



Merleau-Ponty

Phenomenology of Perception

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Introduction

Traditional Prejudices and the
Return to Phenomena

1

THE 'SENSATION' AS A UNIT OF EXPERIENCE

At the outset of the study of perception, we find in language the notion of sensation, which seems immediate and obvious: I have a sensation of redness, of blueness, of hot or cold. It will, however, be seen that nothing could in fact be more confused, and that because they accepted it readily, traditional analyses missed the phenomenon of perception.

I might in the first place understand by sensation the way in which I am affected and the experiencing of a state of myself. The greyness which, when I close my eyes, surrounds me, leaving no distance between me and it, the sounds that encroach on my drowsiness and hum 'in my head' perhaps give some indication of what pure sensation might be. I might be said to have sense-experience (*sentir*) precisely to the extent that I coincide with the sensed, that the latter ceases to have any place in the objective world, and that it signifies nothing for me. This entails recognizing that sensation should be sought on the hither side of any qualified content, since red and blue, in order to be distinguishable as two colours, must already form some picture before me, even though no precise place be assigned to them, and thus cease to be part of myself. Pure sensation will be the experience of an undifferentiated, instantaneous, dotlike impact. It is unnecessary to show, since authors are agreed on it, that this notion corresponds to nothing

in our experience, and that the most rudimentary *factual perceptions* that we are acquainted with, in creatures such as the ape or the hen, have a bearing on relationships and not on any absolute terms.¹ But this does not dispose of the question as to why we feel justified in *theory* in distinguishing within experience a layer of 'impression'. Let us imagine a white patch on a homogeneous background. All the points in the patch have a certain 'function' in common, that of forming themselves into a 'shape'. The colour of the shape is more intense, and as it were more resistant than that of the background; the edges of the white patch 'belong' to it, and are not part of the background although they adjoin it: the patch appears to be placed on the background and does not break it up. Each part arouses the expectation of more than it contains, and this elementary perception is therefore already charged with a *meaning*. But if the shape and the background, as a whole, are not sensed, they must be sensed, one may object, in each of their points. To say this is to forget that each point in its turn can be perceived only as a figure on a background. When Gestalt theory informs us that a figure on a background is the simplest sense-given available to us, we reply that this is not a contingent characteristic of factual perception, which leaves us free, in an ideal analysis, to bring in the notion of impressions. It is the very definition of the phenomenon of perception, that without which a phenomenon cannot be said to be perception at all. The perceptual 'something' is always in the middle of something else, it always forms part of a 'field'. A really homogeneous area offering *nothing to be* cannot be given to *any perception*. The structure of actual perception alone can teach us what perception is. The pure impression is, therefore, not only undiscoverable, but also imperceptible and so inconceivable as an instant of perception. If it is introduced, it is because instead of attending to the experience of perception, we overlook it in favour of the object perceived. A visual field is not made up of limited views. But an object seen is made up of bits of matter, and spatial points are external to each other. An isolated datum of perception is inconceivable, at least if we do the mental experiment of attempting to perceive such a thing. But in the world there are either isolated objects or a physical void.

¹ See *La Structure du Comportement*, pp. 142 and ff.

I shall therefore give up any attempt to define sensation as pure impression. Rather, to see is to have colours or lights, to hear is to have sounds, to sense (*sentir*) is to have qualities. To know what sense-experience is, then, is it not enough to have seen a red or to have heard an A? But red and green are not sensations, they are the sensed (*sensibles*), and quality is not an element of consciousness, but a property of the object. Instead of providing a simple means of delimiting sensations, if we consider it in the experience itself which evinces it, the quality is as rich and mysterious as the object, or indeed the whole spectacle, perceived. This red patch which I see on the carpet is red only in virtue of a shadow which lies across it, its quality is apparent only in relation to the play of light upon it, and hence as an element in a spatial configuration. Moreover the colour can be said to be there only if it occupies an area of a certain size, too small an area not being describable in these terms. Finally this red would literally not be the same if it were not the 'woolly red' of a carpet.² Analysis, then, discovers in each quality meanings which reside in it. It may be objected that this is true only of the qualities which form part of our actual experience, which are overlaid with a body of knowledge, and that we are still justified in conceiving a 'pure quality' which would set limits to a pure sensation. But as we have just seen, this pure sensation would amount to no sensation, and thus to not feeling at all. The alleged self-evidence of sensation is not based on any testimony of consciousness, but on widely held prejudice. We think we know perfectly well what 'seeing', 'hearing', 'sensing' are, because perception has long provided us with objects which are coloured or which emit sounds. When we try to analyse it, we transpose these objects into consciousness. We commit what psychologists call 'the experience error', which means that what we know to be in things themselves we immediately take as being in our consciousness of them. We make perception out of things perceived. And since perceived things themselves are obviously accessible only through perception, we end by understanding neither. We are caught up in the world and we do not succeed in extricating ourselves from it in order to achieve consciousness of the world. If we did we should see that the quality is never experienced immediately, and that

² J. P. Sartre, *L'Imaginaire*, p. 241.

all consciousness is consciousness of something. Nor is this 'something' necessarily an identifiable object. There are two ways of being mistaken about quality: one is to make it into an element of consciousness, when in fact it is an object for consciousness, to treat it as an incommunicable impression, whereas it always has a meaning; the other is to think that this meaning and this object, at the level of quality, are fully developed and determinate. The second error, like the first, springs from our prejudice about the world. Suppose we construct, by the use of optics and geometry, that bit of the world which can at any moment throw its image on our retina. Everything outside its perimeter, since it does not reflect upon any sensitive area, no more affects our vision than does light falling on our closed eyes. We ought, then, to perceive a segment of the world precisely delimited, surrounded by a zone of blackness, packed full of qualities with no interval between them, held together by definite relationships of size similar to those lying on the retina. The fact is that experience offers nothing like this, and we shall never, using the world as our starting-point, understand what a *field of vision* is. Even if it is possible to trace out a perimeter of vision by gradually approaching the centre of the lateral stimuli, the results of such measurement vary from one moment to another, and one never manages to determine the instant when a stimulus once seen is seen no longer. The region surrounding the visual field is not easy to describe, but what is certain is that it is neither black nor grey. There occurs here an *indeterminate vision*, a *vision of something or other*, and, to take the extreme case, what is behind my back is not without some element of visual presence. The two straight lines in Müller-Lyer's optical illusion (Fig. 1) are neither of equal nor unequal length; it is only in the objective world that this question arises.³ The visual field is that strange zone in which contradictory notions jostle each

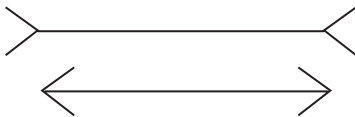


Figure 1

³ Koffka, *Psychologie*, p. 530.

other because the objects—the straight lines of Müller-Lyer—are not, in that field, assigned to the realm of being, in which a comparison would be possible, but each is taken in its private context as if it did not belong to the same universe as the other. Psychologists have for a long time taken great care to overlook these phenomena. In the world taken in itself everything is determined. There are many unclear sights, as for example a landscape on a misty day, but then we always say that no real landscape is in itself unclear. It is so only for us. The object, psychologists would assert, is never ambiguous, but becomes so only through our inattention. The bounds of the visual field are not themselves variable, and there is a moment when the approaching object begins absolutely to be seen, but we do not 'notice' it. But the notion of attention, as we shall show more fully, is supported by no evidence provided by consciousness. It is no more than an auxiliary hypothesis, evolved to save the prejudice in favour of an objective world. We must recognize the indeterminate as a positive phenomenon. It is in this atmosphere that quality arises. Its meaning is an equivocal meaning; we are concerned with an expressive value rather than with logical signification. The determinate quality by which empiricism tried to define sensation is an object, not an element, of consciousness, indeed it is the very lately developed object of scientific consciousness. For these two reasons, it conceals rather than reveals subjectivity.

The two definitions of sensation which we have just tried out were only apparently direct. We have seen that they were based on the object perceived. In this they were in agreement with common sense, which also identifies the sensible by the objective conditions which govern it. The visible is what is seized upon with the eyes, the sensible is what is seized on by the senses. Let us follow up the idea of sensation on this basis,⁴ and see what becomes of this 'by' and this 'with', and the

⁴ There is no justification for dodging the issue, as does Jaspers, for example (*Zur Analyse der Trugwahrnehmungen*) by setting up in opposition, on the one hand a descriptive psychology which 'understands' phenomena, and on the other an explanatory psychology, which concerns itself with their origin. The psychologist always sees consciousness as placed in the body in the midst of the world, and for him the series stimulus-impression-perception is a sequence of events at the end of which perception begins. Each consciousness is born in the world and each perception is a new birth of consciousness. In this perspective the 'immediate' data of perception can always be challenged as

notion of sense-organ, in the first-order thinking constituted by science. Having shown that there is no experience of sensation, do we at least find, in its causes and objective origins, any reasons for retaining it as an explanatory concept? Physiology, to which the psychologist turns as to a higher court of appeal, is in the same predicament as psychology. It too first situates its object in the world and treats it as a bit of extension. *Behaviour* is thus hidden by the reflex, the elaboration and patterning of stimuli, by a longitudinal theory of nervous functioning, which establishes a theoretical correspondence between each element of the situation and an element of the reaction.⁵ As in the case of the reflex are theory, physiology of perception begins by recognizing an anatomical path leading from a *receive* through a definite *transmitter* to a recording station,⁶ equally specialized. The objective world being given, it is assumed that it passes on to the sense-organs messages which must be registered, then deciphered in such a way as to reproduce in us the original text. Hence we have in principle a point-by-point correspondence and constant connection between the stimulus and the elementary perception. But this 'constancy hypothesis'⁷ conflicts with the data of consciousness, and the very psychologists who accept it recognize its purely theoretical character.⁸ For example, the intensity of a sound under certain circumstances lowers its pitch; the addition of auxiliary lines makes two figures unequal which are objectively equal;⁹ a coloured area appears to be the same colour over the whole of its surface, whereas the chromatic thresholds of the different

mere appearances and as complex products of an origin. The descriptive method can acquire a genuine claim only from the transcendental point of view. But, even from this point of view, the problem remains as to how consciousness perceives itself or appears to itself as inserted in a nature. For the philosopher, as for the psychologist, there is therefore always a problem of origins, and the only method possible is to follow, in its scientific development, the causal explanation in order to make its meaning quite clear, and assign to it its proper place in the body of truth. That is why there will be found no refutation, but only an effort to understand the difficulties peculiar to causal thinking.

⁵ See *La Structure du Comportement*, Chap. I.

⁶ We are translating roughly the series 'Empfänger-Übermittler-Empfänger' spoken of by J. Stein, *Über die Veränderung der Sinnesleistungen und die Entstehung von Trugwahrnehmungen*, p. 351.

⁷ Koehler, *Über unbemerkte Empfindungen und Urteilstauschungen*.

⁸ Stumpf does so explicitly. Cf. Koehler, *ibid.*, p. 54.

⁹ Koehler, *ibid.*, pp. 57–8, cf. pp. 58–66.

parts of the retina ought to make it red in one place, orange somewhere else, and in certain cases colourless.¹⁰ Should these cases in which the phenomenon does not correspond to the stimulus be retained within the framework of the law of constancy, and explained by additional factors—attention and judgement—or must the law itself be jettisoned? When red and green, presented together, give the result grey, it is conceded that the central combination of stimuli can immediately give rise to a different sensation from what the objective stimuli would lead us to expect. When the apparent size of an object varies with its apparent distance, or its apparent colour with our recollections of the object, it is recognized that 'the sensory processes are not immune to central influences'.¹¹ In this case, therefore, the 'sensible' cannot be defined as the immediate effect of an external stimulus. Cannot the same conclusion be drawn from the first three examples we have mentioned? If attention, more precise instructions, rest or prolonged practice finally bring perception into line with the law of constancy, this does not prove the law's universal validity, for, in the examples quoted, the first appearance possessed a sensory character just as incontestable as the final results obtained. So the question is whether attentive perception, the subject's concentration on one point of the visual field—for example, the 'analytic perception' of the two main lines in Müller-Lyer's optical illusion—do not, instead of revealing the 'normal sensation', substitute a special set-up for the original phenomenon.¹² The law of constancy cannot avail itself, against the testimony of consciousness, of any crucial experiment in which it is not already implied, and wherever we believe that we are establishing it, it is already presupposed.¹³ If we turn back to the phenomena, they show us that the apprehension of a quality, just as that of size, is bound up with a whole perceptual context, and that the stimuli no longer furnish us with the

¹⁰ R. Déjean, *Les Conditions objectives de la Perception visuelle*, pp. 60 and 83.

¹¹ Stumpf, quoted by Koehler, *ibid.*, p. 58.

¹² Koehler, *ibid.*, pp. 58–63.

¹³ It is only fair to add that this is true of all theories, and that nowhere is there a crucial experiment. For the same reason the constancy hypothesis cannot be completely refuted on the basis of induction. It is discredited because it overlooks phenomena and does not permit any understanding of them. To discern them and to pass judgement on the hypothesis, indeed, one must 'suspend' it.

indirect means we were seeking of isolating a layer of immediate impressions. But when we look for an 'objective' definition of sensation, it is not only the physical stimulus which slips through our fingers. The sensory apparatus, as conceived by modern physiology, is no longer fitted for the rôle of 'transmitter' cast for it by traditional science. Non-cortical lesions of the apparatus of touch no doubt lessen the concentration of points sensitive to heat and cold, or pressure, and diminish the sensitivity of those that remain. But if, to the injured system, a sufficiently extensive stimulus be applied, the specific sensations reappear. The raising of the thresholds is compensated by a more vigorous movement of the hand.¹⁴

One can discern, at the rudimentary stage of sensibility, a working together on the part of partial stimuli and a collaboration of the sensory with the motor system which, in a variable physiological constellation, keeps sensation constant, and rules out any definition of the nervous process as the simple transmission of a given message. The destruction of sight, wherever the injuries be sustained, follows the same law: all colours are affected in the first place,¹⁵ and lose their saturation. Then the spectrum is simplified, being reduced to four and soon to two colours; finally a grey monochrome stage is reached, although the pathological colour is never identifiable with any normal one. Thus in central as in peripheral lesions 'the loss of nervous substance results not only in a deficiency of certain qualities, but in the change to a less differentiated and more primitive structure'.¹⁶ Conversely, normal functioning must be understood as a process of integration in which the text of the external world is not so much copied, as composed. And if we try to seize 'sensation' within the perspective of the bodily phenomena which pave the way to it, we find not a psychic individual, a function of certain known variables, but a formation already bound up with a larger whole, already endowed with a meaning, distinguishable only in degree from the more complex

¹⁴ Stein, *op. cit.*, pp. 357–9.

¹⁵ Even daltonism does not prove that certain systems are, and are alone in being, entrusted with 'seeing' red and green, since a colour-blind person manages to distinguish red if a large area in that colour is put before him, or if the presentation of the colour is made to last a long time. *Id. ibid.*, p. 365.

¹⁶ Weizsäcker, quoted by Stein, *ibid.*, p. 364.

perceptions, and which therefore gets us no further in our attempt to delimit pure sensation. There is no physiological definition of sensation, and more generally there is no physiological psychology which is autonomous, because the physiological event itself obeys biological and psychological laws. For a long time it was thought that peripheral conditioning was the surest method of identifying 'elementary' psychic functions, and of distinguishing them from 'superior' functions less strictly bound up with the bodily substructure. A closer analysis, however, reveals that the two kinds of function overlap. The elementary is no longer that which by addition will cumulatively constitute the whole, nor is it a mere occasion for the whole to constitute itself. The elementary event is already invested with meaning, and the higher function will bring into being only a more integrated mode of existence or a more valid adaptation, by using and sublimating the subordinate operations. Conversely, 'sense-experience is a vital process, no less than procreation, breathing or growth'.¹⁷ Psychology and physiology are no longer, then, two parallel sciences, but two accounts of behaviour, the first concrete, the second abstract.¹⁸ We said that when the psychologist asks the physiologist for a definition of sensation 'in causal terms', he encounters once more on this new ground his familiar difficulties, and now we can see why. The physiologist for his part has to rid himself of the realistic prejudice which all the sciences borrow from common sense, and which hampers them in their development. The changed meaning of the terms 'elementary' and 'more advanced' in modern physiology proclaims a changed philosophy.¹⁹ The scientist too must learn to criticize the idea of an external world in itself, since the facts themselves prompt him to abandon that of the body as a transmitter of messages. The sensible is what is apprehended with the senses, but now we know that this 'with' is not merely instrumental, that the sensory apparatus is not a conductor, that even on the periphery the physiological impression is involved in relations formerly considered central.

Once more, reflection—even the second-order reflection of

¹⁷ Weizsäcker, quoted by Stein, *ibid.*, p. 354.

¹⁸ On all these points see *La Structure du Comportement*, in particular pp. 52 and ff., 65 and ff.

¹⁹ Gelb, *Die Farbenkonstanz der Sehdinge*, p. 595.

science—obscures what we thought was clear. We believed we knew what feeling, seeing and hearing were, and now these words raise problems. We are invited to go back to the experiences to which they refer in order to redefine them. The traditional notion of sensation was not a concept born of reflection, but a late product of thought directed towards objects, the last element in the representation of the world, the furthest removed from its original source, and therefore the most unclear. Inevitably science, in its general effort towards objectification, evolved a picture of the human organism as a physical system undergoing stimuli which were themselves identified by their physico-chemical properties, and tried to reconstitute actual perception²⁰ on this basis, and to close the circle of scientific knowledge by discovering the laws governing the production of knowledge itself, by establishing an objective science of subjectivity.²¹ But it is also inevitable that this attempt should fail. If we return to the objective investigations themselves, we first of all discover that the conditions external to the sensory field do not govern it part for part, and that they exert an effect only to the extent of making possible a basic pattern—which is what Gestalt theory makes clear. Then we see that within the organism the structure depends on variables such as the biological meaning of the situation, which are no longer physical variables, with the result that the whole eludes the well-known instruments of physico-mathematical analysis, and opens the way to another type of intelligibility.²² If we now turn back, as is done here, towards perceptual experience, we notice that science succeeds in constructing only a semblance of subjectivity: it introduces sensations which are things, just where experience shows that there are meaningful patterns; it forces the phenomenal universe into categories which make sense only in the universe of science. It requires that two perceived lines, like two real lines, should be equal or unequal, that a perceived crystal should have a definite number of

²⁰ "The sensations are certainly artificial products, but not arbitrary ones, they are the last component wholes into which the natural structures can be decomposed by the "analytical attitude". Seen from this point of view, they contribute to the knowledge of structures, and consequently the results of the study of sensations, correctly interpreted, are an important element in the psychology of perception." Koffka, *Psychologie*, p. 548.

²¹ Cf. Guillaume, *L'Objectivité en Psychologie*.

²² Cf. *La Structure du Comportement*, Chap. III.

sides,²³ without realizing that the perceived, by its nature, admits of the ambiguous, the shifting, and is shaped by its context. In Müller-Lyer's illusion, one of the lines ceases to be equal to the other without becoming 'unequal': it becomes 'different'. That is to say, an isolated, objective line, and the same line taken in a figure, cease to be, for perception, 'the same'. It is identifiable in these two functions only by analytic perception, which is not natural. In the same way the perceived contains gaps which are not mere 'failures to perceive'. I may, through sight or touch, recognize a crystal as having a 'regular' shape without having, even tacitly, counted its sides. I may be familiar with a face without ever having perceived the colour of the eyes in themselves. The theory of sensation, which builds up all knowledge out of determinate qualities, offers us objects purged of all ambiguity, pure and absolute, the ideal rather than the real themes of knowledge: in short, it is compatible only with the lately developed superstructure of consciousness. That is where 'the idea of sensation is approximately realized'.²⁴

The images which instinct projects before it, those which tradition recreates in each generation, or simply dreams, are in the first place presented on an equal footing with genuine perceptions, and gradually, by critical labour, the true, present and explicit perception is distinguished from phantasms. The word perception indicates a *direction* rather than a primitive function.²⁵ It is known that the uniformity of apparent size of objects at different distances, or of their colour in different lights, is more perfect in children than in adults.²⁶ It follows that perception is more strictly bound up with the local stimulus in its developed than in its undeveloped state, and more in conformity with the theory of sensation in the adult than in the child. It is like a net with

²³ Koffka, *Psychologie*, pp. 530 and 549.

²⁴ M. Scheler, *Die Wissenformen und die Gesellschaft*, p. 412.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 397. 'Man approaches ideal and exact images better than the animal, the adult better than the child, men better than women, the individual better than the member of a group, the man who thinks historically and systematically better than the man impelled by tradition, "imprisoned" in it and incapable of objectivizing, by building up recollection, the environment in which he is involved, of localizing it in time and possessing it by setting it away from himself in a past context.'

²⁶ Hering, Jaensch.

its knots showing up more and more clearly.²⁷ 'Primitive thought' has been pictured in a way which can be understood only if the responses of primitive people, their pronouncements and the sociologists' interpretations are related to the fund of perceptual experience which they are all trying to translate.²⁸ It is sometimes the adherence of the perceived object to its context, and, as it were, its viscosity, sometimes the presence in it of a positive indeterminate which prevents the spatial, temporal and numerical wholes from becoming articulated into manageable, distinct and identifiable terms. And it is this pre-objective realm that we have to explore in ourselves if we wish to understand sense experience.

²⁷ Scheler, *Die Wissenformen und die Gesellschaft*, p. 412.

²⁸ Cf. Wertheimer, *Über das Denken der Naturvölker*, in *Drei Abhandlungen zur Gestalttheorie*.

4

THE PHENOMENAL FIELD

It will now be seen in what direction the following chapters will carry their inquiry. 'Sense experience'* has become once more a question for us. Empiricism had emptied it of all mystery by bringing it down to the possession of a quality. This had been possible only at the price of moving far from the ordinary acceptation of the word. Between sense experience and knowing, common experience establishes a difference which is not that between the quality and the concept. This rich notion of sense experience is still to be found in Romantic usage, for example in Herder. It points to an experience in which we are given not 'dead' qualities, but active ones. A wooden wheel placed on the ground is not, for sight, the same thing as a wheel bearing a load. A body at rest because no force is being exerted upon it is again for sight not the same thing as a body in which opposing forces are in equilibrium.¹ The light of a candle changes its appearance for a child when, after a burn, it stops attracting the child's hand and becomes literally repulsive.² Vision is already inhabited by a meaning (*sens*) which gives it a function in the spectacle of the world and in our existence. The pure *qualé* would be

* The original French word is 'le sentir' (Translator's note).

¹ Koffka, *Perception, an Introduction to the Gestalt Theory*, pp. 558–9.

² Id., *Mental Development*, p. 138.

given to us only if the world were a spectacle and one's own body a mechanism with which some impartial mind made itself acquainted.³ Sense experience, on the other hand, invests the quality with vital value, grasping it first in its meaning for us, for that heavy mass which is our body, whence it comes about that it always involves a reference to the body. The problem is to understand these strange relationships which are woven between the parts of the landscape, or between it and me as incarnate subject, and through which an object perceived can concentrate in itself a whole scene or become the *imago* of a whole segment of life. Sense experience is that vital communication with the world which makes it present as a familiar setting of our life. It is to it that the perceived object and the perceiving subject owe their thickness. It is the intentional tissue which the effort to know will try to take apart. With the problem of sense experience, we rediscover that of association and passivity. They have ceased to be problematical because the classical philosophies put themselves either below or above them, giving them everything or nothing: sometimes association was understood as a mere *de facto* co-existence, sometimes derived from an intellectual construction; sometimes passivity was imported from things into the mind, and sometimes analytical reflection would find in it an activity of understanding. Whereas these notions take on their full meaning if sense experience is distinguished from quality: then association, or rather 'affinity', in the Kantian sense, is the central phenomenon of perceptual life, since it is the constitution, without any ideal model, of a significant grouping. The distinction between the perceptual life and the concept, between passivity and spontaneity is no longer abolished by analytical reflection, since we are no longer forced by the atomism of sensation to look to some connecting activity for our principle of all co-ordination. Finally, after sense experience, understanding also needs to be redefined, since the general connective function ultimately attributed to it by Kantianism is now spread over the whole intentional life and no longer suffices to distinguish it. We shall try to bring out in relation to perception, both the instinctive substructure and the superstructures erected upon it by the exercise of intelligence. As Cassirer puts it, by mutilating perception from above,

³ Scheler, *Die Wissenformen und die Gesellschaft*, p. 408.

empiricism mutilated it from below too:⁴ the impression is as devoid of instinctive and affective meaning as of ideal significance. One might add that mutilating perception from below, treating it immediately as knowledge and forgetting its existential content, amounts to mutilating it from above, since it involves taking for granted and passing over in silence the decisive moment in perception: the upsurge of a true and exact world. Reflection will be sure of having precisely located the centre of the phenomenon if it is equally capable of bringing to light its vital inherence and its rational intention.

So, 'sensation' and 'judgement' have together lost their apparent clearness: we have observed that they were clear only as long as the prejudice in favour of the world was maintained. As soon as one tried by means of them, to picture consciousness in the process of perceiving, to revive the forgotten perceptual experience, and to relate them to it, they were found to be inconceivable. By dint of making these difficulties more explicit, we were drawn implicitly into a new kind of analysis, into a new dimension in which they were destined to disappear. The criticism of the constancy hypothesis and more generally the reduction of the idea of 'the world' opened up a *phenomenal field* which now has to be more accurately circumscribed, and suggested the rediscovery of a direct experience which must be, at least provisionally, assigned its place in relation to scientific knowledge, and to psychological and philosophical reflection.

Science and philosophy have for centuries been sustained by unquestioning faith in perception. Perception opens a window on to things. This means that it is directed, quasi-teleologically, towards a truth in itself in which the reason underlying all appearances is to be found. The tacit thesis of perception is that at every instant experience can be co-ordinated with that of the previous instant and that of the following, and my perspective with that of other consciousnesses—that all contradictions can be removed, that monadic and intersubjective experience is one unbroken text—that what is now indeterminate for me could become determinate for a more complete knowledge, which is as it were realized in advance in the thing, or rather which is the thing itself. Science has first been merely the sequel or amplification

⁴ Cassirer, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, T. III, *Phänomenologie der Erkenntnis*, pp. 77–8.

of the process which constitutes perceived things. Just as the thing is the invariant of all sensory fields and of all individual perceptual fields, so the scientific concept is the means of fixing and objectifying phenomena. Science defined a theoretical state of bodies not subject to the action of any force, and *ipso facto* defined force, reconstituting with the aid of these ideal components the processes actually observed. It established statistically the chemical properties of pure bodies, deducing from these those of empirical bodies, and seeming thus to hold the plan of creation or in any case to have found a reason immanent in the world. The notion of geometrical space, indifferent to its contents, that of pure movement which does not by itself affect the properties of the object, provided phenomena with a setting of inert existence in which each event could be related to physical conditions responsible for the changes occurring, and therefore contributed to this freezing of being which appeared to be the task of physics. In thus developing the concept of the thing, scientific knowledge was not aware that it was working on a presupposition. Precisely because perception, in its vital implications and prior to any theoretical thought, is presented as perception of a being, it was not considered necessary for reflection to undertake a genealogy of being, and it was therefore confined to seeking the conditions which make being possible. Even if one took account of the transformations of determinant consciousness,⁵ even if it were conceded that the constitution of the object is never completed, there was nothing to add to what science said of it; the natural object remained an ideal unity for us and, in the famous words of Lachelier, a network of general properties. It was no use denying any ontological value to the principles of science and leaving them with only a methodical value,⁶ for this reservation made no essential change as far as philosophy was concerned, since the sole conceivable being remained defined by scientific method. The living body, under these circumstances, could not escape the determinations which alone made the object into an object and without which it would have had no place in the system of experience. The value predicates which the reflecting judgement confers upon it had to be sustained, in being, by a

⁵ As L. Brunschvicg does.

⁶ Cf. for example, *L'Expérience humaine et la Causalité physique*, p. 536.

foundation of physico-chemical properties. In ordinary experience we find a fittingness and a meaningful relationship between the gesture, the smile and the tone of a speaker. But this reciprocal relationship of expression which presents the human body as the outward manifestation of a certain manner of being-in-the-world, had, for mechanistic physiology, to be resolved into a series of causal relations.

It was necessary to link to centripetal conditions the centrifugal phenomenon of expression, reduce to third person processes that particular way of dealing with the world which we know as behaviour, bring experience down to the level of physical nature and convert the living body into an interiorless thing. The emotional and practical attitudes of the living subject in relation to the world were, then, incorporated into a psycho-physiological mechanism. Every evaluation had to be the outcome of a transfer whereby complex situations became capable of awakening elementary impressions of pleasure and pain, impressions bound up, in turn, with nervous processes. The impelling intentions of the living creature were converted into objective movements: to the will only an instantaneous fiat was allowed, the execution of the act being entirely given over to a nervous mechanism. Sense experience, thus detached from the affective and motor functions, became the mere reception of a quality, and physiologists thought they could follow, from the point of reception to the nervous centres, the projection of the external world in the living body. The latter, thus transformed, ceased to be my body, the visible expression of a concrete Ego, and became one object among all others. Conversely, the body of another person could not appear to me as encasing another Ego. It was merely a machine, and the perception of the other could not really be *of the other*, since it resulted from an inference and therefore placed behind the automaton no more than a consciousness in general, a transcendent cause and not an inhabitant of his movements. So we no longer had a grouping of factors constituting the self co-existing in a world. The whole concrete content of 'psychic states' resulting, according to the laws of psychophysiology and psychology, from a universal determinism, was integrated into the *in-itself*. There was no longer any real *for-itself* other than the thought of the scientist which perceives the system and which alone ceases to occupy any place in it. Thus, while the living body became an exterior without interior, subjectivity

became an interior without exterior, an impartial spectator. The naturalism of science and the spiritualism of the universal constituting subject, to which reflection on science led, had this in common, that they levelled out experience: in face of the constituting I, the empirical selves are objects. The empirical Self is a hybrid notion, a mixture of in-itself and for-itself, to which reflective philosophy could give no status. In so far as it has a concrete content it is inserted in the system of experience and is therefore not a subject; in so far as it is a subject, it is empty and resolves itself into the transcendental subject. The ideality of the object, the objectification of the living body, the placing of spirit in an axio-logical dimension having no common measure with nature, such is the transparent philosophy arrived at by pushing further along the route of knowledge opened up by perception. It could be held that perception is an incipient science, science a methodical and complete perception,⁷ since science was merely following uncritically the ideal of knowledge set up by the perceived thing.

Now this philosophy is collapsing before our eyes. The natural object was the first to disappear and physics has itself recognized the limits of its categories by demanding a recasting and blending of the pure concepts which it had adopted. For its part the organism presents physico-chemical analysis not with the practical difficulties of a complex object, but with the theoretical difficulty of a meaningful being.⁸ In more general terms the idea of a universe of thought or a universe of values, in which all thinking lives come into contact and are reconciled, is called into question. Nature is not in itself geometrical, and it appears so only to a careful observer who contents himself with macrocosmic data. Human society is not a community of reasonable minds, and only in fortunate countries where a biological and economic balance has locally and temporarily been struck has such a conception of it been possible. The experience of chaos, both on the speculative and the other level, prompts us to see rationalism in a historical perspective which it set itself on principle to avoid, to seek a philosophy which explains the upsurge of reason in a world not of its making and to

⁷ Cf. for example Alain, *Quatre-vingt-un chapitres sur l'Esprit et les Passions*, p. 19, and Brunschvicg, *L'Expérience humaine et la causalité physique*, p. 468.

⁸ Cf. *La Structure du Comportement*, and below, First Part.

prepare the substructure of living experience without which reason and liberty are emptied of their content and wither away. We shall no longer hold that perception is incipient science, but conversely that classical science is a form of perception which loses sight of its origins and believes itself complete. The first philosophical act would appear to be to return to the world of actual experience which is prior to the objective world, since it is in it that we shall be able to grasp the theoretical basis no less than the limits of that objective world, restore to things their concrete physiognomy, to organisms their individual ways of dealing with the world, and to subjectivity its inherence in history. Our task will be, moreover, to rediscover phenomena, the layer of living experience through which other people and things are first given to us, the system 'Self-others-things' as it comes into being; to reawaken perception and foil its trick of allowing us to forget it as a fact and as perception in the interest of the object which it presents to us and of the rational tradition to which it gives rise.

This phenomenal field is not an 'inner world', the 'phenomenon' is not a 'state of consciousness', or a 'mental fact', and the experience of phenomena is not an act of introspection or an intuition in Bergson's sense. It has long been the practice to define the object of psychology by saying that it was 'without extension' and 'accessible to one person only', with the result that this peculiar object could be grasped only by means of a special kind of act, 'internal perception' or introspection, in which subject and object were mingled and knowledge achieved by an act of coinciding. The return to the 'immediate data of consciousness' became therefore a hopeless enterprise since the philosophical scrutiny was trying to be what it could not, in principle, *see*. The difficulty was not only to destroy the prejudice of the exterior, as all philosophies urge the beginner to do, or to describe the mind in a language made for representing things. It was much more fundamental, since inferiority, defined by the impression, by its nature evaded every attempt to express it. It was not only the imparting of philosophical intuitions to others which became difficult—or rather reduced itself to a sort of incantation designed to induce in them experiences comparable to the philosopher's—but the philosopher himself could not be clearly aware of what he saw in the instant, since he would have had to think it, that is fix and distort it. The immediate was therefore a lonely, blind and mute

life. The return to the phenomenal presents none of these peculiarities. The sensible configuration of an object or a gesture, which the criticism of the constancy hypothesis brings before our eyes, is not grasped in some inexpressible coincidence, it 'is understood' through a sort of act of appropriation which we all experience when we say that we have 'found' the rabbit in the foliage of a puzzle, or that we have 'caught' a slight gesture. Once the prejudice of sensation has been banished, a face, a signature, a form of behaviour cease to be mere 'visual data' whose psychological meaning is to be sought in our inner experience, and the mental life of others becomes an immediate object, a whole charged with immanent meaning. More generally it is the very notion of the immediate which is transformed: henceforth the immediate is no longer the impression, the object which is one with the subject, but the meaning, the structure, the spontaneous arrangement of parts. My own 'mental life' is given to me in precisely the same way, since the criticism of the constancy hypothesis teaches me to recognize the articulation and melodic unity of my behaviour as original data of inner experience, and since introspection, when brought down to its positive content, consists equally in making the immanent meaning of any behaviour explicit.⁹ Thus what we discover by going beyond the prejudice of the objective world is not an occult inner world. Nor is this world of living experience completely closed to naïve consciousness, as is Bergson's inferiority. In criticizing the constancy hypothesis and in laying bare phenomena, the psychologist, it is true, runs counter to the natural direction of the process of knowing, which goes blindly through the operations of perception straight on to their teleological results. Nothing is more difficult than to know precisely *what we see*. "There is in natural intuition a sort of "crypto-mechanism" which we have to break in order to reach phenomenal being"¹⁰ or again a dialectic whereby perception hides itself from itself. But although it is of the essence of consciousness to forget its own phenomena thus enabling 'things' to be constituted, this forgetfulness is not mere absence, it is the absence of something which consciousness could bring into its

⁹ We shall, consequently, in the following chapters, resort indifferently to the internal experience of our perception and to the 'external' experience of perceiving subjects.

¹⁰ Scheler, *Idole der Selbsterkenntnis*, p. 106.

presence: in other words consciousness can forget phenomena only because it can recall them, it neglects them in favour of things only because they are the cradle of things. For example they are never completely unknown to scientific consciousness, which borrows all its models from the structures of living experience; it simply does not 'thematize' them, or make explicit the horizons of perceptual consciousness surrounding it to whose concrete relationships it tries to give objective expression. Experience of phenomena is not, then, like Bergsonian intuition, that of a reality of which we are ignorant and leading to which there is no methodical bridge—it is the making explicit or bringing to light of the prescientific life of consciousness which alone endows scientific operations with meaning and to which these latter always refer back. It is not an irrational conversion, but an intentional analysis.

If, as we see, phenomenological psychology is distinguished in all its characteristics from introspective psychology, it is because it is different in basic principle. Introspective psychology detected, on the perimeter of the physical world, a zone of consciousness in which physical concepts are no longer valid, but the psychologist still believed consciousness to be no more than a sector of being, and he decided to explore this sector as the physicist explores his. He tried to describe the givens of consciousness but without putting into question the absolute existence of the world surrounding it. In company with the scientist and common sense, he presupposed the objective world as the logical framework of all his descriptions, and as the setting of his thought. He was unaware that this presupposition dominated the meaning given to the word 'being', forcing it to bring consciousness into existence under the name of 'psychic fact', and thus diverting it from a true grasp of consciousness or from truly immediate experience, and stultifying the many precautions taken to avoid distorting the 'interior'. This is what happened to empiricism when it replaced the physical world by a world of inner events. It is again what happens to Bergson precisely when he contrasts 'multiplicity of fusion' and 'multiplicity of juxtaposition'. For it is here still a question of two modes of being. All that has happened is that mechanical energy has been replaced by spiritual, the discontinuous being of empiricism by being of a fluid kind, but of which we can say that it flows, describing it in the third

person. By taking the Gestalt as the theme of his reflection, the psychologist breaks with psychologism, since the meaning, connection and 'truth' of the percept no longer arise from the fortuitous coming together of our sensations as they are given to us by our psycho-physiological nature, but determine the spatial and qualitative values of these sensations, and are their irreducible configuration.¹¹ It follows that the transcendental attitude is already implied in the descriptions of the psychologist, in so far as they are faithful ones. Consciousness as an object of study presents the peculiarity of not being analysable, even naïvely, without carrying us beyond common sense postulates. If, for example, we set out to create a positive psychology of perception, while still allowing consciousness to be enclosed in the body, and through it suffer the action of a world in itself, we are led to describe the object and the world as they appear to consciousness, and in this way to inquire whether this immediately present world, the only one we know, may not also be the only one of which there is reason to speak. A psychology is always brought face to face with the problem of the constitution of the world.

Psychological reflection, once begun, then, outruns itself through its own momentum. Having recognized the originality of phenomena in relation to the objective world, since it is through them that the objective world is known to us, it is led to integrate with them every possible object and to try to find out how that object is constituted through them. At the same time the phenomenal field becomes a transcendental field. Since it is now the universal focus of knowledge, consciousness definitely ceases to be a particular region of being, a certain collection of 'mental' contents; it no longer resides or is no longer confined within the domain of 'forms' which psychological reflection had first recognized, but the forms, like all things, exist for it. It can no longer be a question of describing the world of living experience which it carries within itself like some opaque datum, it has to be constituted. The process of making explicit, which had laid bare the 'lived-through' world which is prior to the objective one, is put into operation upon the 'lived-through' world itself, thus revealing, prior to the phenomenal field, the transcendental field. The system 'self-others-world' is in

¹¹ Cf. *La Structure du Comportement*, pp. 106–19 and 261.

its turn taken as an object of analysis and it is now a matter of awakening the thoughts which constitute other people, myself as individual subject and the world as a pole of my perception. This new 'reduction' would then recognize only one true subject, the thinking Ego. This move from *naturata* to *naturans*, from constituted to constituting, would complete the thematizing begun by psychology and would leave nothing implicit or tacitly accepted in my knowledge. It would enable me to take complete possession of my experience, thus equating thinking and thought. Such is the ordinary perspective of a transcendental philosophy, and also, to all appearances at least, the programme of a transcendental phenomenology.¹² Now the phenomenal field as we have revealed it in this chapter, places a fundamental difficulty in the way of any attempt to make experience directly and totally explicit. It is true that psychologism has been left behind, that the meaning and structure of the percept are for us no longer the mere outcome of psychophysiological events, that rationality is no longer a fortunate accident bringing together dispersed sensations, and that the Gestalt is recognized as primary. But although the Gestalt may be expressible in terms of some internal law, this law must not be considered as a model on which the phenomena of structure are built up. Their appearance is not the external unfolding of a pre-existing reason. It is not *because* the 'form' produces a certain state of equilibrium, solving a problem of maximum coherence and, in the Kantian sense, making a world possible, that it enjoys a privileged place in our perception; it is the very appearance of the world and not the condition of its possibility; it is the birth of a norm and is not realized according to a norm; it is the identity of the external and the internal and not the projection of the internal in the external. Although, then, it is not the outcome of some circulation of mental states in themselves, neither is it an idea. The Gestalt of a circle is not its mathematical law but its physiognomy. The recognition of phenomena as an original order is a condemnation of empiricism as an *explanation* of order and reason in terms of a coming together of facts and of natural accidents, but it leaves reason and order themselves with the character of facticity. If a universal constituting

¹² It is set forth in these terms in most of Husserl's works, even in those published during his last period.

consciousness were possible, the opacity of the fact would disappear. If then we want reflection to maintain, in the object on which it bears, its descriptive characteristics, and thoroughly to understand that object, we must not consider it as a mere return to a universal reason and see it as anticipated in unreflective experience, we must regard it as a creative operation which itself participates in the facticity of that experience. That is why phenomenology, alone of all philosophies, talks about a transcendental *field*. This word indicates that reflection never holds, arrayed and objectified before its gaze, the whole world and the plurality of monads, and that its view is never other than partial and of limited power. It is also why phenomenology is phenomenology, that is, a study of the *advent* of being to consciousness, instead of presuming its possibility as given in advance. It is striking how transcendental philosophies of the classical type never question the possibility of effecting the complete disclosure which they always assume *done somewhere*. It is enough for them that it should be necessary, and in this way they judge what is by what ought to be, by what the idea of knowledge requires. In fact, the thinking Ego can never abolish its inherence in an individual subject, which knows all things in a particular perspective. Reflection can never make me stop seeing the sun two hundred yards away on a misty day, or seeing it 'rise' and 'set', or thinking with the cultural apparatus with which my education, my previous efforts, my personal history, have provided me. I never actually collect together, or call up simultaneously, all the primary thoughts which contribute to my perception or to my present conviction. A critical philosophy attaches in the last analysis no importance to this resistance offered by passivity, as if it were not necessary to become the transcendental subject in order to have the right to affirm it. It tacitly assumes, consequently, that the philosopher's thinking is not conditioned by any situation. Starting from the spectacle of the world, which is that of a nature open to a plurality of thinking subjects, it looks for the conditions which make possible this unique world presented to a number of empirical selves, and finds it in a transcendental ego in which they participate without dividing it up, because it is not a Being, but a Unity or a Value. This is why the problem of the knowledge of other people is never posed in Kantian philosophy: the transcendental ego which it discusses is just as much other people's as mine, analysis is from the

start located outside me, and has nothing to do but to determine the general conditions which make possible a world for an ego—myself or others equally—and so it never comes up against the question: *who is thinking?* If on the other hand contemporary philosophy takes this as its main theme, and if other people become a problem for it, it is because it is trying to achieve a more radical self-discovery. Reflection cannot be thorough-going, or bring a complete elucidation of its object, if it does not arrive at awareness of itself as well as of its results. We must not only adopt a reflective attitude, in an impregnable *Cogito*, but furthermore reflect on this reflection, understand the natural situation which it is conscious of succeeding and which is therefore part of its definition; not merely practise philosophy, but realize the transformation which it brings with it in the spectacle of the world and in our existence. Only on this condition can philosophical knowledge become absolute knowledge, and cease to be a speciality or a technique. So there will be no assertion of an absolute Unity, all the less doubtful for not having had to come into Being. The core of philosophy is no longer an autonomous transcendental subjectivity, to be found everywhere and nowhere: it lies in the perpetual beginning of reflection, at the point where an individual life begins to reflect on itself. Reflection is truly reflection only if it is not carried outside itself, only if it knows itself as reflection-on-an-unreflective-experience, and consequently as a change in structure of our existence. We earlier attacked Bergsonian intuitionism and introspection for seeking to know by coinciding. But at the opposite extremity of philosophy, in the notion of a universal constituting consciousness, we encounter an exactly corresponding mistake. Bergson's mistake consists in believing that the thinking subject can become fused with the object thought about, and that knowledge can swell and be incorporated into being. The mistake of reflective philosophies is to believe that the thinking subject can absorb into its thinking or appropriate without remainder the object of its thought, that our being can be brought down to our knowledge. As thinking subject we are never the unreflective subject that we seek to know; but neither can we become wholly consciousness, or make ourselves into the transcendental consciousness. If we were consciousness, we would have to have before us the world, our history and perceived objects in their uniqueness as systems of transparent relationships.

Now even when we are not dealing with psychology, when we try to comprehend, in direct reflection and without the help of the varied associations of inductive thought, what a perceived movement, or a circle, are, we can elucidate this singular fact only by varying it somewhat through the agency of imagination, and then fastening our thought upon the invariable element of this mental experience. We can get through to the individual only by the hybrid procedure of finding an *example*, that is, by stripping it of its facticity. Thus it is questionable whether thought can ever quite cease to be inductive, and whether it can assimilate any experience to the point of taking up and appropriating its whole texture. A philosophy becomes transcendental, or radical, not by taking its place in absolute consciousness without mentioning the ways by which this is reached, but by considering itself as a problem; not by postulating a knowledge rendered totally explicit, but by recognizing as the fundamental philosophic problem this *presumption* on reason's part.

That is why we had to begin our examination of perception with psychological considerations. If we had not done so, we would not have understood the whole meaning of the transcendental problem, since we would not, starting from the natural attitude, have methodically followed the procedures which lead to it. We had to frequent the phenomenal field and become acquainted, through psychological descriptions, with the subject of phenomena. If we were to avoid placing ourselves from the start, as does reflexive philosophy, in a transcendental dimension assumed to be eternally given, thus by-passing the full problem of constitution. We could not begin, however, our psychological description without suggesting that once purged of all psychologism it can become a philosophical method. In order to revive perceptual experience buried under its own results, it would not have been enough to present descriptions of them which might possibly not have been understood, we had to establish by philosophical references and anticipations the point of view from which they might appear true. Thus we could begin neither without psychology nor with psychology alone. Experience anticipates a philosophy and philosophy is merely an elucidated experience. But now that the phenomenal field has been sufficiently circumscribed, let us enter this ambiguous domain and let us make sure of our first steps as far as the psychologist is concerned,

until the psychologist's self-scrutiny leads us, by way of a second-order reflection, to the phenomenon of the phenomenon, and decisively transforms the phenomenal field into a transcendental one.

Part I

The Body

EXPERIENCE AND OBJECTIVE THOUGHT

The problem of the body

Our perception ends in objects, and the object once constituted, appears as the reason for all the experiences of it which we have had or could have. For example, I see the next-door house from a certain angle, but it would be seen differently from the right bank of the Seine, or from the inside, or again from an aeroplane: the house itself is none of these appearances: it is, as Leibnitz said, the geometrized projection of these perspectives and of all possible perspectives, that is, the perspectiveless position from which all can be derived, the house seen from nowhere. But what do these words mean? Is not to see always to see from somewhere? To say that the house itself is seen from nowhere is surely to say that it is invisible! Yet when I say that I see the house with my own eyes, I am saying something that cannot be challenged; I do not mean that my retina and crystalline lens, my eyes as material organs, go into action and cause me to see it; with only myself to consult, I can know nothing about this. I am trying to express in this way a certain manner of approaching the object, the 'gaze' in short, which is as indubitable as my own thought, as

directly known by me. We must try to understand how vision can be brought into being from somewhere without being enclosed in its perspective.

To see an object is either to have it on the fringe of the visual field and be able to concentrate on it, or else respond to this summons by actually concentrating upon it. When I do concentrate my eyes on it, I become anchored in it, but this coming to rest of the gaze is merely a modality of its movement: I continue inside one object the exploration which earlier hovered over them all, and in one movement I close up the landscape and open the object. The two operations do not fortuitously coincide: it is not the contingent aspects of my bodily make-up, for example the retinal structure, which force me to see my surroundings vaguely if I want to see the object clearly. Even if I knew nothing of rods and cones, I should realize that it is necessary to put the surroundings in abeyance the better to see the object, and to lose in background what one gains in focal figure, because to look at the object is to plunge oneself into it, and because objects form a system in which one cannot show itself without concealing others. More precisely, the inner horizon of an object cannot become an object without the surrounding objects' becoming a horizon, and so vision is an act with two facets. For I do not identify the detailed object which I now have with that over which my gaze ran a few minutes ago, by expressly comparing these details with a memory of my first general view. When, in a film, the camera is trained on an object and moves nearer to it to give a close-up view, we can *remember* that we are being shown the ash tray or an actor's hand, we do not actually identify it. This is because the screen has no horizons. In normal vision, on the other hand, I direct my gaze upon a sector of the landscape, which comes to life and is disclosed, while the other objects recede into the periphery and become dormant, while, however, not ceasing to be there. Now, with them, I have at my disposal their horizons, in which there is implied, as a marginal view, the object on which my eyes at present fall. The horizon, then, is what guarantees the identity of the object throughout the exploration; it is the correlative of the impending power which my gaze retains over the objects which it has just surveyed, and which it already has over the fresh details which it is about to discover. No distinct memory and no explicit conjecture could fill this rôle: they

would give only a probable synthesis, whereas my perception presents itself as actual. The object-horizon structure, or the perspective, is no obstacle to me when I want to see the object: for just as it is the means whereby objects are distinguished from each other, it is also the means whereby they are disclosed. To see is to enter a universe of beings which *display themselves*, and they would not do this if they could not be hidden behind each other or behind me. In other words: to look at an object is to inhabit it, and from this habitation to grasp all things in terms of the aspect which they present to it. But in so far as I see those things too, they remain abodes open to my gaze, and, being potentially lodged in them, I already perceive from various angles the central object of my present vision. Thus every object is the mirror of all others. When I look at the lamp on my table, I attribute to it not only the qualities visible from where I am, but also those which the chimney, the walls, the table can 'see'; but back of my lamp is nothing but the face which it 'shows' to the chimney. I can therefore see an object in so far as objects form a system or a world, and in so far as each one treats the others round it as spectators of its hidden aspects and as guarantee of the permanence of those aspects. Any seeing of an object by me is instantaneously reiterated among all those objects in the world which are apprehended as co-existent, because each of them is all that the others 'see' of it. Our previous formula must therefore be modified; the house itself is not the house seen from nowhere, but the house seen from everywhere. The completed object is translucent, being shot through from all sides by an infinite number of present scrutinies which intersect in its depths leaving nothing hidden.

What we have just said about the spatial perspective could equally be said about the temporal. If I contemplate the house attentively and with no thought in my mind, it has something eternal about it, and an atmosphere of torpor seems to be generated by it. It is true that I see it from a certain point in my 'duration', but it is the same house that I saw yesterday when it was a day younger: it is the same house that either an old man or a child might behold. It is true, moreover, that age and change affect it, but even if it should collapse tomorrow, it will remain for ever true that it existed today: each moment of time calls all the others to witness; it shows by its advent 'how things were meant to turn out' and 'how it will all finish'; each present permanently

underpins a point of time which calls for recognition from all the others, so that the object is seen at all times as it is seen from all directions and by the same means, namely the structure imposed by a horizon. The present still holds on to the immediate past without positing it as an object, and since the immediate past similarly holds its immediate predecessor, past time is wholly collected up and grasped in the present. The same is true of the imminent future which will also have its horizon of imminence. But with my immediate past I have also the horizon of futurity which surrounded it, and thus I have my actual present seen as the future of that past. With the imminent future, I have the horizon of past which will surround it, and therefore my actual present as the past of that future. Thus, through the double horizon of retention and protention, my present may cease to be a factual present quickly carried away and abolished by the flow of duration, and become a fixed and identifiable point in objective time.

But, once more, my human gaze never posits more than one facet of the object, even though by means of horizons it is directed towards all the others. It can never come up against previous appearances or those presented to other people otherwise than through the intermediary of time and language. If I conceive in the image of my own gaze those others which, converging from all directions, explore every corner of the house and define it, I have still only a harmonious and indefinite set of views of the object, but not the object in its plenitude. In the same way, although my present draws into itself time past and time to come, it possesses them only in intention, and even if, for example, the consciousness of my past which I now have seems to me to cover exactly the past as it was, the past which I claim to recapture is not the real past, but my past as I now see it, perhaps after altering it. Similarly in the future I may have a mistaken idea about the present which I now experience. Thus the synthesis of horizons is no more than a presumptive synthesis, operating with certainty and precision only in the immediate vicinity of the object. The remoter surrounding is no longer within my grasp; it is no longer composed of still discernible objects or memories; it is an anonymous horizon now incapable of bringing any precise testimony, and leaving the object as incomplete and open as it is indeed, in perceptual experience. Through this opening, indeed, the substantiality of the object slips away. If it is to reach perfect density, in

other words if there is to be an absolute object, it will have to consist of an infinite number of different perspectives compressed into a strict co-existence, and to be presented as it were to a host of eyes all engaged in one concerted act of seeing. The house has its water pipes, its floor, perhaps its cracks which are insidiously spreading in the thickness of its ceilings. We never see them, but it has them along with its chimneys and windows which we can see. We shall forget our present perception of the house: every time we are able to compare our memories with the objects to which they refer, we are surprised, even allowing for other sources of error, at the changes which they owe to their own duration. But we still believe that there is a truth about the past; we base our memory on the world's vast Memory, in which the house has its place as it really was on that day, and which guarantees its being at this moment. Taken in itself—and as an object it demands to be taken thus—the object has nothing cryptic about it; it is completely displayed and its parts co-exist while our gaze runs from one to another, its present does not cancel its past, nor will its future cancel its present. The positing of the object therefore makes us go beyond the limits of our actual experience which is brought up against and halted by an alien being, with the result that finally experience believes that it extracts all its own teaching from the object. It is this *ek-stase** of experience which causes all perception to be perception of something.

Obsessed with being, and forgetful of the perspectivism of my experience, I henceforth treat it as an object and deduce it from a relationship between objects. I regard my body, which is my point of view upon the world, as one of the objects of that world. My recent awareness of my gaze as a means of knowledge I now repress, and treat my eyes as bits of matter. They then take their place in the same objective space in which I am trying to situate the external object and I believe that I am producing the perceived perspective by the projection of the objects on my retina. In the same way I treat my own perceptual history as a result of my relationships with the objective world; my present, which is my point of view on time, becomes one moment of

* Active transcendence of the subject in relation to the world. The author uses either the French word *extase*, or Heidegger's form *ek-stase*. The latter is the one used throughout this translation (Translator's note).

time among all the others, my duration a reflection or abstract aspect of universal time, as my body is a mode of objective space. In the same way, finally, if the objects which surround the house or which are found in it remained what they are in perceptual experience, that is, acts of seeing conditioned by a certain perspective, the house would not be posited as an autonomous being. Thus the positing of one single object, in the full sense, demands the compositive bringing into being of all these experiences in one act of manifold creation. Therein it exceeds perceptual experience and the synthesis of horizons—as the notion of a universe, that is to say, a completed and explicit totality, in which the relationships are those of reciprocal determination, exceeds that of a world, or an open and indefinite multiplicity of relationships which are of reciprocal implication.¹ I detach myself from my experience and pass to the *idea*. Like the object, the idea purports to be the same for everybody, valid in all times and places, and the individuation of an object in an objective point of time and space finally appears as the expression of a universal positing power.² I am no longer concerned with my body, nor with time, nor with the world, as I experience them in antepredicative knowledge, in the inner communion that I have with them. I now refer to my body only as an idea, to the universe as idea, to the idea of space and the idea of time. Thus ‘objective’ thought (in Kierkegaard’s sense) is formed—being that of common sense and of science—which finally causes us to lose contact with perceptual experience, of which it is nevertheless the outcome and the natural sequel. The whole life of consciousness is characterized by the tendency to posit objects, since it is consciousness, that is to say self-knowledge, only in so far as it takes hold of itself and draws itself together in an identifiable object. And yet the absolute positing of a single object is the death of consciousness, since it congeals the whole of existence, as a crystal placed in a solution suddenly crystallizes it.

We cannot remain in this dilemma of having to fail to understand either the subject or the object. We must discover the origin of the object at the very centre of our experience; we must describe the

¹ Husserl, *Umsturz der kopernikanischen Lehre: die Erde als Ur-Arche bewegt sich nicht* (unpublished).

² ‘I understand by the sole power of judging, which resides in my mind, what I thought I saw with my eyes.’ 2nd Meditation, AT, IX, p. 25.

emergence of being and we must understand how, paradoxically, there is for us an *in-itself*. In order not to prejudge the issue, we shall take objective thought on its own terms and not ask it any questions which it does not ask itself. If we are led to rediscover experience behind it, this shift of ground will be attributable only to the difficulties which objective thought itself raises. Let us consider it then at work in the constitution of our body as object, since this is a crucial moment in the genesis of the objective world. It will be seen that one's own body evades, even within science itself, the treatment to which it is intended to subject it. And since the genesis of the objective body is only a moment in the constitution of the object, the body, by withdrawing from the objective world, will carry with it the intentional threads linking it to its surrounding and finally reveal to us the perceiving subject as the perceived world.

2

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE BODY AND CLASSICAL PSYCHOLOGY

In its descriptions of the body from the point of view of the self, classical psychology was already wont to attribute to it 'characteristics' incompatible with the status of an object. In the first place it was stated that my body is distinguishable from the table or the lamp in that I can turn away from the latter whereas my body is constantly perceived. It is therefore an object which does not leave me. But in that case is it still an object? If the object is an invariable structure, it is not one in spite of the changes of perspective, but in that change or through it. It is not the case that ever-renewed perspectives simply provide it with opportunities of displaying its permanence, and with contingent ways of presenting itself to us. It is an object, which means that it is standing in front of us, only because it is observable: situated, that is to say, directly under our hand or gaze, indivisibly overthrown and re-integrated with every movement they make. Otherwise it would be true like an idea and not present like a thing. It is particularly true that an object is an object only in so far as it can be moved away from me, and ultimately disappear from my field of vision. Its presence is such that it entails a possible absence. Now the permanence of my own body is entirely different in

kind: it is not at the extremity of some indefinite exploration; it defies exploration and is always presented to me from the same angle. Its permanence is not a permanence in the world, but a permanence on my part. To say that it is always near me, always there for me, is to say that it is never really in front of me, that I cannot array it before my eyes, that it remains marginal to all my perceptions, that it is with me. It is true that external objects too never turn one of their sides to me without hiding the rest, but I can at least freely choose the side which they are to present to me. They could not appear otherwise than in perspective, but the particular perspective which I acquire at each moment is the outcome of no more than physical necessity, that is to say, of a necessity which I can use and which is not a prison for me: from my window only the tower of the church is visible, but this limitation simultaneously holds out the promise that from elsewhere the whole church could be seen. It is true, moreover, that if I am a prisoner the church will be restricted, for me, to a truncated steeple. If I did not take off my clothes I could never see the inside of them, and it will in fact be seen that my clothes may become appendages of my body. But this fact does not prove that the presence of my body is to be compared to the *de facto* permanence of certain objects, or the organ compared to a tool which is always available. It shows that conversely those actions in which I habitually engage incorporate their instruments into themselves and make them play a part in the original structure of my own body. As for the latter, it is my basic habit, the one which conditions all the others, and by means of which they are mutually comprehensible. Its permanence near to me, its unvarying perspective are not a *de facto* necessity, since such necessity presupposes them: in order that my window may impose upon me a point of view of the church, it is necessary in the first place that my body should impose upon me one of the world; and the first necessity can be merely physical only in virtue of the fact that the second is metaphysical; in short, I am accessible to factual situations only if my nature is such that there are factual situations for me. In other words, I observe external objects with my body, I handle them, examine them, walk round them, but my body itself is a thing which I do not observe: in order to be able to do so, I should need the use of a second body which itself would be unobservable. When I say that my body is always perceived by me,

these words are not to be taken in a purely statistical sense, for there must be, in the way my own body presents itself, something which makes its absence or its variation inconceivable. What can it be? My head is presented to my sight only to the extent of my nose end and the boundaries of my eye-sockets. I can see my eyes in three mirrors, but they are the eyes of someone observing, and I have the utmost difficulty in catching my living glance when a mirror in the street unexpectedly reflects my image back at me. My body in the mirror never stops following my intentions like their shadow, and if observation consists in varying the point of view while keeping the object fixed, then it escapes observation and is given to me as a simulacrum of my tactile body since it imitates the body's actions instead of responding to them by a free unfolding of perspectives. My visual body is certainly an object as far as its parts far removed from my head are concerned, but as we come nearer to the eyes, it becomes divorced from objects, and reserves among them a quasi-space to which they have no access, and when I try to fill this void by recourse to the image in the mirror, it refers me back to an original of the body which is not out there among things, but in my own province, on this side of all things seen. It is no different, in spite of what may appear to be the case, with my tactile body, for if I can, with my left hand, feel my right hand as it touches an object, the right hand as an object is not the right hand as it touches: the first is a system of bones, muscles and flesh brought down at a point of space, the second shoots through space like a rocket to reveal the external object in its place. In so far as it sees or touches the world, my body can therefore be neither seen nor touched. What prevents its ever being an object, ever being 'completely constituted'¹ is that it is that by which there are objects. It is neither tangible nor visible in so far as it is that which sees and touches. The body therefore is not one more among external objects, with the peculiarity of always being there. If it is permanent, the permanence is absolute and is the ground for the relative permanence of disappearing objects,

¹ Husserl, *Ideen* T. II (unpublished). We are indebted to Mgr Noël and the Institut Supérieur de Philosophie of Louvain, trustees of the collected *Nachlass*, and particularly to the kindness of the Reverend Father Van Bréda, for having been able to consult a certain amount of unpublished material.

real objects. The presence and absence of external objects are only variations within a field of primordial presence, a perceptual domain over which my body exercises power. Not only is the permanence of my body not a particular case of the permanence of external objects in the world, but the second cannot be understood except through the first: not only is the perspective of my body not a particular case of that of objects, but furthermore the presentation of objects in perspective cannot be understood except through the resistance of my body to all variation of perspective. If objects may never show me more than one of their facets, this is because I am myself in a certain place from which I see them and which I cannot see. If nevertheless I believe in the existence of their hidden sides and equally in a world which embraces them all and co-exists with them, I do so in so far as my body, always present for me, and yet involved with them in so many objective relationships, sustains their co-existence with it and communicates to them all the pulse of its duration. Thus the permanence of one's own body, if only classical psychology had analysed it, might have led it to the body no longer conceived as an object of the world, but as our means of communication with it, to the world no longer conceived as a collection of determinate objects, but as the horizon latent in all our experience and itself ever-present and anterior to every determining thought.

The other 'characteristics' whereby one's own body was defined were no less interesting, and for the same reasons. My body, it was said, is recognized by its power to give me 'double sensations': when I touch my right hand with my left, my right hand, as an object, has the strange property of being able to feel too. We have just seen that the two hands are never simultaneously in the relationship of touched and touching to each other. When I press my two hands together, it is not a matter of two sensations felt together as one perceives two objects placed side by side, but of an ambiguous set-up in which both hands can alternate the rôles of 'touching' and being 'touched'. What was meant by talking about 'double sensations' is that, in passing from one rôle to the other, I can identify the hand touched as the same one which will in a moment be touching. In other words, in this bundle of bones and muscles which my right hand presents to my left, I can anticipate for an instant the integument or incarnation of that other

right hand, alive and mobile, which I thrust towards things in order to explore them. The body catches itself from the outside engaged in a cognitive process; it tries to touch itself while being touched, and initiates 'a kind of reflection'² which is sufficient to distinguish it from objects, of which I can indeed say that they 'touch' my body, but only when it is inert, and therefore without ever catching it unawares in its exploratory function.

It was also said that the body is an affective object, whereas external things are from my point of view merely represented. This amounted to stating a third time the problem of the status of my own body. For if I say that my foot hurts, I do not simply mean that it is a cause of pain in the same way as the nail which is cutting into it, differing only in being nearer to me; I do not mean that it is the last of the objects in the external world, after which a more intimate kind of pain should begin, an unlocalized awareness of pain in itself, related to the foot only by some causal connection and within the closed system of experience. I mean that the pain reveals itself as localized, that it is constitutive of a 'pain-infested space'. 'My foot hurts' means not: 'I think that my foot is the cause of this pain', but: 'the pain comes from my foot' or again 'my foot has a pain'. This is shown clearly by the 'primitive voluminousness of pain' formerly spoken of by psychologists. It was therefore recognized that my body does not present itself as the objects of external impressions do, and that perhaps even these latter objects do no more than stand out against the affective background which in the first place throws consciousness outside itself.

Finally when the psychologists tried to confine 'kinaesthetic sensations' to one's own body, arguing that these sensations present the body's movements to us globally, while attributing the movements of external objects to a mediating perception and to a comparison between successive positions, it could have been objected that movement, expressing a relationship, cannot be felt, but demands a mental operation. This objection, however, would merely have been an indictment of their language. What they were expressing, badly it is true, by 'kinaesthetic sensation', was the originality of the movements which I perform with my body: they directly anticipate the final

² Husserl, *Méditations cartésiennes*, p. 81.

situation, for my intention initiates a movement through space merely to attain the objective initially given at the starting point; there is as it were a germ of movement which only secondarily develops into an objective movement. I move external objects with the aid of my body, which takes hold of them in one place and shifts them to another. But my body itself I move directly, I do not find it at one point of objective space and transfer it to another, I have no need to look for it, it is already with me—I do not need to lead it towards the movement's completion, it is in contact with it from the start and propels itself towards that end. The relationships between my decision and my body are, in movement, magic ones.

If the description of my own body given by classical psychology already offered all that is necessary to distinguish it from objects, how does it come about that psychologists have not made this distinction or that they have in any case seen no philosophical consequence flowing from it? The reason is that, taking a step natural to them, they chose the position of impersonal thought to which science has been committed as long as it believed in the possibility of separating, in observation, on the one hand what belongs to the situation of the observer and on the other the properties of the absolute object. For the living subject his own body might well be different from all external objects; the fact remains that for the unsituated thought of the psychologist the experience of the living subject became itself an object and, far from requiring a fresh definition of being, took its place in universal being. It was the life of the 'psyche' which stood in opposition to the real, but which was treated as a second reality, as an object of scientific investigation to be brought under a set of laws. It was postulated that our experience, already besieged by physics and biology, was destined to be completely absorbed into objective knowledge, with the consummation of the system of the sciences. Thenceforth the experience of the body degenerated into a 'representation' of the body; it was not a phenomenon but a fact of the psyche. In the matter of living appearance, my visual body includes a large gap at the level of the head, but biology was there ready to fill that gap, to explain it through the structure of the eyes, to instruct me in what the body really is, showing that I have a retina and a brain like other men and like the corpses which I dissect, and that, in short, the surgeon's instrument could infallibly bring to

light in this indeterminate zone of my head the exact replica of plates illustrating the human anatomy. I apprehend my body as a subject-object, as capable of 'seeing' and 'suffering', but these confused representations were so many psychological oddities, samples of a magical variety of thought the laws of which are studied by psychology and sociology and which has its place assigned to it by them, in the system of the real world, as an object of scientific investigation. This imperfect picture of my body, its marginal presentation, and its equivocal status as touching and touched, could not therefore be structural characteristics of the body itself; they did not affect the idea of it; they became 'distinctive characteristics' of those contents of consciousness which make up our representation of the body: these contents are consistent, affective and strangely duplicated in 'double sensations', but apart from this the representation of the body is a representation like any other and correspondingly the body is an object like any other. Psychologists did not realize that in treating the experience of the body in this way they were simply, in accordance with the scientific approach, shelving a problem which ultimately could not be burked. The inadequacy of my perception was taken as a *de facto* inadequacy resulting from the organization of my sensory apparatus; the presence of my body was taken as a *de facto presence* springing from its constant action on my receptive nervous system; finally the union of soul and body, which was presupposed by these two explanations, was understood, in Cartesian fashion, as a *de facto union* whose *de jure* possibility need not be established, because the fact, as the starting point of knowledge, was eliminated from the final result. Now the psychologist could imitate the scientist and, for a moment at least, see his body as others saw it, and conversely see the bodies of others as mechanical things with no inner life. The contribution made from the experiences of others had the effect of dimming the structure of his own, and conversely, having lost contact with himself he became blind to the behaviour of others. He thus saw everything from the point of view of universal thought which abolished equally his experience of others and his experience of himself. But as a psychologist he was engaged in a task which by nature pulled him back into himself, and he could not allow himself to remain unaware to this extent. For whereas neither the physicist nor the chemist are the objects of their own investigation, the psychologist was

himself, in the nature of the case, the fact which exercised him. This representation of the body, this magical experience, which he approached in a detached frame of mind, was himself; he lived it while he thought about it. It is true that, as has been shown,³ it was not enough for him to be a psyche in order to know this, for this knowledge, like other knowledge, is acquired only through our relations with other people. It does not emerge from any recourse to an ideal of introspective psychology, and between himself and others no less than between himself and himself, the psychologist was able and obliged to rediscover a pre-objective relationship. But as a psyche speaking of the psyche, he was all that he was talking about. This history of the psyche which he was elaborating in adopting the objective attitude was one whose outcome he already possessed within himself, or rather he was, in his existence, its contracted outcome and latent memory. The union of soul and body had not been brought about once and for all in a remote realm; it came into being afresh at every moment beneath the psychologist's thinking, not as a repetitive event which each time takes the psyche by surprise, but as a necessity that the psychologist knew to be in the depths of his being as he became aware of it as a piece of knowledge. The birth of perception from 'sensory givens' to 'world' had to be renewed with each act of perception, otherwise the sensory givens would have lost the meaning they owed to this development. Hence the 'psyche' was not an object like others; it had done everything that one was about to say of it before it could be said; the psychologist's being knew more about itself than he did; nothing that had happened or was happening according to science was completely alien to it. Applied to the psyche, the notion of fact, therefore, underwent a transformation. The *de facto* psyche, with its 'peculiarities', was no longer an event in objective time and in the external world, but an event with which we were in internal contact, of which we were ourselves the ceaseless accomplishment or upsurge, and which continually gathered within itself its past, its body and its world. Before being an objective fact, the union of soul and body had to be, then, a possibility of consciousness itself and the question arose as to what the perceiving subject is if he is to be able to experience a body as his own.

³ P. Guillaume, *L'Objectivité en Psychologie*.

There was no longer a fact passively submitted to, but one assumed. To be a consciousness or rather to be an *experience* is to hold inner communication with the world, the body and other people, to be with them instead of being beside them. To concern oneself with psychology is necessarily to encounter, beneath objective thought which moves among ready-made things, a first opening upon things without which there would be no objective knowledge. The psychologist could not fail to rediscover himself as experience, which means as an immediate presence to the past, to the world, to the body and to others at the very moment when he was trying to see himself as an object among objects. Let us then return to the 'characteristics' of one's own body and resume the study of it where we left off. By doing so we shall trace the progress of modern psychology and thereby effect along with it the return to experience.

3

THE SPATIALITY OF ONE'S OWN BODY AND MOTILITY

Let us first of all describe the spatiality of my own body. If my arm is resting on the table I should never think of saying that it is *beside* the ash-tray in the way in which the ash-tray is beside the telephone. The outline of my body is a frontier which ordinary spatial relations do not cross. This is because its parts are inter-related in a peculiar way: they are not spread out side by side, but enveloped in each other. For example, my hand is not a collection of points. In cases of *alloecheiria*,* in which the subject feels in his right hand stimuli applied to his left hand, it is impossible to suppose that each of the stimulations changes its spatial value on its own account.¹ The various points on the left hand are transferred to the right as relevant to a total organ, a hand without parts which has been suddenly displaced. Hence they form a system and the space of my hand is not a mosaic of spatial values. Similarly my whole body for me is not an assemblage of organs juxtaposed in space. I am in undivided possession of it and I know

* A disorder of sensation in which sensations are referred to the wrong part of the body (Translator's note). Cf. for example Head, *On disturbances of sensation with especial reference to the pain of visceral disease*.

¹ *Ibid.* We have discussed the notion of the local signal in *La Structure du Comportement*, pp. 102 and ff.

where each of my limbs is through a *body image* in which all are included. But the notion of body image is ambiguous, as are all notions which make their appearance at turning points in scientific advance. They can be fully developed only through a reform of methods. At first, therefore, they are used only in a sense which falls short of their full sense, and it is their immanent development which bursts the bounds of methods hitherto used. 'Body image' was at first understood to mean a *compendium* of our bodily experience, capable of giving a commentary and meaning to the internal impressions and the impression of possessing a body at any moment. It was supposed to register for me the positional changes of the parts of my body for each movement of one of them, the position of each local stimulus in the body as a whole, an account of the movements performed at every instant during a complex gesture, in short a continual translation into visual language of the kinaesthetic and articular impressions of the moment. When the term body image was first used, it was thought that nothing more was being introduced than a convenient name for a great many associations of images, and it was intended merely to convey the fact that these associations were firmly established and constantly ready to come into play. The body image was supposed gradually to show itself through childhood in proportion as the tactile, kinaesthetic and articular contents were associated among themselves or with visual contents, and more easily evoked them.² Its physiological representation could then be no more than a focus of images in the classical sense. Yet in the use made of it by psychologists, it is clear that the body image does not fit into this associationist definition. For example, in order that the body image may elucidate *allocheiria*, it is not enough that each sensation of the left hand should take its place among generic images of all parts of the body acting in association to form around the left hand, as it were, a superimposed sketch of the body; these associations must be constantly subject to a unique law, the spatiality of the body must work downwards from the whole to the parts, the left hand and its position must be implied in a comprehensive bodily purpose and must originate

² Cf. for example Head, *Sensory disturbances from cerebral lesion*, p. 189; Pick, *Störungen der Orientierung am eigenen Körper*, and even Schilder, *Das Körperschema*, although Schilder admits that 'such a complex is not the sum of its parts but a new whole in relation 'to them'.

in that purpose, so that it may at one stroke not only be superimposed on or cleave to the right hand, but actually become the right hand. When we try³ to elucidate the phenomenon of the phantom limb by relating it to the body image of the subject, we add to the accepted explanations, in terms of cerebral tracks and recurrent sensations, only if the body image, instead of being the residue of habitual cenesthesia, becomes the law of its constitution. If a need was felt to introduce this new word, it was in order to make it clear that the spatial and temporal unity, the inter-sensory or the sensori-motor unity of the body is, so to speak, *de jure*, that it is not confined to contents actually and fortuitously associated in the course of our experience, that it is in some way anterior to them and makes their association possible. We are therefore feeling our way towards a second definition of the body image: it is no longer seen as the straightforward result of associations established during experience, but a total awareness of my posture in the intersensory world, a 'form' in the sense used by Gestalt psychology.⁴ But already this second definition too is superseded by the analyses of the psychologists. It is inadequate to say that my body is a form, that is to say a phenomenon in which the totality takes precedence over the parts. How is such a phenomenon possible? Because a form, compared to the mosaic of a physico-chemical body or to that of 'cenesthesia', is a new type of existence. The fact that the paralysed limb of the anosognosic no longer counts in the subject's body image, is accounted for by the body image's being neither the mere copy nor even the global awareness of the existing parts of the body, and by its active integration of these latter only in proportion to their value to the organism's projects. Psychologists often say that the body image is *dynamic*.⁵ Brought down to a precise sense, this term means that my body appears to me as an attitude directed towards a certain existing or possible task. And indeed its spatiality is not, like that of external objects or like that

³ As for example Lhermitte, *L'Image de notre Corps*.

⁴ Konrad, *Das Körperschema, eine kritische Studie und der Versuch einer Revision*, pp. 365 and 367. Bürger-Prinz and Kaila define the body image as 'knowledge of one's own body as the collective expression both of the mutual relations of its limbs and of its parts'. *Ibid.*, p. 365.

⁵ Cf. for example Konrad, *op. cit.*

of 'spatial sensations', a *spatiality of position*, but a *spatiality of situation*. If I stand in front of my desk and lean on it with both hands, only my hands are stressed and the whole of my body trails behind them like the tail of a comet. It is not that I am unaware of the whereabouts of my shoulders or back, but these are simply swallowed up in the position of my hands, and my whole posture can be read so to speak in the pressure they exert on the table. If I stand holding my pipe in my closed hand, the position of my hand is not determined discursively by the angle which it makes with my forearm, and my forearm with my upper arm, and my upper arm with my trunk, and my trunk with the ground. I know indubitably where my pipe is, and thereby I know where my hand and my body are, as primitive man in the desert is always able to take his bearings immediately without having to cast his mind back, and add up distances covered and deviations made since setting off. The word 'here' applied to my body does not refer to a determinate position in relation to other positions or to external co-ordinates, but the laying down of the first co-ordinates, the anchoring of the active body in an object, the situation of the body in face of its tasks. Bodily space can be distinguished from external space and envelop its parts instead of spreading them out, because it is the darkness needed in the theatre to show up the performance, the background of somnolence or reserve of vague power against which the gesture and its aim⁶ stand out, the zone of not being in front of which precise beings, figures and points can come to light. In the last analysis, if my body can be a 'form' and if there can be, in front of it, important figures against indifferent backgrounds, this occurs in virtue of its being polarized by its tasks, of its *existence towards* them, of its collecting together of itself in its pursuit of its aims; the body image is finally a way of stating that my body is in-the-world.⁷ As far as spatiality is concerned, and this alone interests us at the moment, one's own body is the third term, always tacitly understood, in the figure-background structure, and every figure stands out against the double horizon of external and bodily space. One must therefore reject as an abstraction

⁶ Grünbaum, *Asphasie und Motorik*, p. 395.

⁷ We have already seen (cf. *supra* pp. 81–2) that the phantom limb, which is a modality of the body image, is understood in terms of the general movement of being-in-the-world.

any analysis of bodily space which takes account only of figures and points, since these can neither be conceived nor be without horizons.

It will perhaps be replied that the figure-background structure or the point-horizon structure themselves presuppose the notion of objective space; that in order to experience a display of dexterity as a figure against the massive background of the body, the hand and the rest of the body must be linked by this relationship of objective spatiality, so that the figure-background structure becomes once again one of the contingent contents of the universal form of space. But what meaning could the word 'against' have for a subject not placed by his body face to face with the world? It implies the distinction of a top and a bottom, or an 'orientated space'.⁸ When I say that an object is on a table, I always mentally put myself either in the table or in the object, and I apply to them a category which theoretically fits the relationship of my body to external objects. Stripped of this anthropological association, the word *on* is indistinguishable from the word 'under' or the word 'beside'. Even if the universal form of space is that without which there would be for us no bodily space, it is not that by which there is one. Even if the form is not the *setting in which*, but the *means whereby* the content is posited, it is not the sufficient means of this act of positing as far as bodily space is concerned, and to this extent the bodily content remains, in relation to it, something opaque, fortuitous and unintelligible. The only solution along this road would be to acknowledge that the body's spatiality has no meaning of its own to distinguish it from objective spatiality, which would do away with the content as a phenomenon and hence with the problem of its relation to form. But can we pretend to discover no distinctive meaning in the words 'on', 'under', 'beside', or in the dimensions of orientated space? Even if analysis discovers in all these relationships the universal relation of externality, the self-evidentness of top and bottom, right and left, for the person who has his being in space, prevents us from treating all these distinctions as nonsense, and suggests to us that we should look beneath the explicit meaning of definitions for the latent meaning of experiences. The relationships between the two spaces would therefore

⁸ Cf. Becker, *Beiträge zur phänomenologischen Begründung der Geometrie und ihren physikalischen Anwendungen*.

be as follows: as soon as I try to posit bodily space or bring out its meaning I find nothing in it but intelligible space. But at the same time this intelligible space is not extracted from orientated space, it is merely its explicit expression, and, when separated from that root has no meaning whatsoever. The truth is that homogeneous space can convey the meaning of orientated space only because it is from the latter that it has received that meaning. In so far as the content can be really subsumed under the form and can appear as the content of that form, it is because the form is accessible only through the content. Bodily space can really become a fragment of objective space only if within its individuality as bodily space it contains the dialectical ferment to transform it into universal space. This is what we have tried to express by saying that the point-horizon structure is the foundation of space. The horizon or background would not extend beyond the figure or round about it, unless they partook of the same kind of being as the figure, and unless they could be converted into points by a transference of the gaze. But the point-horizon structure can teach me what a point is only in virtue of the maintenance of a hither zone of corporeality from which to be seen, and round about it indeterminate horizons which are the counterpart of this seeing. The multiplicity of points or 'heres' can in the nature of things be constituted only by a chain of experiences in which on each occasion one and no more of them is presented as an object, and which is itself built up in the heart of this space. And finally, far from my body's being for me no more than a fragment of space, there would be no space at all for me if I had no body.

If bodily space and external space form a practical system, the first being the background against which the object as the goal of our action may stand out or the void in front of which it may come to light, it is clearly in action that the spatiality of our body is brought into being, and an analysis of one's own movement should enable us to arrive at a better understanding of it. By considering the body in movement, we can see better how it inhabits space (and, moreover, time) because movement is not limited to submitting passively to space and time, it actively assumes them, it takes them up in their basic significance which is obscured in the commonplaceness of established situations. We should like to analyse closely an example of morbid motility which clearly shows the fundamental relations between the body and space.

A patient⁹ whom traditional psychiatry would class among cases of psychic blindness is unable to perform 'abstract' movements with his eyes shut; movements, that is, which are not relevant to any actual situation, such as moving arms and legs to order, or bending and straightening a finger. Nor can he describe the position of his body or even his head, or the passive movements of his limbs. Finally, when his head, arm or leg is touched, he cannot identify the point on his body; he cannot distinguish two points of contact on his skin even as much as three inches apart; and he cannot recognize the size or shape of objects placed against his body. He manages the abstract movements only if he is allowed to watch the limb required to perform them, or to go through preparatory movements involving the whole body. The localization of stimuli, and recognition of objects by touch also become possible with the aid of the preparatory movements. Even when his eyes are closed, the patient performs with extraordinary speed and precision the movements needed in living his life, provided that he is in the habit of performing them: he takes his handkerchief from his pocket and blows his nose, takes a match out of a box and lights a lamp. He is employed in the manufacture of wallets and his production rate is equal to three quarters of that of a normal workman. He can even¹⁰ without any preparatory movement, perform these 'concrete' movements to order. In the same patient, and also in cerebellar cases, one notices¹¹ a dissociation of the act of pointing from reactions of taking or grasping: the same subject who is unable to point to order to a part of his body, quickly moves his hand to the point where a mosquito is stinging him. Concrete movements and acts of grasping therefore enjoy a privileged position for which we need to find some explanation.

Let us examine the question more closely. A patient, asked to point to some part of his body, his nose for example, can only manage to do so if he is allowed to take hold of it. If the patient is set the task of

⁹ Gelb and Goldstein, *Über den Einfluss des vollständigen Verlustes des optischen Vorstellungsvermögens auf das taktile Erkennen.*—*Psychologische Analysen hirn-pathologischer Fälle*, Chap. II, pp. 157–250.

¹⁰ Goldstein, *Über die Abhängigkeit der Bewegungen von optischen Vorgängen*. This second work makes use of observations made on the same patient, Schneider, two years after those collected in the work just referred to.

¹¹ Goldstein, *Zeigen und Greifen*, pp. 453–66.

interrupting the movement before its completion, or if he is allowed to touch his nose only with a wooden ruler, the action becomes impossible.¹² It must therefore be concluded that 'grasping' or 'touching', even for the body, is different from 'pointing'. From the outset the grasping movement is magically at its completion; it can begin only by anticipating its end, since to disallow taking hold is sufficient to inhibit the action. And it has to be admitted that a point on my body can be present to me as one to be taken hold of without being given in this anticipated grasp as a point to be indicated. But how is this possible? If I know where my nose is when it is a question of holding it, how can I not know where it is when it is a matter of pointing to it? It is probably because knowledge of where something is can be understood in a number of ways. Traditional psychology has no concept to cover these varieties of consciousness of place because consciousness of place is always, for such psychology, a positional consciousness, a representation, *Vor-stellung*, because as such it gives us the place as a determination of the objective world and because such a representation either is or is not, but, if it is, yields the object to us quite unambiguously and as an end identifiable through all its appearances. Now here, on the other hand, we have to create the concepts necessary to convey the fact that bodily space may be given to me in an intention to take hold without being given in an intention to know. The patient is conscious of his bodily space as the matrix of his habitual action, but not as an objective setting; his body is at his disposal as a means of ingress into a familiar surrounding, but not as the means of expression of a gratuitous and free spatial thought. When ordered to perform a concrete movement, he first of all repeats the order in a questioning tone of voice, then his body assumes the general position required for the task; finally he goes through the movement. It is noticeable that the whole body is involved in it, and that the patient never cuts it down, as a normal subject would, to the strict minimum. To the military salute are added the other external marks of respect. To the right hand pantomime of combing the hair is added, with the left, that of holding a mirror; when the right hand pretends to knock in a nail, the left pretends to hold the nail. The explanation is that the order is taken quite seriously and that the patient

¹² *Ibid.* This is a cerebellar case.

manages to perform these concrete movements to order only provided that he places himself mentally in the actual situation to which they correspond. The normal subject, on giving, to order, a military salute, sees in it no more than an experimental situation, and therefore restricts the movement to its most important elements and does not throw himself into it.¹³ He is using his body as a means to play acting; he finds it entertaining to pretend to be a soldier; he escapes from reality in the rôle of the soldier¹⁴ just as the actor slips his real body into the 'great phantom'¹⁵ of the character to be played. The normal man and the actor do not mistake imaginary situations for reality, but extricate their real bodies from the living situation to make them breathe, speak and, if need be, weep in the realm of imagination. This is what our patient is no longer able to do. In the course of living, he says 'I experience the movements as being a result of the situation, of the sequence of events themselves; myself and my movements are, so to speak, merely a link in the whole process and I am scarcely aware of any voluntary initiative . . . It all happens independently of me.' In the same way, in order to make a movement to order he places himself 'in the affective situation as a whole, and it is from this that the movement flows, as in real life'.¹⁶ If his performance is interrupted and he has the experimental situation recalled to him, all his dexterity disappears. Once more kinetic initiative becomes impossible, the patient must first of all 'find' his arm, 'find', by the preparatory movements, the gesture called for, and the gesture itself loses the melodic character which it presents in ordinary life, and becomes manifestly a collection of partial movements strung laboriously together. I can therefore take my place, through the medium of my body as the potential source of a certain number of familiar actions, in my environment conceived as a set of *manipulanda* and without, moreover, envisaging my body or my surrounding as objects in the Kantian sense, that is, as systems of qualities linked by some intelligible law, as transparent entities, free from any attachment to a specific place or time, and ready to be named or at least

¹³ Goldstein, *Über die Abhängigkeit*, p. 175.

¹⁴ J. P. Sartre, *L'Imaginaire*, p. 243.

¹⁵ Diderot, *Paradoxe sur le Comédien*.

¹⁶ Goldstein, *Über die Abhängigkeit*, pp. 175–6.

pointed out. There is my arm seen as sustaining familiar acts, my body as giving rise to determinate action having a field or scope known to me in advance, there are my surroundings as a collection of possible points upon which this bodily action may operate,—and there is, furthermore, my arm as a mechanism of muscles and bones, as a contrivance for bending and stretching, as an articulated object, the world as a pure spectacle into which I am not absorbed, but which I contemplate and point out. As far as bodily space is concerned, it is clear that there is a knowledge of place which is reducible to a sort of co-existence with that place, and which is not simply nothing, even though it cannot be conveyed by a description or even by the mute reference of a gesture. A patient of the kind discussed above, when stung by a mosquito, does not need to look for the place where he has been stung. He finds it straight away, because for him there is no question of locating it in relation to axes of co-ordinates in objective space, but of reaching with his phenomenal hand a certain painful spot on his phenomenal body, and because between the hand as a scratching potentiality and the place stung as a spot to be scratched a directly experienced relationship is presented in the natural system of one's own body. The whole operation takes place in the domain of the phenomenal; it does not run through the objective world, and only the spectator, who lends his objective representation of the living body to the acting subject, can believe that the sting is perceived, that the hand moves in objective space, and consequently find it odd that the same subject should fail in experiments requiring him to point things out. Similarly the subject, when put in front of his scissors, needle and familiar tasks, does not need to look for his hands or his fingers, because they are not objects to be discovered in objective space: bones, muscles and nerves, but potentialities already mobilized by the perception of scissors or needle, the central end of those 'intentional threads' which link him to the objects given. It is never our objective body that we move, but our phenomenal body, and there is no mystery in that, since our body, as the potentiality of this or that part of the world, surges towards objects to be grasped and perceives them.¹⁷ In the same way the patient has no need

¹⁷ It is not a question of how the soul acts on the objective body, since it is not on the latter that it acts, but on the phenomenal body. So the question has to be reframed, and

to look for a theatre of action and a space in which to deploy these concrete movements: the space is given to him in the form of the world at this moment; it is the piece of leather 'to be cut up'; it is the lining 'to be sewn'. The bench, scissors, pieces of leather offer themselves to the subject as poles of action; through their combined values they delimit a certain situation, an open situation moreover, which calls for a certain mode of resolution, a certain kind of work. The body is no more than an element in the system of the subject and his world, and the task to be performed elicits the necessary movements from him by a sort of remote attraction, as the phenomenal forces at work in my visual field elicit from me, without any calculation on my part, the motor reactions which establish the most effective balance between them, or as the conventions of our social group, or our set of listeners, immediately elicit from us the words, attitudes and tone which are fitting. Not that we are trying to conceal our thoughts or to please others, but because we are literally what others think of us and what our world is. In the concrete movement the patient has a positing awareness neither of the stimulus nor of his reaction: quite simply he is his body and his body is the potentiality of a certain world.

What, on the other hand, happens in experiments in which the patient fails? If a part of his body is touched and he is asked to locate the point of contact, he first of all sets his whole body in motion and thus narrows down the problem of location, then he comes still nearer by moving the limb in question, and the process is completed in the form of quiverings of the skin in the neighbourhood of the point touched.¹⁸ If the subject's arm is extended horizontally, he cannot describe its position until he has performed a set of pendular movements which convey to him the arm position in relation to the trunk, that of the forearm to the rest of the arm, and that of the trunk in

we must ask why there are two views of me and of my body: my body for me and my body for others, and how these two systems can exist together. It is indeed not enough to say that the objective body belongs to the realm of 'for others', and my phenomenal body to that of 'for me', and we cannot refuse to pose the problem of their relations, since the 'for me' and the 'for others' co-exist in one and the same world, as is proved by my perception of an other who immediately brings me back to the condition of an object for him.

¹⁸ Goldstein, *Über den Einfluss . . .*, pp. 167–206.

relation to the vertical. In the case of passive movement, the subject feels that there is movement but cannot say of what kind and in what direction. Here again he resorts to active movements. The patient concludes that he is lying down from the pressure of the mattress on his back, or that he is standing from the pressure of the ground on his feet.¹⁹ If the two points of a compass are placed on his hand, he can distinguish them only if he is allowed to rotate his hand, and bring first one and then the other point into contact with his skin. If letters or figures are traced out on his hand, he identifies them only provided that he can himself move his hand, and it is not the movement of the point on his hand which he perceives, but conversely the movement of his hand in relation to the point. This is proved by tracing on his left hand normal letters, which are never recognized, then the mirrored image of the same letters, which is immediately understood. The mere touching of a paper rectangle or oval gives rise to no recognition, whereas the subject recognizes the figures if he is allowed to make exploratory movements to 'spell out' the shapes, to spot their 'characteristics' and to identify the object on this basis.²⁰ How are we to co-ordinate this set of facts and how are we to discover by means of it what function, found in the normal person, is absent in the patient? There can be no question of simply transferring to the normal person what the deficient one lacks and is trying to recover. Illness, like childhood and 'primitive' mentality, is a complete form of existence and the procedures which it employs to replace normal functions which have been destroyed are equally pathological phenomena. It is impossible to deduce the normal from the pathological, deficiencies from the substitute functions, by a mere change of the sign. We must take substitutions as substitutions, as allusions to some fundamental function that they are striving to make good, and the direct image of which they fail to furnish. The genuine inductive method is not a 'differential method'; it consists in correctly reading phenomena, in grasping their

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 206–13.

²⁰ For example, the subject runs his fingers over an angle several times: 'My fingers,' he says, 'move straight along, then stop, and then move off again in another direction: it is an angle, it must be a right angle.'—'Two, three, four angles, the sides are each two centimetres long, so they are equal, all the angles are right angles . . . It's a dice.' *Ibid.*, p. 195. Cf. pp. 187–206.

meaning, that is, in treating them as modalities and variations of the subject's total being. We observe that when the patient is questioned about the position of his limbs or of a tactile stimulus, he tries, by means of preparatory movements, to make his body into an object of present perception. Asked about the shape of an object in contact with his body, he tries to trace it out himself by following the outline of the object. Nothing would be more misleading than to suppose the normal person adopting similar procedures, differing merely in being shortened by constant use. The kind of patient under consideration sets out in search of these explicit perceptions only in order to provide a substitute for a certain mutual presence of body and object which is a datum of normal experience and which we still have to reconstitute. It is true that even in the normal person the perception of the body and of objects in contact with the body is vague when there is no movement.²¹ The fact remains that the normal person can, in the absence of any movements, always distinguish a stimulus applied to his head from one applied to his body. Are we to suppose that²² excitations felt as coming either from outside or from one's own body have brought into play, in that person, 'kinaesthetic residua' which take the place of actual movements? But then how could data supplied by the sense of touch arouse 'kinaesthetic residua' of a determinate kind unless they carried within themselves some characteristic which enables them to do so, unless they themselves, in other words, had some well defined or obscure spatial significance?²³ At least we can say that the normal subject can immediately 'come to grips' with his body.²⁴ He enjoys the use of his body not only in so far as it is involved in a concrete setting, he is in a situation not only in relation to the tasks imposed by a particular job, he is not open merely to real situations; for, over and above all this, his body is correlated with pure stimuli devoid of any practical bearing; he is open to those verbal and imaginary situations which he can choose for himself or which may be suggested to him in the course of an experiment. His body, when touched, is not presented to him as a

²¹ Goldstein, *Über den Einfluss . . .*, pp. 206–13.

²² As Goldstein does, *ibid.*, pp. 167–206.

²³ Cf. *supra* the general discussion of the 'association of ideas', pp. 17 and ff.

²⁴ A patient named Schneider says he needs *Anhaltspunkte*.

geometrical outline in which each stimulus occupies an explicit position, and Schneider's disease lies precisely in his need, in order to find out where he is being touched, to convert the bodily area touched into a shape. But each stimulus applied to the body of the normal person arouses a kind of 'potential movement', rather than an actual one; the part of the body in question sheds its anonymity, is revealed, by the presence of a particular tension, as a certain power of action within the framework of the anatomical apparatus. In the case of the normal subject, the body is available not only in real situations into which it is drawn. It can turn aside from the world, apply its activity to stimuli which affect its sensory surfaces, lend itself to experimentation, and generally speaking take its place in the realm of the potential. It is because of its confinement within the actual that an unsound sense of touch calls for special movements designed to localize stimuli, and for the same reason the patient substitutes, for tactile recognition and perception, a laborious decoding of stimuli and deduction of objects. For a key, for instance, to appear as such in my tactile experience, a kind of fulness of touch is required, a tactile field in which local impressions may be co-ordinated into a shape just as notes are mere stepping-stones in a melody; and that very viscosity of tactile data which makes the body dependent upon actual situations reduces the object to a collection of successive 'characteristics', perception to an abstract account, recognition to a rational synthesis or a plausible conjecture, and strips the object of its carnal presence and facticity. Whereas in the normal person every event related to movement or sense of touch causes consciousness to put up a host of intentions which run from the body as the centre of potential action either towards the body itself or towards the object, in the case of the patient, on the other hand, the tactile impression remains opaque and sealed up. It may well draw the grasping hand towards itself, but does not stand in front of the hand in the manner of a thing which can be pointed out. The normal person reckons with the possible, which thus, without shifting from its position as a possibility, acquires a sort of actuality. In the patient's case, however, the field of actuality is limited to what is met with in the shape of a real contact or is related to these data by some explicit process of deduction.

The analysis of 'abstract movement' in patients throws into relief this

possession of space, this spatial existence which is the primary condition of all living perception. If the patient is ordered to shut his eyes and then perform an abstract movement, a set of preparatory operations is called for in order to enable him to 'find' the operative limb, the direction or pace of the movement, and finally the plane in which it is to be executed. If, for instance, he is ordered to move his arm, with no detail as to how, he is first of all perplexed. Then he moves his whole body and after a time his movements are confined to his arm, which the subject eventually 'finds'. If it is a question of 'raising his arm' the patient must also 'find' his head (which symbolizes 'up' for him) by means of a set of pendulum movements which are continued throughout the action and which serve to establish the objective. If the subject is asked to trace a square or a circle in the air, he first 'finds' his arm, then lifts it in front of him as a normal subject would do to find a wall in the dark and finally he makes a few rough movements in a straight line or describing various curves, and if one of these happens to be circular he promptly completes the circle. Moreover he can find the requisite movement only in a certain plane, which is not quite perpendicular to the ground, and apart from this special plane he cannot begin to trace the figures.²⁵ Clearly the patient finds in his body only an amorphous mass into which actual movement alone introduces divisions and links. In looking to his body to perform the movement for him he is like a speaker who cannot utter a word without following a text written beforehand. The patient himself neither seeks nor finds his movement, but moves his body about until the movement comes. The order given is not meaningless to him, since he recognizes the inadequacy of his first attempts, and also since, if a fortuitous gesture produces the required movement, he is aware of it and can immediately turn his piece of good fortune to account. But if the order has an *intellectual significance* for him and not a *motor* one, it does not communicate anything to him as a mobile subject; he may well find in the shape of a movement performed an illustration of the order given, but he can never convert the thought of a movement into actual movement. What he lacks is neither motility nor thought, and we are brought to the recognition of something between movement as a third person process

²⁵ Goldstein, *Über den Einfluss . . .*, pp. 213–22.

and thought as a representation of movement—something which is an anticipation of, or arrival at, the objective and is ensured by the body itself as a motor power, a ‘motor project’ (*Bewegungsentwurf*), a ‘motor intentionality’ in the absence of which the order remains a dead letter. The patient either conceives the ideal formula for the movement, or else he launches his body into blind attempts to perform it, whereas for the normal person every movement is, indissolubly, movement and consciousness of movement. This can be expressed by saying that for the normal person every movement has a *background*, and that the movement and its background are ‘moments of a unique totality’.²⁶ The background to the movement is not a representation associated or linked externally with the movement itself, but is immanent in the movement inspiring and sustaining it at every moment. The plunge into action is, from the subject’s point of view, an original way of relating himself to the object, and is on the same footing as perception. Light is thus thrown upon the distinction between abstract and concrete movement: the background to concrete movement is the world as given, whereas the background to abstract movement is built up. When I motion my friend to come nearer, my intention is not a thought prepared within me and I do not perceive the signal in my body. I beckon across the world, I beckon over there, where my friend is; the distance between us, his consent or refusal are immediately read in my gesture; there is not a perception followed by a movement, for both form a system which varies as a whole. If, for example, realizing that I am not going to be obeyed, I vary my gesture, we have here, not two distinct acts of consciousness. What happens is that I see my partner’s unwillingness, and my gesture of impatience emerges from this situation without any intervening thought.²⁷ If I then execute ‘the same’ movement, but without having any present or even imaginary partner in mind, and treat it as ‘a set of movements in themselves’;²⁸ if, that is, I perform a ‘flexion’ of the forearm in relation to the upper arm, with ‘supination’ of the arm and ‘flexion’ of the fingers, my body, which a

²⁶ Goldstein, *Über die Abhängigkeit*, p. 161; Bewegung und Hintergrund bestimmen sich wechselseitig, sind eigentlich nur zwei herausgegriffene Momente eines einheitlichen Ganzes.

²⁷ *Ibid.* . . . , p. 161.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

moment ago was the vehicle of the movement, now becomes its end; its motor project is no longer directed towards someone in the world, but towards my fore and upper arm, and my fingers; and it is directed towards them, furthermore, in so far as they are capable of breaking with their involvement in the given world and giving shape round about me to an imaginary situation, or even in so far as, independently of any fictitious partner, I look with curiosity upon this strange signifying contrivance and set it to work for my amusement.²⁹ The abstract movement carves out within that plenum of the world in which concrete movement took place a zone of reflection and subjectivity; it superimposes upon physical space a virtual or human space. Concrete movement is therefore centripetal whereas abstract movement is centrifugal. The former occurs in the realm of being or of the actual, the latter on the other hand in that of the virtual or the non-existent; the first adheres to a given background, the second throws out its own background. The normal function which makes abstract movement possible is one of 'projection' whereby the subject of movement keeps in front of him an area of free space in which what does not naturally exist may take on a semblance of existence. One knows of patients with powers less seriously affected than Schneider's who perceive forms, distances and objects in themselves, but who are unable either to trace in objects the directions which are useful from the point of view of action, or to arrange them according to some given principle, or generally to assign to the spatial scene delimitations in human terms which make it the field of our action. For instance, patients faced with a dead end in a labyrinth have difficulty in finding 'the opposite direction'. If a ruler is laid between them and the doctor they cannot, to order, distribute the objects between 'their side' and 'the doctor's side'. They are very inaccurate in pointing out, on another person's arm, the point corresponding to the one stimulated on their own. Knowing that the month is March and the day a Monday, they will have difficulty in saying what the previous month and day were, though they may well

²⁹ Goldstein (*Über die Abhängigkeit . . .*, pp. 160 and ff.) merely says that the background of abstract movement is the body, and this is true in that the body during abstract movement is no longer merely the vehicle, but becomes the aim of the movement. Nevertheless, by changing function, it also changes its existential modality and passes from the actual to the possible.

know by heart the days and months in their correct order. They are incapable of comparing the number of units contained in two sets of sticks placed in front of them: they may count the same stick twice over, or else include in one set of sticks some which belong to the other.³⁰ The reason is that all these operations require the same ability to mark out boundaries and directions in the given world, to establish lines of force, to keep perspectives in view, in a world, to organize the given world in accordance with the projects of the present moment, to build into the geographical setting a behavioural one, a system of meanings outwardly expressive of the subject's internal activity. For these patients the world exists only as one readymade or congealed, whereas for the normal person his projects polarize the world, bringing magically to view a host of signs which guide action, as notices in a museum guide the visitor. This function of 'projection' or 'summoning' (in the sense in which the medium summons an absent person and causes him to appear) is also what makes abstract movement possible: for, in order to be in possession of my body independently of any urgent task to be performed; in order to enjoy the use of it as the mood takes me, in order to describe in the air a movement formulated only verbally or in terms of moral requirements. I must reverse the natural relationship in which the body stands to its environment, and a human productive power must reveal itself through the density of being.

It is in these terms that the disorder discernible in the movements in question may be described. But it may be thought that this description (and this criticism has often been made of psychoanalysis)³¹ presents to us only the significance or essence of the disease and not its cause. Science, it may be objected, waits upon explanation, which means looking beneath phenomena for the circumstances upon which they

³⁰ Van Woerkom, *Sur la notion de l'espace (le sens géométrique)*, pp. 113–19.

³¹ Cf. for example, H. Le Savoureux, 'Un philosophe en face de la Psychoanalyse', *Nouvelle Revue Française*, February 1939. 'For Freud the mere fact of having related symptoms to each other through plausible logical links is a sufficient confirmation that a psychoanalytical interpretation, which means a psychological one, is soundly based. The adoption of logical coherency as the criterion for accepting an interpretation beings Freudian proof much nearer to metaphysical deduction than to scientific explanation . . . In medical treatment of mental disease, psychological plausibility is regarded as practically worthless in the investigation of causes' (p. 318).

depend, in accordance with the tried methods of induction. Here, for example, we know that the motor disorders of Schneider are related to far-reaching disorders of sight, which in turn arise from the occipital injury which lies at the root of his condition. Schneider does not recognize any object by merely looking at it.³² His visual data are almost-amorphous patches.³³ As for objects not in sight, he is unable to form any visual image of them.³⁴ It is known, on the other hand, that 'abstract' movements become possible for the subject provided that he keeps his eyes fixed on the limb which is to perform them.³⁵ Thus the remnant of volitional motility is aided by what remains of visual knowledge. The famous methods of Mill might allow us to conclude here that abstract movements and *Zeigen* are dependent on the power of visual representation, whereas concrete movements, which are preserved by the patient as are those imitative movements, whereby he compensates for his paucity of visual data, arise from the kinaesthetic or tactile sense, which incidentally was remarkably exploited by Schneider. It would appear, then, that the distinction between concrete and abstract movement, like that between *Greifen* and *Zeigen*, is reducible to the traditional distinction between tactile and visual, and the function of projection or evocation, which we brought to light above, to perception and visual representation.³⁶

³² He succeeds only by being allowed 'imitative movements' (*nachfahrende Bewegungen*) of the head, hands or fingers which sketch in the imperfect outline of the object. Gelb and Goldstein, *Zur Psychologie des optischen Wahrnehmungs- und Erkennungsvorganges, Psychologische Analysen hirnpathologischer Fälle*, Chap. I.

³³ 'The patient's visual data lack any specific and characteristic structure. His impressions, unlike those of a normal person's, have no firm configuration; they have not, for instance, the typical look of a "square", a "triangle", a "straight line" or a "curve". Before him he sees only patches in which his sight allows him to pick out only salient characteristics, such as height and breadth and their relation to each other'. (*Ibid.*, p. 77.) A gardener sweeping a path fifty yards away is 'a long streak with something moving backwards and forwards towards the top of it' (p. 108). In the street the patient distinguishes men from vehicles by the fact that 'men are all the same; long and thin—vehicles are wide, unmistakably so, and much thicker' (*ibid.*).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

³⁵ Gelb and Goldstein, *Über den Einfluss . . .*, pp. 213–22.

³⁶ It was in this sense that Gelb and Goldstein interpreted Schneider's case in the first works which they devoted to him (*Zur Psychologie . . .* and *Über den Einfluss*). It will be seen how subsequently (*Über die Abhängigkeit* and particularly *Zeigen und Greifen* and the works

In reality, an inductive analysis carried out according to Mill's methods is fruitless. For the disturbances of abstract movement and *Zeigen* are encountered not only in cases of psychological blindness, but also in cerebellar patients and in many other disorders.³⁷ There is no justification for picking out as crucial just one of these concordances and using it to 'explain' the act of pointing out. In face of the ambiguity of facts one must abandon the mere statistical noting-down of coincidences, and try to 'understand' the relation which they reveal. In cerebellar cases it is observed that visual as distinct from auditory stimuli produce only imperfect motor reactions, and yet there is with them no reason to presume any primary disturbance of the visual function. It is not because the latter is deficient that designatory movements become impossible, but, on the contrary, because the attitude of *Zeigen* is impossible that the visual stimuli arouse only partial reactions. We must admit that the sound, of itself, prompts rather a grasping movement, and visual perception the act of pointing. 'The sound always leads us towards its content, its significance for us; in visual presentation, on the other hand, we can much more easily "disregard" the content and we are drawn much more definitely towards the part of space where the object is to be found.'³⁸ A meaning then is definable less in terms of the indescribable quality of its 'mental contents' than in terms of a certain manner of presenting its object, of its epistemological structure having its quality as concrete realization and, in the language of Kant, exhibition. The doctor who brings to bear upon the patient 'visual' or 'auditory stimuli' believes that he is testing 'visual' or 'auditory sensibility' and drawing up an inventory of sensible qualities which make up consciousness (in empiricist language) or of the material at the disposal of cognition (in intellectualist language). The doctor and the psychologist borrow the concepts of 'sight' and 'hearing' from common sense which considers them univocal, because our body includes as a matter of fact sets of visual and auditory apparatus

published under their editorship by Benary, Hocheimer and Steinfeld) they broadened their diagnosis. The progress of their analysis is a particularly clear example of the progress of psychology.

³⁷ *Zeigen und Greifen*, p. 456.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 458-9.

which are anatomically distinct and to which isolatable contents of consciousness are supposed to correspond according to a general postulate of 'constancy'³⁹ which expresses our natural ignorance of ourselves. But, when taken up and systematically applied by science these confused concepts hinder research and finally necessitate a general revision of these naïve categories. In fact, the measuring of thresholds tests functions prior to any specific identification of sensible qualities and to the elaboration of knowledge, the way in which the subject makes his surroundings exist for him, either as a pole of activity and the terminus of an act of seizure or expulsion, or else as a spectacle and theme of knowledge. The motor disturbances of cerebellar cases and those of psychological blindness can be co-ordinated only if we identify the basis of movement and vision not as a collection of sensible qualities but as a certain way of giving form or structure to our environment. We are led back by the very use of this inductive method to 'metaphysical' questions which positivism would wish to avoid. Induction succeeds only provided that it is not restricted to noting things as present or absent, with concomitant variations, and that it conceives and comprehends facts as subsumed under ideas not contained in them. It is not a matter of choosing between a description of the disorder which furnishes the meaning and an explanation which provides the cause. There are, moreover, no explanations without comprehension.

But let us make our objection more explicit. On examination it is seen to be twofold.

1. The 'cause' of a 'psychic fact' is never another 'psychic fact' capable of being disclosed to straightforward observation. For example, visual representation does not explain abstract movement, for it is itself endowed with the same power of throwing out a spectacle which is revealed in abstract movement and the act of pointing. Now this power does not come under the senses, not even under any inner sense. Let it be said provisionally that it is disclosed only to a certain kind of reflection, the nature of which we shall examine closely later. It follows that psychological induction is not a mere inventory of facts. Psychology does not provide its explanations by identifying, among a collection of

³⁹ Cf. above, Introduction, p. 7.

facts, the invariable and unconditioned antecedent. It conceives or comprehends facts in exactly the same way as induction in physical science, not content to note empirical sequences, creates notions capable of co-ordinating facts. That is why, in psychology as in physics, no induction can avail itself of any crucial experiment. Since explanation is not discovered but created, it is never given with the fact, but is always simply a probable interpretation. So far we have merely applied to psychology what has been fully demonstrated with regard to physical induction,⁴⁰ and our first complaint is against the empiricist manner of conceiving induction and against Mill's methods.

2. Now we shall see that this first objection covers a second one. In psychology it is not only empiricism that has to be challenged. It is the inductive method and causal thinking generally. The object of psychology is such that it cannot possibly be expressed as the relations of function to variable. Let us make these two points clear in some detail.

(i) We notice that Schneider's motor disturbances are associated with large-scale deficiency of knowledge gained by visual means. We are therefore tempted to regard psychological blindness as a distinctive variety of pure tactile behaviour, and, since consciousness of bodily space and abstract movement, which has potential space in view, are almost totally absent, we are inclined to conclude that the sense of touch alone gives us no experience of objective space.⁴¹ We shall then say that touch by itself is not of a kind to provide a background to movement, that is to say, to set out in front of the moving subject his departure and arrival points in strict simultaneity. The patient tries to provide for himself a 'kinaesthetic background' by means of preparatory movements, and is successful in thus 'marking' the position of his body at the outset and in launching into the movement, yet this kinaesthetic background is precarious, and could not possibly equal the visual background in constantly relating motion to its points of departure and arrival throughout the movement's duration. It is thrown out of gear by the movement itself and needs to be restored after each phase of the movement. That is why, as we might put it, Schneider's abstract movements have lost their melodic flow, why they are made up of

⁴⁰ Cf. Brunschvicg, *L'Expérience humaine et la Causalité physique*, Part I.

⁴¹ Gelb and Goldstein, *Über den Einfluss . . .*, pp. 227–50.

fragments placed end to end, and why they often 'run off the rails' on the way. The practical field which Schneider lacks is none other than the visual field.⁴² But in order to be justified in relating, in psychological blindness, the motor to the visual disturbance, and, in the normal subject, the projective function to vision as its invariable and unconditioned antecedent, then we must be sure that only the visual data have been affected by the disease and that all other pre-conditions of behaviour, particularly tactile experience, have been left exactly as they were in the normal person. Can we confidently maintain this? At this stage it becomes clear that the facts are ambiguous, that no experiment is decisive and no explanation final. When we observe that a normal subject is capable of making abstract movements with his eyes shut, and that the tactile experience of the normal person is sufficient to govern motility, it can always be retorted that the tactile data of the normal person have received their objective structure from visual data according to the old conception of the education of the senses. When we observe that a blind person is able to localize stimuli on the surface of his body and perform abstract movements—apart from the fact that there are examples of preparatory movements among the blind, the reply can always be made that frequent associations have imparted the qualitative colouring of kinaesthetic impressions to tactile ones and welded the former into a quasi-simultaneous occurrence.⁴³ Indeed, many factors in the behaviour of patients⁴⁴ lead one to suspect some primary modification of tactile experience. For example, a subject may know how to knock at a door, but he can no longer do so if the door is hidden or merely out of reach. In the latter case, the patient cannot perform the action of knocking or opening in a void, even if his eyes are open and fixed on the door.⁴⁵ How can we invoke visual failure here, when the patient enjoys a visual perception of the objective which is ordinarily sufficient to govern his movements more or less satisfactorily? Have we not brought to light a primary disturbance of touch? Clearly, for an object to be able to produce a movement it must be included in the

⁴² Goldstein, *Über die Abhängigkeit*, pp. 163 and ff.

⁴³ Goldstein, *Über den Einfluss . . .*, pp. 244 and ff.

⁴⁴ We are here concerned with the case of S which Goldstein himself puts alongside the Schneider case, in his book *Über die Abhängigkeit . . .*

⁴⁵ *Über die Abhängigkeit . . .*, pp. 178–84.

patient's field of movement, and the disturbance consists of a shrinkage in this field, which is henceforth limited to objects actually touchable, and exclusive of that horizon of possible touch which surrounds them for the normal person. The deficiency would appear, in the last resort, to affect a function much deeper than vision, deeper too than touch conceived as a collection of given qualities. It appears to concern the subject's vital area: that opening upon the world which has the effect of making objects at present out of reach count notwithstanding for the normal person; they exist for him as touchable things and are part of his world of movement. According to this hypothesis, when patients observe their hand and the goal of their action throughout a movement,⁴⁶ we must understand this not as a mere amplification of a normal procedure, for the recourse to vision is to be seen as necessitated merely by the collapse of the sense of potential touch. But, on the strictly inductive plane this interpretation, in which touch is primarily involved, remains optional, and we may always prefer, with Goldstein, a different one: according to this the patient, wishing to strike, needs a goal within physical reach, precisely because his sight, in which he is deficient, is no longer adequate to provide a substantial background to the movement. There is, then, no fact capable of decisively bearing out that the tactile experience of patients is or is not identical with that of normal people, and Goldstein's conception, like the physical theory, can always be reconciled with the facts, given some auxiliary hypothesis. No rigorously exclusive interpretation is possible in psychology as in physics.

However, if we look more closely, we shall see that the impossibility of a decisive experiment, in psychology, is attributable to special reasons. It arises from the very nature of the object under investigation, namely behaviour, and leads to important consequences. Between theories, neither of which is either ruled out or completely vindicated by the facts, physics can nevertheless choose according to the degree of probability, that is, according to the number of facts which each succeeds in co-ordinating without loading itself with auxiliary hypotheses elaborated to meet the needs of the case. In psychology this criterion is lacking: no auxiliary hypothesis is necessary, as we have seen, to

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

explain in terms of visual disturbance the impossibility of the action of 'knocking' in front of a door. Not only do we never arrive at an exclusive interpretation (deficiency of sense of potential touch or deficiency of visual world), but, what is more, we necessarily have to do with *equally probable* interpretations because 'visual representations', 'abstract movement' and 'sense of potential touch' are only different names for one and the same central phenomenon. Hence psychology is not in the same position as physics; that is to say, confined within the probability of inductions, it is unable to choose, even on the basis of plausibility, between hypotheses which from a strictly inductive point of view remain incompatible. For an induction, even when it is merely probable, to remain a possibility, the 'visual representation' or the 'tactile perception' must be the cause of the abstract movement, or alternatively both must be effects of another cause. The three or four terms must be able to be considered from the outside and we must be able to pick out the correlative variations. But if they should prove incapable of being isolated, if each of them presupposed the rest, the failure involved would not be a failure of empiricism or of attempts to find a decisive experiment, it would be the failure of the inductive method or of causal thinking in the realm of psychology. We thus arrive at the second point that we were trying to make.

(ii) If, as Goldstein recognizes, the co-existence of the tactile with the visual data, in the case of the normal person, modifies the former sufficiently to enable them to provide a background for abstract movement, the tactile data of the patient, which are cut off from the visual contribution, cannot be forthwith identified with those of the normal person. Tactile and visual data, says Goldstein, are not juxtaposed in the normal person; the former derive from the proximity of the latter a 'qualitative colouring' which they have lost for Schneider. It follows, he adds, that the study of the purely tactile is impossible as far as the normal person is concerned, and that derangement alone provides a picture of what tactile experience reduced to itself would comprise.⁴⁷ The conclusion is sound, but it amounts to maintaining that the word 'touch' has not the same meaning applied to the normal as to the abnormal subject, that the 'purely tactile' is a pathological

⁴⁷ *Über den Einfluss . . .*, pp. 227 and ff.

phenomenon which does not enter as a component into normal experience. It is further implied that illness, by disturbing the visual function, has not disclosed the pure essence of touch, that it has indeed changed the whole of the subject's experience, or, if one prefers it put in this way, that there is not in the normal subject a tactile experience and also a visual one, but an integrated experience to which it is impossible to gauge the contribution of each sense. The experiences mediated by touch in psychological blindness have nothing in common with those which touch mediates in the normal subject, and neither set really deserves to be called 'tactile' data. Tactile experience is not a condition apart which might be kept constant while the 'visual' experience was varied with a view to pinning on to each its own causality, nor is behaviour a function of these variables. It is on the contrary presupposed in defining them just as each is presupposed in defining the other.⁴⁸ Psychological blindness, deficiency of sense of touch and motor disturbances are three expressions of a more fundamental disturbance through which they can be understood and

⁴⁸ On the conditioning of sensory data by motility, cf. *Structure du Comportement*, p. 41, and the experiments which show that a dog when chained up does not perceive as does a dog free in its movements. The procedures of traditional psychology are strangely mixed, in the writings of Gelb and Goldstein, with the concrete emphasis derived from Gestalt psychology. They recognize clearly enough that the perceiving subject reacts as a whole, but the totality is conceived as a mixture and touch receives from its co-existence with sight only a 'qualitative colouring', whereas according to the spirit of Gestalt psychology, two sensory realms can communicate only by becoming absorbed as inseparable constituents into an intersensory system. Now if tactile data, along with visual ones, make up a composite formation, it is clearly on condition that they themselves, on their own ground, bring into being a spatial organization, for otherwise the connection between touch and sight would be an external association, and the tactile data would remain, in the total configuration, what they are taken each in isolation—two consequences equally ruled out by Gestalt theory. It is fair to add that, in another work (*Bericht über den IX Kongress für experimentelle Psychologie in München, Die psychologische Bedeutung pathologischer Störungen der Raumwahrnehmung*), Gelb himself points out the inadequacy of the work which we have just analysed. We may not even speak, he says, of a coalescence of touch and sight in the normal subject, or even make any distinction between these two components in reactions to space. Both pure tactile and pure visual experience, with its space of juxtaposition and its represented spaces, are products of analysis. There is a concrete manipulation of space in which all senses collaborate in an 'undifferentiated unity' (p. 76) and the sense of touch is ill-adapted only to the theoretical knowledge of space.

not three component factors of morbid behaviour. Visual representations, tactile data and motility are three phenomena which stand out sharply within the unity of behaviour. When, by reason of the fact that they show correlated variations, we try to explain one in terms of the other, we forget, for example, that the act of visual representation, as is proved in cerebellar cases, already presupposes the same power of projection as is seen in abstract movement and in the act of pointing out, and thus we beg the question. Inductive and causal thought, by vesting in vision or touch or any one *de facto* datum the power of projection which is found in them all, conceals that power from us and blinds us to that dimension of behaviour which is precisely the one with which psychology is concerned. In physics, the establishment of a law requires the scientist to conceive the idea under which the facts are to be co-ordinated, and this idea, which is not found in the facts, will never be verified by any conclusive experiment, and will never be more than probable. But it is still the idea of a causal link, in the sense of a relationship of function to variable. Atmospheric pressure had to be invented but, after all, it was still a third person process, the function of a certain number of variables. In so far as behaviour is a form, in which 'visual' and 'tactile contents', sensibility and motility appear only as inseparable moments, it remains inaccessible to causal thought and is capable of being apprehended only by another kind of thought, that which grasps its object as it comes into being and as it appears to the person experiencing it, with the atmosphere of meaning then surrounding it, and which tries to infiltrate into that atmosphere in order to discover, behind scattered facts and symptoms, the subject's whole being, when he is normal, or the basic disturbance, when he is a patient.

We cannot explain disturbances in the power of abstract movement in terms of loss of visual contents, nor, consequently, the function of projection in terms of the actual presence of these contents. So one method alone still seems possible: it consists in reconstituting the basic disturbance by going back from the symptoms not to a *cause* which is itself observable, but to a *reason* or intelligible condition of possibility for the state of affairs. It involves treating the human subject as an irresolvable consciousness which is wholly present in every one of its manifestations. If the disturbance is not to be related to the contents, it

must be linked to the form of knowledge; if psychology is not empiricist and explicative, it ought to be rationalistic and reflective. In exactly the same way as the act of naming,⁴⁹ the act of pointing out presupposes that the object, instead of being approached, grasped and absorbed by the body, is kept at a distance and stands as a picture in front of the patient. Plato still allowed the empiricist the power of pointing a finger at things, but the truth is that even this silent gesture is impossible if what is pointed out is not already torn from instantaneous existence and monadic existence, and treated as representative of its previous appearances in me, and of its simultaneous appearances in others, in other words, subsumed under some category and promoted to the status of a concept. If the patient is no longer able to point to some part of his body which is touched, it is because he is no longer a subject face to face with an objective world, and can no longer take up a 'categorical attitude'.⁵⁰ In the same way, abstract movement is endangered in so far as it presupposes awareness of an objective, is borne on by that awareness, and is movement for itself. Indeed it is not triggered off by any existing object, but is clearly centrifugal, outlining in space a gratuitous intention which has reference to one's own body, making an object of it instead of going through it to link up with things by means of it. It is, then, diffused with a power of objectification, a 'symbolical function',⁵¹ a 'representative function',⁵² a power of 'projection'⁵³ which is, moreover, already at work in forming 'things'. It consists in treating sense-data as mutually representative, and also collectively representative of an 'eidos'; in giving a meaning to these data, in breathing a spirit into them, in systematizing them, in centring a plurality of experiences round one intelligible core, in bringing to light in them an identifiable unity when seen in different perspectives. To sum up, it consists in placing beneath the flow of impressions an explanatory invariant, and in giving a form to the stuff of experience. Now it is not possible to maintain that consciousness has this power, it is this power itself. As soon as there is consciousness, and in order that

⁴⁹ Cf. Gelb and Goldstein, *Über Farbennamenamnesie*.

⁵⁰ Gelb and Goldstein, *Zeigen und Greifen*, pp. 456–7.

⁵¹ Head.

⁵² Bouman and Grünbaum.

⁵³ Van Woerkom.

there may be consciousness, there must be something to be conscious of, an intentional object, and consciousness can move towards this object only to the extent that it 'derailizes' itself and throws itself into it, only if it is wholly in this reference to . . . something, only if it is a pure meaning-giving act. If a being is consciousness, he must be nothing but a network of intentions. If he ceases to be definable in terms of the act of sense-giving, he relapses into the condition of a thing, the thing being precisely what does not know, what slumbers in absolute ignorance of itself and the world, what consequently is not a true 'self', i.e. a 'for-itself', and has only a spatio-temporal form of individuation, existence in itself.⁵⁴ Consciousness, therefore, does not admit of degree. If the patient no longer exists as a consciousness, he must then exist as a thing. Either movement is movement for itself, in which case the 'stimulus' is not its cause but its intentional object—or else it disintegrates and is dispersed in existence in itself, and becomes an objective process in the body, whose phases are successive but unknown to each other. The special status of concrete movements in illness is explained by seeing them as reflexes in the traditional sense. The patient's hand meets the point on his body where the mosquito has settled because pre-established nerve circuits, not the excitation, control the reaction. Actions performed in the course of his work are preserved because they are dependent upon firmly rooted conditioned reflexes. They persist in spite of psychic deficiencies because they are movements in themselves. The distinction between concrete and abstract movement, between *Greifen* and *Zeigen* comes down to that between the physiological and the psychic, existence in itself and existence for itself.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Husserl has often been credited with this distinction. In fact, it is found in Descartes and Kant. In our opinion Husserl's originality lies beyond the notion of intentionality; it is to be found in the elaboration of this notion and in the discovery, beneath the intentionality of representations, of a deeper intentionality, which others have called existence.

⁵⁵ Gelb and Goldstein sometimes tend to interpret phenomena in this sense. They have done more than anyone to go beyond the traditional dualism of automatism and consciousness. But they have never named this third term between the psychic and the physiological, between the for itself and the in itself to which their analyses always led them and which we call existence. Hence their earliest works often fall back on the traditional dichotomy of body and consciousness: 'The act of seizing is, much more than that of pointing, determined by relationships existing between the organism and its surrounding

But we shall see that in reality the first distinction, far from covering also the second, is incompatible with it. Every 'physiological explanation' tends to become generalized. If the grasping action or the concrete movement is guaranteed by some factual connection between each point on the skin and the motor muscles which guide the hand, it is difficult to see why the same nerve circuit communicating a scarcely different movement to the same muscles should not guarantee the gesture of *Zeigen* as it does the movement of *Greifen*. Between the mosquito which pricks the skin and the ruler which the doctor presses on the same spot, the physical difference is not great enough to explain why the grasping movement is possible, but the act of pointing impossible. The two 'stimuli' are really distinguishable only if we take into account their affective value or biological meaning, and the two responses cease to merge into one another only if we consider the *Zeigen* and the *Greifen* as two ways of relating to the object and two types of being in the world. But this is precisely what cannot be done once we have reduced the living body to the condition of an object. If it is once conceded that it may be the seat of third person processes, nothing in behaviour can be reserved for consciousness. Both gestures and movements, employing as they do the same organ-objects, the same nerve-objects, must be given their place on the map of interiorless processes,

field . . . ; it is less a question of relations consciously formed than of immediate reactions . . . , we are here concerned with a much more vital process, one describable in biological language as primitive.' (*Zeigen und Greifen*, p. 459.) 'The act of seizing remains completely insensitive to modifications affecting the conscious part of this performance, to any deficiency of simultaneous apprehension (in psychological blindness), to the instability of perceived space (in cerebellar cases), to disturbances of sensitivity (in certain cortical lesions), because it is not carried out in this objective domain. It is preserved as long as the peripheral excitations are still sufficient to govern it accurately.' (*Zeigen und Greifen*, p. 460.) Gelb and Goldstein question the existence of localizing reflex movements (Henri), but only in so far as there might be a tendency to regard them as innate. They retain the idea of an 'automatic localization not inclusive of any awareness of space, since it operates even during sleep' (thus conceived as total unconsciousness). It is certainly 'learnt' from the time of comprehensive reactions of the whole body to tactile stimuli in babyhood—but this apprenticeship is conceived as the accumulation of 'kines-
thetic residues' which are 'awakened' in the normal adult by external excitations, and which direct him towards the appropriate outlets (*Über den Einfluss . . .*, pp. 167–206). In correctly performing the actions required by his trade, Schneider shows that they are habitual totalities which demand no consciousness of space (*ibid.*, pp. 221–2).

and inserted in the compactly woven stuff of 'physiological conditions'. Does not the patient who, in doing his job, moves his hand towards a tool lying on the table, displace the segments of his arm exactly as he would have to do to perform the abstract movement of extending it? Does not an everyday gesture involve a series of muscular contractions and innervations? It is therefore impossible to set limits to physiological explanation. On the other hand, it is impossible also to set limits to consciousness. If we relate the act of pointing to consciousness, if once the stimulus can cease to be the cause of the reaction and become its intentional object, it becomes inconceivable that it should ever function as a pure cause or that the movement should ever be blind. For if 'abstract' movements are possible, in which consciousness of the starting and finishing points is present, we must at every moment in our life know where our body is without having to look for it as we look for an object moved from its place during our absence. Even 'automatic' movements must therefore announce themselves to our consciousness, which means that there never occur, in our bodies, movements in themselves. And if all objective space is for intellectual consciousness only, we must find the categorical attitude even in the movement of grasping itself.⁵⁶ Like physiological causality, arrival at self-awareness has nowhere to start. We must either reject physiological explanation or admit that it is all-inclusive—either deny consciousness or accept it as comprehensive. We cannot relate certain movements to bodily mechanism and others to consciousness. The body and consciousness are not mutually limiting, they can be only parallel. Any physiological explanation becomes generalized into mechanistic physiology, any achievement of self-awareness into intellectualist psychology, and mechanistic physiology or intellectualist psychology bring behaviour down to the same uniform level and wipe out the distinction between abstract and concrete movement, between *Zeigen*

⁵⁶ Goldstein himself, who tended (as we have seen in the preceding note) to relate *Greifen* to the body and *Zeigen* to the categorical attitude, is forced to go back on this 'explanation'. The act of grasping, he says, may 'be performed to order, and the patient tries to grasp. In order to do so he does not need to be aware of the point in space towards which he thrusts forward his hand, but he nevertheless has a feeling of orientation in space . . .' (*Zeigen und Greifen*, p. 461). The act of grasping, as found in normal subjects, 'still demands a categorial and conscious attitude' (*ibid.*, p. 465).

and Greifen. This distinction can survive only if there are several ways for the body to be a body, several ways for consciousness to be consciousness. As long as the body is defined in terms of existence in-itself, it functions uniformly like a mechanism, and as long as the mind is defined in terms of pure existence for-itself, it knows only objects arrayed before it. The distinction between abstract and concrete movement is therefore not to be confused with that between body and consciousness; it does not belong to the same reflective dimension, but finds its place only in the behavioural dimension. Pathological phenomena introduce variations before our eyes in something which is not the pure awareness of an object. Any diagnosis, like that of intellectualist psychology, which sees here a collapse of consciousness and the freeing of automatism, or again that of an empiricist psychology of contents, would leave the fundamental disturbance untouched.

The intellectualist analysis, here as everywhere, is less false than abstract. It is true that the 'symbolic function' or the 'representative function' underlies our movements, but it is not a final term for analysis. It too rests on a certain groundwork. The mistake of intellectualism is to make it self-subsistent, to remove it from the stuff in which it is realized, and to recognize in us, as a non-derivative entity, an undistanced presence in the world. For, using this consciousness, an entirely transparent consciousness, this intentionality which admits of no degrees of more or less, as a starting point, everything that separates us from the real world—error, sickness, madness, in short incarnation—is reduced to the status of mere appearance. Admittedly intellectualism does not bring consciousness into being independently of its material. For example it takes great care not to introduce behind the word, the action and the perception, any 'symbolic consciousness' as the common and numerically sole form of linguistic, perceptual and motor material. There is no 'general symbolic faculty', says Cassirer,⁵⁷ and analytical reflection does not seek to establish between pathological phenomena relating to perception, language and action a 'community in being', but a 'community in meaning'.⁵⁸ Just because it has finally gone beyond causal thought and realism, intellectualist psychology

⁵⁷ Symbolvermögen schlechthin, Cassirer, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, III, p. 320.

⁵⁸ Gemeinsamkeit im Sein, Gemeinsamkeit im Sinn, *ibid.*

would be able to see the meaning or essence of illness, and recognize a unity of consciousness which is not evident on the plane of being, and which is vouched for, in its own eyes, on the plane of truth. But the distinction between community in being and community in sense, the conscious passage from the existential order to the order of value and the transvaluation which allows meaning and value to be declared autonomous are, for practical purposes, equivalent to an abstraction, since, from the point of view finally adopted, the variety of phenomena becomes insignificant and incomprehensible. If consciousness is placed outside being, the latter cannot breach it, the empirical variety of consciousnesses—morbid, primitive, childlike consciousness, the consciousness of others—cannot be taken seriously, there is nothing to be known or understood, one thing alone makes sense: the pure essence of consciousness. None of these consciousnesses could fail to effect the *Cogito*. The lunatic, behind his ravings, his obsessions and lies, knows that he is raving, that he is allowing himself to be haunted by an obsession, that he is lying, in short he is not mad, he thinks he is. All is then for the best and insanity is only perversion of the will. The analysis of the meaning of illness, once it ends with the symbolic function, identifies all disorders as the same, uniting aphasia, apraxia and agnosia⁵⁹ and perhaps even has no way of distinguishing them from schizophrenia.⁶⁰ It then becomes understandable that doctors and psychologists should decline the invitation to intellectualism and fall back, for want of anything better, on the attempts at causal explanation which at least have the merit of taking into account what is peculiar to illness, and to each form of it, and which by this means give at any rate the illusion of possessing actual knowledge. Modern pathology shows that there is no strictly elective disturbance, but it shows equally that each one is coloured by the sector of behaviour which it principally attacks.⁶¹ Even if all aphasia, when closely observed, is seen to involve disturbances of

⁵⁹ Cf. for example Cassirer, *Philosophie der Symbolischen Formen*, III, Chap. VI, *Pathologie des Symbolbewusstseins*.

⁶⁰ One can indeed imagine an intellectualist interpretation of schizophrenia which would equate the atomistic conception of time and the loss of the future with a collapse of the categorial attitude.

⁶¹ *Structure du Comportement*, pp. 91 and ff.

both gnostic* and praxic kinds; if all apraxia† involves linguistic and perceptual disturbances, and all agnosia‡ disturbances of language and action, the fact remains that the core of these disorders is here to be found in the domain of language, there in that of perception, and elsewhere in that of action. When we invoke in all these cases the symbolic function, we are, it is true, characterizing the structure common to the different derangements, but this structure should not be separated from the stuff through which on each occasion it is realized, if not electively, at least in great measure. After all Schneider's trouble was not initially metaphysical, for it was a shell splinter which wounded him at the back of the head. The damage to his sight was serious, but it would be ridiculous, as we have said, to explain all the other deficiencies in terms of the visual one as their cause; but no less ridiculous to think that the shell splinter directly struck symbolic consciousness. It was through his sight that mind in him was impaired.

Until some means has been discovered whereby we can link the origin and the essence or meaning of the disturbance; until some definition is found for a *concrete essence*, a structure of illness which shall express both its generality and its particularity, until phenomenology becomes genetic phenomenology, unhelpful reversions to causal thought and naturalism will remain justified. Our problem therefore becomes clearer. The task for us is to conceive, between the linguistic, perceptual and motor contents and the form given to them or the symbolic function which breathes life into them, a relationship which shall be neither the reduction of form to content, nor the subsuming of content under an autonomous form. We need to understand both how Schneider's complaint everywhere overshoots particular contents—visual, tactile and motor—of his experience, and how it nevertheless attacks the symbolic function only through the specially chosen

* *Gnosia*: The perceptive faculty, enabling one to recognize the form and nature of persons and things (Translator's note).

† *Apraxia*: (i) A disorder of voluntary movement, consisting in a more or less complete incapacity to execute purposeful movements, notwithstanding the preservation of muscular power, sensibility, and co-ordination in general. (ii) A psychomotor defect in which one is unable to apply to its proper use an object which one is nevertheless able to name and the uses of which one can describe (Translator's note).

‡ *Agnosia*: Absence of ability to recognize the form and nature of persons and things, or the perceptive faculty (Translator's note).

material provided by sight. The senses and one's own body generally present the mystery of a collective entity which, without abandoning its thisness and its individuality, puts forth beyond itself meanings capable of providing a framework for a whole series of thoughts and experiences. Although Schneider's trouble affects motility and thought as well as perception, the fact remains that what it damages, particularly in the domain of thought, is his power of apprehending simultaneous wholes, and in the matter of motility, that, so to speak, of taking a bird's-eye view of movement and projecting it outside himself. It is then in some sense mental space and practical space which are destroyed or impaired, and the words themselves are a sufficient indication of the visual origin of the disturbance. Visual trouble is not the cause of the other disturbances, particularly that directly affecting thought. But neither is it a mere consequence of them. Visual contents, moreover, are not the cause of the function of projection, but neither is sight a mere opportunity given to Mind to bring into play a power in itself unconditioned. Visual contents are taken up, utilized and sublimated to the level of thought by a symbolical power which transcends them, but it is on the basis of sight that this power can be constituted. The relationship between matter and form is called in phenomenological terminology a relationship of *Fundierung*: the symbolic function rests on the visual as on a ground; not that vision is its cause, but because it is that gift of nature which Mind was called upon to make use of beyond all hope, to which it was to give a fundamentally new meaning, yet which was needed, not only to be incarnate, but in order to be at all. Form integrates within itself the content until the latter finally appears as a mere mode of form itself, and the historical stages leading up to thought as a ruse of Reason disguised as Nature. But conversely, even in its intellectual sublimation, content remains in the nature of a radical contingency, the initial establishment or foundation⁶² of knowledge and action, the first laying hold of being or value, whose concrete richness will never be finally exhausted by knowledge and action, and whose spontaneous method they will ceaselessly reapply. This dialectic of form and content is what we have to restore, or rather, since 'reciprocal action' is as yet only a compromise with

⁶² We are translating Husserl's favourite word: *Stiftung*.

causal thought, and a contradictory principle, we have to describe the circumstances under which this contradiction is conceivable, which means existence, the perpetual re-ordering of fact and hazard by a reason non-existent before and without those circumstances.⁶³

If we want to observe what underlies the 'symbolic function' itself, we must first of all realize that even intelligence is not reconcilable with intellectualism. What impairs thought in Schneider's case is not that he is incapable of perceiving concrete data as specimens of a unique *eidos*, or of subsuming them under some category, but on the contrary, that he can relate them only by a quite explicit subsumption. It is noticeable, for example, that the patient does not understand even such simple analogies as: 'fur is to cat as plumage is to bird', or 'light is to lamp as heat is to stove', or 'eye is to light and colour as ear is to sounds'. In the same way he cannot understand, in their metaphorical sense, such common expressions as 'the chair leg' or 'the head of a nail', although he knows what part of the object is indicated by these words. It may happen that normal subjects of equal educational standard are no more able to explain the analogy, but this is for diametrically opposed reasons. It is easier for the normal subject to understand the analogy than to analyse it, whereas the patient manages to understand only when he has made it explicit by recourse to conceptual analysis. 'He looks for . . . a common material characteristic from which he can infer, as from a middle term, the identity of the two relationships'.⁶⁴ For example, he thinks about the analogy between eye and ear and

⁶³ See below third part. E. Cassirer clearly has the same aim when he takes Kant to task for having most of the time analysed only an 'intellectual sublimation of experience' (*Philosophie der Symbolischen Formen*, T. III, p. 14), when he tries to express, through the notion of symbolic pregnancy, the absolute simultaneity of matter and form, or when he adopts for his own purposes Hegel's declaration that the mind carries and preserves its past in the depths of its present. But the relationships between the various symbolic forms remain ambiguous. One always wonders whether the function of *Darstellung* is a stage in the return to itself of an eternal consciousness, the shadow of the function of *Bedeutung*—or whether, on the contrary, the function of *Bedeutung* is an unforeseeable amplification of the first constitutive 'wave'. When Cassirer takes up the Kantian formula according to which consciousness can analyse only what it has synthesized, he is manifestly returning to intellectualism despite the phenomenological and even existential analyses which his book contains and which we shall have occasion to use.

⁶⁴ Benary, *Studien zur Untersuchung der Intelligenz bei einem Fall von Seelenblindheit*, p. 262.

clearly does not understand it until he can say: 'The eye and the ear are both sense organs, therefore they must give rise to something similar.' If we described analogy as the apperception of two given terms under a co-ordinating concept, we should be giving as normal a procedure which is exclusively pathological, and which represents the roundabout way in which the patient makes good the normal understanding of analogy. 'This freedom in choosing a *tertium comparationis* on the patient's part is the opposite of the intuitive formation of the image in the normal subject: the latter seizes a specific identity in conceptual structures, for him the living processes of thought are symmetrical and mutually complementary. Thus does he 'catch' the essential feature of the analogy, and one may always wonder whether a subject does not remain able to understand, even when this understanding is not adequately expressed through the formulation and clarification which he provides.'⁶⁵ Living thought, then, does not consist in subsuming under some category. The category imposes on the terms brought together a meaning external to them. It is by drawing upon already constituted language and upon the sense-relationships which it holds in store that Schneider succeeds in relating eye to ear as 'sense-organs'. In normal thought eye and ear are immediately apprehended in accordance with the analogy of their function, and their relationship can be fixed in a 'common characteristic' and recorded in language only because it has first been perceived in its origin in the singularity of sight and hearing.

It will perhaps be objected that our criticism is valid only against a summary intellectualism which absorbs thought into a purely logical activity, whereas analytical reflection goes back to the origin of predication, finding behind the judgement of inherence that of relation, behind subsumption, seen as a mechanical and formal operation, the categorial act whereby thought bestows upon the subject the meaning expressed in the predicate. Thus our criticism of the categorial function, it might be said, does nothing but reveal, behind the empirical use of the category, a transcendental use without which indeed the first is incomprehensible. The distinction, however, between the empirical and transcendental use conceals the problem rather than solves it. Critical philosophy duplicates the empirical operations of thought with a

⁶⁵ Benary, *Studien zur Untersuchung der Intelligenz bei einem Fall von Seelenblindheit*, p. 263.

transcendental activity which has the task of bringing about all those syntheses for which empirical thought provides the elements. But when I think something at the present moment, the guarantee of a non-temporal synthesis is insufficient and even unnecessary as a basis of my thought. It is now, in the living present that the synthesis has to be effected, otherwise thought would be cut off from its transcendental premises. It cannot therefore be asserted that when I think I take my place once more in the eternal subject which I have never ceased to be. For the true subject of thought is the person who achieves the conversion and resumption of action at this very moment, and it is he who breathes his own life into the non-temporal ghost. We need therefore to understand how temporal thought links up with itself and brings about its own synthesis. The fact that the normal subject immediately grasps that the eye is to sight as the ear is to hearing shows that the eye and ear are immediately given to him as means of access to one and the same world, and furthermore that one world is for him antepredicatively self-evident, so that the equivalence of the 'sense-organs' and their analogy is to be read off from things and can be lived before being conceived. The Kantian subject posits a world, but, in order to be able to assert a truth, the actual subject must in the first place have a world or be in the world, that is, sustain round about it a system of meanings whose reciprocities, relationships and involvements do not require to be made explicit in order to be exploited. When I move about my house, I know without thinking about it that walking towards the bathroom means passing near the bedroom, that looking at the window means having the fireplace on my left, and in this small world each gesture, each perception is immediately located in relation to a great number of possible co-ordinates. When I chat with a friend whom I know well, each of his remarks and each of mine contains, in addition to the meaning it carries for everybody else, a host of references to the main dimensions of his character and mine, without our needing to recall previous conversations with each other. These acquired worlds, which confer upon my experience its secondary meaning, are themselves carved out of a primary world which is the basis of the primary meaning. In the same way there is a 'world of thoughts', or a sediment left by our mental processes, which enables us to rely on our concepts and acquired judgements as we might on

things there in front of us, presented globally, without there being any need for us to resynthesize them.

In this way there can be for us a sort of mental panorama, with its clear-cut and its vague areas, a physiognomic disposition of questions and intellectual situations, such as research, discovery and certainty. But the word 'sediment' should not lead us astray: this acquired knowledge is not an inert mass in the depths of our consciousness. My flat is, for me, not a set of closely associated images. It remains a familiar domain round about me only as long as I still have 'in my hands' or 'in my legs' the main distances and directions involved, and as long as from my body intentional threads run out towards it. Similarly my acquired thoughts are not a final gain, they continually draw their sustenance from my present thought, they offer me a meaning, but I give it back to them. Indeed our available store expresses for ever afresh the energy of our present consciousness. Sometimes it weakens, as in moments of weariness, and then my 'world' of thought is impoverished and reduced to one or two obsessive ideas; sometimes, on the other hand, I am at the disposal of all my thoughts and every word spoken in front of me then stimulates questions and ideas, recasting and reorganizing the mental panorama, and presenting itself with a precise physiognomy. Thus what is acquired is truly acquired only if it is taken up again in a fresh momentum of thought, and a thought is assigned to its place only if it takes up its place itself. The essence of consciousness is to provide itself with one or several worlds, to bring into being its own thoughts *before* itself, as if they were things, and it demonstrates its vitality indivisibly by outlining these landscapes for itself and then by abandoning them. The world-structure, with its two stages of sedimentation and spontaneity, is at the core of consciousness, and it is in the light of a levelling-down of the 'world' that we shall succeed in understanding Schneider's intellectual, perceptual and motor disturbances, without assimilating them to each other.

The traditional analysis of perception⁶⁶ distinguishes within it

⁶⁶ We are holding over until the second part a closer study of perception, and we here confine our remarks to what is essential for the elucidation of the basic and also the motor disturbance in Schneider's case. These anticipations and repetitions are unavoidable if, as we shall try to show, perception and experience of one's own body are mutually implied.

sense-givens and the meaning which they receive from an act of understanding. Perceptual disturbances, from this point of view, could be only sensory deficiencies or gnosic disturbances. Schneider's case, on the other hand, shows deficiencies affecting the junction of sensitivity and significance, deficiencies which disclose the existential conditioning of both. If a fountain pen is shown to the patient, in such a way that the clip is not seen, the phases of recognition are as follows. 'It is black, blue and shiny,' says the patient. 'There is a white patch on it, and it is rather long; it has the shape of a stick. It may be some sort of instrument. It shines and reflects light. It could also be a coloured glass.' The pen is then brought closer and the clip is turned towards the patient. He goes on: 'It must be a pencil or a fountain pen.' (He touches his breast pocket). 'It is put there, to make notes with.'⁶⁷ It is clear that language intervenes at every stage of recognition by providing possible meanings for what is in fact seen, and that recognition advances *pari passu* with linguistic connections: from 'long' to 'shaped like a stick', from 'stick' to 'instrument', and from there to 'instrument for noting things down', and finally to 'fountain pen'. The sensory givens are limited to suggesting these meanings as a fact suggests a hypothesis to the physicist. The patient, like the scientist, verifies mediately and clarifies his hypothesis by cross-checking facts, and makes his way blindly towards the one which co-ordinates them all.

This procedure contrasts with, and by so doing throws into relief, the spontaneous method of normal perception, that kind of living system of meanings which makes the concrete essence of the object immediately recognizable, and allows its 'sensible properties' to appear only through that essence. It is this familiarity and communication with the object which is here interrupted. In the normal subject the object 'speaks' and is significant, the arrangement of colours straight away 'means' something, whereas in the patient the meaning has to be brought in from elsewhere by a veritable act of interpretation. Conversely in the normal person the subject's intentions are immediately reflected in the perceptual field, polarizing it, or placing their seal upon it, or setting up in it, effortlessly, a wave of significance. In the patient the perceptual field has lost this plasticity. If he is asked to make a

⁶⁷ Hochheimer, *Analyse eines Seelenblinden von der Sprache*, p. 49.

square with four triangles identical with a given one, he replies that it is impossible and that with four triangles only two squares can be built. The experimenter insists, showing him that a square has two diagonals and can always be divided into four triangles. The patient's reply is: 'Yes, but that is because the parts necessarily fit each other. When a square is divided into four, if the parts are brought together in the correct way, they must make a square.'⁶⁸ He knows therefore what a square and a triangle are; even the relationship between these two meanings does not escape him, at least after the doctor's explanations, and he understands that any square can be split into triangles. But he does not go on to conclude that any right-angled isosceles triangle can be used to construct a square, because the construction of this square requires that the given triangles be arranged differently and that the sensory-givens must become the means of illustration of an imaginary meaning. The world in its entirety no longer suggests any meaning to him and conversely the meanings which occur to him are not embodied any longer in the given world. We shall say, in a word, that the world no longer has any *physiognomy* for him.⁶⁹ This is what reveals the nature of the peculiarities seen in his drawings. Schneider never draws from the model (*nachzeichnen*); perception is not carried directly into movement. With his left hand he feels the object, recognizes certain characteristics (a corner, a right angle), formulates his discovery and finally draws without any model a figure corresponding to the verbal formula.⁷⁰

The translation of percept into movement is effected via the express meanings of language, whereas the normal subject penetrates into the object by perception, assimilating its structure into his substance, and through this body the object directly regulates his movements.⁷¹ This subject-object dialogue, this drawing together, by the subject, of the

⁶⁸ Benary, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

⁶⁹ Schneider can hear read, or himself read, without recognizing it, a letter which he has written. He even states that without signature one cannot know whose a letter is (Hochheimer, *op. cit.*, p. 12).

⁷⁰ Benary, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

⁷¹ It is this appropriation of the 'motive' in its full sense that Cézanne achieved after hours of meditation. 'We are germinating,' he would say. After which suddenly: 'Everything would fall into place.' J. Gasquet, *Cézanne, II Partie, Le Motif*, pp. 81–3.

meaning diffused through the object, and, by the object, of the subject's intentions—a process which is physiognomic perception—arranges round the subject a world which speaks to him of himself, and gives his own thoughts their place in the world. Since this function is impaired in Schneider's case, it is foreseeable that, *a fortiori*, perception of human events and other people will show deficiencies, for these presuppose the same taking up of external by internal and of internal by external. And indeed if a story is told to the patient, it is observed that instead of grasping it as a melodic whole with down and up beats, with its characteristic rhythm or flow, he remembers it only as a succession of facts to be noted one by one. That is why he can understand it only if pauses are made in the narrative and used to sum up briefly the gist of what he has so far been told. When he tells back the story, he never does so according to the account given to him (*nacherzählen*): he finds nothing to emphasize; he can understand the course of the story only as he tells it, and it is, as it were, reconstituted part by part.⁷² There is, then, in the normal subject an essence of the story which emerges as it is told, without any express analysis, and this subsequently guides along any reproduction of the narrative. The story for him is a certain human event, recognizable by its style, and here the subject 'understands' because he has the power to live, beyond his immediate experience, through the events described. Generally speaking, nothing but what is immediately given is present to the speaker. The thought of others will never be present to him, since he has no immediate experience of it.⁷³ The words of others are for him signs which have to be severally deciphered, instead of being, as with the normal subject, the transparent envelope of a meaning within which he might live. Like events, words are for the patient not the theme of an act of drawing together or projecting, but merely the occasion for a methodical

⁷² Benary, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

⁷³ Of a conversation of importance to him, he recalls only the general theme and the decision taken at the end of it, but not his interlocutor's words: 'I know what I said in a conversation from the reasons I had for saying it: what the other said is more difficult because I have nothing to hold on to (*Anhaltspunkt*) in order to remember' (Benary, *op. cit.*, p. 214). It can be seen, furthermore, that the patient reconstitutes and infers his own attitude at the time of the conversation, and that he is incapable of directly 'taking hold' even of his own thoughts.

interpretation. Like the object, other people 'tell' him nothing, and the phantoms which present themselves to him are devoid, not, it is true, of that intellectual meaning arrived at through analysis, but that primary meaning reached through co-existence.

Specifically intellectual disturbances, those of judgement and meaning—cannot be considered ultimate deficiencies, and must also be placed in the same existential context. Take, for example, 'number blindness'.⁷⁴ It has been possible to demonstrate that the patient, though able to count, add, subtract, multiply or divide in relation to the things placed in front of him, cannot conceive number, and that all his results are obtained by ritual procedures, which have no significant bearing on it. He knows by heart the sequence of numbers and recites it mentally, while checking off on his fingers the objects to be counted, added, subtracted, multiplied or divided: 'a number for him merely belongs to a sequence of numbers, and has no meaning as a fixed quantity, as a group or a determinate measure.'⁷⁵ Of two numbers the greater for him is the one which comes 'after' in the numerical series. When he is given $5 + 4 - 4$ to work out, he does the sum in two stages without 'noticing anything in particular'. He merely agrees, if it is pointed out to him, that the number 5 'remains'. He fails to understand that 'twice half' a given number is the number itself.⁷⁶ Are we then to say that he has lost number as a category or schema? Yet when he runs his eyes over the objects to be counted, checking each of them on his fingers, even though it often happens that he confuses objects already counted with those still to come, even though the synthesis may be vague, he obviously has the notion of a synthetic operation which is nothing other than numeration. And conversely, with the normal subject the sequence of numbers as a kinetic melody practically devoid of genuinely numerical meaning is most often substituted for the concept of number. Number is never a pure concept, the absence of which would allow us to define Schneider's mental state, it is a structure of consciousness involving degrees of more or less. The true act of counting requires of the subject that his operations as they develop and cease

⁷⁴ Benary, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

⁷⁶ Benary, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

to occupy the centre of his consciousness, shall not cease to be there for him and shall constitute, for subsequent operations, a *ground* on which they may be established. Consciousness holds in reserve, behind itself, completed syntheses; these are still available and might be brought back into action, and it is on this basis that they are taken up and transcended in the total act of numeration. What is called pure number or authentic number is only a development or extension, through repetition, of the process which constitutes any perception. Schneider's conception of number is affected only in so far as it implies, to a great extent, the power of laying out a past in order to move towards a future. It is this existential basis of intelligence which is affected, much more than intelligence itself, for, as we have shown,⁷⁷ Schneider's general intelligence is intact: his replies are slow, never meaningless, but those of a mature, thinking man who takes an interest in the doctor's experiments. Beneath the intelligence as an anonymous function or as a categorial process, a personal core has to be recognized, which is the patient's being, his power of existing. It is here that the illness has its seat. Schneider would still like to arrive at political or religious opinions, but knows that it is useless to try. 'He must now be content with large-scale beliefs, without the power to express them.'⁷⁸ He never sings or whistles of his own accord.⁷⁹ We shall see later that he never takes any initiative sexually. He never goes out for a walk, but always on an errand, and he never recognizes Professor Goldstein's house as he passes it 'because he did not go out with the intention of going there'.⁸⁰ Just as he needs, by means of preparatory movements, to be able to 'take a grip' on his own body before performing movements when they are not mapped out ahead in a familiar situation,—so, a conversation with another person does not constitute for him a situation significant in itself, and requiring extempore replies. He can speak only in accordance with a plan drawn up in advance: 'He cannot fall back on the inspiration of the moment in order to find the ideas required in response to a complex stage of the conversation, and this is

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 284.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, op. cit., p. 213.

⁷⁹ Hochheimer, op. cit., p. 37.

⁸⁰ Hochheimer, op. cit., p. 56.

true whether it is a question of new or old points of view.⁸¹ There is in his whole conduct something meticulous and serious which derives from the fact that he is incapable of play-acting. To act is to place oneself for a moment in an imaginary situation, to find satisfaction in changing one's 'setting'. The patient, on the other hand, cannot enter into a fictitious situation without converting it into a real one: he cannot tell the difference between a riddle and a problem.⁸² In his case, the possible situation at every moment is so narrow that two sectors of the environment not having anything in common for him cannot simultaneously form a situation.⁸³ If one talks to him he cannot hear the sound of another conversation in the next room; if a dish is brought and placed on the table, he does not stop to wonder where the dish comes from. He states that one can see only in the direction in which one is looking, and only objects at which one is looking.⁸⁴ Future and past are for him only 'shrunken' extensions of the present. He has lost 'our power of looking according to the temporal vector'.⁸⁵ He cannot take a bird's eye view of his past and unhesitatingly rediscover it by going from the whole to the parts: he rebuilds it, starting with a fragment which has kept its meaning and which provides him with a 'supporting-point'.⁸⁶ Since he complains of the weather, he is asked if he feels better in winter. He replies: 'I can't say now, I can't say anything at the moment'.⁸⁷ Thus all Schneider's troubles are reducible to a unity, but not the abstract unity of the 'representative function': he is 'tied' to actuality, he 'lacks liberty',⁸⁸ that concrete liberty which comprises the general power of putting oneself into a situation. Beneath intelligence as beneath perception, we discover a more fundamental function, 'a vector mobile in all directions like a searchlight, one through which we can direct ourselves towards anything, in or outside

⁸¹ Benary, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

⁸² In the same way there are for him no double meanings or puns because words have only one meaning at a time, and because the actual is entirely without any horizon of possibilities. Benary, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

⁸³ Hochheimer, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 32–33.

⁸⁵ 'Useres Hineinsehen in den Zeitvektor', *ibid.*

⁸⁶ Benary, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

⁸⁷ Hochheimer, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

ourselves, and display a form of behaviour in relation to that object'.⁸⁹ Yet the analogy of the searchlight is inadequate, since it presupposes given objects on to which the beam plays, whereas the nuclear function to which we refer, before bringing objects to our sight or knowledge, makes them exist in a more intimate sense, for us. Let us therefore say rather, borrowing a term from other works,⁹⁰ that the life of consciousness—cognitive life, the life of desire or perceptual life—is subtended by an 'intentional arc' which projects round about us our past, our future, our human setting, our physical, ideological and moral situation, or rather which results in our being situated in all these respects. It is this intentional arc which brings about the unity of the senses, of intelligence, of sensibility and motility. And it is this which 'goes limp' in illness.

The study of a pathological case, then, has enabled us to glimpse a new mode of analysis—existential analysis—which goes beyond the traditional alternatives of empiricism and rationalism, of explanation and introspection. If consciousness were a collection of mental facts each disturbance should be elective. If it were a 'representative function', a pure power of signification, it could be or not be (and with it everything else), but it could not cease to be having once been, or become sick, that is, deteriorate. If, in short, it is a projective activity, which leaves objects all round it, like traces of its own acts, but which nevertheless uses them as springboards from which to leap towards other spontaneous acts, then it becomes understandable that any 'content' deficiency should have its repercussions on the main body of experience and open the door to its disintegration, that any pathological degeneration should affect the whole of consciousness—and that nevertheless the derangement should on each occasion attack a certain 'side' of consciousness, that in each case certain symptoms should dominate the clinical picture of the disease, and, in short, that consciousness should be vulnerable and able to receive the illness into itself. In attacking the 'visual sphere', illness is not limited to destroying certain contents of consciousness, 'visual representations' or sight literally speaking; it affects sight in the figurative sense, of which the former is no more than the model or symbol—the power of 'looking

⁸⁹ Hochheimer, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

⁹⁰ Cf. Fischer, *Raum-Zeitstruktur und Denkstörung in der Schizophrenie*, p. 250.

down upon' (*überschauen*) simultaneous multiplicities,⁹¹ a certain way of positing the object or being aware. However, as this type of consciousness is only the sublimation of sensory vision, as it is schematized constantly within the dimensions of the visual field, albeit endowing them with a new meaning, it will be realized that this general function has its psychological roots. Consciousness freely develops its visual data beyond their own specific significance; it uses them for the expression of its spontaneous acts, as semantic evolution clearly shows in loading the terms intuition, self-evidence and natural light with increasingly rich meaning. But conversely, not one of these terms, in the final sense which history has given them, is understandable without reference to the structures of visual perception. Hence one cannot say that man sees because he is Mind, nor indeed that he is Mind because he sees: to see as a man sees and to be Mind are synonymous. In so far as consciousness is consciousness of something only by allowing its furrow to trail behind it, and in so far as, in order to conceive an object one must rely on a previously constructed 'world of thought', there is always some degree of depersonalization at the heart of consciousness. Hence the principle of an intervention from outside: consciousness may be ailing, the world of its thoughts may collapse into fragments,—or rather, as the 'contents' dissociated by the illness did not appear in the rôle of parts in normal consciousness and served only as stepping-stones to significances which outstrip them, consciousness can be seen trying to hold up its superstructures when their foundations have given way, aping its everyday processes, but without being able to come by any intuitive realization, and without being able to conceal the particular deficiency which robs them of their complete significance. It is in the same way theoretically understandable that mental illness may, in its turn, be linked with some bodily accident; consciousness projects itself into a physical world and has a body, as it projects itself into a cultural world and has its habits: because it cannot be consciousness without playing upon significances given either in the absolute past of nature or in its own personal past, and because any form of lived experience tends towards a certain generality whether that of our habits or that of our 'bodily functions'.

These elucidations enable us clearly to understand motility as basic

⁹¹ Cf. *La Structure du Comportement*, pp. 91 and ff.

intentionality. Consciousness is in the first place not a matter of 'I think that' but of 'I can'.⁹² Schneider's motor trouble cannot, any more than his visual deficiency, be reduced to any failure of the general function of representation. Sight and movement are specific ways of entering into relationship with objects and if, through all these experiences, some unique function finds its expression, it is the momentum of existence, which does not cancel out the radical diversity of contents, because it links them to each other, not by placing them all under the control of an 'I think', but by guiding them towards the intersensory unity of a 'world'. Movement is not thought about movement, and bodily space is not space thought of or represented. 'Each voluntary movement takes place in a setting, against a background which is determined by the movement itself. . . . We perform our movements in a space which is not "empty" or unrelated to them, but which on the contrary, bears a highly determinate relation to them: movement and background are, in fact, only artificially separated stages of a unique totality.'⁹³ In the action of the hand which is raised towards an object is contained a reference to the object, not as an object represented, but as that highly specific thing towards which we project ourselves, near which we are, in anticipation, and which we haunt.⁹⁴ Consciousness is

⁹² This term is the usual one in Husserl's unpublished writings.

⁹³ Goldstein, *Über die Abhängigkeit*, p. 163.

⁹⁴ It is not easy to reveal pure motor intentionality: it is concealed behind the objective world which it helps to build up. The history of apraxia would show how the description of Praxis is almost always contaminated and finally made impossible by the notion of representation. Liepmann (*Über Störungen des Handelns bei Gehirnkranken*) draws a clear distinction between apraxia and agnosic disturbances of conduct, in which the object is not recognized, but in which, however, conduct is in harmony with the representation of the object, and generally between apraxia and disturbances affecting the 'ideational preparation of action' (forgetting the aim, confusing two aims, premature performance, transfer of the aim through some intrusive perception) (op. cit., pp. 20–31). With Liepmann's subject (the 'counsellor of state'), the ideational process is normal, since the subject can perform with his left hand everything that he is prevented from performing with his right. Moreover, the hand is not paralysed. 'The case of the counsellor of state shows that between the so-called higher mental processes and motor nerve-impulses there is room for another deficiency which prevents any application of the project (*Entwurf*) for action to the motility of one particular limb . . . The whole sensory-motor apparatus of a limb is so to speak dislocated (*exarticuliert*) in relation to the whole physiological process (ibid., pp. 40–1). Normally, then, every formula of movement, while

being-towards-the-thing through the intermediary of the body. A movement is learned when the body has understood it, that is, when it has incorporated it into its 'world', and to move one's body is to aim at

offering us a representation, presents itself to our body as a specific practical possibility. The patient has retained the formula of movement as a representation, but it no longer conveys anything to his right hand, or at any rate his right hand has no longer any sphere of action.' 'He has retained everything communicable in an action, everything objective and perceptible in it for others. What he lacks, namely his capacity to move his right hand according to a plan already mapped out, is something incommunicable and incapable of being an object for an outside consciousness; it is a power, not a thing known (*ein Können, kein Kennen*)' (ibid., p. 47). But when Liepmann tries to make his analysis more explicit, he returns to traditional views and dissects movement into a representation (the 'formula of movement' which, along with the main goal provides me with intermediate aims) and a system of automatisms (which, for each intermediate aim, brings appropriate nerve impulses into play) (ibid., p. 59). The 'power' earlier mentioned becomes a 'property of the nervous substance' (ibid., p. 47). This brings us back to the dualism of consciousness and body which we thought we had left behind when we introduced the notion of *Bewegungsentwurf* or motor project. If it is a question of a simple action, the representation of the goal and of the intermediate aims is transformed into movement because it releases involuntary actions acquired once and for all (p. 55). If it is a matter of complex action, it calls up the 'kinaesthetic memory of the component movements: as movement is composed of partial acts, the project of movement is composed of the representation of its parts or the intermediate aims: it is this representation that we have called the formula of movement' (p. 57). Praxis is torn asunder by representations and automatic actions. The case of the counsellor of state becomes unintelligible, since it becomes necessary to relate his troubles either to the ideational preliminaries to movement, or else to some deficiency of the automatic actions, which Liepmann ruled out from the start. So motor apraxia comes down either to ideational apraxia, which is a form of agnosia, or else to paralysis. We shall make sense of apraxia and do justice to Liepmann's observations only if the movement to be performed can be anticipated, though not by a representation. This is possible only provided that consciousness is understood not as the explicit positing of its objects, but more generally as reference to a practical as well as a theoretical object, as being-in-the-world, and if the body for its part is understood not as one object among all objects, but as the vehicle of being in the world. As long as consciousness is understood as representation, the only possible operation for it is to form representations. Consciousness will be motor as long as it furnishes itself with a 'representation of movement'. The body then executes the movement by copying it from the representation which consciousness presents to itself, and in accordance with a formula of movement which it receives from that representation. (Cf. O. Sittig, *Über Apraxie*, p. 98.) We still need to understand by what magical process the representation of a movement causes precisely that movement to be made by the body. The problem can be solved only provided that we cease to draw a distinction between the body as a mechanism in itself and consciousness as being for itself.

things through it; it is to allow oneself to respond to their call, which is made upon it independently of any representation. Motility, then, is not, as it were, a handmaid of consciousness, transporting the body to that point in space of which we have formed a representation beforehand. In order that we may be able to move our body towards an object, the object must first exist for it, our body must not belong to the realm of the 'in-itself'. Objects no longer exist for the arm of the apraxic, and this is what causes it to remain immobile. Cases of pure apraxia in which the perception of space remains unaffected, in which even the 'intellectual notion of the gesture to be made' does not appear to be obscured, and yet in which the patient cannot copy a triangle;⁹⁵ cases of constructive apraxia, in which the subject shows no gnostic disturbance except as regards the localization of stimuli on his body, and yet is incapable of copying a cross, a v or an o,⁹⁶ all prove that the body has its world and that objects or space may be present to our knowledge but not to our body.

We must therefore avoid saying that our body is in space, or in time. It inhabits space and time. If my hand traces a complicated path through the air, I do not need, in order to know its final position, to add together all movements made in the same direction and subtract those made in the opposite direction. 'Every identifiable change reaches consciousness already loaded with its relations to what has preceded it, as on a taximeter the distance is given already converted into shillings and pence.'⁹⁷ At every moment, previous attitudes and movements provide an ever ready standard of measurement. It is not a question of a visual or motor 'memory' of the starting position of the hand: cerebral lesions may leave visual memory intact while destroying awareness of movement. As for the 'motor memory', it is clear that it could hardly establish the present position of the hand, unless the perception which gave rise to it had not, stored up in it, an absolute awareness of 'here', for without this we should be thrown back from memory to memory

⁹⁵ Lhermitte, G. Lévy and Kyriako, *Les Perturbations de la représentation spatiale chez les apraxiques*, p. 597.

⁹⁶ Lhermitte and Trelles, *Sur l'apraxie constructive, les troubles de la pensée spatiale et de la somatognosie dans l'apraxie*, p. 428. Cf. Lhermitte, de Massary and Kyriako, *Le Rôle de la pensée spatiale dans l'apraxie*.

⁹⁷ Head and Holmes, *Sensory disturbances from cerebral lesions*, p. 187.

and never have a present perception. Just as it is necessarily 'here', the body necessarily exists 'now'; it can never become 'past', and if we cannot retain in health the living memory of sickness, or, in adult life that of our body as a child, these 'gaps in memory' merely express the temporal structure of our body. At each successive instant of a movement, the preceding instant is not lost sight of. It is, as it were, dovetailed into the present, and present perception generally speaking consists in drawing together, on the basis of one's present position, the succession of previous positions, which envelop each other. But the impending position is also covered by the present, and through it all those which will occur throughout the movement. Each instant of the movement embraces its whole span, and particularly the first which, being the active initiative, institutes the link between a here and a yonder, a now and a future which the remainder of the instants will merely develop. In so far as I have a body through which I act in the world, space and time are not, for me, a collection of adjacent points nor are they a limitless number of relations synthesized by my consciousness, and into which it draws my body. I am not in space and time, nor do I conceive space and time; I belong to them, my body combines with them and includes them. The scope of this inclusion is the measure of that of my existence; but in any case it can never be all-embracing. The space and time which I inhabit are always in their different ways indeterminate horizons which contain other points of view. The synthesis of both time and space is a task that always has to be performed afresh. Our bodily experience of movement is not a particular case of knowledge; it provides us with a way of access to the world and the object, with a 'praktognosia',⁹⁸ which has to be recognized as original and perhaps as primary. My body has its world, or understands its world, without having to make use of my 'symbolic' or 'objectifying function'. Certain patients can imitate the doctor's movements and move their right hand to their right ear and their left to their nose, so long as they stand beside the doctor and follow his movements through a mirror, but not if they face him. Head explained the patient's failure in terms of the inadequacy of his 'formulation': according to

⁹⁸ Grünbaum, *Aphasie und Motorik*.

him the imitation of the action is dependent upon a verbal translation. In fact, the formulation may be correct although the imitation is unsuccessful, or again the imitation may be successful without any formulation. Writes on the subject⁹⁹ then introduce, if not exactly verbal symbolism, at least a general symbolic function, an ability to 'transpose', in which imitation, like perception or objective thought, is merely a particular case. But it is obvious that this general function does not explain adapted action. For patients are capable, not only of formulating the action to be performed, but of picturing it to themselves. They are quite aware of what they have to do, and yet, instead of moving the right hand to the right ear and the left hand to the nose, they touch one ear with both hands, or else their nose and one eye, or one ear and one eye.¹⁰⁰ What has become impossible is the application and adaptation to their own body of the objective particularity of the action. In other words, the right and left hand, the eye and ear are still presented to them as absolute locations, and not inserted into any system of correlations which links them up with the corresponding parts of the doctor's body, and which makes them usable for imitation, even when the doctor is face to face with the patient. In order to imitate the actions of someone facing me, it is not necessary that I should know expressly that 'the hand which appears on the right side of my visual field is for my partner the left one'. Now it is precisely the victim of disturbances who has recourse to these explanations. In normal imitation, the subject's left hand is immediately identified with his partner's, his action immediately models itself on the other's, and the subject projects himself or loses his separate reality in the other, becomes identified with him, and the change of co-ordinates is pre-eminently embodied in this existential process. This is because the normal subject has his body not only as a system of present positions, but besides, and thereby, as an open system of an infinite number of equivalent positions directed to other ends. What we have called the body image is precisely this system of equivalents, this immediately given invariant whereby the different motor tasks are instantaneously transferable. It follows that it is not only an experience of my body, but

⁹⁹ Goldstein, Van Woerkom, Bouman and Grünbaum.

¹⁰⁰ Grünbaum, *op. cit.*, pp. 386–92.

an experience of my body-in-the-world, and that this is what gives a motor meaning to verbal orders. The function destroyed in apraxic disturbances is therefore a motor one. 'It is not the symbolic or sense-giving function in general which is affected in cases of this kind: it is a much more primary function, in its nature motor, in other words, the capacity for motor differentiation within the dynamic body image'.¹⁰¹ The space in which normal imitation operates is not, as opposed to concrete space with its absolute locations, an 'objective space' or a 'representative space' based on an act of thought. It is already built into my bodily structure, and is its inseparable correlative. 'Already motility, in its pure state, possesses the basic power of giving a meaning (*Sinngebung*)'.¹⁰² Even if subsequently, thought and the perception of space are freed from motility and spatial being, for us to be able to conceive space, it is in the first place necessary that we should have been thrust into it by our body, and that it should have provided us with the first model of those transpositions, equivalents and identifications which make space into an objective system and allow our experience to be one of objects, opening out on an 'in itself'. 'Motility is the primary sphere in which initially the meaning of all significances (*der Sinn aller Signifikationen*) is engendered in the domain of represented space.'¹⁰³

The acquisition of habit as a rearrangement and renewal of the corporeal schema presents great difficulties to traditional philosophies, which are always inclined to conceive synthesis as intellectual synthesis. It is quite true that what brings together, in habit, component actions, reactions and 'stimuli' is not some external process of association.¹⁰⁴ Any mechanistic theory runs up against the fact that the learning process is systematic; the subject does not weld together individual movements and individual stimuli but acquires the power to respond with a certain type of solution to situations of a certain general form. The situations may differ widely from case to case, and the response movements may be entrusted sometimes to one operative organ,

¹⁰¹ Grünbaum, op. cit., pp. 397–98.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 394.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 396.

¹⁰⁴ See, on this point, *La Structure du Comportement*, pp. 125 and ff.

sometimes to another, both situations and responses in the various cases having in common not so much a partial identity of elements as a shared meaning. Must we then see the origin of habit in an act of understanding which organizes the elements only to withdraw subsequently?¹⁰⁵ For example, is it not the case that forming the habit of dancing is discovering, by analysis, the formula of the movement in question, and then reconstructing it on the basis of the ideal outline by the use of previously acquired movements, those of walking and running? But before the formula of the new dance can incorporate certain elements of general motility, it must first have had, as it were, the stamp of movement set upon it. As has often been said, it is the body which 'catches' (*kapiert*) and 'comprehends' movement. The acquisition of a habit is indeed the grasping of a significance, but it is the motor grasping of a motor significance. Now what precisely does this mean? A woman may, without any calculation, keep a safe distance between the feather in her hat and things which might break it off. She feels where the feather is just as we feel where our hand is.¹⁰⁶ If I am in the habit of driving a car, I enter a narrow opening and see that I can 'get through' without comparing the width of the opening with that of the wings, just as I go through a doorway without checking the width of the doorway against that of my body.¹⁰⁷ The hat and the car have ceased to be objects with a size and volume which is established by comparison with other objects. They have become potentialities of volume, the demand for a certain amount of free space. In the same way the iron gate to the Underground platform, and the road, have become restrictive potentialities and immediately appear passable or impassable for my body with its adjuncts. The blind man's stick has ceased to be an object for him, and is no longer perceived for itself; its point has become an area of sensitivity, extending the scope and active radius of touch, and providing a parallel to sight. In the exploration of things, the length of the stick does not enter expressly as a middle term: the blind man is rather aware of it through the position of objects

¹⁰⁵ As Bergson, for example, thinks when he defines habit as 'the fossilized residue of a spiritual activity'.

¹⁰⁶ Head, *Sensory disturbances from cerebral lesion*, p. 188.

¹⁰⁷ Grünbaum, *Aphasie und Motorik*, p. 395.

than of the position of objects through it. The position of things is immediately given through the extent of the reach which carries him to it, which comprises besides the arm's own reach the stick's range of action. If I want to get used to a stick, I try it by touching a few things with it, and eventually I have it 'well in hand', I can see what things are 'within reach' or out of reach of my stick. There is no question here of any quick estimate or any comparison between the objective length of the stick and the objective distance away of the goal to be reached. The points in space do not stand out as objective positions in relation to the objective position occupied by our body; they mark, in our vicinity, the varying range of our aims and our gestures. To get used to a hat, a car or a stick is to be transplanted into them, or conversely, to incorporate them into the bulk of our own body. Habit expresses our power of dilating our being-in-the-world, or changing our existence by appropriating fresh instruments.¹⁰⁸ It is possible to know how to type without being able to say where the letters which make the words are to be found on the banks of keys. To know how to type is not, then, to know the place of each letter among the keys, nor even to have acquired a conditioned reflex for each one, which is set in motion by the letter as it comes before our eye. If habit is neither a form of knowledge nor an involuntary action, what then is it? It is knowledge in the hands, which is forthcoming only when bodily effort is made, and cannot be formulated in detachment from that effort. The subject knows where the letters are on the typewriter as we know where one of our limbs is, through a knowledge bred of familiarity which does not give us a position in objective space. The movement of her fingers is not presented to the typist as a path through space which can be described, but merely as a certain adjustment of motility, physiognomically distinguishable from any other. The question is often framed as if the perception of a letter written on paper aroused the representation of the same letter which in turn aroused the representation of the movement needed to strike it on the machine. But

¹⁰⁸ It thus elucidates the nature of the body image. When we say that it presents us immediately with our bodily position, we do not mean, after the manner of empiricists, that it consists of a mosaic of 'extensive sensations'. It is a system which is open on to the world, and correlative with it.

this is mythological language. When I run my eyes over the text set before me, there do not occur perceptions which stir up representations, but patterns are formed as I look, and these are endowed with a typical or familiar physiognomy. When I sit at my typewriter, a motor space opens up beneath my hands, in which I am about to 'play' what I have read. The reading of the word is a modulation of visible space, the performance of the movement is a modulation of manual space, and the whole question is how a cretin physiognomy of 'visual' patterns can evoke a certain type of motor response, how each 'visual' structure eventually provides itself with its mobile essence without there being any need to spell the word or specify the movement in detail in order to translate one into the other. But this power of habit is no different from the general one which we exercise over our body: if I am ordered to touch my ear or my knee, I move my hand to my ear or my knee by the shortest route, without having to think of the initial position of my hand, or that of my ear, or the path between them. We said earlier that it is the body which 'understands' in the acquisition of habit. This way of putting it will appear absurd, if understanding is subsuming a sense-datum under an idea, and if the body is an object. But the phenomenon of habit is just what prompts us to revise our notion of 'understand' and our notion of the body. To understand is to experience the harmony between what we aim at and what is given, between the intention and the performance—and the body is our anchorage in a world. When I put my hand to my knee, I experience at every stage of the movement the fulfilment of an intention which was not directed at my knee as an idea or even as an object, but as a present and real part of my living body, that is, finally, as a stage in my perpetual movement towards a world. When the typist performs the necessary movements on the typewriter, these movements are governed by an intention, but the intention does not posit the keys as objective locations. It is literally true that the subject who learns to type incorporates the key-bank space into his bodily space.

The example of instrumentalists shows even better how habit has its abode neither in thought nor in the objective body, but in the body as mediator of a world. It is known¹⁰⁹ that an experienced organist is

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Chevalier, *L'Habitude*, pp. 202 and ff.

capable of playing an organ which he does not know, which has more or fewer manuals, and stops differently arranged, compared with those on the instrument he is used to playing. He needs only an hour's practice to be ready to perform his programme. Such a short preparation rules out the supposition that new conditioned reflexes have here been substituted for the existing sets, except where both form a system and the change is all-embracing, which takes us away from the mechanistic theory, since in that case the reactions are mediated by a comprehensive grasp of the instrument. Are we to maintain that the organist analyses the organ, that he conjures up and retains a representation of the stops, pedals and manuals and their relation to each other in space? But during the short rehearsal preceding the concert, he does not act like a person about to draw up a plan. He sits on the seat, works the pedals, pulls out the stops, gets the measure of the instrument with his body, incorporates within himself the relevant directions and dimensions, settles into the organ as one settles into a house. He does not learn objective spatial positions for each stop and pedal, nor does he commit them to 'memory'. During the rehearsal, as during the performance, the stops, pedals and manuals are given to him as nothing more than possibilities of achieving certain emotional or musical values, and their positions are simply the places through which this value appears in the world. Between the musical essence of the piece as it is shown in the score and the notes which actually sound round the organ, so direct a relation is established that the organist's body and his instrument are merely the medium of this relationship. Henceforth the music exists by itself and through it all the rest exists.¹¹⁰ There is here no place for any 'memory' of the position of the stops, and it is not in objective space that the organist in fact is playing. In reality his movements during rehearsal are consecratory gestures: they draw affective vectors, discover emotional sources, and create a space of expressiveness as the movements of the augur delimit the *templum*.

The whole problem of habit here is one of knowing how the musical

¹¹⁰ 'As though the musicians were not nearly so much playing the little phrase as performing the rites on which it insisted before it would consent to appear.' (Proust, *Swann's Way*, II, trans. C. K. Scott Moncrieff, Chatto & Windus, p. 180.)

'Its cries were so sudden that the violinist must snatch up his bow and race to catch them as they came.' (Ibid., p. 186.)

significance of an action can be concentrated in a certain place to the extent that, in giving himself entirely to the music, the organist reaches for precisely those stops and pedals which are to bring it into being. Now the body is essentially an expressive space. If I want to take hold of an object, already, at a point of space about which I have been quite unmindful, this power of grasping constituted by my hand moves upwards towards the thing. I move my legs not as things in space two and a half feet from my head, but as a power of locomotion which extends my motor intention downwards. The main areas of my body are devoted to actions, and participate in their value, and asking why common sense makes the head the seat of thought raises the same problem as asking how the organist distributes, through 'organ space', musical significances. But our body is not merely one expressive space among the rest, for that is simply the constituted body. It is the origin of the rest, expressive movement itself, that which causes them to begin to exist as things, under our hands and eyes. Although our body does not impose definite instincts upon us from birth, as it does upon animals, it does at least give to our life the form of generality, and develops our personal acts into stable dispositional tendencies. In this sense our nature is not long-established custom, since custom presupposes the form of passivity derived from nature. The body is our general medium for having a world. Sometimes it is restricted to the actions necessary for the conservation of life, and accordingly it posits around us a biological world; at other times, elaborating upon these primary actions and moving from their literal to a figurative meaning, it manifests through them a core of new significance: this is true of motor habits such as dancing. Sometimes, finally, the meaning aimed at cannot be achieved by the body's natural means; it must then build itself an instrument, and it projects thereby around itself a cultural world. At all levels it performs the same function which is to endow the instantaneous expressions of spontaneity with 'a little renewable action and independent existence'.¹¹¹ Habit is merely a form of this fundamental power. We say that the body has understood and habit has been cultivated when it has absorbed a new meaning, and assimilated a fresh core of significance.

¹¹¹ Valéry, *Introduction à la Méthode de Léonard de Vinci, Variété*, p. 177.

To sum up, what we have discovered through the study of motility, is a new meaning of the word 'meaning'. The great strength of intellectualist psychology and idealist philosophy comes from their having no difficulty in showing that perception and thought have an intrinsic significance and cannot be explained in terms of the external association of fortuitously agglomerated contents. The *Cogito* was the coming to self-awareness of this inner core. But all meaning was *ipso facto* conceived as an act of thought, as the work of a pure I, and although rationalism easily refuted empiricism, it was itself unable to account for the variety of experience, for the element of senselessness in it, for the contingency of contents. Bodily experience forces us to acknowledge an imposition of meaning which is not the work of a universal constituting consciousness, a meaning which clings to certain contents. My body is that meaningful core which behaves like a general function, and which nevertheless exists, and is susceptible to disease. In it we learn to know that union of essence and existence which we shall find again in perception generally, and which we shall then have to describe more fully.

4

THE SYNTHESIS OF ONE'S OWN BODY

The analysis of bodily space has led us to results which may be generalized. We notice for the first time, with regard to our own body, what is true of all perceived things: that the perception of space and the perception of the thing, the spatiality of the thing and its being as a thing are not two distinct problems. The Cartesian and Kantian tradition already teaches us this; it makes the object's spatial limits its essence; it shows in existence *partes extra partes*, and in spatial distribution, the only possible significance of existence in itself. But it elucidates the perception of the object through the perception of space, whereas the experience of our own body teaches us to embed space in existence. Intellectualism clearly sees that the 'motif of the thing' and the 'motif of space'¹ are interwoven, but reduces the former to the latter. Experience discloses beneath objective space, in which the body eventually finds its place, a primitive spatiality of which experience is merely the outer covering and which merges with the body's very being. To be a body, is to be tied to a certain world, as we have seen; our body is not primarily in space: it is of it. Anosognosics who describe their arm as

¹ Cassirer, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, III, Second Part, Chap. II.

'like a snake', long and cold,² do not, strictly speaking, fail to recognize its objective outline and, even when the patient looks unsuccessfully for his arm or fastens it in order not to lose it,³ he knows well enough where his arm is, since that is where he looks for it and fastens it. If, however, patients experience their arm's space as something alien, if generally speaking I can feel my body's space as vast or minute despite the evidence of my senses, this is because there exists an affective presence and enlargement for which objective spatiality is not a sufficient condition, as anosognosia shows, and indeed not even a necessary condition, as is shown by the phantom arm. Bodily spatiality is the deployment of one's bodily being, the way in which the body comes into being as a body. In trying to analyse it, we were therefore simply anticipating what we have to say about bodily synthesis in general.

We find in the unity of the body the same implicatory structure as we have already described in discussing space. The various parts of my body, its visual, tactile and motor aspects are not simply co-ordinated. If I am sitting at my table and I want to reach the telephone, the movement of my hand towards it, the straightening of the upper part of the body, the tautening of the leg muscles are enveloped in each other. I desire a certain result and the relevant tasks are spontaneously distributed amongst the appropriate segments, the possible combinations being presented in advance as equivalent: I can continue leaning back in my chair provided that I stretch my arm further, or lean forward, or even partly stand up. All these movements are available to us in virtue of their common meaning. That is why, in their first attempts at grasping, children look, not at their hand, but at the object: the various parts of the body are known to us through their functional value only, and their co-ordination is not learnt. Similarly, when I am sitting at my table, I can instantly visualize the parts of my body which are hidden from me. As I contract my foot in my shoe, I can see it. This power belongs to me even with respect to parts of the body which I have never seen. Thus certain patients have the hallucination of their own face *seen from inside*.⁴ It has been possible to show that we do not

² Lhermitte, *L'Image de notre corps*, p. 130.

³ Van Bogaert, *Sur la Pathologie de l'Image de soi*, p. 541.

⁴ Lhermitte, *L'Image de notre corps*, p. 238.

recognize our own hand in a photograph, and that many subjects are even uncertain about identifying their own handwriting among others, and yet that everyone recognizes his own silhouette or his own walk when it is filmed. Thus we do not recognize the appearance of what we have often seen, and on the other hand we immediately recognize the visual representation of what is invisible to us in our own body.⁵ In heautoscopy the double which the subject sees in front of him is not always recognized by certain visible details, yet he feels convinced that it is himself, and consequently declares that he sees his double.⁶ Each of us sees himself as it were through an inner eye which from a few yards away is looking at us from the head to the knees.⁷ Thus the connecting link between the parts of our body and that between our visual and tactile experience are not forged gradually and cumulatively. I do not translate the 'data of touch' into the language of seeing' or *vice versa*—I do not bring together one by one the parts of my body; this translation and this unification are performed once and for all within me: they are my body, itself. Are we then to say that we perceive our body in virtue of its law of construction, as we know in advance all the possible facets of a cube in virtue of its geometrical structure? But—to say nothing at this stage about external objects—our own body acquaints us with a species of unity which is not a matter of subsumption under a law. In so far as it stands before me and presents its systematic variations to the observer, the external object lends itself to a cursory mental examination of its elements and it may, at least by way of preliminary approximation, be defined in terms of the law of their variation. But I am not in front of my body, I am in it, or rather I am it. Neither its variations nor their constant can, therefore, be expressly posited. We do not merely behold as spectators the relations between the parts of our body, and the correlations between the visual and tactile body: we are ourselves the unifier of these arms and legs, the person who both sees and touches them. The body is, to use Leibnitz's term, the 'effective law' of its changes. If we can still speak of interpretation in relation to the perception of one's own body, we shall have to say that it interprets

⁵ Wolff, *Selbstbeurteilung und Fremdbeurteilung in wissentlichen und unwissentlichen Versuch*.

⁶ Menninger-Lerchenthal, *Das Truggebilde der eigenen Gestalt*, p. 4.

⁷ Lhermitte, *L'Image de notre corps*, p. 238.

itself. Here the 'visual data' make their appearance only through the sense of touch, tactile data through sight, each localized movement against a background of some inclusive position, each bodily event, whatever the 'analyser' which reveals it, against a background of significance in which its remotest repercussions are at least foreshadowed and the possibility of an intersensory parity immediately furnished. What unites 'tactile sensations' in the hand and links them to visual perceptions of the same hand, and to perceptions of other bodily areas, is a certain style informing my manual gestures and implying in turn a certain style of finger movements, and contributing, in the last resort, to a certain bodily bearing.⁸ The body is to be compared, not to a physical object, but rather to a work of art. In a picture or a piece of music the idea is incommunicable by means other than the display of colours and sounds. Any analysis of Cézanne's work, if I have not seen his pictures, leaves me with a choice between several possible Cézannes, and it is the sight of the pictures which provides me with the only existing Cézanne, and therein the analyses find their full meaning. The same is true of a poem or a novel, although they are made up of words. It is well known that a poem, though it has a superficial meaning translatable into prose, leads, in the reader's mind, a further existence which makes it a poem. Just as the spoken word is significant not only through the medium of individual words, but also through that of accent, intonation, gesture and facial expression, and as these additional meanings no longer reveal the speaker's thoughts but the source of his thoughts and his fundamental manner of being, so poetry, which is perhaps accidentally narrative and in that way informative, is essentially a variety of existence. It is distinguishable from the cry, because the cry makes use of the body as nature gave it to us: poor in expressive means; whereas the poem uses language, and even a particular language, in such a way that the existential modulation, instead of being dissipated at the very instant of its expression, finds in poetic art a means of making itself eternal. But although it is independent of the gesture which is inseparable from living expression, the poem is not independent of every material aid, and it would be irrecoverably lost if

⁸ The mechanics of the skeleton cannot, even at the scientific level, account for the distinctive positions and movements of my body. Cf. *La Structure du Comportement*, p. 196.

its text were not preserved down to the last detail. Its meaning is not arbitrary and does not dwell in the firmament of ideas: it is locked in the words printed on some perishable page. In that sense, like every work of art, the poem exists as a thing and does not eternally survive as does a truth. As for the novel, although its plot can be summarized and the 'thought' of the writer lends itself to abstract expression, this conceptual significance is extracted from a wider one, as the description of a person is extracted from the actual appearance of his face. The novelist's task is not to expound ideas or even analyse characters, but to depict an inter-human event, ripening and bursting it upon us with no ideological commentary, to such an extent that any change in the order of the narrative or in choice of viewpoint would alter the literary meaning of the event. A novel, poem, picture or musical work are individuals, that is, beings in which the expression is indistinguishable from the thing expressed, their meaning, accessible only through direct contact, being radiated with no change of their temporal and spatial situation. It is in this sense that our body is comparable to a work of art. It is a nexus of living meanings, not the law for a certain number of covariant terms. A certain tactile experience felt in the upper arm signifies a certain tactile experience in the forearm and shoulder, along with a certain visual aspect of the same arm, not because the various tactile perceptions among themselves, or the tactile and visual ones, are all involved in one intelligible arm, as the different facets of a cube are related to the idea of a cube, but because the arm seen and the arm touched, like the different segments of the arm, together *perform* one and the same action.

Just as we saw earlier that motor habit threw light on the particular nature of bodily space, so here habit in general enables us to understand the general synthesis of one's own body. And, just as the analysis of bodily spatiality foreshadowed that of the unity of one's own body, so we may extend to all habits what we have said about motor ones. In fact every habit is both motor and perceptual, because it lies, as we have said, between explicit perception and actual movement, in the basic function which sets boundaries to our field of vision and our field of action. Learning to find one's way among things with a stick, which we gave a little earlier as an example of motor habit, is equally an example of perceptual habit. Once the stick has become a familiar instrument,

the world of feelable things recedes and now begins, not at the outer skin of the hand, but at the end of the stick. One is tempted to say that through the sensations produced by the pressure of the stick on the hand, the blind man builds up the stick along with its various positions, and that the latter then mediate a second order object, the external thing. It would appear in this case that perception is always a reading off from the same sensory data, but constantly accelerated, and operating with ever more attenuated signals. But habit does not consist in interpreting the pressures of the stick on the hand as indications of certain positions of the stick, and these as signs of an external object, since it *relieves us of the necessity* of doing so. The pressures on the hand and the stick are no longer given; the stick is no longer an object perceived by the blind man, but an instrument with which he perceives. It is a bodily auxiliary, an extension of the bodily synthesis. Correspondingly, the external object is not the geometrized projection or invariant of a set of perspectives, but something towards which the stick leads us and the perspectives of which, according to perceptual evidence are not signs, but aspects. Intellectualism cannot conceive any passage from the perspective to the thing itself, or from sign to significance otherwise than as an interpretation, an apperception, a cognitive intention. According to this view sensory data and perspectives are at each level contents grasped as (*aufgefasst als*) manifestations of one and the same intelligible core.⁹ But this analysis distorts both the sign and the meaning: it separates out, by a process of objectification of both, the sense-content, which is already 'pregnant' with a meaning, and the invariant core, which is not a law but a thing; it conceals the organic relationship between subject and world, the active transcendence of consciousness, the momentum which carries it into a thing and into a world by means of its organs and instruments. The analysis of motor habit as an extension of existence leads on, then, to an analysis of perceptual habit as the coming into possession of a world. Conversely, every perceptual habit

⁹ Husserl, for example, for a long time defined consciousness or the imposition of a significance in terms of the *Auffassung-Inhalt* framework, and as a *beseelende Auffassung*. He takes a decisive step forward in recognizing, from the time of his *Lectures on Time*, that this operation presupposes another deeper one whereby the content is itself made ready for this apprehension. 'Not every constitution is brought about through the *Auffassungsinhalt-Auffassung*.' *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, p. 5, note 1.

is still a motor habit and here equally the process of grasping a meaning is performed by the body. When a child grows accustomed to distinguishing blue from red, it is observed, that the habit cultivated in relation to these two colours helps with the rest.¹⁰ Is it, then, the case that through the pair blue-red the child has perceived the meaning; 'colour'? Is the crucial moment of habit-formation in that coming to awareness that arrival at a 'point of view of colour', that intellectual analysis which subsumes the data under one category? But for the child to be able to perceive blue and red under the category of colour, the category must be rooted in the data, otherwise no subsumption could recognize it in them. It is necessary that, on the 'blue' and 'red' panels presented to him the particular kind of vibration and impression on the eye known as blue and red should be represented. In the gaze we have at our disposal a natural instrument analogous to the blind man's stick. The gaze gets more or less from things according to the way in which it questions them, ranges over or dwells on them. To learn to see colours it is to acquire a certain style of seeing, a new use of one's own body: it is to enrich and recast the body image. Whether a system of motor or perceptual powers, our body is not an object for an 'I think', it is a grouping of lived-through meanings which moves towards its equilibrium. Sometimes a new cluster of meanings is formed; our former movements are integrated into a fresh motor entity, the first visual data into a fresh sensory entity, our natural powers suddenly come together in a richer meaning, which hitherto has been merely foreshadowed in our perceptual or practical field, and which has made itself felt in our experience by no more than a certain lack, and which by its coming suddenly reshuffles the elements of our equilibrium and fulfils our blind expectation.

¹⁰ Koffka, *Growth of the Mind*, pp. 174 and ff.

5

THE BODY IN ITS SEXUAL BEING

Our constant aim is to elucidate the primary function whereby we bring into existence, for ourselves, or take a hold upon, space, the object or the instrument, and to describe the body as the place where this appropriation occurs. Now so long as we considered space or the things perceived, it was not easy to rediscover the relationship between the embodied subject and its world, because it is transformed by its own activity into the intercourse between the epistemological subject and the object. Indeed the natural world presents itself as existing in itself over and above its existence for me; the act of transcendence whereby the subject is thrown open to the world runs away with itself and we find ourselves in the presence of a nature which has no need to be perceived in order to exist. If then we want to bring to light the birth of being for us, we must finally look at that area of our experience which clearly has significance and reality only for us, and that is our affective life. Let us try to see how a thing or a being begins to exist for us through desire or love and we shall thereby come to understand better how things and beings can exist in general.

Ordinarily affectivity is conceived as a mosaic of affective states, of pleasures and pains each sealed within itself, mutually incomprehensible, and explicable only in terms of the bodily system. If it is

conceded that in man the emotional life is 'shot through with intelligence' we mean that simple representations can take the place of the natural stimuli of pleasure and pain, according to the laws governing the association of ideas or governing the conditioned reflex, that these substitutions superimpose pleasure and pain on circumstances which are, naturally speaking, matters of indifference to us and that, through one displacement after another, second or third order values are created which bear no obvious relation to our natural pleasures and pains. The objective world plays less and less directly on the keyboard of 'elementary' affective states, but their value remains nevertheless as a possibility of pleasure and pain. Apart from experience of pleasure and pain, of which there is nothing to be said, the subject stands out by his power of representation, and affectivity is not recognized as a distinctive form of consciousness. If this conception were correct, any sexual incapacity ought to amount either to the loss of certain representations or else to a weakening of the capacity for satisfaction. We shall see that this is not the case. One patient¹ no longer seeks sexual intercourse of his own accord. Obscene pictures, conversations on sexual topics, the sight of a body do not arouse desire in him. The patient hardly ever kisses, and the kiss for him has no value as sexual stimulation. Reactions are strictly local and do not begin to occur without contact. If the prelude is interrupted at this stage, there is no attempt to pursue the sexual cycle. In the sexual act intromission is never spontaneous. If orgasm occurs first in the partner and she moves away, the half-fulfilled desire vanishes. At every stage it is as if the subject did not know what is to be done. There are no active movements, save a few seconds before the orgasm which is extremely brief. Nocturnal emissions are rare and never accompanied by dreams. Are we to try to explain this sexual inertia—as earlier we explained the loss of initiative in general movements—in terms of the disappearance of visual representations? The difficulty here is in maintaining that there is no tactile representation of sexual activity, and one is thus still left wondering why in Schneider's case touch stimulation, and not only visual perception, has

¹ Schneider once more, the patient whose motor and intellectual deficiencies we have studied above, and whose emotional and sexual behaviour has been analysed by Steinfeld, *Ein Beitrag zur Analyse der Sexualefunktion*, pp. 175–80.

lost much of its sexual significance. If now we work on the supposition of some general failure of representation, both of touch and vision, the problem still remains of describing the concrete aspect assumed by this wholly formal deficiency in the realm of sexuality. For indeed the infrequency of nocturnal emissions, for example, is not explained by the weakness of representations, which are its effect rather than its cause, and which would seem to point to some change in the character of the sexual life itself. If we presuppose some decline of normal sexual reflexes or of pleasurable states, we are then faced with a case tending rather to show that there are no sexual reflexes and no pure state of pleasure. For, it will be recalled, all Schneider's troubles spring from a wound of limited extent in the occipital region. If sexuality in man were an autonomous reflex apparatus, if the object of sexual desire affected some organ of pleasurable sensation anatomically defined, then the effect of the cerebral injury would be to free these automatic responses and take the form of accentuated sexual behaviour. Pathology brings to light, somewhere between automatic response and representation, a vital zone in which the sexual possibilities of the patient are elaborated, in the same way, as we saw above, as are his motor, perceptual and even intellectual possibilities. There must be, immanent in sexual life, some function which ensures its emergence, and the normal extension of sexuality must rest on internal powers of the organic subject. There must be an Eros or a Libido which breathes life into an original world, gives sexual value or meaning to external stimuli and outlines for each subject the use he shall make of his objective body. It is the very structure of perception or erotic experience which has undergone change in Schneider. In the case of the normal subject, a body is not perceived merely as any object; this objective perception has within it a more intimate perception: the visible body is subtended by a sexual schema, which is strictly individual, emphasizing the erogenous areas, outlining a sexual physiognomy, and eliciting the gestures of the masculine body which is itself integrated into this emotional totality. But for Schneider a woman's body has no particular essence: it is, he says, pre-eminently character which makes a woman attractive, for physically they are all the same. Close physical contact causes only a 'vague feeling', the knowledge of 'an indeterminate something' which is never enough to 'spark off' sexual behaviour and

create a situation which requires a definite mode of resolution. Perception has lost its erotic structure, both spatially and temporally. What has disappeared from the patient is his power of projecting before himself a sexual world, of putting himself in an erotic situation, or, once such a situation is stumbled upon, of maintaining it or following it through to complete satisfaction. The very word satisfaction has no longer any meaning for him, since there is no intention or initiative of a sexual kind which calls up a cycle of movements and states, which 'patterns' them and finds its satisfaction in them. In so far as the tactile stimuli themselves, which the patient turns to excellent account under different circumstances, have lost their sexual significance, it is because they have so to speak ceased to speak to his body, to locate it in a sexual context, or, in other words, because the patient no longer asks, of his environment, this mute and permanent question which constitutes normal sexuality. Schneider, and the majority of impotent subjects, 'do not throw themselves into what they are doing'. But absent-mindedness and inappropriate representations are not causes but effects, and in so far as the subject coolly perceives the situation, it is in the first place because he does not live it and is not caught up in it. At this stage one begins to suspect a mode of perception distinct from objective perception, a kind of significance distinct from intellectual significance, an intentionality which is not pure 'awareness of something'. Erotic perception is not a *cogitatio* which aims at a *cogitatum*; through one body it aims at another body, and takes place in the world, not in a consciousness. A sight has a sexual significance for me, not when I consider, even confusedly, its possible relationship to the sexual organs or to pleasurable states, but when it exists for my body, for that power always available for bringing together into an erotic situation the stimuli applied, and adapting sexual conduct to it. There is an erotic 'comprehension' not of the order of understanding, since understanding subsumes an experience, once perceived, under some idea, while desire comprehends blindly by linking body to body. Even in the case of sexuality, which has nevertheless long been regarded as pre-eminently the type of bodily function, we are concerned, not with a peripheral involuntary action, but with an intentionality which follows the general flow of existence and yields to its movements. Schneider can no longer put himself into a sexual situation any more than

generally he occupies an affective or an ideological one. Faces are for him neither attractive nor repulsive, and people appear to him in one light or another only in so far as he has direct dealings with them, and according to the attitude they adopt towards him, and the attention and solicitude which they bestow upon him. Sun and rain are neither gay nor sad; his humour is determined by elementary organic functions only, and the world is emotionally neutral. Schneider hardly extends his sphere of human relationships at all, and when he makes new friendships they sometimes come to an unfortunate end: this is because they never result, as can be seen on analysis, from a spontaneous impulse, but from a decision made in the abstract. He would like to be able to think about politics and religion, but he does not even try, knowing that these realms are closed to him, and we have seen that generally speaking he never performs an act of authentic thought and substitutes for the intuitive understanding of number or the grasp of meanings the manipulation of signs and a technique depending on 'points of support'.² We discover both that sexual life is one more form of original intentionality, and also bring to view the vital origins of perception, motility and representation by basing all these 'processes' on an 'intentional arc' which gives way in the patient, and which, in the normal subject, endows experience with its degree of vitality and fruitfulness.

Thus sexuality is not an autonomous cycle. It has internal links with the whole active and cognitive being, these three sectors of behaviour displaying but a single typical structure, and standing in a relationship to each other of reciprocal expression. Here we concur with the most lasting discoveries of psychoanalysis. Whatever the theoretical declarations of Freud may have been, psychoanalytical research is in fact led to an explanation of man, not in terms of his sexual substructure, but to a discovery in sexuality of relations and attitudes which had previously been held to reside in *consciousness*. Thus the significance of psychoanalysis is less to make psychology biological than to discover a dialectical process in functions thought of as 'purely bodily', and to reintegrate sexuality into the human being. A breakaway disciple of Freud³

² Cf. *supra*, p. 133.

³ W. Stekel, *La Femme frigide*.

shows, for example, that frigidity is scarcely ever bound up with anatomical or physiological conditions, but that it expresses in most cases a refusal of orgasm, of femininity or of sexuality, and this in turn expresses the rejection of the sexual partner and of the destiny which he represents. It would be a mistake to imagine that even with Freud psychoanalysis rules out the description of psychological motives, and is opposed to the phenomenological method; psychoanalysis has, on the contrary, albeit unwittingly, helped to develop it by declaring, as Freud puts it, that every human action 'has a meaning',⁴ and by making every effort to understand the event, short of relating it to mechanical circumstances.

For Freud himself the sexual is not the genital, sexual life is not a mere effect of the processes having their seat in the genital organs, the libido is not an instinct, that is, an activity naturally directed towards definite ends, it is the general power, which the psychosomatic subject enjoys, of taking root in different settings, of establishing himself through different experiences, of gaining structures of conduct. It is what causes a man to have a history. In so far as a man's sexual history provides a key to his life, it is because in his sexuality is projected his manner of being towards the world, that is, towards time and other men. There are sexual symptoms at the root of all neuroses, but these symptoms, correctly interpreted, symbolize a whole attitude, whether, for example, one of conquest or of flight. Into the sexual history, conceived as the elaboration of a general form of life, all psychological constituents can enter, because there is no longer an interaction of two causalities and because the genital life is geared to the whole life of the subject. So the question is not so much whether human life does or does not rest on sexuality, as of knowing what is to be understood by sexuality. Psychoanalysis represents a double trend of thought: on the one hand it stresses the sexual substructure

⁴ Freud, *Introductory Lectures*, p. 31. Freud himself, in his concrete analyses, abandons causal thought, when he demonstrates that symptoms always have several meanings, or, as he puts it, are 'overdetermined'. For this amounts to admitting that a symptom, at the time of its onset, always finds *raisons d'être* in the subject, so that no event in a life is, strictly speaking, externally determined. Freud compares the accident occurring from outside to the foreign body which, for the oyster, is merely the occasion for secreting a pearl. See for example *Cinq psychanalyses*, Chap. I, p. 91, note 1.

of life, on the other it 'expands' the notion of sexuality to the extent of absorbing into it the whole of existence. But precisely for that reason, its conclusions, like those of our last paragraph but one, remain ambiguous. When we generalize the notion of sexuality, making it a manner of being in the physical and inter-human world, do we mean, in the last analysis, that all existence has a sexual significance or that every sexual phenomenon has an existential significance? In the first hypothesis, existence would be an abstraction, another name for the sexual life. But since sexual life can no longer be circumscribed, since it is no longer a separate function definable in terms of the causality proper to a set of organs, there is now no sense in saying that all existence is understood through the sexual life, or rather this statement becomes a tautology. Must we then say, conversely, that the sexual phenomenon is merely an expression of our general manner of projecting our setting? But the sexual life is not a mere reflection of existence: an effective life, in the political and ideological field, for example, can be associated with impaired sexuality, and may even benefit from such impairment. On the other hand, the sexual life may, as in Casanova's case for example, possess a kind of technical perfection corresponding to no particularly vigorous version of being in the world. Even though the sexual apparatus has, running through it, the general current of life, it may monopolize it to its own advantage. Life is particularized into separate currents. If words are to have any meaning, the sexual life is a sector of our life bearing a special relation to the existence of sex. There can be no question of allowing sexuality to become lost in existence, as if it were no more than an epiphenomenon. For if we admit that the sexual troubles of neurotics are an expression of their basic drama in magnified form, it still remains to be seen why the sexual expression of the drama is more immature, more frequent and more striking than the rest; and why sexuality is not only a symptom, but a highly important one. Here we meet once more a problem which we have already encountered several times. We showed with Gestalt theory that no layer of sensory data can be identified as immediately dependent on senseorgans: the smallest sensory datum is never presented in any other way than integrated into a configuration and already 'patterned'. This, as we have said, does not prevent the words 'see' and 'hear' from

having a meaning. We have drawn attention elsewhere⁵ to the fact that the specialized regions of the brain, the 'optical zone', for example, never function in isolation. The fact remains, as we pointed out, that the visual or auditory side predominates in the picture of the illness, according to the region in which the lesions are situated. Finally, as we have indicated above, biological existence is synchronized with human existence and is never indifferent to its distinctive rhythm. Nevertheless, we shall now add, 'living' (*leben*) is a primary process from which, as a starting point, it becomes possible to 'live' (*erleben*) this or that world, and we must eat and breathe before perceiving and awakening to relational living, belonging to colours and lights through sight, to sounds through hearing, to the body of another through sexuality, before arriving at the life of human relations. Thus sight, hearing, sexuality, the body are not only the routes, instruments or manifestations of personal existence: the latter takes up and absorbs into itself their existence as it is anonymously given. When we say that the life of the body, or the flesh, and the life of the psyche are involved in a relationship of reciprocal expression, or that the bodily event always has a psychic meaning, these formulations need to be explained. Valid as they are for excluding causal thought, they do not mean that the body is the transparent integument of Spirit. The return to existence, as to the setting in which the communication between body and mind can be understood, is not a return to Consciousness or Spirit, and existential psychoanalysis must not serve as a pretext for a revival of mentalistic philosophy (*spiritualisme*). This will be better understood if we clarify the notions of 'expression' and 'meaning' which belong to the world of language and thought as already constituted, which we have just applied uncritically to the body-mind relationship, and which bodily experience must in fact lead us to correct.

A girl⁶ whose mother has forbidden her to see again the young man with whom she is in love, cannot sleep, loses her appetite and finally the use of speech. An initial manifestation of this loss of speech is found to have occurred during her childhood, after an earthquake, and

⁵ *La Structure du Comportement*, pp. 80 and ff.

⁶ Rinswanger, *Über Psychotherapie*, pp. 113 and ff.

subsequently again following a severe fright. A strictly Freudian interpretation of this would introduce a reference to the oral phase of sexual development. But what is 'fixated' on the mouth is not merely sexual existence, but, more generally, those relations with others having the spoken word as their vehicle. In so far as the emotion elects to find its expression in loss of speech, this is because of all bodily functions speech is the most intimately linked with communal existence, or, as we shall put it, with co-existence. Loss of speech, then, stands for the refusal of co-existence, just as, in other subjects, a fit of hysterics is the means of escaping from the situation. The patient breaks with relational life within the family circle. More generally, she tends to break with life itself: her inability to swallow food arises from the fact that swallowing symbolizes the movement of existence which carries events and assimilates them; the patient is unable, literally, to 'swallow' the prohibition which has been imposed upon her.⁷ In the subject's childhood, fear was translated by loss of speech because the imminence of death violently interrupted co-existence, and threw her back upon her own personal fate. The symptom of aphonia reappears because the mother's prohibition restores the situation metaphorically, and because, moreover, by shutting off the future from the subject, it leads her back to her favourite forms of behaviour. These motivations may be supposed to take advantage of a particular sensitivity of the throat and the mouth in the case of our subject, a sensitivity which may be related to the history of her libido and to the oral phase of sexuality. Thus though the sexual significance of symptoms can be discerned, in faint outline, their more general significance in relation to past and future, to the self and others, that is to say, to the fundamental dimensions of existence. But as we shall see, the body does not constantly express the modalities of existence in the way that stripes indicate rank, or a house-number a house: the sign here does not only convey its significance, it is filled with it; it is, in a way, what it signifies, as a portrait is the quasi-presence of the absent Peter,⁸ or as wax figures in magic are what they stand for. The sick girl does not mime with her

⁷ Binswanger (*Über Psychotherapie*, p. 188), points out that one patient, as he recollects a traumatic memory, and tells it to the doctor, relaxes the sphincter.

⁸ J. P. Sartre, *L'Imaginaire*, p. 38.

body a drama played out 'in her consciousness'. By losing her voice she does not present a public version of an 'inner state', she does not make a 'gesture' like that of the head of a state shaking hands with the engine driver and embracing a peasant, or that of a friend who takes offence and stops speaking to me. To have lost one's voice is not to keep silence: one keeps silence only when one can speak. It is true that loss of voice is not paralysis, and this is proved by the fact that, treated by psychological means and left free by her family to see the man she loves, the girl recovers her power of speech. Yet neither is aphonia a deliberate or voluntary silence. It is generally known how, by the notion of pithiatism,* the theory of hysteria has been carried beyond the dilemma of paralysis (or of anaesthesia) and simulation. If the hysterical patient is a deceiver, it is first and foremost himself that he deceives, so that it is impossible to separate what he really feels or thinks and what he overtly expresses: pithiatism is a disease of the *Cogito*, consciousness which has become ambivalent and not a deliberate refusal to declare what one knows. Here, in the same way, the girl does not cease to speak, she 'loses' her voice as one loses a memory. It is true again that, as psychoanalysis shows, the lost memory is not accidentally lost, it is lost rather in so far as it belongs to an area of my life which I reject, in so far as it has a certain significance and, like all significances, this one exists only for someone. Forgetfulness is therefore an act; I keep the memory at arm's length, as I look past a person whom I do not wish to see. Yet, as psychoanalysis too shows to perfection, though the resistance certainly presupposes an intentional relationship with the memory resisted, it does not set it before us as an object; it does not specifically reject the memory. It is directed against a region of our experience, a certain category, a certain class of memories. The subject who has left a book, which was a present from his wife, in a drawer, and forgotten all about it, and who rediscovers it when they have become reconciled once more,⁹ had not really lost the book, but neither did he know where it was. Everything connected with his wife had ceased to exist for him, he had shut it out from his life, and at one stroke, broken the circuit of all

* Pithiatism: the class of hysterical symptoms which can be made to disappear or be reproduced by means of suggestion (Translator's note).

⁹ Freud, *Introductory Lectures*, p. 43.

actions relating to her, and thus placed himself on the hither side of all knowledge and ignorance, assertion and negation, in so far as these were voluntary. Thus, in hysteria and repression, we may well overlook something although we know of it, because our memories and our body, instead of presenting themselves to us in singular and determinate conscious acts, are enveloped in generality. Through this generality we still 'have them', but just enough to hold them at a distance from us. We discover in this way that sensory messages or memories are expressly grasped and recognized by us only in so far as they adhere generally to that area of our body and our life to which they are relevant. Such adherence or rejection places the subject in a definite situation and sets bounds, as far as he is concerned, to the immediately available mental field, as the acquisition or loss of a sense organ presents to or removes from his direct grasp an object in the physical field. It cannot be said that the factual situation thus created is the mere consciousness of a situation, for that would amount to saying that the 'forgotten' memory, arm or leg are arrayed before my consciousness, present and near to me in the same sense as are the 'preserved' regions of my past or of my body. No more can it be said that the loss of voice is voluntary. Will presupposes a field of possibilities among which I choose: here is Peter, I can speak to him or not. But if I lose my power of speech, Peter no longer exists for me as an interlocutor, sought after or rejected; what collapses is the whole field of possibilities. I cut myself off even from that mode of communication and significance which silence provides. Of course we may go on to speak of hypocrisy or bad faith. But then it will be necessary to draw a distinction between psychological and metaphysical hypocrisy. The former deceives others by concealing from them thoughts expressly in the mind of the subject. It is fortuitous and easily avoided. The latter is self-deceiving through the medium of generality, thus leading finally to a state or a situation which is not an inevitability, but which is not posited or voluntary. It is even to be found in the 'sincere' or 'authentic' man whenever he undertakes to be something or other unqualifiedly. It is part of the human lot. When the hysterical fit has reached its climax, even if the subject has sought it as the means of escaping from an intolerable situation and plunges into it as into a place of refuge, he scarcely hears anything more, he can scarcely see, he has almost become the spasmodic

and panting existence which struggles on the bed. The intensity of resentment is such that it becomes resentment against X, against life, an absolute resentment. With every minute that passes, freedom is depreciated and becomes less probable. Even if freedom is never impossible and even if it may always derail the dialectics of bad faith, the fact remains that a night's sleep has the same power: what can be surmounted by this anonymous force must indeed be of the same nature as it, and so it must at least be admitted that resentment or loss of voice, as they persist, become consistent like things, that they assume a structure, and that any decision that interrupted them would come from a lower level than that of 'will'. The patient cuts himself off from his voice as certain insects sever one of their own legs. He is literally without a voice. In treating this condition, psychological medicine does not act on the patient by making him know the origin of his illness: sometimes a touch of the hand puts a stop to the spasms and restores to the patient his speech¹⁰ and the same procedure, having acquired a ritual significance, will subsequently be enough to deal with fresh attacks. In any case, in psychological treatment of any kind, the coming to awareness would remain purely cognitive, the patient would not accept the meaning of his disturbances as revealed to him without the personal relationship formed with the doctor, or without the confidence and friendship felt towards him, and the change of existence resulting from this friendship. Neither symptom nor cure is worked out at the level of objective or positing consciousness, but below that level. Loss of voice as a situation may be compared to sleep: I lie down in bed, on my left side, with my knees drawn up; I close my eyes and breathe slowly, putting my plans out of my mind. But the power of my will or consciousness stops there. As the faithful, in the Dionysian mysteries, invoke the god by miming scenes from his life, I call up the visitation of sleep by imitating the breathing and posture of the sleeper. The god is actually there when the faithful can no longer distinguish themselves from the part they are playing, when their body and their consciousness cease to bring in, as an obstacle, their particular opacity, and when they are totally fused in the myth. There is a moment when sleep 'comes', settling on this imitation of itself which I have been

¹⁰ Binswanger, *Über Psychotherapie*, pp. 113 and ff.

offering to it, and I succeed in becoming what I was trying to be: an unseeing and almost unthinking mass, riveted to a point in space and in the world henceforth only through the anonymous alertness of the senses. It is true that this last link makes waking up a possibility: through these half-open doors things will return or the sleeper will come back into the world. In the same way the patient who has broken with co-existence can still perceive the sensible integument of other people, and abstractly conceive the future by means, for instance, of a calendar. In this sense the sleeper is never completely isolated within himself, never totally a sleeper, and the patient is never totally cut off from the intersubjective world, never totally ill. But what, in the sleeper and the patient, makes possible a return to the real world, are still only impersonal functions, sense organs and language. We remain free in relation to sleep and sickness to the exact extent to which we remain always involved in the waking and healthy state, our freedom rests on our being in a situation, and is itself a situation. Sleep and waking, illness and health are not modalities of consciousness or will, but presuppose an 'existential step'.¹¹ Loss of voice does not merely represent a refusal of speech, or anorexia a refusal of life; they are that refusal of others or refusal of the future, torn from the transitive nature of 'inner phenomena', generalized, consummated, transformed into *de facto* situations.

The body's rôle is to ensure this metamorphosis. It transforms ideas into things, and my mimicry of sleep into real sleep. The body can symbolize existence because it realizes it and is its actuality. It sustains its dual existential action of systole and diastole. On the one hand, indeed, it is the possibility enjoyed by my existence of discarding itself, of making itself anonymous and passive, and of bogging itself down in a scholastic. In the case of the girl just discussed, the move towards the future, towards the living present or towards the past, the power of learning, of maturing, of entering into communication with others, have become, as it were, arrested in a bodily symptom, existence is tied up and the body has become 'the place where life hides away'.¹² For the

* Anorexia: loss of appetite (Translator's note).

¹¹ Binswanger, *Über Psychotherapie*, p. 188.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 182.

patient, nothing further happens, nothing assumes meaning and form in life, or more precisely there occurs only a recurrent and always identical 'now', life flows back on itself and history is dissolved in natural time. Even when normal and even when involved in situations with other people, the subject, in so far as he has a body, retains every moment the power to withdraw from it. At the very moment when I live in the world, when I am given over to my plans, my occupations, my friends, my memories, I can close my eyes, lie down, listen to the blood pulsating in my ears, lose myself in some pleasure or pain, and shut myself up in this anonymous life which subtends my personal one. But precisely because my body can shut itself off from the world, it is also what opens me out upon the world and places me in a situation there. The momentum of existence towards others, towards the future, towards the world can be restored as a river unfreezes. The girl will recover her voice, not by an intellectual effort or by an abstract decree of the will, but through a conversion in which the whole of her body makes a concentrated effort in the form of a genuine gesture, as we seek and recover a name forgotten not 'in our mind', but 'in our head' or 'on the tip of our tongue'. The memory or the voice is recovered when the body once more opens itself to others or to the past, when it opens the way to co-existence and once more (in the active sense) acquires significance beyond itself. Moreover, even when cut off from the circuit of existence, the body never quite falls back on to itself. Even if I become absorbed in the experience of my body and in the solitude of sensations, I do not succeed in abolishing all reference of my life to a world. At every moment some intention springs afresh from me, if it is only towards the things round about me which catch my eye, or towards the instants, which are thrown up, and which thrust back into the past what I have just lived through. I never become quite a thing in the world; the density of existence as a thing always evades me, my own substance slips away from me internally, and some intention is always foreshadowed. In so far as it carries within it 'sense organs', bodily existence is never self-sufficient, it is always a prey to an active nothingness, it continually sets the prospect of living before me, and natural time at every successive moment adumbrates the empty form of the true event. This prospect may indeed fail to elicit any response. The instant of natural time does not establish anything, it has

to be immediately renewed, and indeed is renewed in another instant, and the sensory functions by themselves do not cause me to be in the world: when I become absorbed in my body, my eyes present me with no more than the perceptible outer covering of things and of other people, things themselves take on unreality, behaviour degenerates into the absurd, and the present itself, as in cases of false recognition, loses its consistency and takes on an air of eternity. Bodily existence which runs through me, yet does so independently of me, is only the barest raw material of a genuine presence in the world. Yet at least it provides the possibility of such presence, and establishes our first consonance with the world. I may very well take myself away from the human world and set aside personal existence, but only to rediscover in my body the same power, this time unnamed, by which I am condemned to being. It may be said that the body is 'the hidden form of being ourself',¹³ or on the other hand, that personal existence is the taking up and manifestation of a being in a given situation. If we therefore say that the body expresses existence at every moment, this is in the sense in which a word expresses thought. Anterior to conventional means of expression, which reveal my thoughts to others only because already, for both myself and them, meanings are provided for each sign, and which in this sense do not give rise to genuine communication at all, we must, as we shall see, recognize a primary process of signification in which the thing expressed does not exist apart from the expression, and in which the signs themselves induce their significance externally. In this way the body expresses total existence, not because it is an external accompaniment to that existence, but because existence realizes itself in the body. This incarnate significance is the central phenomenon of which body and mind, sign and significance are abstract moments.

Understood in this way, the relation of expression to thing expressed, or of sign to meaning is not a one-way relationship like that between original text and translation. Neither body nor existence can be regarded as the original of the human being, since they presuppose each other, and because the body is solidified or generalized existence, and existence a perpetual incarnation. What is particularly important,

¹³ Binswanger, *Über Psychotherapie*, 'eine verdeckte Form unseres Selbstseins' p. 188.

is that when we say that sexuality has an existential significance or that it expresses existence, this is not to be understood as meaning that the sexual drama¹⁴ is in the last analysis only a manifestation or a symptom of an existential drama. The same reason that prevents us from 'reducing' existence to the body or to sexuality, prevents us also from 'reducing' sexuality to existence: the fact is that existence is not a set of facts (like 'psychic facts') capable of being reduced to others or to which they can reduce themselves, but the ambiguous setting of their inter-communication, the point at which their boundaries run into each other, or again their woven fabric. There is no question of making human existence walk 'on its head'. There is no doubt at all that we must recognize in modesty, desire and love in general a metaphysical significance, which means that they are incomprehensible if man is treated as a machine governed by natural laws, or even as 'a bundle of instincts', and that they are relevant to man as a consciousness and as a freedom. Usually man does not show his body, and, when he does, it is either nervously or with an intention to fascinate. He has the impression that the alien gaze which runs over his body is stealing it from him, or else, on the other hand, that the display of his body will deliver the other person up to him, defenceless, and that in this case the other will be reduced to servitude. Shame and immodesty, then, take their place in a dialectic of the self and the other which is that of master and slave: in so far as I have a body, I may be reduced to the status of an object beneath the gaze of another person, and no longer count as a person for him, or else I may become his master and, in my turn, look at him. But this mastery is self-defeating, since, precisely when my value is recognized through the other's desire, he is no longer the person by whom I wished to be recognized, but a being fascinated, deprived of his freedom, and who therefore no longer counts in my eyes.

Saying that I have a body is thus a way of saying that I can be seen as an object and that I try to be seen as a subject, that another can be my master or my slave, so that shame and shamelessness express the dialectic of the plurality of consciousness, and have a metaphysical significance. The same might be said of sexual desire: if it cannot accept the

¹⁴ We here take the word in its etymological sense (and without any Romantic overtone) as did Politzer, *Critique des fondements de la psychologie*, p. 23.

presence of a third party as witness, if it feels that too natural an attitude or over-casual remarks, on the part of the desired person, are signs of hostility, this is because it seeks to fascinate, and because the observing third party or the person desired, if he is too free in manner, escapes this fascination. What we try to possess, then, is not just a body, but a body brought to life by consciousness. As Alain says, one does not love a madwoman, except in so far as one has loved her before the onset of madness. The importance we attach to the body and the contradictions of love are, therefore, related to a more general drama which arises from the metaphysical structure of my body, which is both an object for others and a subject for myself. The intensity of sexual pleasure would not be sufficient to explain the place occupied by sexuality in human life or, for example, the phenomenon of eroticism, if sexual experience were not, as it were, an opportunity, vouchsafed to all and always available, of acquainting oneself with the human lot in its most general aspects of autonomy and dependence. The embarrassments and fears involved in human behaviour are not explainable in terms of the sexual concern, since it contains them already. On the other hand we do not reduce sexuality to something other than itself by relating it to the ambiguity of the body. For, to thought, the body as an object is not ambiguous; it becomes so only in the experience which we have of it, and pre-eminently in sexual experience, and through the fact of sexuality. To treat sexuality as a dialectic is not to make a process of knowledge out of it, nor to identify a man's history with the history of his consciousness. The dialectic is not a relationship between contradictory and inseparable thoughts; it is the tending of an existence towards another existence which denies it, and yet without which it is not sustained. Metaphysics—the coming to light of something beyond nature—is not localized at the level of knowledge: it begins with the opening out upon 'another', and is to be found everywhere, and already, in the specific development of sexuality. It is true that, with Freud, we have generalized the notion of sexuality. How can we then talk about a distinctive development of sexuality? How can we identify a content of consciousness as sexual? Indeed we cannot. Sexuality conceals itself from itself beneath a mask of generality, and continually tries to escape from the tension and drama which it sets up. But again, how are we justified in saying that it

hides itself from itself, as if it were our life's subject? Should we not simply say that it is transcended and submerged in the more general drama of existence? Here two mistakes are to be avoided: one is to fail to recognize in existence any content other than its obvious one, which is arranged in the form of distinct representations, as do philosophies of consciousness; the other is to duplicate this obvious content with a latent content, also consisting of representations, as do psychologies of the unconscious. Sexuality is neither transcended in human life nor shown up at its centre by unconscious representations. It is at all times present there like an atmosphere. The dreamer does not first visualize the latent content of his dream, the one, that is, which is to be revealed with the help of suitable images by the 'second account'; he does not first openly perceive the stimuli of genital origin as being genital, only subsequently translating the text into figurative language. For the dreamer, indeed, who is far removed from the language of the waking state, this or that genital excitation or sexual drive is without more ado this image of a wall being climbed or cliff-face being scaled, which are seen as the obvious content. Sexuality becomes diffused in images which derive from it only certain typical relationships, only a certain general emotional physiognomy. The dreamer's penis *becomes* the serpent which appears in the manifest content.¹⁵ What we have just said about the dreamer applies equally to that ever slumbering part of ourselves which we feel to be anterior to our representations, to that individual haze through which we perceive the world. There are here blurred outlines, distinctive relationships which are in no way 'unconscious' and which, we are well aware, are ambiguous, having reference to sexuality without specifically calling it to mind. From the part of the body which it especially occupies, sexuality spreads forth like an odour or like a sound. Here we encounter once more that general function of unspoken transposition which we have already recognized in the body during our investigation of the body image. When I move my hand towards a thing, I know implicitly that my arm unbends. When I move my eyes, I take account of their movement, without being expressly conscious of the fact, and am thereby aware that the upheaval caused in my field of vision is only apparent. Similarly

¹⁵ Laforgue, *L'Echec de Baudelaire*, p. 126.

sexuality, without being the object of any intended act of consciousness, can underlie and guide specified forms of my experience. Taken in this way, as an ambiguous atmosphere, sexuality is co-extensive with life. In other words, ambiguity is of the essence of human existence, and everything we live or think has always several meanings. A way of life—an attitude of escapism and need of solitude—is perhaps a generalized expression of a certain state of sexuality. In thus becoming transformed into existence, sexuality has taken upon itself so general a significance, the sexual theme has contrived to be for the subject the occasion for so many accurate and true observations in themselves, of so many rationally based decisions, and it has become so loaded with the passage of time that it is an impossible undertaking to seek, within the framework of sexuality, the explanation of the framework of existence. The fact remains that this existence is the act of taking up and making explicit a sexual situation, and that in this way it has always at least a double sense. There is interfusion between sexuality and existence, which means that existence permeates sexuality and *vice versa*, so that it is impossible to determine, in a given decision or action, the proportion of sexual to other motivations, impossible to label a decision or act 'sexual' or 'non-sexual'. Thus there is in human existence a principle of indeterminacy, and this indeterminacy is not only for us, it does not stem from some imperfection of our knowledge, and we must not imagine that any God could sound our hearts and minds and determine what we owe to nature and what to freedom. Existence is indeterminate in itself, by reason of its fundamental structure, and in so far as it is the very process whereby the hitherto meaningless takes on meaning, whereby what had merely a sexual significance assumes a more general one, chance is transformed into reason; in so far as it is the act of taking up a *de facto* situation. We shall give the name 'transcendence' to this act in which existence takes up, to its own account, and transforms such a situation. Precisely because it is transcendence, existence never utterly outruns anything, for in that case the tension which is essential to it would disappear. It never abandons itself. What it is never remains external and accidental to it, since this is always taken up and integrated into it. Sexuality therefore ought not, any more than the body in general, to be regarded as a fortuitous content of our experience. Existence has no fortuitous attributes, no content which

does not contribute towards giving it its form; it does not give admittance to any pure fact because it is the process by which facts are drawn up. It will perhaps be objected that the organization of our body is contingent, that we can 'conceive a man without hands, feet, head'¹⁶ and, *a fortiori* a sexless man, self-propagating by cutting or layering. But this is the case only if we take an abstract view of hands, feet, head or sexual apparatus, regarding them, that is, as fragments of matter, and ignoring their living function. Only, indeed, if we form an abstract notion of man in general, into which only the *Cogitatio* is allowed to enter. If, on the other hand, we conceive man in terms of his experience, that is to say, of his distinctive way of patterning the world, and if we reintegrate the 'organs' into the functional totality in which they play their part, a handless or sexless man is as inconceivable as one without the power of thought. It will be further objected that our contention ceases to be paradoxical only at the price of becoming a tautology: we are saying in effect that a man would be different from what he is, and would therefore no longer be a man, if he were without any of the relational systems which in fact he possesses. But, it will be added, this arises from our conception of man as empirical man, as he in fact exists, and from our relating, as through an essential necessity and within the context of a human *a priori*, characteristics of this given totality which have been brought together simply by the interplay of multiple causes and the caprice of nature. In fact, we do not imagine, through any backward-looking illusion, any essential necessity, we point out an existential connection. Since, as we have shown above in the examination of Schneider's case, all human 'functions', from sexuality to motility and intelligence, are rigorously unified in one synthesis, it is impossible to distinguish in the total being of man a bodily organization to be treated as a contingent fact, and other attributes necessarily entering into his make-up. Everything in man is a necessity. For example, it is no mere coincidence that the rational being is also the one who holds himself upright or has a thumb which can be brought opposite to the fingers; the same manner of existing is evident in both aspects.¹⁷ On the other hand everything in man is contingency

¹⁶ Pascal, *Pensées et Opuscles* (ed. Brunschvicg), Section VI, No. 339, p. 486.

¹⁷ Cf. *La Structure du Comportement*, pp. 160-1.

in the sense that this human manner of existence is not guaranteed to every human child through some essence acquired at birth, and in the sense that it must be constantly reforged in him through the hazards encountered by the objective body. Man is a historical idea and not a natural species. In other words, there is in human existence no unconditioned possession, and yet no fortuitous attribute. Human existence will force us to revise our usual notion of necessity and contingency, because it is the transformation of contingency into necessity by the act of taking in hand. All that we are, we are on the basis of a *de facto* situation which we appropriate to ourselves and which we ceaselessly transform by a sort of *escape* which is never an unconditioned freedom. There is no explanation of sexuality which reduces it to anything other than itself, for it is already something other than itself, and indeed, if we like, our whole being. Sexuality, it is said, is dramatic *because* we commit our whole personal life to it. But just why do we do this? Why is our body, for us, the mirror of our being, unless because it is a *natural self*, a current of given existence, with the result that we never know whether the forces which bear us on are its or ours—or with the result rather that they are never entirely either its or ours. There is no outstripping of sexuality any more than there is any sexuality enclosed within itself. No one is saved and no one is totally lost.¹⁸

¹⁸ One can no more get rid of historical materialism than of psychoanalysis by impugning 'reductionist' conceptions and causal thought in the name of a descriptive and phenomenological method, for historical materialism is no more linked to such 'causal' formulations as may have been given than is psycho-analysis, and like the latter it could be expressed in another language. It consists just as much in making economics historical as in making history economic. The economics on which it bases history is not, as in classical economics, a closed cycle of objective phenomena, but a correlation of productive forces and forms of production, which is completed only when the former emerge from their anonymity, become aware of themselves and are thus capable of imposing a form on the future. Now, the coming to awareness is clearly a cultural phenomenon, and through it all psychological motivations may find their way into the web of history. A 'materialist' history of the 1917 Revolution does not consist of explaining each revolutionary thrust in terms of the retail price index at the moment in question, but of putting it back in the class dynamism and interplay of psychological forces, which fluctuated between February and October, between the new proletarian power and the old conservative power. Economics is reintegrated into history rather than history's being reduced to economics. 'Historical materialism', in the works inspired by it, is often

nothing but a concrete conception of history which brings under consideration, besides its obvious content (the official relations between 'citizens' in a democracy, for instance) its latent content, or the relations between human persons as they are actually established in concrete living. When 'materialist' history identifies democracy as a 'formal' régime, and describes the conflicts with which such a régime is torn, the real subject of history, which it is trying to extract from beneath the juridical abstraction called the citizen, is not only the economic subject, man as a factor in production, but in more general terms the living subject, man as creativity, as a person trying to endow his life with form, loving, hating, creating or not creating works of art, having or not having children. Historical materialism is not a causality exclusive to economics. One is tempted to say that it does not base history and ways of thinking on production and ways of working, but more generally on ways of existing and co-existing, on human relationships. It does not bring the history of ideas down to economic history, but replaces these ideas in the one history which they both express, and which is that of social existence. Solipsism as a philosophical doctrine is not the result of a system of private property; nevertheless into economic institutions as into conceptions of the world is projected the same existential prejudice in favour of isolation and mistrust.

Yet this interpretation of historical materialism may appear ambiguous. We are 'expanding' the notion of economics as Freud expands that of sexuality; we are bringing into it, besides the process of production and the struggle of economic forces against economic forms, the constellation of psychological and moral motives which combine to determine this struggle. But does not the word 'economics' thus lose all definite meaning? If it is not that economic relations are expressed in the mode of *Mitsein*, is it not the mode of *Mitsein* that is expressed in economic relations? When we relate both private property and solipsism to a certain structure of *Mitsein*, are we not once more turning history upside down? And must we not choose between the following two theses: either the drama of co-existence has a purely economic significance, or else the economic drama is absorbed into a wider drama and has only an existential meaning, which brings back mentalistic philosophy (*spiritualisme*).

It is precisely this dilemma, which the notion of existence, properly understood, enables us to leave behind, and what we have said above about the existential conception of 'expression' and 'significance' must be reapplied here. An existential theory of history is ambiguous, but this ambiguity cannot be made a matter of reproach, for it is inherent in things. Only at the approach of revolution does history follow the lines dictated by economics, and, as in the case of the individual life, sickness subjects a man to the vital rhythm of his body, so in a revolutionary situation such as a general strike, factors governing production come clearly to light, and are specifically seen as decisive. Even so we have seen just now that the outcome depends on how the opposing forces think of each other. It is all the more true, then, that during periods of depression, economic factors are effective only to the extent that they are lived and taken up by a human subject, wrapped up, that is, in ideological shreds by a process amounting to self-deception, or rather permanent equivocation, which is yet part of history and has a weight of its own. Neither the conservative nor the proletarian is conscious of being engaged in merely an economic struggle, and they always bring a human significance to

their action. In this sense there is never any pure economic causality, because economics is not a closed system but is a part of the total and concrete existence of society. But an existential conception of history does not deprive economic situations of their power of *motivation*. If existence is the permanent act by which man takes up, for his own purposes, and makes his own a certain *de facto* situation, none of his thoughts will be able to be quite detached from the historical context in which he lives, and particularly from his economic situation. Precisely because economics is not a closed world, and because all motivations intermingle at the core of history, the external becomes internal, and the internal external, and no constituent of our existence can ever be outrun. It would be ridiculous to regard Paul Valéry's poetry as a mere episode of economic disturbance: pure poetry can have an eternal meaning. But it is not ridiculous to seek, in the social and economic drama, in the world of our *Mitseln*, the motive for this coming to awareness. Just as all our life, as we have said, breathes a sexual atmosphere, without its being possible to identify a single content of consciousness which is 'purely sexual' or which is not sexual at all, so the economic and social drama provides each consciousness with a certain background or even a certain *imago* which it sets about deciphering in its own way and, in this sense, it is co-extensive with history. The act of the artist or philosopher is free, but not motiveless. Their freedom resides in the power of equivocation of which we spoke above, or in the process of escape discussed earlier; it consists in appropriating a *de facto* situation by endowing it with a figurative meaning beyond its real one. Thus Marx, not content to be the son of a lawyer and student of philosophy, conceives his own situation as that of a 'lower middle class intellectual' in the new perspective of the class struggle. Thus does Valéry transmute into pure poetry a disquiet and solitude of which others would have made nothing. Thought is the life of human relationships as it understands and interprets itself. In this voluntary act of carrying forward, this passing from objective to subjective, it is impossible to say just where historical forces end and ours begin, and strictly speaking the question is meaningless, since there is history only for a subject who lives through it, and a subject only in so far as he is historically situated. There is no one meaning of history; what we do has always several meanings, and this is where an existential conception of history is distinguishable from materialism and from spiritualism. But every cultural phenomenon has, among others, an economic significance, and history by its nature never transcends, any more than it is reducible to, economics. Conceptions of law, morality, religion and economic structure are involved in a network of meanings within the Unity of the social event, as the parts of the body are mutually implicatory within the Unity of the gesture, or as 'physiological', 'psychological' and 'moral' motives are linked in the Unity of an action. It is impossible to reduce the life which involves human relationships either to economic relations, or to juridical and moral ones thought up by men, just as it is impossible to reduce individual life either to bodily functions or to our knowledge of life as it involves them. But in each case, one of the orders of significance can be regarded as dominant: one gesture as 'sexual', another as 'amorous', another as 'warlike', and even in the sphere of co-existence, one period of history can be seen as characterized by intellectual culture, another as primarily political or economic. The question whether the history of our time is pre-eminently significant in an economic sense, and whether our ideologies give us only a derivative or secondary

meaning of it is one which no longer belongs to philosophy, but to politics, and one which will be solved only by seeking to know whether the economic or ideological scenario fits the facts more completely. Philosophy can only show that it is possible, starting from the human condition.

Part II

The World as Perceived

THE THEORY OF THE BODY IS ALREADY A THEORY OF PERCEPTION

Our own body is in the world as the heart is in the organism: it keeps the visible spectacle constantly alive, it breathes life into it and sustains it inwardly, and with it forms a system. When I walk round my flat, the various aspects in which it presents itself to me could not possibly appear as views of one and the same thing if I did not know that each of them represents the flat seen from one spot or another, and if I were unaware of my own movements, and of my body as retaining its identity through the stages of those movements. I can of course take a mental bird's eye view of the flat, visualize it or draw a plan of it on paper, but in that case too I could not grasp the unity of the object without the mediation of bodily experience, for what I call a plan is only a more comprehensive perspective: it is the flat 'seen from above', and the fact that I am able to draw together in it all habitual perspectives is dependent on my knowing that one and the same embodied subject can view successively *from* various positions. It will perhaps be objected that by restoring the object to bodily experience as one of the poles of that experience, we deprive it of precisely that which constitutes its objectivity. From the point of view of my body I never see as

equal the six sides of the cube, even if it is made of glass, and yet the word 'cube' has a meaning; the cube itself, the cube in reality, beyond its sensible appearances, has its six equal sides. As I move round it, I see the front face, hitherto a square, change its shape, then disappear, while the other sides come into view and one by one become squares. But the successive stages of this experience are for me merely the opportunity of conceiving the whole cube with its six equal and simultaneous faces, the intelligible structure which provides the explanation of it. And it is even necessary, for my tour of inspection of the cube to warrant the judgement: 'here is a cube', that my movements themselves be located in objective space and, far from its being the case that the experience of my own movement conditions the position of an object, it is, on the contrary, by conceiving my body itself as a mobile object that I am able to interpret perceptual appearance and construct the cube as it truly is. The experience of my own movement would therefore appear to be no more than a psychological circumstance of perception and to make no contribution to determining the significance of the object. The object and my body would certainly form a system, but we would then have a nexus of objective correlations and not, as we were saying earlier, a collection of lived-through correspondences. The unity of the object would thus be conceived, not experienced as the correlate of our body's unity.

But can the object be thus detached from the actual conditions under which it is presented to us? One can bring together discursively the notion of the number six, the notion of 'side' and that of equality, and link them together in a formula which is the definition of the cube. But this definition rather puts a question to us than offers us something to conceive. One emerges from blind, symbolic thought only by perceiving the particular spatial entity which bears these predicates all together. It is a question of tracing in thought that particular form which encloses a fragment of space between six equal faces. Now, if the words 'enclose' and 'between' have a meaning for us, it is because they derive it from our experience as embodied subjects. In space itself independently of the presence of a psycho-physical subject, there is no direction, no inside and no outside. A space is 'enclosed' between the sides of a cube as we are enclosed between the walls of our room. In order to be able to conceive the cube, we take up a position in space,

now on its surface, now in it, now outside it, and from that moment we see it in perspective. The cube with six equal sides is not only invisible, but inconceivable; it is the cube as it would be for itself; but the cube is not for itself, since it is an object. There is a first order dogmatism, of which analytical reflection rids us, and which consists in asserting that the object is in itself, or absolutely, without wondering what it is. But there is another, which consists in affirming the ostensible significance of the object, without wondering how it enters into our experience. Analytical reflection puts forward, instead of the absolute existence of the object, the thought of an absolute object, and, through trying to dominate the object and think of it from no point of view, it destroys the object's internal structure. If there is, for me, a cube with six equal sides, and if I can link up with the object, this is not because I constitute it from the inside: it is because I delve into the thickness of the world by perceptual experience. The cube with six equal sides is the limiting idea whereby I express the material presence of the cube which is there before my eyes, under my hands, in its perceptual self-evidence. The sides of the cube are not projections of it, but precisely sides. When I perceive them successively, with the appearance they present in different perspectives, I do not construct the idea of the geometrized projection which accounts for these perspectives: the cube is already there in front of me and reveals itself through them. I do not need to take an objective view of my own movement, or take it into account, in order to reconstitute the true form of the object behind its appearing: the account is already taken, and already the new appearance has compounded itself with the lived-through movement and presented itself as an appearance of a cube. The thing, and the world, are given to me along with the parts of my body, not by any 'natural geometry', but in a living connection comparable, or rather identical, with that existing between the parts of my body itself.

External perception and the perception of one's own body vary in conjunction because they are the two facets of one and the same act. The attempt has long been made to explain Aristotle's celebrated illusion by allowing that the unaccustomed position of the fingers makes the synthesis of their perceptions impossible: the right side of the middle finger and the left side of the index do not ordinarily 'work' together, and if both are touched at once, then there must be two

marbles. In reality, the perceptions of the two fingers are not only disjointed, they are inverted: the subject attributes to the index what is touched by the middle finger and *vice versa*, as can be shown by applying two distinct stimuli to the fingers, a point and a ball, for example.¹ Aristotle's illusion is primarily a disturbance of the body image. What makes the synthesis of the two tactile perceptions in one single object impossible, is not so much that the position of the fingers is unaccustomed or statistically rare, it is that the right face of the middle finger and the left face of the index cannot combine in a joint exploration of the object, that the crossing of the fingers, being a movement which has to be imposed on them, lies outside the motor possibilities of the fingers themselves and cannot be aimed at in a project towards movement. The synthesis of the object is here effected, then, through the synthesis of one's own body, it is the reply or correlative to it, and it is literally the same thing to perceive one single marble, and to use two fingers as one single organ. The disturbance of the body image may even be directly translated into the external world without the intervention of any stimulus. In heautoscopy, before seeing himself, the subject always passes through a state akin to dreaming, musing or disquiet, and the image of himself which appears outside him is merely the counterpart of this depersonalization.² The patient has the feeling of being in the double outside himself, just as, in a lift which goes upwards and suddenly stops, I feel the substance of my body escaping from me through my head and overrunning the boundaries of my objective body. It is in his own body that the patient feels the approach of this Other whom he has never seen with his eyes, as the normal person is aware, through a certain burning feeling in the nape of the neck, that someone is watching him from behind.³ Conversely, a certain form of external experience implies and produces a certain

¹ Tastevin, Czermak, Schilder, quoted by Lhermitte, *L'Image de notre Corps*, pp. 36 and ff.

² Lhermitte, *L'Image de notre Corps*, pp. 136–88, cf. p. 191: 'During the period of autoscopia the subject is overcome by a feeling of profound sadness which spreads outwards and into the very image of the double, which seems to be filled with effective vibrations identical with those experienced by the original person'; 'his consciousness seems to have moved wholly outside himself'. And Menninger-Lerchenthal, *Das Truggebilde der eigenen Gestalt*, p. 180: 'I suddenly had the impression of being outside my body.'

³ Jaspers, quoted by Menninger-Lerchenthal, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

consciousness of one's own body. Many patients speak of a 'sixth sense' which seems to produce their hallucinations. Stratton's subject, whose visual field has been objectively inverted, at first sees everything upside down; on the third day of the experiment, when things are beginning to regain their upright position, he is filled with 'the strange impression of looking at the fire out of the back of his head'.⁴ This is because there is an immediate equivalence between the orientation of the visual field and the awareness of one's own body as the potentiality of that field, so that any upheaval experimentally brought about can appear indifferently either as the inversion of phenomenal objects or as a redistribution of sensory functions in the body. If a subject focuses for long-distance vision, he has a double image of his own finger as indeed of all objects near to him. If he is touched or pricked, he is aware of being touched or pricked in two places.⁵ Diplopia is thus extended into a bodily duplication. Every external perception is immediately synonymous with a certain perception of my body, just as every perception of my body is made explicit in the language of external perception. If, then, as we have seen to be the case, the body is not a transparent object, and is not presented to us in virtue of the law of its constitution, as the circle is to the geometer, if it is an expressive unity which we can learn to know only by actively taking it up, this structure will be passed on to the sensible world. The theory of the body schema is, implicitly, a theory of perception. We have relearned to feel our body; we have found underneath the objective and detached knowledge of the body that other knowledge which we have of it in virtue of its always being with us and of the fact that we are our body. In the same way we shall need to reawaken our experience of the world as it appears to us in so far as we are in the world through our body, and in so far as we perceive the world with our body. But by thus remaking contact with the body and with the world, we shall also rediscover ourselves, since, perceiving as we do with our body, the body is a natural self and, as it were, the subject of perception.

⁴ Stratton, *Vision without Inversion of the Retinal Image*, p. 350.

⁵ Lhermitte, *L'Image de notre Corps*, p. 39.

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