infinitum*, having the “null-point” as the limit; in the reverse direction, we encounter the infinite enlargement of the image: in these cases the appearing side is ever the same; the other sides, as it were, appear through the possible modifications of turning.

Husserl remarks that mere expansion is a modification that is not related to mere change in orientation, because the latter is the *displacement* or *rotation* of a figure that maintains its identity in the oculomotor field:

As regards expansion, on the other hand, the points do not retain their reciprocal orientation. The concept of expansion implies in the first place, generally speaking, a change in the location of the points in the field. Where all the points maintain their location, we can naturally not speak of a modification.²⁷

Turning, as distinct from expansion, constantly brings new presentational contents so that to say “the object is turning” means the same as saying that it constantly shows itself from new sides; when a complete revolution is carried out, the sequential appearance of sides brings to appearance the *closedness* of the nexus of sides and therefore, gets the complete corporeal surface to appear as a closed one. Expansional modification lacks, as mere receding and approaching, the cyclical character; it has the character of “bilaterality” where “bilateral” means that it has two and only two directions which fuse as opposites into a linear manifold.

6. Qualitative and phoronomic change of the thing

In the preceding remarks we have started from the assumption that the world of things is absolutely stationary, stationary not only in the phoronomic sense, but also in the qualitative one. We can consider now the changeableness of qualities, e.g. coloration, of the things; everything has its *pre-empirical form* (size for example) and its pre-empirical qualities (color, for example) as filling the form in all its parts: both these components can undergo their changes, thus constituting the objective form filled throughout with objective qualities.

Coloration, Husserl adds, is, on one side, variable independently of the form, but, on the other side, it is inseparable from the form because it reveals itself as the condition of possibility of the concrete form, that is, a condition of possibility for the constitution of corporeality.

As to the question of how is the thing constituted as identical in qualitative change, we can state that the thing is what is unitary when the qualities change

and the form remains identical: the thing is a *multidimensional infinite manifold* of image-modifications which becomes the bearer of the consciousness of unity; when, i.e., the coloration changes unexpectedly, then the actual perception experiences a leap by virtue of which it no longer elapses in the sense of the original apprehension. In this way, the apprehension *disappoints* the intention instead of *fulfilling* it so that the consciousness has the form of the “otherwise”.

When the coloration changes continuously, kinaesthesias can be absolutely stationary for a certain period of time: in this case, the image endures unchanged with regard to pre-empirical form and location, even if the coloration changes. Passing over to the complete system of kinaesthetic motivations, the image is absorbed into the infinities of possible modifications pertaining to the kinaesthetic systems of the Body:

In the system of absolute non-change, there pertains to every kinaesthetic situation, to every determinate Bodily position (once the coordination is carried out through a first perception), a strictly determinate appearance according to color as well as form, and to every kinaesthetic series, to every determinate change in position, there pertains a determinate series of appearances.²⁸

A second basic type of change is *movement*, first of all, movement without qualitative change, thus mere movement.

What characterizes movement is the fact that the object occupies different locations, thus undergoing a change, even if it remains the same: sameness here means that two co-existing things are completely the same, except for their location, if each of them is constituted in the same manifold of appearances. Their difference can reside only in the kinaesthetic relations, in their relations to other things; in this case, the continuous change does not affect the kinaesthetic coordination:

For instance, if I keep my body stationary, perhaps while sitting, and even keep my eyes still, then, at the beginning of the course of movement of the thing, the image α pertains to this bodily posture, thus to the determinate K-complex. Now the thing moves. If we extract a phase of the movement, it offers a different image, β as pertaining to the same K (I am still sitting) but to a different time. Thereby, however, this β -image also already pertains to the thing in its initial location, prior to the movement. But in order to reach this image, I must assume a different bodily

posture: K' . Due to the movement of the thing, however, β is now connected to K instead of K' . Likewise, α also pertains to the thing in its new location, but α is not coordinated to K but to a different K , let us say K'' .²⁹

7. *The importance of the Body for Husserl*

According to Husserl, the importance of the Body, intended as lived body, is not only due to the fact that it is the basis of the constitution of the three-dimensional space, but also to the more massive fact that everything that appears belongs to its (the lived body's) environs; thanks to the Body I am at the center of things and, for this reason, the "I-myself" is a bodily self, as it were, the "I-center" of all my experiences.

My Body then can be conceived as a "null-body" (*Nullkoerper*) thanks to which everything in my immediate surrounding is given a *location*.

My Body, as the *zero point* in analytical geometry, has the property of seeming always to be unmoving in relation to the surrounding world; it moreover presents fundamental anomalies which distinguish it from all other things:

In popular terms, every thing in the whole world can escape from me, except for my own Body... the manifold of images that pertains to the Body has a distinctive kinaesthetic motivation in contrast to other things.³⁰

For instance, when we walk we do not experience only a movement of the legs in relation to the other parts of the Body, but also a movement of the entire visible Body through a change in its distance from other bodies; the Ego-point does not recede, it is always co-moved:

The Body moves, but does so without "receding" from itself: the images of it do not change in the sense of "receding". In this way, therefore, the Ego moves.³¹

The Body thus is stationary to itself so that the true *stabilitas loci* is not to be found in God or in the enduring landmarks, but in myself.

According to Edward Casey, Kant was right to think that the Body is the source of orientation, but he did not show that it is such a source only inasmuch it is the stable center of the perceptual field.³²

Husserl posits between the lived body and the objective space a *Sehraum*, a purely visual space, in order to make the objective space a *lived space*: the visual space has its own system of places (*Ortssystem*) even if the notion of “place” here is conceived mainly as simple location; this last assumption would be demonstrated by the fact that Husserl uses *Ort* (place) and *Lage* (position) interchangeable.³³

Anyway, it seems that Husserl introduces a new conception of place: as a matter of fact, the kinesthetic motivations make of the invariably given manifold of places something which is never given without a *K* (e.g. a kinaesthetic sensation). The feeling of my own body being or moving in a place affects the way I experience that place.

Casey writes:

And if kinesthetic self-awareness is itself the basic form that awareness of my body takes (whether this corporeal consciousness be visual or tactile), then it will constitute a privileged entry into place as I actually experience it. Feeling my body means feeling how it is to occupy the place it is in.³⁴

Kinesthetic self-awareness has the character of spontaneity (*Spontaneitaet*) and this means that its domain is a system of kinaesthetic situations; this character has the form of a “von-mir-aus-Geschehen”³⁵, as it were, of an *occurring thanks to me*. Such a system, determined as spontaneity of the kinaesthetic consciousness, actualizes practical possibilities (*Vermoeglichkeiten*) and, for this reason, it has the character of movement (*Bewegung*).

It is also plausible, on the ground of phenomenological analyses, to suppose that receptivity (*Rezeptivitaet*), that is, the givenness of appearances in an objective apprehension, would depend on kinaesthetic situations so that even the passive layer of consciousness would be founded on the active layer of the same³⁶; the link and interaction between receptivity and spontaneity can be achieved by the

consciousness of the Body which functions as a structural regulative system (*Regelstruktur*).

Claesges states as:

Durch den Leib (als Moment des kinaesthetischen Bewusstseins) wird die Rezeptivitaet so geregelt, dass *sie nur als Empfindung moeglich ist*, d.h. zugleich immer auch als ein Vorkommnis an einer in Raum und Zeit erscheinenden Gegenstaendlichkeit aufgefasst werden kann.³⁷

The foundational correlation between receptivity and spontaneity would depend ultimately on the uniqueness of the Body : it, as a matter of fact, comes ahead of every constitution of spatial-temporal objects, even ahead of that constitution thanks to which it appears as *res extensa*. The Body is not primarily an object, it is much more a structural totality (*Strukturganzheit*) that belongs to the *a priori* of the perceptual and kinaesthetic consciousness.

The Body, in contrast with other objects, is constituted by the “reflection” (*Reflexivitaet*) of the tactile system; insofar as it is subject to the availableness (*Verfuegbarkeit*) of the Ego, the Body reveals itself as an Ego opposed to the outer world:

Dadurch ergibt sich ein doppeltes Verhaeltnis des Ich zu seinem Leibe. Einmal muss sich das Ich mit seinem Leibe identifizieren koennen, den sonst waere nicht einsichtig, wieso das Ich selber in der Welt sein koennte; zum anderen muss sich das Ich von seinem Leib unterscheiden koennen, denn der Leib ist eine kinaestetisch konstituierte Gegenstaendlichkeit, die als solche ein Ich der kinaesthetischen Vermoeglichkeiten voraussetzt.³⁸

Husserl seems to lack an articulated concept of lived space, even if he resorts to various substitutes of the same: think not only of the notion of “concrete appearance” (*Apparenz*), but also, and above all, of that of the “the near-sphere” (*Nahsphaere*):

Thanks to my kinaesthesias, I have access to a near-sphere that is a major part of my “core-world” (*Kernwelt*). In and through- and around- this circle of nearness, places are constellated as nearby areas in/to which I can move. The near-sphere includes the approachability implied in the “I can” of kinaesthetic awareness. My own near-sphere is in effect the proximal place or places in which I

am or to which I *can go* (my far-sphere, in contrast, contains places to which I do not have immediate access.³⁹

The *near-sphere* not only fills the gap between body and place, but it is relevant also for the constitution of space since this does not arise from pure intuition but from concrete things to which we have access; “nearness” can be defined as what I can see in a small stretch of time, in a unitary comprehensive intuition and in a kinesthetic aspect relative to a unified consciousness.⁴⁰

The Husserlian notion of “nearness”, even if more theoretical, can be drawn near to the Heideggerian “closeness” which, however, presents an existential turn; Heidegger thinks of the human implacement in terms of “The Aroundness of the Environment and Dasein’s spatiality”: “closeness” represents, in his point of view, the most salient characteristic of the spatiality of the ready-to-hand in its familiarity:

Every entity that is ‘to hand’ has a different closeness, which is not to be ascertained by measuring distances. This closeness regulates itself in terms of circumspectively ‘calculative’ manipulating and using... When this closeness of the equipment has been given directionality, this signifies no merely that the equipment has its position (*Stelle*) in space as present-at-hand somewhere, but also that as equipment it has been essentially fitted up and installed, set up, and put to rights.⁴¹

The richness here of the notion of “closeness”, associated as it is with terms such as “familiarity”, “calculative manipulating” or “equipment”, marks its distance from the Husserlian concept of “nearness” which gets rid of the existential concreteness of the Heideggerian “closeness”.

The notion of “closeness” or that of “nearness” assume an even more important role in Heidegger’s very late writings: this relevance is indicated by the verbal proliferation of terms like the active gerund “naehernd” or noun forms like “nearhood” (*Nahheit*) and “nighness” (*Nahnis*). Thanks to nearness, the Open is not enclosed from without neither gathered as a region or located as a thing: it points much more to a *neighborhood*, that is, to the nearness of things and people who *cohabit* a place in common.⁴²

It remains now to answer the question of what, in Husserl's point of view, makes possible the passage from the near-sphere to the objective space.

Spatiality, that is, objective space, is constituted through the *concatenation* of places available to me in my near-sphere; according to Casey, what we call "space" is not just the correlate, as it is for Claesges, of my kinesthetically felt near-sphere but its very *expansion*. In Husserl's point of view, the apperceptive expansion (*Erweiterung*) of the near-sphere is achieved in a homogeneous infinite open world of space:

This amounts to saying that the emptying and amalgamation of particular spaces, each of which is felt kinesthetically by the lived body, becomes in short order the planiform, absolute space of Newton. But that is possible only to the extent that places themselves depend on the lived body as the I-center or null-point, the "absolute here", of any given perceptual field.⁴³

The lived body, according to Husserl, is not itself *in* space as a physical object exists in space; it moves *through* space as "indirectly co-localized" in its movements:

My body- in particular, say, the bodily part "hand"-moves in space; [but] the activity of holding sway, "kinesthesia", which is embodied together with the body's movement, is not itself in space as a spatial movement but is only indirectly co-localized in that movement.⁴⁴

Only by virtue of this original experience of the bodily *holding-sway*, I am able to understand another physical body as a living body in which another "I" is embodied and holds sway.

If we believe that only natural sciences would capture the true nature of things, then, as a matter of fact, we are compelled to think that the *Lebenswelt* is merely subjective and relative, treating the world as if it could exist independently of any human accomplishment; Husserl opposes this view; it is because it does not justice to the *very subjectivity* which accomplishes science.

- ³² D. Lohmar, *Erfahrung und kategoriales Denken. Hume, Kant und Husserl ueber vorpraedikative Erfahrung und praedikative Erkenntnis*, cit. p. 253.
- ³³ *EJ*, 203.
- ³⁴ *EJ*, 203.
- ³⁵ Ch. Harvey, J. Hintikka, "Modalization and Modalities", cit., p.66.
- ³⁶ *EJ*, 239.
- ³⁷ J. N. Mohanty, "Intentionality and Possible World: Husserl and Hintikka", cit., 251.
- ³⁸ J. N. Mohanty, "Husserl on 'possibility'", *Husserl Studies*, 1, 1984.
- ³⁹ *IPPII*, 275.
- ⁴⁰ Cfr. J. N., Mohanty, "Husserl on 'possibility'", cit., p.26.
- ⁴¹ *IPPI*, 205.
- ⁴² See M. Heidegger, *Logik als die Frage nach dem Wesen der Sprache*, in Gesamtausgabe, Bd. 38, Frankfurt a. Main 1998, p.79.
- ⁴³ Cfr. E. Husserl, *Die Krisis der europaeischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phaenomenologie. Ergaenzungsband. Texte aus dem Nachlass 1934-1937*, Kluwer, The Hague 1992, pp.425-426.
- ⁴⁴ E. Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston 1970, pp.142-143.
- ⁴⁵ Ms. K III 6/54a.

Notes to chapter 2

- ¹ E. Husserl, *Thing and Space: Lectures of 1907*, Kluwer, Dordrecht 1997, p.2; hereafter *TS*.
- ² See *IP*, 33.
- ³ *TS*, 2.
- ⁴ E. Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, vol. I, Routledge & Paul Kegan, London 1970, pp. 157-158.
- ⁵ E. Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston 1970, p. 123.
- ⁶ E. Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, vol. I, Kluwer, Dordrecht 1982, p.361; hereafter *IPPI*.
- ⁷ U. Claesges, *Edmund Husserls Theorie der Raumkonstitution*, Martinus Nijhoff, Den Haag 1964, p. 50.
- ⁸ *IPPI*, 361.
- ⁹ *IPPI*, 363.
- ¹⁰ E. Husserl, *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, vol. II, Kluwer, Dordrecht 1989, p.41; hereafter *IPPII*.
- ¹¹ *IPPII*, 45.
- ¹² *IPPII*, 46.
- ¹³ *IPPII*, 47.
- ¹⁴ *TS*, 257.
- ¹⁵ *TS*, 132.
- ¹⁶ *TS*, 136.
- ¹⁷ *TS*, 137.
- ¹⁸ *TS*, 141.
- ¹⁹ *TS*, 143.
- ²⁰ *TS*, 149.
- ²¹ *TS*, 157.
- ²² *TS*, 158.
- ²³ *TS*, 169.
- ²⁴ *TS*, 208.
- ²⁵ *TS*, 208.
- ²⁶ *TS*, 210.
- ²⁷ *TS*, 213.
- ²⁸ *TS*, 230.
- ²⁹ *TS*, 238.
- ³⁰ *TS*, 241.
- ³¹ *TS*, 242.

- ³² See E.S. Casey, *The Fate of Place. A Philosophical History*, University of California Press, 1998, p.218.
- ³³ See E.S. Casey, *The Fate of Place. A Philosophical History*, cit., p.218.
- ³⁴ E.S. Casey, *The Fate of Place. A Philosophical History*, cit., p. 219.
- ³⁵ See, U. Claesges, *Edmund Husserls Theorie der Raumkonstitution*, cit., p.127.
- ³⁶ See L. Landgrebe, "Prinzipien einer Lehre vom Empfinden", in *Zeitschrift fuer philosophische Forschung*, VIII, 1954, p.205.
- ³⁷ U. Claesges, *Edmund Husserls Theorie der Raumkonstitution*, cit., p.129.
- ³⁸ U. Claesges, *Edmund Husserls Theorie der Raumkonstitution*, cit., p.122.
- ³⁹ E.S. Casey, *The Fate of Place. A Philosophical History*, cit., p.219.
- ⁴⁰ See Beilage 73, "Die Konstitution des Raumes in Synthetischen Uebergang von Nahraum zu Nahraum", in E. Husserl, *Zur Phaenomenologie des Intersubjectivitaet*. Zweiter Teil: 1921-28, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague 1973, where Husserl writes, among other things, that "der Raum [ist] konstituiert im Uebergang von Nahraum zu Nahraum durch Fernkinaesthenen" (p.546).
- ⁴¹ M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, State University of New York Press, Albany 1953, p. 135.
- ⁴² See M. Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, Harper & Row, New York 1971, p. 93.
- ⁴³ E.S. Casey, *The Fate of Place. A Philosophical History*, cit., p.220.
- ⁴⁴ E. Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, cit., p.217.

Notes to chapter 3

- ⁴⁵ R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1979.
- ⁴⁶ R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, cit., p.170.
- ⁴⁷ W. A. deVries, *Wilfrid Sellars*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Ithaca 2005, p.62.
- ⁴⁸ R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, cit., p.64. Sellars points out that the question concerning the existence of *synthetic a priori* knowledge depends on a *decision* rather than on an *answer*: "What the decision should be, that is, which meaning (if any) should be attached to the term 'a priori', it is by no means easy to say. Many factors are involved, by no means the least of which is a sense of belonging to one or other of the two major traditions of Western philosophy.... If one is tired of philosophical shibboleths, and finds important insights on both sides of the fence, one will content oneself with pointing out that while every conceptual frame involves propositions which, though synthetic, are true *ex vi terminorum*, every conceptual frame is also but one among many which compete for adoption in the market-place of experience" (*ITSA*, in *SPR*, 319-320).
- ⁴⁹ R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, cit., p.174.
- ⁵⁰ According to Sellars, learning to use a language doesn't amount to learning to *obey* the rules for the use of its expressions; obeying rules, as a matter of fact, involves using the language in which the rules are formulated leading in this way to a *vicious regress*. To avoid this, we ought to substitute "the phrase 'learning to conform to the rules...' for 'learning to obey the rules...' where 'conforming to a rule enjoining the doing of A in circumstances C' is to be equated simply with 'doing A when the circumstances are C' - regardless of how one comes to do it" (*SRLG*, in *SPR*, 322). In doing so, learning to use a language (L) doesn't entail no longer having learned to use the metalanguage (ML), and so on.
- ⁵¹ R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, cit., p.177.
- ⁵² L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Blackwell, Oxford 2001, pp.27^c-28^c; hereafter *PI*.
- ⁵³ R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, cit., p.178. The claim that justification is a practice referred to what we already accept amounts to reject, in Sellars' point of view, the falsely atomistic conception of belief: individual beliefs, as a matter of fact, are neither meaningful nor justified in isolation from the conceptual framework of which they are part.
- ⁵⁴ Sellars writes: "Jones thinks out-loud: Lo! Here is a red apple. Now to say that this visual thinking-out-loud that something is the case is epistemically *justified* or *reasonable* or has authority is clearly *not* to say that Jones has correctly inferred from certain premises, which he has good reason to believe, that there is a red apple in front of him. For we are dealing with a *paradigm* case of non inferential belief. *The authority of the thinking accrues to it in quite a different way. It can be traced to the fact that Jones has learned to use the relevant words in perceptual situations*" (*SK*, 324).
- ⁵⁵ Sellars points out: "One of the forms taken by the Myth of the Given is the idea that there is, indeed *must* be, a structure of particular matter of fact such that (a) each fact can not only be non-inferentially known to be the case, but presupposes no other knowledge either of particular matter