



Embodiment, Enaction, and Culture

Investigating the Constitution of the Shared World

edited by Christoph Durt, Thomas Fuchs, and Christian Tewes

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1 Intercorporeality and Intersubjectivity: A Phenomenological Exploration of Embodiment

Dermot Moran

1 Phenomenology as an Eidetic Description of *Ineinandersein* and the Life of Spirit

The phenomenological movement—especially as originally developed by Husserl and elaborated by Scheler, Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty—has been responsible for the radical reconception of human existence that revolutionized philosophy in the twentieth century and is still being assimilated more generally in philosophy of mind and action, as well as in the cognitive sciences (see, e.g., Varela, Thompson, and Rosch 1999; Thompson 2010; Shapiro 2014). Edmund Husserl, in particular, focused intensively on a number of central themes, such as the intentionality of consciousness and the constitution of sense, the essential description of the a priori structures of consciousness (“the ABC of consciousness”), the essential structures of lived embodiment (*Leiblichkeit*), the nature of empathy (*Einfühlung*) and the experience of the foreign (*Fremderfahrung*), and finally the wider a priori structures of intersubjectivity (*Intersubjektivität*) and “sociality” (*Sozialität*).

The mature Husserl aimed at nothing less than a holistic phenomenological description of the entire “life of consciousness” (*Bewusstseinsleben*) or “life of spirit” (*Geistesleben*), including human sociality, communalization, historicity, generativity, and life in culture and tradition. He wanted to describe human life in its rich intersubjective concreteness. Regrettably, phenomenologists who concentrate narrowly on the early Husserl of the *Logical Investigations* (1900–1901; Husserl 2001a) and *Ideas I* (Husserl 1977a)¹ often overemphasize his focus on the individual life of intentional consciousness as reconstructed from within (and even on the structure of individual, atomistic lived experiences [*Erlebnisse*]) and tend to overlook Husserl’s original, radical, and fundamentally groundbreaking explorations of intersubjectivity, sociality, and the constitution of historical cultural life (which would later influence Heidegger and Schütz, among others).

1. Hereafter the work will be cited as *Ideas I*, followed by the paragraph number (§), page number of the translation (2014b), and then the *Husserliana* volume number and page.

In respect of this individualist misinterpretation, Husserl is often his own worst enemy, since he repeatedly and very publicly, for example, in his *Cartesian Meditations* (Husserl 1950, 1967; hereafter *CM*), compared his phenomenological breakthrough to subjectivity with Descartes's discovery of the *ego cogito* and modeled his phenomenological *epoché*, albeit with important changes of emphasis, on Descartes's radical doubt. As a result, Husserl's phenomenology has too often been designated a methodological solipsism that proceeds through individualistic introspection of conscious experiences, and Husserl's wider explorations of social and cultural life have been passed over (and many of his original discoveries have been attributed to others, e.g., Heidegger and Gadamer). It is worth reminding ourselves, therefore, of the originality of Husserl's meditations on the nature of the self, its embodiment, and its intercorporeal, intersubjective communal relations with others.

In this chapter,² then, I want to focus on Husserl's mature reflections (i.e., as specifically found in his writings of the 1920s and 1930s) on the intentional constitution of culture, particularly as he understood it to relate to lived embodiment and, especially, the specific relations that hold between lived bodies, their *Ineinandersein*, *Füreinandersein*, or what Husserl calls in *Cartesian Meditations* "a mutual being-for-one-another" (*ein Wechselseitig-füreinander-sein*; *CM*, 129; *Hua I*, 157). As he puts it elsewhere, in the *Crisis of European Sciences* (Husserl 1970, 1962), Husserl approaches human subjects not only as having "subject being for the world" (*Subjektsein für die Welt*) but also as possessing "object being in the world" (*Objektsein in der Welt*; *Crisis*, 178; *Hua VI*, 182). How humans can be both in the world and for the world is, for him, the riddle of transcendental subjectivity.

Human beings not only have a sense of the individual identity and continuity of the flow of consciousness but also have a sense of being involved with one another. Human beings unite in many forms of social and collective intentionality. But Husserl also writes of humans as possessing a "world-consciousness" (*Weltbewusstsein*). This world-consciousness is a very real and complex phenomenon. It allows human subjects not only to experience things from their individual points of view but also to participate in evolving historical cultural life. Yet few phenomenologists have explored Husserl's conception of *Weltbewusstsein*, although it is, for him, a central component to human "being-in-the-world."

Human beings are, in the parlance of contemporary cognitive science, embodied, enactive, embedded, and "enworlded."³ Human subjectivity, moreover, is always a cosubjectivity (*Mitsubjektivität*) with others in the shared context of an evolving, historical world. For Husserl, that consciousness must be embodied is an eidetic law. He speaks broadly

2. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the conference *Enacting Culture: Embodiment, Interaction and the Development of Culture*, October 15–17, 2014, TESIS, University of Heidelberg, Germany, on Wednesday, October 15, 2014. I am grateful to Thomas Fuchs, Christoph Durt, Stefano Micali, Sarah Heinämaa, and Dan Hutto for their comments.

3. Gerda Walther, one of Husserl's students, explicitly speaks of "embedding" (*Einbettung*) in her *Zur Phänomenologie der Mystik* (1923).

of embodiment as *Leiblichkeit* and *Verleiblichung* (1973e; *Hua XV*, 289),⁴ but also as “incorporation” (*Verkörperung*; 1973c; *Hua XIII*, 139), and even of the “enworlding” (*Verweltlichung*) or the “humanization” (*Vermenschlichung*; 1973e; *Hua XV*, 705) of the transcendental subject.

While contemporary cognitive science has come to see the human being as essentially intersubjective and social, it has not yet fully taken on board the dynamics of human temporal life—a life lived in the context of a historical community. Phenomenology still has much to contribute in this regard.

It is this world-consciousness that allows each conscious subject to feel a belonging with other subjects in a shared world. Humans live necessarily in various forms of community (from family to state), as well as participating in a generation and having a sense of other generations (father, mother, forefathers, etc.; see Husserl 1973e; *Hua XV*, 178)—part of what Husserl speaks of as the life of “generativity” (*Generativität*, a concept he seems to have developed entirely separately from Heidegger; see *Crisis*, 188; *Hua VI*, 191).⁵ Generativity is, for Husserl, just one of the many a priori structures (Heidegger will call them “existentialia”) that go to constitute communal, social life (for a discussion of the world as it appears to acting, practical subjects, for example, the way the death of a child can break with the normal course of life, something Husserl and his wife Malvine experienced when their son was killed in action in the Great War, see Husserl 1973e; *Hua XV*, 212).

Furthermore, Husserl very early established the interrelation between objectivity and intersubjectivity, between the intentional experience of something as having an identity and a sense that transcends our distinctive points of view and the sense that we have that our points of view are partial and that others bring different perspectives to bear on situations. Husserl saw that the undeniable primary experience of the objective world is of the *one shared world* that all of us experience (“for all,” *für jedermann*, Husserl 1974, 1969; *Hua XVII*, 244). The sense of objectivity is co-constituted by us, and we are constituted as living beings in relation to this backdrop of world. The objective world means simply the world that is the object of our intersubjective intentions and attitudes. The constitution of objectivity is

4. Husserl’s terminology is flexible; he also speaks of *organische Leiblichkeit* (1968; *Hua IX*, 109), *physische Leiblichkeit* (1968; *Hua IX*, 129), and even of the body as *Leibding*.

5. Husserl develops his own terminology for talking about history and tradition. His concept of “generativity” is one such example. David Carr translates the term—somewhat misleadingly—as “genesis.” The term usually has a medical meaning of “concern with the next generation,” e.g., in rearing children, but is broadened by Husserl to mean the overall process by which cultural meaning is creatively filtered and transmitted from one generation to another. The concept was later developed by the psychoanalyst Erik Erikson (1902–1994) to cover all kinds of ways in which traditions may be passed on or inhibited, e.g., a child deciding to stand up to familial abuse. Husserl discusses “generativity” in greater detail in texts associated with the *Crisis*; see especially the 1934 supplement, *Verschiedene Formen der Historizität* (*Different Forms of Historicity*, in Husserl 1992).

closely related to the experience of embodiment. One's own lived body is, in an important sense, the first object that one experiences.

2 The Centrality of Embodiment for Husserl: *Leib* and *Körper*

In line with Husserl's meditations on cultural life, the centrality of embodiment in his phenomenology is also not yet fully appreciated, primarily because these reflections were carried out in *Ideas II* (Husserl 1952),⁶ the draft manuscript of which Husserl felt unable to complete and publish in his lifetime. As a result, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who had access to the *Ideas II* manuscript from as early as his visit to Leuven in 1939, is usually credited with inaugurating the phenomenology of embodiment in his *Phenomenology of Perception* (Merleau-Ponty 1945) and in subsequent publications.⁷ Despite Merleau-Ponty's popularization of embodiment, especially perceptual and motor embodiment, Husserl's own phenomenology is, in many ways, almost totally and even exclusively a "phenomenology of embodiment" (*Phänomenologie der Leiblichkeit*), a phrase he uses in his *Phenomenological Psychology* lectures (1977b, 153; 1968; *Hua IX*, 199) of 1925 (which are themselves an extended reflection on embodiment). Embodiment forms the basis of perception and agency but also lies at the root of the human "existential" experience of being-in-the-world most generally, of "acting and suffering" (*Tun und Leiden*), as Husserl says.

The phenomenological tradition generally—including not just Husserl but also Max Scheler, Edith Stein, and later Helmuth Plessner—begins its analysis of embodiment from the key distinction, found originally in Fichte and the earlier German idealists, between the animate, "lived body" (*Leib*), that is experienced first-personally and the physical, material, objective "body" (*Körper*) that is subject to the laws of physics, causation, gravity, and so on (see Waldenfels 2000; Grätzel 1989). It must be emphasized that *Leib* and *Körper* are on a continuum; in fact, Husserl speaks of a *Verflechtung* between *Leib* and *Körper*. The body can be experienced as a living, responsive organism (when I run and jump) or as a physical thing (when I fall and bang my knee). Indeed, Sartre points out in *Being and Nothingness* that an anesthetic can render the organic body as mere physical thing by numbing the limb (1995, 304; 1943, 366), thereby rendering the touching-touched circle inoperative.⁸ Normally,

6. Hereafter cited as *Ideas II*, followed by paragraph number (§), page number of the translation (1989), and then the *Husserliana* volume number and page.

7. There are exceptions; see, in particular, Behnke 2010; Bernet 2013; Heinämaa 2011; and Taipale 2014.

8. In contrast to Merleau-Ponty, however, Sartre claims that the phenomenon of double sensation does not reveal something essential about embodiment. For Sartre, the double sensation is simply a contingent feature of our embodied existence and is not a significant or exemplary phenomenon. Sartre claims that the double sensation can easily be removed by morphine, which makes my leg numb and insensitive to being touched (1995, 304; 1943, 366). The intertwining of touching and touched is

however, the body-subject or organically experienced body is prior in that it is the primary way we experience our own bodies.

Normally and primarily, for Husserl, we experience our bodies as living organisms, and the body as purely physical entity is grasped only by abstraction from everything psychic. As Husserl writes:

Thus the body [*der Leib*] is seen at this level ... and seen in its two-sidedness, at the same time in its physical externality [*Äusserlichkeit*] and its animating internality [*Innerlichkeit*]. Only if we abstract from this internality co-existing in every normal experience of the body [*Leibeserfahrung*] do we have the purely physical body-thing [*Leibding*]. Thus, e.g., the foot as material spatial body [*Körper*]. But as my foot in the experience of my body, it is more; the field of touch-sensations and contact sensations governs it, is localized in it. (1977b, 100; *Hua IX*, 131)

Husserl writes about our own peculiar relation to our bodies in the following research note from 1921:

Thus the body has in itself the most original character of being mine [*den ursprünglichsten Charakter des Meinen*]; belonging to me, it contrasts with the foreign, in which I am not involved, i.e., not practically [*nicht praktisch*]. ... My body is among all things the closest [*Mein Leib ist mir unter allen Dingen das Nächste*], the closest in perception, the closest in feeling and will. And so I am, the functioning I, before all other worldly objects united with it [the body] in a special way. (Husserl 1973; *Hua XIV*, 58, my translation)

The lived body, in Husserl's account, is experienced from within as a center of orientation, sensations, movement, action and affection, as a series of "I can's." But the body is not just a set of abilities and habitualities. It also engages in its own self-constitution and is expressive of the ego-subject that inhabits it. The bodily subject's self-presence, moreover, is permeated by gaps and absences. As Husserl says, the body is "a remarkably imperfectly constituted thing" (*Ideas II*, §41(b), 167; *Hua IV*, 159). This allows the body to become continually expressive and to develop new significations that eventually become sedimented into its very embodied condition.

3 The Embedded and Enworlded Body-Subject

In his later works, Husserl tries to explore this embeddedness and enworldedness of the human subject in terms of his original concept of "horizons," zones of genuine significance

not revelatory of our being-in-the-world. Rather, for Sartre, to touch and be touched reflect different "orders" or "levels" of being. When one hand touches the other hand, I directly experience the hand that is being touched first. In other words, I am intentionally directed at the *object*. It is only because of the possibility of a *certain reflection* that I can turn back and focus on the sensation in the touching hand. This reflection is not inbuilt in the primary act of intending. Sartre maintains that this constitutes ontological proof that the body-for-me and the body-for-the-other are entirely separate intentional objectivities.

that cannot be objectified in the manner of the objects of perceptual experience but serve to contextualize in fundamentally different ways the objects in experience.⁹ Horizons have various levels of indeterminacy. In §27 of *Ideas I*, for instance, he speaks of the horizons of inactualities that surround the perceived actualities:

What is currently perceived, what is determinate (or at least somewhat determinate) and co-present in a more or less clear way is in part pervaded, in part surrounded by a horizon of indeterminate actuality, a horizon of which I am dimly conscious. I am able to direct the illuminating focus of my attention on it with varying success. (*Ideas I*, §27, 49; *Hua III/1*, 49)

In later years, Husserl speaks of the need to examine in particular the nature of what he calls “horizon intentionality” (*Horizontintentionalität*) that is quite distinct from the more usual object intentionality that has been the focus of most philosophical discussion. Horizon in everyday parlance is primarily a spatial notion. It marks the limits of the visible. But in Husserl, horizon is primarily a temporal notion, marking the way in which the present emerges from the past and projects toward the future.

Every lived experience (*Erlebnis*) is not just built on the past, layered with sedimented meaning and surrounded by environmental affordances, but also projects a “horizon” of emptiness, of possibility, anticipation, and futurity. Furthermore, conscious experiences are not just first-personal decisions and position taking (*Stellungnehmen*); the conscious subject emerges from and builds on unconscious living experiences that are passively experienced. The subject can simply be drawn toward certain sounds as attractive or can like certain colors or tastes. It is conditioned and motivated by these passive allures: “I choose the fabric for the sake of its beautiful color or its smoothness” (*Ideas II*, §34, 148; *Hua IV*, 140). The self “sinks its tap roots into nature,” as Edith Stein says (2000, 115). It is affected by what Husserl speaks of as “psychophysical conditionalities,” whatever has been given to us in terms of height, strength, basic health, and all those other factual features of our embodied experience that might be considered as “the given.”

The self, moreover, is never experienced in a complete self-disclosure (in the immediacy of the *cogito*) but experiences itself as mediated through interaction with other selves (e.g., parents, siblings, teachers, friends, colleagues, and what Alfred Schütz calls, more generally, “consociates” [1967, 109]). Human subjectivity in its temporal flow of experiential consciousness can only be understood if its horizons (temporal, motivational, senseful), especially its overlapping horizons with other subjects, can definitively be charted. For Husserl, the intertwining and overlapping of sensory modalities in the embodied subject give us the place to start reflecting on the experience of otherness and especially the other’s lived body.

9. In the *Crisis* (264; *Hua VI*, 267) Husserl praises William James for his notion of “fringes,” which Husserl takes to be a version of his own concept of “horizons.” Husserl’s notion of horizon includes not just spatial and temporal horizons but all kinds of experiences of boundaries, zones, and shades of indeterminacy that surround what is determinate in our experience.

4 Reversibility, the “Double Sensation” (*Doppelempfindung*), and the Flesh

What makes Husserl’s phenomenology radically original lies not only in its extensive elaboration of the concept of “lived embodiment” (*Leiblichkeit*) and its perceptual, willing, and active life, but also in its exploration of the “intertwining” (*Verflechtung*; see Moran 2014) that already occurs *within* the body (e.g., hand-touching-hand, which produces “double sensations”) and, crucially, prefigures embodied relations *between* subjects in the constitution of the “we-world” (*Wir-Welt*) of intersubjectively shared culture. It was indeed Husserl who first took over a traditional trope from nineteenth-century psychology, namely, the exploration of the phenomenon of self-touching, our ability to touch ourselves, and made it indicative of the very essence of embodiment.¹⁰

Merleau-Ponty, inspired by Husserl’s discussion of the “double sensation,” seized and expanded on this insight to make the touching-touched relation central to the experience of embodiment, or what he termed “the flesh” (*la chair*). Deeply influenced by Husserl’s manuscript of *Ideas II* (which Merleau-Ponty continued to read creatively in later years after his first encounter with the manuscript in 1939, stimulated especially by Marly Biemel’s *Husserliana* edition that appeared in 1952), Merleau-Ponty (1968, 1964a) in *The Visible and the Invisible* (hereafter *VI*) speaks primarily of “incarnation” (*incarnation*) or simply just “flesh” (*la chair*) (*VI*, 31; 51), a term he could also have encountered in Sartre’s *Being and Nothingness*, which has an important chapter on embodiment (see Moran 2011). “Flesh,” as Merleau-Ponty puts it in *The Visible and the Invisible*, is essentially characterized by “reversibility” (*réversibilité*), “the finger of the glove that is turned inside out” (*VI*, 263; 311) and “the doubling up of my body into inside and outside” (*VI*, 264; 311). Flesh is one entity that is sensitive on both sides: inward and out.

It was Merleau-Ponty, too, who recognized that the phenomenon of touching-touched cannot be separated from the wider issue of the relation between subjects in empathy and, indeed, the overarching issue of the intersubjective constitution of the objective world as such. In his late essay commemorating Husserl, *The Philosopher and His Shadow* (*Le philosophe et son ombre*), written in 1959 and published in *Signs* (Merleau-Ponty 1960, 1964b), Merleau-Ponty writes that “the problem of *Einfühlung*, like that of my incarnation, opens on the meditation of sensible being, or, if you prefer, it betakes itself there” (*Le problème de l’Einfühlung comme celui de mon incarnation débouche donc sur la méditation du sensible, ou, si l’on préfère, il s’y transporte*; *Signs*, 171; 215). In other words, the apprehension of the other in its various forms (from the other of my body to other bodies) is itself based on the understanding of incarnation, whose very essence is revealed through the touching-touched relation. The touch opens up one’s own body, and that of the other, as a living presence: “Es wird Leib, es empfindet,” as Merleau-Ponty often repeats, echoing a passage in Husserl’s *Ideas II*, §36:

10. For a discussion of the phenomenology of touch and vision, see Moran 2015.

If I speak of the *physical* thing, “left hand,” then I am abstracting from these sensations (a ball of lead has nothing like them and likewise for every “merely” physical thing, every thing that is not my Body [*Leib*]). If I do include them, then it is not that the physical thing is now richer, instead *it becomes Body, it senses* [*es wird Leib, es empfindet*]. ... The sensation is doubled. Hence the Body is originally constituted in a double way. (*Ideas II*, 152–153; *Hua IV*, 145)¹¹

As Merleau-Ponty insists, the touching-touched relation totally transforms our ontology and moves us beyond the dualism of subject and object. He writes in his famous essay *The Philosopher and His Shadow*:

It is imperative that we recognize that this description also overturns our idea of the thing and the world, and that it results in an ontological rehabilitation of the sensible. For from now on we may literally say that space itself is known through my body. ... When we say that the perceived thing is grasped “in person” or “in the flesh” (*leibhaft*), this is to be taken literally: the flesh of what is perceived, this compact particle which stops exploration, and this optimum which terminates it all reflect my own incarnation and are its counterpart. (*Signs*, 166–167; 210–211)

Perceptual presence of the intentional object, the experience of subjective incarnation, and the distinctive experience of empathy with the other (in all its gradations) are all interrelated in both Husserl’s and Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology.

5 The Openness to the Other in Empathy

Empathy, as Husserl conceives it (and as Merleau-Ponty quite brilliantly recognizes), always includes a recognition of the other’s lived body as expressive of his or her subjectivity that is perceived and lived through, but cannot be inhabited fully from within, the first-person perspective (see Moran 2004; Zahavi 2014). I apprehend you in your unique subjectivity, and I live through your emotional and cognitive states as perceived directly by me, but I cannot inhabit them in the precise manner you inhabit them. Empathy, according to the Husserlian and Merleau-Pontian approaches, involves a direct perceptual relation with the other. When the phone rings, I *hear* John’s voice; I do not hear a set of electronic sounds and *infer* that John is the cause of these noises and conclude, therefore, that John is speaking to me. Empathy is not “inference” (*Schluss*), as Husserl often proclaims. It does not come about, under normal conditions, as the conclusion of a chain of reasoning (although clearly such chains of inference can occur, as when Sherlock Holmes infers the suspect’s motive for the crime). In everyday life, empathy is direct and is experienced as immediate (even if it is in fact mediated through the cues or expressivity of the lived body).

Empathy has to incorporate or (to use Husserl’s term *Fundierung*) *be founded on* the perception of the living body of the other person, but it never stops there (unless one is explicitly

11. Merleau-Ponty (*Signs*, 166; 210) invokes Husserl’s phrase “es wird Leib, es empfindet” in his essay *The Philosopher and His Shadow* to express the peculiar manner in which touching brings one’s own flesh to animate life.

intentionally directed to the body's movements as a director might direct an actor). Empathic perception *sees through* the living body, as it were, to the intentional situation, to the matter that is in play. I enter a room and intuitively grasp that an argument is going on or that the relation between the people in the room radiates awkwardness. Similarly, I am attuned to others (even to consociates I do not personally know) when I negotiate public spaces, step around people in the street, stand behind people in a queue (although the acceptable distances or "body space" involved is highly culturally specific). This *attunement* (Husserl speaks of *Paarung*, "pairing") is taking place primarily in the intentional space of sense or meaning, but not necessarily explicitly in the sphere of linguistic meaning; it is incorporated in bodily expression. The smile *reveals* happiness, the grimace pain. As we move to the higher levels of communal and social organization, empathy requires us to deploy our resources as fully engaged, acting, embodied subjects who are responsive to motivations and reason. From this point of view, the communication between subjects takes place at the level of *persons* (as Husserl will emphasize) who relate to one another in an interpersonal way that prioritizes people as free, reason-responsive agents.

6 Intercorporeity and Intersubjectivity

In his many private meditations on intersubjectivity and, of course, in his published *Fourth* and *Fifth Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl deftly tried to articulate the full complexity of the manner in which human subjects negotiate this tricky intertwining of first- and second-person perspectives in the "personalistic attitude." As is well known, Husserl never felt he had resolved precisely the manner that the other persons are given to the subject precisely as other, as another subject with his or her distinctive point of view. Husserl was not able to fully characterize how it is that one lived-body subject experiences another. Merleau-Ponty, despite his many advances over Husserl, also could not deliver a sophisticated account of empathy. Even in his mature reflections in the posthumously published *The Visible and the Invisible*, Merleau-Ponty never develops an account of empathy that could rival Husserl's in its detail and complexity, but he does offer a new name for the embodied subject's intercourse with other embodied subjects when he proposes the name "intercorporeity" or "intercorporeality" (*intercorporéité*). In fact, Husserl himself never uses the equivalent German word for "intercorporeality," *Zwischenleiblichkeit*, but it is undoubtedly the case that he explores the phenomenon without explicitly naming it. By explicitly naming it, Merleau-Ponty foregrounds it as a key element of intersubjectivity. Moreover, for Merleau-Ponty, intercorporeality has many different forms, and, indeed, he even speaks of "interanimality" (*interanimalité*), widening the net of intercorporeal relations beyond the interhuman and including various forms of interspecies encounters (an area of research that is only now being recognized in the philosophy of embodiment and the cognitive sciences). Interanimality is to be found in petting an animal, milking a cow, riding a horse, doing "doga" (yoga with a pet dog as partner), or even in more extreme cases, such as the practice of zoophilia, having sex with animals. For

thousands of years, the lifeworld of farmers has involved living in shared relationships with animals.

In relation to his understanding of intercorporeal relations, Husserl is initially, as Merleau-Ponty also acutely recognizes, concerned with the interplay between, and indeed fusion of, the different corporeal senses (primarily sight and touch) in constituting the one, public, spatiotemporal, material world. It is especially the running together of sight and touch that preoccupies Husserl, for instance, in his *Ding und Raum (Thing and Space)* lectures of 1907 (1973a, 1997) and thereafter in *Ideas II*. In *Thing and Space*, Husserl asserts that the lived body's modality of occupying space is constituted by sensory experiences being objectivated and combined with sensations of bodily self-movement: "A body is constituted as a sensuous schema by the sense of touch and the sense of sight, and every sense is a sense through an apperceptive conjunction of the corresponding sense-data with kinaesthetic data" (1997, 257; 1973a; *Hua XVI*, 298).

In these lectures, Husserl spends a great deal of time examining how vision itself is constituted from the intertwining of the sensory experiences of each eye, combined with eye and head movements, but then he combines this with the analysis of the role played by touch and self-awareness of the body's location through this sense. Touching, having proprioceptive experiences, and self-movement are all essential to the body's self-constitution. There can be no sensory experience without bodily movement. As Merleau-Ponty will later proclaim: "*Wahrnehmen* and *sich bewegen* are synonymous" (VI, 255; 303), and "I am that animal of perceptions and movements called a body" (*Signs*, 167; 211). Husserl emphasizes that the eye cannot see itself, so it is excluded from the circularity involved in the touching relation. Although the eye in one sense "touches" the object it sees (alights on it), the eye itself does not appear as a component in its own vision. Thus in *Ideas II*, §37, Husserl attests that this "double sensation" (*Doppelempfindung*) or "double apprehension" (*Doppelauffassung*) belongs exclusively to touch and is *not* found in vision. He declares: "In the case of an *object constituted purely visually* we have *nothing* comparable" (*Ideas II*, §37, 155; *Hua IV*, 147). On this basis, he concludes that touch is more basic than sight in the body's sensory constitution of spatiality. Merleau-Ponty will take over and expand on Husserl's analysis of the double sensation to claim that all five senses have a distinctive degree of reciprocity, reflectivity, and doubling over. In what seems to be more than pure metaphor for him, he speaks of our vision "palpating"—touching—the visible (VI, 131; 171) and of the seer as "incorporated" into the visible in a genuine incarnation. Quoting the experiences of artists in particular (painters and poets), Merleau-Ponty talks about vision as taking place in a world that is not just visible but in its own way looks back at the seer. There is doubling over or recoil of the seen on the seer, just as in the case of touch.

Merleau-Ponty in particular emphasizes not just the body's self-constitution, motility, reflexivity, and incarnation but also the experience of the fleshly subject encountering a world that responds to it also as flesh: "It is already the flesh of things that speaks to us of

our own flesh" (VI, 193; 243). But Husserl, equally, does not neglect the experience of one person perceiving the other through the mediation of the other's animate body and the combined intersubjective experiences contributing to the experience of being in the one, shared world. These reflections are found primarily in Husserl's *Nachlass*, especially in the three volumes of *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität: Texte aus dem Nachlass* (*On the Phenomenology of Intersubjectivity*) (1973). Husserl emphasizes that intercorporeal cooperation is itself the foundation for objectivity: "The body, the living body of the other, is the first intersubjective thing" (1973d; *Hua XIV*, 110, my translation). Similarly, in his published work *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, Husserl talks about the need to explore phenomenologically the extraordinary phenomenon that I experience not only the other person as currently present to me (in empathy) but also have a sense that we share one and the same world:

Moreover it must be made understandable that I necessarily ascribe to someone else (in his lived experiences, his experiences and the rest, which I attribute to him as processes other than mine), not a merely analogous experienced world [*Erfahrungswelt*], but the *same* world [*dieselbe*] that I experience; likewise, that I mean him as experiencing me in the world and, moreover, experiencing me as related to the same experienced world to which he is related; and so forth. (1974, §96, 239, translation modified; *Hua XVII*, 246)

For Husserl, it is an absolute and undeniable fact that each of us experiences ourselves and others as participating in and belonging to the one, *same* world, the world that is "there for everyone" (*für Jedermann daseiend*; 1974, §96, 240; *Hua XVII*, 247), an absolute fact of the "intersubjective knowledge community" (*intersubjektive Erkenntnisgemeinschaft*; 1974; *Hua XVII*, 247). For Husserl, as we have seen, a key to the constitution of objectivity is the relation of one body-subject with another in empathy. It is through empathy and the communion with another that the genuine sense of the objective world in itself is born. As Husserl writes:

Communication creates unity [*Kommunikation schafft Einheit*]. Separated things remain external [to each other], they can be put beside one another and touch, they can never have a common *identity*. Consciousness, however, really coincides with consciousness; consciousness, when it understands another consciousness, is constituted as the same, what is constituted in one; both are one in the same way. (1973d; *Hua XIV*, 198, my translation)

This is a really important insight. The fusion of consciousness with consciousness forms an intentional unity, and the intentional object of these fused consciousnesses equally has a high degree of unity. Thus the "world" (the horizon of significations) as the common object of our conscious experiences is constituted by us as *one and the same*. For Husserl, it simply makes no sense to posit a plurality of worlds; all regions belong to the one overall world, as the "horizon of horizons."

7 Intersubjectivity, Intercorporeality, and the Constitution of World

For Husserl, one of the most important tasks for phenomenology is to chart how the *sense* of an objective world intersubjectively available to all comes to be constituted. This is doubly important, not just to understand our dwelling in the lifeworld but also because it is precisely this shared objective world that becomes purified and formalized in the scientific concept of the “true world” (*die wahre Welt*) or “world in itself” (*Welt an sich*; *Hua VI*, 119), as Husserl elaborates it in his *Crisis of European Sciences*. Everyone must be able to experience *the* object (from his or her perspective) within an already given common world. For each one of us, to be a subject is to occupy a perspective, to have a slant on things, as it were, but it also means that each of us recognizes that our particular perspective or slant is just one of many and the objective world is precisely the object of all our perspectives.¹² Husserl makes both embodiment and experience of the other in empathy necessary conditions for the possibility of intersubjective agreement and validity. Part of this intersubjective communication involves, as we have seen, what Merleau-Ponty calls “intercorporeality.” There are many puzzling forms of intercorporeality, but it includes, at the higher level, two people communicating by language with each other or, to use Max Scheler’s example, being oriented emotionally (emotions are surely the most embodied of feelings) toward the same shared values. Intercorporeal communication does not have to be merely the intimate, for example, whispering in the ear of a loved one. The martial arts and dance are exemplary forms of intercorporeality.

Medicine has many forms of intercorporeal practice, from various forms of massage to the manipulation of joints. Indeed, intercorporeality takes many forms, from the double body of pregnancy, through the caress, the kiss, the embrace with the loved one, sexual intercourse, and the handshake, to corporal punishment, wrestling, martial arts, and team sports, even singing together, joint chanting, and other forms of intercorporeal blending. Each offers its own unique mode of attunement to the other through the lived body and develops its own universe of signification.

Husserl’s discussion of the phenomenon of intercorporeality is limited, but it focuses primarily on the mother-child relation. His analysis of the connections between subjects leads him also to discuss, albeit briefly, the “most primordial genetic continuity” between mother and child, which he refers to, in a fragmentary text from 1927, as being a part of *Ich-Du-Leben* (1973d; *Hua XIV*, 504) and a special kind of “pairing.” The mother is oriented to the “child-within,” and the child-within (even before birth) is attuned to the voice, mood, and movements of the mother. Husserl’s remarks here are regrettably brief. He is interested in exploring different kinds of intentional “fulfillment” (*Erfüllung*) that occur when one person seeks to interpret the other. Husserl continues this reflection in another text from June 22, 1933

12. For a discussion of how modern science elaborated on the idea of both perspective and pure perspectiveless objectivity (the “God’s eye”), see Harries 2001.