

# The Living Body as the Origin of Culture: What the Shift in Husserl’s Notion of “Expression” Tells us About Cultural Objects

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**Abstract** Husserl’s philosophy of culture relies upon a person’s body being expressive of the person’s spirit, but Husserl’s analysis of expression in *Logical Investigations* is inadequate to explain this bodily expressiveness. This paper explains how Husserl’s use of “expression” shifts from *LI* to *Ideas II* and argues that this shift is explained by Husserl’s increased understanding of the pervasiveness of sense in subjective life and his increased appreciation for the unity of the person. I show how these two developments allow Husserl to better describe the bodily expressiveness that is the source of culture. Husserl’s account of culture is thoroughly intentionalistic, but it does not emphasize thought at the expense of embodiment. Culture originates not in an abstract subjectivity, but by persons’ expressing themselves physically in the world. By seeing how Husserl develops his mature position on bodily expressiveness, we can better appreciate the meaningfulness and the bodily concreteness of cultural objects.

**Keywords** Husserl · Culture · Expression · Indication · Intimation · Body · Living body · Spirit · Cultural objects

## 1 Introduction

Edmund Husserl’s philosophy of culture relies upon understanding a person’s body as expressive of the person’s spirit. In the first *Logical Investigation* Husserl distinguishes between two types of sign, expressive and indicative. Sometimes we put our thoughts into words, into expressive signs. But we also “express” our subjective states and acts, often unintentionally, in other bodily movements and comportments, such as facial gestures. The latter type of bodily signs Husserl calls

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“intimations” of subjective life. According to *The Logical Investigations*, these intimative bodily movements signify subjective states and acts to others. He notes that common speech calls these “expressions,” but insists that they are indicative rather than expressive. According to Husserl’s later description of cultural objects from *Ideas II* and afterwards, all cultural objects (whether linguistic or not) are “expressive” of their cultural sense, which he calls an irreal “psyche” of the object. His position appeals, however, to cultural objects’ involvement in *intimative* bodily activity. Husserl’s description of cultural objects, therefore, uses a broader understanding of expression than the one offered in *The Logical Investigations*. In *Ideas II* and afterwards Husserl uses “expression” with this broader sense in order to describe persons’ subjectively animated bodies and the things of our cultural worlds.

This paper discusses the shift of Husserl’s use of “expression” between the *Logical Investigation* and *Ideas II* and argues that this shift is explained by two developments in Husserl’s thought. First, Husserl acquires a better understanding of the pervasiveness of sense or meaning in subjective life. His later thought thus highlights the meaningfulness of even nonlinguistic subjective activity. Secondly, the later Husserl more deeply appreciates the unity of the person, which unity undermines the idea, suggested by *Logical Investigations*, that a merely indicative relation obtains between a person’s body and subjective life. Together these two developments allow Husserl to better describe the non-linguistic expressiveness of the living body that is the source of culture and that grounds Husserl’s description of cultural objects as expressive.

Husserl’s account of culture is a powerful and appealing one. It is a thoroughly intentionalistic account—cultural objects acquire and maintain their identity as cultural objects because of our subjective activities with and about them. At the same time, it does not emphasize thought at the expense of physical embodiment. Culture originates not in an abstract subjectivity, but by persons’ expressing themselves physically in the world. And cultural objects, though they do get their meanings from us, physically embody this meaning for us, maintaining their identities over against us even when we are not “thinking” about them and even when we wish their identities were different.

But Husserl does not start off with an understanding of the prelinguistic expressiveness of the living body sufficient to account for culture. Section 2 of this paper explains Husserl’s initial position on how the body signifies subjective life. Section 3 explains Husserl’s later position on this question and explains his analogy between the living body and words. Section 4 discusses how this new position illuminates the structure of culture. By seeing how Husserl develops this mature position on the prelinguistic expressiveness of the living body, we can better appreciate both the meaningfulness and the bodily concreteness of cultural objects.

## 2 Is the Other Person’s Subjective Life Expressed or Indicated?

Husserl shifts between the words “indication” and “expression” when describing the body’s appresentation of the subjective acts of the person. These words are

certainly different. Husserl says that sometime in addition, subjective importances of the living

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certainly related, but they are not equivalent; moreover, Husserl emphasizes the differences between them in *Logical Investigation I*. Although Husserl sometimes says that the body “indicates” the subjective states and acts of the person, he also sometimes insists that the relation between body and spirit is not indicative. In addition, although the later Husserl often says that the body “expresses” the subjective life, this seems to be a reversal of an earlier position that emphasizes important differences between the way expressions express the meant and the way the living body appresents the subjective life of the person.

In *Logical Investigation I*, Husserl distinguishes between three basic types of sign: natural indicative signs, artificial indicative signs, and expressive (i.e., lingual) signs. Indication is a relation between two independently experienceable states of affairs, in which the existence of one state of affairs points us to the existence of the other (Hua XIX/1, p. 32/270). For example, perhaps lights in a house’s windows late at night motivate a burglar’s belief that the resident is still awake. Though not all indicative signs are *produced* by thinking beings *in order to* indicate, even natural indications are, according to Husserl, not indications without a mind’s *use* of them as such: “A thing is only properly an indication if and where it in fact serves to indicate something to some thinking being” (Hua XIX/1, p. 31/270). Expressive signs also point beyond themselves to something else. Unlike indications, expressions according to Husserl are meaningful in the technical sense that people mean things through them—a person voluntarily uses expressions with the “intent to put certain ‘thoughts’ on record expressively, either for the man himself, in his solitary state, or for others” (Hua XIX/1, pp. 37–38/275). Intentionality gives the expression its meaning and, by doing so, is responsible for the expression’s relation to the signified, to what the expression points to (Hua XIX/1, pp. 43–44/280). For example, the expression “The back door is locked” consists of a sensuous side (the shaped blackness on this page) and a meaning. It expresses the fact of *the back door’s being locked*, and it does so only because acts animate it, giving it the meaning that the back door is locked. In Husserl’s account of expressive signification, there is a complex relationship, and a kind of unity, between these three: the sensuous side of the expression, its meaning, and what it expresses.

First, let us focus on the relationship between an expression’s meaning and what it expresses. The meaning of the expression is the content of the meaning-intention (i.e., the content of the act of meaning that animates the expression). This same content can be the meaning of many different acts, and different kinds of act, by many different people. I can think or imagine or question that the back door is locked, and so can you. We can also go to see whether the back door is, in fact, locked. That we can meaningfully use and understand expressions in the absence of the referred-to state of affairs, in whose presence we would verify the expression, shows us that the meaning-bestowing act cannot be an intuition, a filled act, of the expressed state of affairs. In fact, the meaning of the expression (i.e., content of the meaning intention) remains the same regardless of the intuitive presence or absence of the referent, and regardless of whether the content of the intuition of the referent is the same or conflicts with this meaning. According to the *Logical Investigations*, the expression through its meaning expresses the content of *the would-be verifying intuition*, while the meaning of the expression is the content of the non-intuitive act

of meaning. Therefore, technically the *Logical Investigations* denies that an expression expresses its meaning. The expression “the back door is locked,” through the meaning that we give it, expresses the fact of the back door being locked, and this fact is what we confront in intuition in going to see if the back door is in fact locked. Nevertheless, because the would-be verifying intuition is content-identical to the meaning intention, we can say that the expression expresses its meaning as it would be verified. This identity of content accounts for the unity between expression and intuition, as Husserl points out: “In the realized relation of the expression to its objective correlate, the sense-informed expression becomes one with the act of meaning-fulfillment” (Hua XIX/1, pp. 44–45/281). So, though the same content can form the kernel of many different acts, the meaning of the expression is by definition the content of the meaning intention, because it is a meaning intention (and not, for example, an act of intuition) that bestows meaning on the expression, while what is expressed or signified is the *identical content* as found in a would-be fulfilling act. This identity of content grounds the felt unity that the expression has with the expressed.

Let's now turn to the relation between the expression's sensuous side and its meaning. In an expression at work, the sensuous side of the expression (the sounds or the shapes) forms an experiential unity with its meaning. It is only by way of its unity with its meaning that experiencing the sensuous side of the expression can arouse in us acts intending what is expressed. In Husserl's usage, “The word ‘expression’ is normally understood—whenever, that is, we do not speak of a ‘mere’ expression—as the *sense-informed* expression” (Hua XIX/1, p. 45/281). Having a meaning is essential to being an expression, and when we experience the expression we live through its sensuousness and intend the meaning. Husserl therefore emphasizes the phenomenal unity of the expression's sensuous and meaningful sides, and the unity of the expression (via its meaning) with what it expresses: “The sounded word is first made one with the meaning-intention, and this in its turn is made one (as intentions in general are made one with their fulfillments) with its corresponding meaning-fulfillment” (Hua XIX/1, p. 45/281). This unity achieved between these three aspects—the sensuous side, the meaning, and the expressed—is a key feature of expression in Husserl's account (and crucial to understanding his later accounts of the person and of culture).

According to the *Logical Investigations*, “In virtue of [indication] an object or state of affairs not merely recalls another, and so points to it, but also provides evidence for the latter, fosters the presumption that it likewise exists, and makes us immediately feel this” (Hua XIX/1, p. 37/274). For this reason, Husserl claims the relationship between the indicated and indication requires, for the person following the indication, some foundation in reality. In contrast, “The existence of the [expressive] sign neither ‘motivates’ the existence of the meaning, nor, properly expressed, our belief in the meaning's existence” (Hua XIX/1, p. 42/279). For this reason, the relationship between the expressive sign and the meaning does not require, for the person understanding the sign, some foundation in reality. As Rudolf Bernet (1988, p. 6) explains,

[G]enuine signs do not signify or significantly refer in virtue of any natural, physical, or psychological link between the sign and its referent. They signify, as one text from 1914 states, without any material basis (*ohne jede sachliche Unterlage*) or, as we could also say, without any *fundamentum in re*. In the case of indication, quite to the contrary, the relation between the indicative sign and its referent has such a *fundamentum in re*, and the indicating is materially founded (*sachlich begründet*).

Husserl's requirement for a "material basis" in the relationship between indicator and indicated can be justified by an appeal to his definition of indication as one thing pointing to another thing's real existence. While an expression acquires its meaning by a thinking being intending the meaning through it, an indicating thing indicates the indicated thing because a thinking being apprehends (whether correctly or not) a real relation between them.<sup>1</sup> The presumed existential relation between the things grounds the positional relation in our motivation from the indicator to the indicated—such that the belief in the one motivates not just the thought of but the belief in the other. As Robert Sokolowski comments, "The indicated may be present, past, or future, but the actual presence of the sign refers us to it in its reality; we are not just made to think of the sense of what is indicated" (1974, p. 112). For this reason, the indication and the indicated must be connected, for the thinking being, by some real relation. Sokolowski summarizes Husserl's definition: "Indication involves two independent objects or states of affairs, related by association or causality in such a way that the presence of one refers us to the existence of the other" (1974, p. 111).

Likewise, that expressions do not indicate what they express can be justified by an appeal to Husserl's definition of expression as pointing to the expressed by an act of meaning. An expression points only because it has a meaning given to it; as Husserl tells us: "an expression only refers to an objective correlate *because* it means something" (Hua XIX/1, p. 54/289). Bernet explains: "Genuine signs ... signify (*bezeichnen*) on the basis of a deliberate decision, on the basis of a will" (1988, p. 6). The expression points to the expressed by way of an act of meaning animating it and the intent to use the expression to express that meaning. Because these subjective acts are the origin of the relation between the expression and the expressed, this relation is not real or causal; thus, an expression (operating *qua* expression) cannot lead us to the real existence of what is expressed.

From the *Logical Investigations* we can conclude with these contrasts between indication and expression. The indicating thing and the indicated thing are phenomenally two, and, due to the apprehension of a real connection between them, we are led *directly* from belief in one to the belief in the other. In contrast, the expression and the expressed are phenomenally unified, and we are led through one

<sup>1</sup> Notice that artificial indicative signs are not indications in this sense. As Bernet (1988) explains, in this 1914 text, which Husserl wrote after revising *LI I*, Husserl distinguishes more sharply between what are presented in the first *Investigation* as two species of indicative sign—the natural and artificial. Now, natural indications are not really signs at all (because being a "genuine sign" requires artifice), and artificial indexical signs are not properly indications (because they are not grounded in a real relation).

to the intention of the other *by way of an act of meaning*, which establishes an unreal relation between them.

By assigning this technical sense to “expression,” in the *Logical Investigations* Husserl self-consciously “exclude[s] much that ordinary speech would call an ‘expression’” (Hua XIX/1, p. 37/275), such as a facial or hand gesture. In any act of communication, the speaker has subjective states thinking of the meant and intending to communicate it. In the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl insists on the distinction between these subjective acts of intending something and intending to express it (which are among many subjective acts or states of the speaker) and the meaning communicated. Husserl emphasizes that any subjective states *indicated* by the movements of the other person’s body (unless they are the topic of his expression) are not meant or *expressed*. They are not the meaning of the expression. Husserl has good reasons for this position.

First, while indication requires the real existence of the sign and indicates the real existence of the signified, expression does neither. When I apprehend another’s facial or hand gestures as “expressing” his anger or frustration, the presence of the movements motivate my *belief* in particular subjective states: thus, this is indication and only improperly called “expression.”

Second, in the case of expression, for the expresser the expression and the expressed are “phenomenally one.” When someone utters “It’s in the fridge,” both any comprehending auditor and the speaker grasp the expression as meaning that it’s in the fridge; the meaning that they both grasp through the expression is not the speaker’s *act* of meaning, but the *content* of that act (the state of affairs meant). The expression via its meaning simply does not draw thematic attention to any acts on the speaker’s part. The speaker intends this meaning, not his own act of meaning. An observer may take my statement and bodily movements as signs of my subjective states, but these are not “expressions” because they are not produced for the sake of pointing to something. These “expressive” movements involve “no intent to put certain ‘thoughts’ on record.” Husserl concludes that “they ‘mean’ something to [the onlooker] insofar as he interprets them, but even for him they are without meaning in the special sense in which verbal signs have meaning: they only mean in the sense of indicating” (Hua XIX/1, pp. 37–38/275). In the case of the apprehension of my facial and hand gestures, the onlooker apprehends subjective states I am experiencing without *my* focusing on them or my intending to share them with him through such “expressions,” so that there is no phenomenal identity for me (i.e., in the mind of the perhaps unwitting signifier) between my movements and the “meanings” grasped by the onlooker.

Although such subjective states are indicated and not expressed, they have a special role in expression. Husserl names this special indication of subjective states in behavior “intimation,” and he identifies it as a necessary condition for communicative expression. For an expression to work communicatively the auditor must have accepted these intimations: he must accept the expressive body as having subjective states, and accept the person as directing himself in communication to someone (Hua XIX/1, p. 39/277). Verbal expressions intimate subjective acts, and must do so in order to express something to an audience. But, despite this special role for intimation in enabling expression, according to the senses of “expression” and “indication” as

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laid out in *Logical Investigations*, clearly the living body of the other person indicates but does not express his subjective life to me.

If *Logical Investigation I* had given us Husserl's last word (rather than his first of many) on the relationship between spirit and body, we might guess that he was a dualist, and given the analogy between cultural objects and the body, we might guess that for him the cultural properties of a cultural object are related indicatively and dualistically to its physical properties. In order to understand his mature philosophy of culture, we must investigate how his phenomenology of bodily expression develops after the *Logical Investigations*.

### 3 The Broadening of “Expression”

Not without cause, I think, Husserl later uses the word “expression” more loosely such that, in the experience of another person, the body and its movements *express* subjective states of the person. He remarks in *Ideas II*, for example: “In their intuitive content—in what is typical of Corporeality in general, and in that many particularities which vary from case to case—ones of facial expression, of gestures, of the spoken ‘word,’ of the individual’s intonation, etc.—is expressed the spiritual life of persons, their thinking, feeling, desiring, what they do and what they omit to do” (Hua IV, p. 235/246). The justification for the shift in usage is, I shall argue, *not* a major change in position on the issues about signification addressed in the *Logical Investigations*,<sup>2</sup> but involves two things: (1) an expansion of the use of “sense” or “meaning” [*Sinn*] beyond signification, and (2) an increased emphasis on the *unity* of lived body and subjective life. These two points allow us to explain (3) Husserl's analogy between word and body, and finally to see why (4) the other person's living body expresses (and does not merely appresent) his spirit.

#### 3.1 The Expansion of “Meaning”

In *Ideas I* Husserl explicitly expands the range of “sense” or “meaning” (*Sinn*) beyond the realm of signification. Whereas before only significative acts were considered to have meaning, now meaningfulness is recognized as characterizing all

<sup>2</sup> The chronology of Husserl's works here is relevant. *Logical Investigations* was initially published in 1900–1901; a seriously revised edition was published in 1913. *Ideas I* was written in 1912 and published in 1913. *Ideas II* was written, rewritten, and repeatedly edited from 1912 to 1928, and published only posthumously. This timing makes the puzzle of which I am offering an explanation all the more puzzling—why does Husserl in *Ideas II* and generally after 1913 use “expression” in a way inconsistent with his definition of it in both editions of *Logical Investigations*? Husserl's *LI* revisions of 1913 were selective, as he tells us in the introduction to the revised edition, and he felt the need to leave much standing that he considered misleading, incomplete, or even erroneous in small ways. One might explain this puzzle by concluding that Husserl simply rejects in *Ideas II* his position on expression in the 1913 edition of *LI*. Given the chronology, I would find any such explanation implausible. My explanation does not suggest that Husserl rejects the position of the *Logical Investigations* on expression, understood in the narrow sense. Rather, the 1913 revisions of *Logical Investigations* retained the narrow use of “expression,” and its position is correct as far as it goes, though Husserl was at the same time developing a broader and more fundamental understanding of it.

of subjective life. All subjective acts mean their content, while still only some acts also have their contents expressed intentionally in sensuous signs.

Using perceptual experience as an example, Aron Gurwitsch explains Husserl's expansion of "meaning": "When we perceive a thing, e.g., a house, we do so from the point of observation at which we happen to be placed, so that the house appears under a certain aspect: from one of its sides, the front or the back, as near or far, and the like. It appears, as Husserl expresses it, by way of a one-sided adumbrational presentation." By closing and opening our eyes, we experience the same house under the same aspect but in different acts, such that these different acts have *the same content*. Gurwitsch continues:

Again we perceive an identical entity, namely, that which is perceived exactly as it is perceived, the "perceived as such" (*das Wahrgenommene als solches*). It stands in the same relation to the acts of perception as does the meaning apprehended to the acts of meaning apprehension. One may generalize the term "meaning" so as to use it beyond the domain of symbolic expressions and speak of perceptual meanings. ... Husserl's most general term here is that of noema, a concept that comprises meaning in the conventional sense as a special class. "Noema" denotes the object as meant and intended in any mode whatsoever and hence includes the mode of perceptual experience. (1974, p. 231)

That is, Husserl broadens "meaning" to cover the content or object *as intended* of whatever types of act.<sup>3</sup> He also sometimes refers to the noema—i.e., the object as intended, which is the content of our acts—as the "objective sense" of the intended object.

This is not to say that all intended objects have meaning or sense the way words do. According to Husserl, the latter are examples of objects that have sense as a predicate belonging to them essentially. Thus, the noema, the object as intended, is for Husserl not construed as a linguistic meaning. Rather, Husserl is simply emphasizing that the object as intended is the content of an act, and to be the content of an act is to be meant, to be the meaning or sense of an act. The object *that* we intend is not (necessarily) a meaning, but the object *considered as intended by an act* is essentially the content of an act, is a meaning. As Husserl explains in *Experience and Judgment*,

Every objectivity has in itself its objective sense. ... It is by means of the identity of this sense that it can be experienced, conceived, etc., as the same in

<sup>3</sup> Husserl's broadening of this concept so that all acts of consciousness have meanings allows him to emphasize the role of intentionality in consciousness and to develop the understanding of consciousness that results. Because all acts of consciousness are correlated to objects as intended, where these objects are the meanings of these acts, consciousness is more clearly essentially embedded in relations. Gurwitsch again explains: "The temporal events called 'acts of consciousness' have the peculiarity of being actualizations or apprehensions of meanings; the terms 'apprehension' and 'meaning' are understood in a very general sense beyond the special case of symbolic expressions. It pertains to the essential nature of acts of consciousness to be related and to correspond to noemata. Rather than being conceived of as a one-dimensional sequence of events, *consciousness must be defined as a noetico-noematic correlation*" (1974, p. 233).



multifarious acts. ... To be sure, one can say that objective sense, the intended as such, which has its own identity whether it is or not, ... resides in every object as its sense-content; but mere sense-content *is not, in the true sense, a predicate of the object.* (1973a, §65, p. 267)

Some objects have sense as a predicate—i.e., their having a different sense is part of their objective sense. When an object with sense as a predicate is the content of an act, it is a content with another content (“an objectivity of sense”) nestled inside.<sup>4</sup> “This is the case,” Husserl explains, “with those real objects in which, as bearers of signification, irrealities have their mundane, spatiotemporal occurrence. ... The *objective sense* corresponding to such an object is, consequently, a *sense of sense*, a second-level sense” (1973a, §65, p. 268). With Husserl’s broadening of meaning, significative meaning is recognized as only a special type of meaning or sense. As we shall see, this makes room for a more concrete and unified view of the person and of cultural objects.

### 3.2 Appresentation: The Heightened Emphasis on Unity Between the Body and Spirit

The later Husserl emphasizes the unity of intimate bodily movements with the intimated subjective acts. He does so, for example, by identifying intimations of the subjective states through the body as “apperceptions.” An apperception is a complex experience, an experience with parts. Regarding the object apperceived, some parts of the object are directly given (the “core of presentation”), while others are not (Hua I, p. 150/122). Correlatively, regarding the intention rather than the object, some parts of the experience are intuitions while others are empty intentions. An apperception is, according to Husserl in *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Syntheses*, “a consciousness that is not merely conscious of something, and then still something else that it does not include, but rather, a consciousness that points to this other one as one that belongs to it, as what is motivated through it” (Hua XI, p. 338/627). Two points here must be spelled out. (a) The intuited and emptily intended aspects of the thing are understood as belonging together (e.g., in a spatial object, the various sides are intended as sides *of* the same thing); as belonging together, they are synthesized or fused as parts of a whole. (b) The intuited aspects motivate my intention of the aspects not intuited. Because (a) the perceived and the apperceived aspects are understood as belonging together, (b) the perceived aspects, which motivate the intention of the apperceived aspects as aspects of the same, ground the experience *of the whole* that incorporates both present and appresented aspects. An appresentation “is a making present combined by associations with presentation, with perception proper, but a making present

<sup>4</sup> By “objectivity of sense” Husserl means that the objectivity is irreal, i.e., its being involves being a sense, being intended. For the sake of comparison later, it is interesting to note that John Searle says something similar: linguistic meaning arises when the conditions of satisfaction of one intentional state (e.g., a belief) are imposed on the conditions of satisfaction of another intentional state (e.g., a voluntary vocal action); the imposed conditions of satisfaction then belong, in an “observer-dependent” way (i.e., dependent upon being intended), to the imposed-upon condition. Thus the conditions of satisfaction of a sentence include other conditions of satisfaction.

which is fused with the latter in the particular function of ‘co-perception.’ ... Thus every perception of this type is transcending: it posits more as itself-there than it makes ‘actually’ present at any time” (Hua I, pp. 150–51/122). As Husserl says here, in all apperception we have (i) the aspects presented directly, (ii) the aspects not presented directly but intended, and (iii) the whole, which incorporates the fused (i) and (ii). The whole is itself there “in person”; it is perceived, even though parts of it are not given directly, on the basis of the parts of it that are. Though this ambiguity of a narrow and broad “perception” may seem unfortunate, it is necessary.<sup>5</sup> In order to speak of “perception” of any transcendent object at all we must allow perception to apply to wholes some parts of which are merely apperceived. All experienced physicalities are such wholes, mixing the presented and merely intended. This applies to living and nonliving physical objects. When I perceive (in the broad sense) the body of another person as a whole, I see (in the narrow sense) only one side but apperceive others.

According to *Ideas II*, because the body appresents subjective states, both the living body (with its physical aspects) and these subjective states are *first of all* moments in the unity of the person, and only *abstractly* thought of as separate and related.<sup>6</sup> Husserl emphasizes that the living body and its spiritual “animating sense” (the subjective life) are not pieces but moments. That is, they are not separately presentable, and for this reason the distinction between them is “abstract” (Hua IV, p. 341n./352n.). This also illuminates the distinction between the living body (*Leib*) and the mere material body (*Körper*) considered apart from its being a person. The body, insofar as it is materially present like any other physical thing, is separately presentable. But for the material mass to have the sense “living body” is for it to be subsumed into a whole;<sup>7</sup> the living body is not presented as what it is apart from this apprehension of it as animated. Even a dead “living body” is apprehended as dead, not as mere matter, because it indicates the past presence of the animating sense that is no longer expressed in it. Because the living body is present and appresents the spirit, this whole is asymmetrical; consequently, the bodily aspect of the person is

<sup>5</sup> It is an unfortunate ambiguity because philosophical errors might be made if one confuses the two senses of “perception.” For example, someone may argue that we never directly experience or *perceive* the thing as a whole because our *perceptions* of the thing are really only of aspects of it. In order to avoid errors arising from the ambiguity, one must keep the ambiguous (or analogical) character of perception in mind.

<sup>6</sup> This theme is found in germ already in the *Investigations*, where Husserl comments that grasping an intimation is not an intellectual affair, but is perception in a broad sense: “The hearer perceives the intimation in the same sense in which he perceives the intimating person—even though the mental phenomena which make him a person cannot fall, for what they are, in the intuitive grasp of another” (Hua XIX/1, p. 40/278).

<sup>7</sup> There is an interesting similarity here to Aristotle’s position on the body. According to Aristotle, the material cause of a living thing is a body that is *potentially* alive; he then rather cryptically elaborates, this refers to a body that *is* alive (See *On The Soul* II.1, 412b). The matter underlying the bone, sinew, blood, etc., preexists the living thing and persists after its death, and the seed and fruit are in potency to be bodies of living things, but none of these are in this sense “potentially alive,” i.e., they don’t have the potencies of life. Rather, the material that is a proper part of the living thing is the “organized” matter being put to work as the organ of the soul and is thus posterior to the whole, defined by the presence of soul. That is, the living body is not *mere* matter, but a real part of the living thing and definable only as a part: the presence of the soul makes the body what it is.

more concrete than the spiritual aspect. Nevertheless, Husserl insists on the priority of the whole person to either of these parts.

Experiencing the living body as a mere physical thing related to a subjective life (and thus experiencing a person as a psychophysical composite) requires the *abstraction* of two non-independent parts because being animated is part of what the living body is. But, as Husserl emphasizes in Section III of *Ideas II*, in natural, pre-theoretical experience we find unity (Hua IV, pp. 234–35/246). And though our experience of the body as living is founded on a perception of the body's physicality, in the natural attitude we automatically move through this physicality to apprehend the person. In the person body and spirit essentially show up together, and only afterwards are they abstractable as components.

An indication and what it indicates are two existentially related things or states of affairs, so by classifying intimation as a type of indication in the *Logical Investigations* Husserl may seem to imply a body-subjectivity dualism.<sup>8</sup> Husserl explicitly rejects such a dualism later, however.<sup>9</sup> For this reason, the relation of the body to its subjective life cannot be one of mere indication, and the later Husserl denies that the body merely indicates the subjective life of the person. In the *naturalistic* attitude, it seems obvious to speak of the physical body as indicating the psychic, but the *natural* attitude is prior (the naturalistic attitude relies upon it), and in the natural attitude the body and the spiritual are one in the person: "If we stick to our *de facto* experience," Husserl comments in *Cartesian Meditation V*, "our experience of someone else as it comes to pass at any time, we find that actually the *sensuously seen body* is experienced forthwith as *the body of someone else* and not as merely an indication of someone else" (Hua I, p. 150/121). Husserl seems to turn to the word "expression" to describe intimations precisely *because* it emphasizes a special type of unity where indication had implied separateness, as the following passage from *Ideas II* corroborates: "the 'psychic life' [is] *expressed* in the other's Body, another subject with his lived experiences, his surrounding world, etc. This is not to be understood as meaning that we have two separate things beside one another: the Body of sense intuition and in addition the representation of something subjective; rather, what we have here is an intuition of a *human being*" (Hua IV, pp. 340–41/352; emphasis in the original).

Note that this is a broadening of "expression" and not a reclassification of intimation as expression in the significative sense analyzed in the *Logical Investigations*. First, with intimation there is no intention to put certain thoughts on record. Second, because there is no intent to put certain thoughts on record, the person expressing himself in bodily movement does not thematically intend the intimated

<sup>8</sup> This is why Steven Galt Crowell is right to label the attitude of the *Logical Investigations* "naturalistic" in its categorization of intimation as indicative rather than expressive: "In *Ideas II*, for example, the concept of expression includes all that distinguishes the realm of spirit from the realm of nature. In the naturalistic attitude (characteristic of the analyses in the *Logical Investigations*), the body appears as an *indicative* sign or index of the psyche, but from the personalistic attitude the body is *expression* of the spirit. Thus, facial expressions, though not signs, *mean* something" (1996, p. 62).

<sup>9</sup> For example, "[W]anting to view men and animals seriously as double realities, as combinations of two different sorts of realities which are to be equated in the sense of their reality" is a "fundamental mistake" (Hua VI, p. 222/219).

subjective acts through the expression. That is, in my apprehension of the other person as another, the person's body is not used by him as a sign—though in a certain way it is used by me as such, because I take it as meaning something that he does not intend to mean through it. The manipulator of the signs is not, as is the case in linguistic expression, also the one primarily thinking of the meaning, so there is no phenomenal unity for the person expressing himself between the expression and the expressed. Third, regarding this broadened sense of “expression,” the meaning of the expression is precisely the intimated states. But this is in contrast to linguistic expression: for example, if we want to verify my statement “it's in the fridge,” we inspect the fridge, not the mind of the speaker. Finally, there is an existential implication in intimation that is not found in expressive signification—the subjective life intimated is not merely thought of but is understood as coexisting with the body expressing it. Therefore, “expression” is now being used by Husserl beyond signification in general. Despite these differences, the unity (emphasized by the word “apperception”) between the bodily intimations and the intimated subjective states is closer to the relation between linguistic expressions and the expressed meanings than to the relation between indicating and indicated facts, and this encourages Husserl's later use of “expression” for the intimation of subjective states.

### 3.3 The Analogy Between Word and Body

Husserl tells us, most emphatically in *Ideas II*, that the body-spirit relation and the word-meaning relation are of the same kind. This requires some spelling out, and also some qualifications.

In justifying the parallel, Husserl emphasizes unity. He tells us that a body expresses the spirit as a word expresses its sense: “The thoroughly intuitive unity presenting itself when we grasp a person *as such* (e.g., when we, as persons, speak to them as persons, or when we hear them speak, or work together with them, or watch their actions) is the unity of the ‘expression’ and the ‘expressed’ that belongs to the essence of all comprehensive unities. This Body-spirit unity is not the only one of this kind” (Hua IV, p. 236/248). A book, and its words and sentences, for example, are also such unities. The “sentences” of the book are physical things that show up to me sensibly (located a certain distance and direction from my eyes, for example), but when I am reading I am not focused on them as such. This merely physical givenness of the words “is precisely what I am not focused on. I see what is thingly about it insofar as it appears to me, but I ‘live in the sense, comprehending it’” (Hua IV, p. 236/248). The cultural object, body and sense, necessarily shows up as a unity if I am actually reading the book, rather than theorizing about it. Husserl comments that one's attitude makes the difference. In a theoretical attitude, I can abstract from the sentence's meaning; likewise, I can abstract from the body's animating spirit and the person's intentional relationships to the things around him. But, when simply reading, or when straightforwardly dealing with others, “[i]t is obvious that my attitude is here quite different” (Hua IV, p. 236/248). It is in the personalistic—that is, the natural—attitude that the whole person and the sentence show up as wholes, as what they are.

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In terms of the threefold unity (discussed above) of the sensuous expression, its meaning, and the expressed, the unity emphasized here between body and spirit is analogous to that achieved between the sensuous side of the linguistic expression and its meaning, not to the unity achieved between the linguistic expression (via its meaning, the content of the meaning intention) and that which it expresses (the content of the would-be verifying intention). In our experience of the other person, for us his body and his spiritual life achieve a unity. The spirit of the other person is the content of our meaning intention, while the would-be verifying intuition is essentially inaccessible to us.<sup>10</sup>

Just as word–body and meaning are united in the expression, living body and spirit are united in the expressive whole, the person. This analogy undermines any tendency to think of body and spirit as two pieces of the person, and thus it allows us to understand how the other person as a whole can be *directly* given to me, though not all of him is. Though the other person’s spirit is given to me only mediately in the apperception of the whole person, founded on the perception of his body, Husserl denies that the person is given only mediately.<sup>11</sup> We do not know merely other people’s bodies and take guesses at who they really are “inside.” Rather, we really know other persons even though we do not know everything about them.

The major qualification to the analogy between word and person is that meaning artificially belongs to the word’s physicality, while the spirit’s belonging to a body is not artificial. Husserl clarifies the analogy in *Phenomenological Psychology*: “The cultural object itself or its cultural sense is accordingly not, for instance, something psychically real in the manner of real psychic states or real psychic properties making themselves known in them” (Hua IX, p. 116/88). For this reason, the living body cannot be thoroughly construed according to Husserl’s description of words in *Experience and Judgment* §65. As we saw above, there he emphasizes words as embodiments of irrealities and the sensuous sides of words as endowing these irrealities (their meanings) with spatiotemporal existence; he also emphasizes that words have sense as a predicate essentially, “belonging to their being itself” (1973a, p. 268).

First, the body is not a reality in which an irrealty, the spirit, has its “mundane, temporal existence,” because the spirit is not an irrealty. The body does give the spirit objective spatiotemporal location according to Husserl.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the acts that make up the subjective life of the person are already individualized in their temporal location—coming and going once and for all—in relation to each other.

<sup>10</sup> “Everyone experiences the embodiment of souls in original fashion only in his own case. What properly and essentially makes up the character of a living body I experience only in my own living body, namely, in my constant and immediate holding-sway [over my surroundings] through this physical body alone. Only it is given to me originally and meaningfully as ‘organ’ and as articulated into particular organs” (Hua VI, p. 220/217).

<sup>11</sup> “Empathy is not a mediate experience in the sense that the other would be experienced as a psychophysical annex to his Corporeal body, but is instead an immediate experience of others” (Hua IV, p. 375/384–85).

<sup>12</sup> As Husserl explains in *Phenomenological Psychology*, “Spatiality and spatio-temporality belong in a distinctive manner to matter and ... everything psychic participates in objective extension only mediately by its matter and the spatio-temporality belonging to it” (Hua IX, p. 110/83).

So, though the body gives spirit its objective spatiotemporal location, spirit is in itself temporalized.

Second, the spirit's being apprehended as a spirit is accidental to it, not essential to it (i.e., being a content of an intentional act does not "belong to its being itself"). In contrast, the meaning of a word is essentially a content. Regarding irrealities or "objectivities of sense," section 65 of *Experience and Judgment* explains that they are only as intended, and are thus not given merely receptively but must be produced. What defines the distinction between the real and irreal is whether being-intended belongs to the object's "objective sense" (Husserl 1973a, p. 269). But being the content of an intention is not part of what it means to be for subjective life. My subjective life is what it is, whether apprehended as such or not. When I intend the body of the other person as having the sense *spirit*, I must intend him as experiencing his subjective life intimately in the way I experience my own. To intend the other person as another "I," I must intend the other person's spiritual side as being there independently of my intention of it—which is to say, the subjective life of the other person is apprehensible to me in receptivity (though not *sensible* receptivity). Thus, the meaning of a word is irreal and is what it is as the content of some intention; the spirit of a living body is not. As Husserl comments in the margin of an *Ideas II* manuscript: "1. Expression of an irreal sense: ideal appresentation. 2. Expression of the psychic: real appresentation, the real linked to the real in the unity of a concrete reality" (Hua IV, p. 341n./352n.).

The spirit is not an objectivity of sense, ultimately, because the spirit is not artificial. There is, therefore, an existential implication in the body-spirit relation not found in the word-meaning relation, as Husserl makes clear in *Ideas II*. In the case of the body's expression of the person's subjective life, the expressed is appresented as co-existing (Hua IV, p. 341/352). When a body no longer bears pairing (when it no longer appresents the person), the body may still represent the subjective life. Husserl suggests this when he comments that "[t]he corpse bears in itself the representation of a human soul but no longer appresents it; and thus we see precisely a corpse, which was a man, but now no longer is" (Hua IV, p. 341/352). The corpse indicates the past presence of spirit and still represents the spirit—analogueous to the way the dead man's name does—but it no longer appresents the person or his spirit. If the body-spirit relation matched the word-meaning relation more completely, there would not be this difference between a corpse's representation of and a body's appresentation of the spirit.

#### 3.4 The Body as Expressive (and Not Just Appresentative) of Subjective Life

As described so far, it is not clear how the unity of body and spirit in the person differs at all from the unity achieved in any other apperception. In an apperception the present and absent aspects are subsumed into a unity. For this reason, the present aspects of the apperceived thing *appresent* but do not *indicate* the absent aspects of that thing. This is the case both in perception of a physical thing and in perception of another person, as Husserl claims in the following comment in *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjectivität*:

“Indication” in the sense of an objective indicating (one objectivity indicates another) is not present here, where after all I do not first grasp once for itself the thing “body” and posit it for itself and then, second, the other man. Indeed, the other man is not a “soul” separate from a body, but rather he is a man and is there perceptually for me in his corporeal [existence], and here that means his actual bodily existence, except that I have him in an ordinary manner of givenness in which only his outer-bodiliness is “genuinely” perceptually given to me, and his inwardness is appresentatively given. *Just as the genuinely and nongenuinely perceived aspects of a physical thing are not separate objects that refer to one other by means of inference or “indication,” so here* (Hua XIV, pp. 331–32).<sup>13</sup>

The present sides of a die, for example, do not indicate the absent sides; calling it “indication” would imply more of a twoness where a unity of aspects in a whole is achieved. Apperception constitutes unity in perception of physical objects, just as it does for the living body. But appresentation is not *eo ipso* expressive. The apparent sides of the die do not *express* the hidden sides. Though perceptual appresentation is not “expressive,” the body’s appresentation of the spirit is. Why? This is the key to understanding Husserl’s later, broadened use of “expression,” and thus the key to seeing why cultural objects are expressive.

In *Ideas II* and beyond, “expression” gets a related, but not quite correlative, broadening to the expansion in *Ideas I* of *Sinn* beyond signification: while in *Ideas I* Husserl continues to use “expression” in the narrow sense of signification, as we have seen, in *Ideas II* Husserl describes much as expressive that does not qualify as such in the terms of the *Logical Investigations*. All acts have their contents, including, e.g., valuational and volitional acts. Only some of these acts have their contents intentionally expressed significantly (in which the contents are expressed by making them the content of another content). Many more acts display themselves directly (without a significative intention) in bodily movements. *Such movements are embodiments of subjective acts with their meanings*. Once we understand the embodied subjective act as having sense or meaning, I think, it is natural to say that the embodying movements have meaning themselves. “Expression” is therefore broadened to include all, even non-significative, *embodiments of subjective acts*.

In some sense, the body appresents subjective life just as the present aspects of the die appresent the absent ones; the body also expresses what it appresents, however, because what it appresents has sense or meaning, while the hidden sides of the die do not. An appresentation of the hidden sides do not point any further, while an appresentation of the subjective life does. Like words, when the subjective life of

<sup>13</sup> „Die ‚Anzeige‘ im Sinn eines objektiven Anzeigens (ein Objektives zeigt ein anderes an) liegt hier nicht vor, wo ich ja nicht einmal das Ding ‚Leib‘ erfasse und für mich setze und fürs zweite den anderen Menschen. Der fremde Mensch ist ja keine von einem Leib abgesonderte ‚Seele‘, sondern er ist Mensch und ist für mich wahrnehmungsmässig da in seinem leibhaften, und das ist hier wirklichen leiblichen Dasein, nur dass ich ihn in einer ursprünglichen Gegebenheitsweise habe, in der mir ‚eigentlich‘ wahrnehmungsmässig gegeben ist nur seine aussenleiblichkeit, und seine innerlichkeit appresentativ. *So wie eigentlich und uneigentlich Wahrgenommenes eines physischen Dinges nicht gesonderte und durch Schluss oder ‚Anzeige‘ aufeinander bezogene Gegenstände sind, so hier*“ (translated by myself; emphasis added).

the other person is the content of an intentional act it has another content nested inside, because to grasp the person involves empathizing with him *as subject* of world surrounding him; that is, understanding the person as a person requiring grasping him as an intentional being, as directed to and engaged in the world in perceptions, emotions, and actions. Husserl expresses this nicely in *Ideas II*: “other’s Body is for me a passageway (in ‘expression,’ in intimation, etc.) toward understanding of the Ego there, the ‘he’: he moves his hand, he reaches for that, he strikes, he considers, he is motivated by this or that. He is the center of surrounding world appearing to him” (Hua IV, p. 347/358). Notice that the body passageway draws me in to understanding the person, and this necessarily further draws me in to understanding his intentional life as directed toward other things. The introduction to *Experience and Judgment* explains that comprehending a person involves a further comprehension of what he himself is intending:

If I turn toward a man, this act of turning-toward [*Zuwendung*], the thematic ray of activity, goes first of all simply and straightforwardly to the body, as matter of sensuous perception. But this ray does not *terminate* in the body; the understanding of the expression, it goes beyond, to the ego-subject *therefore, to his being in the doing of this or that* (Husserl 1973a, pp. 55–56, latter emphasis added).

Part of the objective sense of the other person, therefore, is his intending additional senses. To have the other person as content requires recognizing that he himself intends other things as content. In this way the living body of the other person is a word, whose apperceived meaning refracts our interest *out to the world*, to the meant, and not like the given sides of a pair of dice, whose apperceived sides just are what they are—reflecting *inward* to add to the meaning of the whole offering no further meaning. As Alfred Schutz comments, focusing on reciprocal empathetic pairing: “If I see a stone within my reach, I simply see it, and that is the end of the matter. If I see an Other person in my reach, I necessarily discover inversely, I am also in his reach: he sees me” (1989, p. 110).

There are important dissimilarities between the linguistic expression and the person, however. When I intend the other person, he is the intentional content of the act, and my intentional content contains another content *because* he intends a second content—not *because* my meaning intention puts it there. When the word is the intentional content of an act, it contains another content, but the word does not intend them. Also, the word is lost sight of in the content it draws us toward, and the person is not. The other person’s body is a passageway for us to grasp the person and his subjective life. Apprehending him as having a subjective life refracts intentional rays back toward the world as meant by him; in doing so it resembles linguistic expression. But the other person’s subjective life is not a mere tool for refraction of interest. The person is not a mere means bearing our thoughts to the senses he intends, as the word is for what it expresses, although he does to a degree channel our thoughts away from himself to the world as intended by the word. Another way of saying this is that persons do not have sense as a predicate, if they do have directedness to senses as a predicate.



#### 4 The Origin and Structure of Cultural Objects

As we have seen, Husserl claims that the unity between a body and its spirit is analogous in structure to the unity between a word and its meaning. He uses the word-meaning relation to clarify the body-spirit relation, and he seems to base his application of “expression” to the body-spirit relation on its structural parallel with the word-meaning relation. In fact, Husserl’s order of explanation here reverses the intrinsic order of priority. In a supplement to *Ideas II*, Husserl explains that the body-spirit unity is prior to and the source of the word-meaning unity (and the unity of sense and body in other cultural objects), and that the expression of the spirit in the body is prior to and the source of significative expression. Grasping the body-spirit unity of the other person, he tells us, is “just like reading a newspaper.” He continues:

But the relations are of course not altogether the same, and in addition a more profound analysis shows that *all such comprehensive unities refer back to the unity of Body and spirit* in the ordinary and most proper sense. But the reference to them can at the same time serve to make clearer the character of the unity which interests us here (Hua IV, p. 320/333; emphasis added).

As *Phenomenological Psychology* puts it, we ascribe only a “sort of ‘mentality’” to “‘cultural objects’ under the title ‘mental sense,’” but the psychic is the “*originally mental*, therefore ... the place of origin of all mentality” (Hua IX, p. 114/86).<sup>14</sup> The senses that constitute the identities of words and other cultural objectivities are irreal, and have their source in persons’ actual acts with their meanings. The primary expression is that of the other person’s spirit through his body, and this expressive unity of his body and spirit extends itself for me in an irreal form to objects he deals with in his surrounding world. The other person’s body therefore takes on a crucial role in the origin of culture. It is my pivot from objects that I see, value, and use to objects that I understand as involved in the life of the other person, as seen, valued, and used by him.

Bodily activity is culturally crucial—so there is partial truth at the core of a behaviorist account of culture. Most primitively, an object acquires an intersubjective cultural layer with others’ *bodily* response to and manipulation of things, *but only because the body is a living body, is expressive*. Moreover, most cultural objects have senses that go beyond what intimated bodily movement alone can bestow upon them. (Because it requires judgment, an expression of the Pythagorean Theorem, for example, is not explicable if we stay focused on the level of the living body.) Nevertheless, all cultural sense begins here. The spirit of the person, which animates the person’s living body, animates also things in the world by way of the person’s bodily involvement with them. Understanding cultural objects, including words, requires, first, recognizing the living body’s fullness-of-soul, and, second,

<sup>14</sup> It is worth noting, for the sake of comparison later, that Husserl’s description of culture as derivative, irreal spirituality or mentality is similar to Searle’s talk of derivative, observer-relative intentionality. For Searle, “Meaning is a derived form of intentionality. The original or intrinsic intentionality of a speaker’s thought is transferred to words, sentences, marks, symbols, and so on” (1998, p. 141).

noticing how its spirituality spreads to things involved in the body's movement. The living body is "full of soul," Husserl tells us in *Ideas II*, and

This applies furthermore also to all human products in visible reality. As products of the animated Body, they are animated just as any thingly process produced, stimulated, or elicited by human agency: a stroke that is aimed, a stick wielded, a book written, etc., take on the spirituality of the Body. The movement of a machine has its spirituality just as the machine itself has. Each work, each product, each action expresses an activity and is characterized as work, as act: one sees how the cigar is rolled, one discovers therein the expression of a manipulation and, on the other hand, the "visible" aim. The handwriting, each stroke in it, its "*ductus*," bears the stamp of the objective spirit. In short, products and works are again psycho-physical unities; they have their physical and their spiritual aspects, they are physical things that are "animated" (Hua IV, p. 321/333).

Husserl's claim here is that to apprehend the other person's products and the things in the world manipulated by him as such is to recognize them as drawn into the spiritual expressiveness of his body. Through sedimentation, they then carry for us an invisible mark of his knowing, feeling, and doing, the "stamp" of his spiritual activity. All objects taken up by the other person's body take on the spirituality of his body. For me as an understanding spectator, the animated living body of the other person animates its products and the objects of the surrounding world it manipulates (or those, we may add, it comports itself toward).

Husserl's location of the origin of culture in the expressiveness of the living body allows us to see that the surrounding world is brimming with "humanized things" (Hua VI, p. 230/227). What we and others have done turns about to face us in the objects with which and places where we have acted. Sentimentality, but also feeling at home in a way of life, gratitude to others, pride in accomplishment, the invitation to return to activity, guilt at what one has done, temptations or challenges to repeat past deeds, amusement, bemusement, and rekindled affection are common and fitting emotional responses to the human faces that we and others have etched into the objects of our surrounding world. As a result of our continual culture-creating, -reinforcing, and -transforming activities (individual and communal), the world of straightforward experience has been "furnished almost everywhere and ever so abundantly with cultural sense" and is "continually being so furnished" (Hua IX, pp. 117–18/90).

The objects we encounter in the world carry this sedimentation of our and others' past activity. New acts with cultural objects may reinforce this meaning, or may layer new meanings over this sedimented meaning, or may subtly transform this meaning, unwittingly or otherwise. But the sedimented meaning confronts us, whether we or others wish it were there or not.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the meaning of a cultural object is not given to it by any *particular* act of meaning with the object. If I use a

<sup>15</sup> Of course, this sedimented meaning may disappear over years and generations. Notably, this wearing away of cultural meanings happens through neglect, in contrast to the wearing away through use that corrupts the physical aspects of cultural objects.

hammer as a doorjamb, it is still a hammer. This phenomenon is particularly obvious for words: the meaning of a word in a linguistic community is not given to it by any particular act of meaning by any particular person. If Joe Schmoe use the word “republic” for an oppressive dictatorship merely because that government has some feature he likes, he is using it incorrectly—even if all he means by this word here and now is that it is, to his mind, a good regime, and even if his interlocutors understand his meaning. The static and individualistic analysis of linguistic meaning given in *Logical Investigations I* is not false, because particular acts of meaning animating expressions are fundamentally what gives words their meanings. Nevertheless, this analysis of language is incomplete, and misleading if one concludes from it that an individual’s meaning intentions completely determine the meaning of words. Words, like other established cultural objects, have sedimented meanings that are unchangeable by any individual act or person, meanings that persons harness for particular meaningful actions.

As Husserl’s analysis makes clear, although rooted in the body culture is an essentially spiritual accomplishment and is in this sense free. A complete Husserlian philosophy of culture must be a normative one where the norm is reason and it applies to all beings with reason. This is because reason is inherently normative for all free activities of subjectivity, and culture, as a spiritual accomplishment of rational creatures, stands under the norms of authenticity and reason. It is not enough to articulate how cultures arise philosophically, according to certain essential subjective structures, and historically, according to the factual happenings that have formed a culture and its contingent spiritual contents. Rather, a complete philosophy of culture also needs to articulate what culture should be. This puts culture under ethics and under the teleology of reason in human life. Nevertheless, “Every spontaneity sinks down into passivity,” as Husserl comments in *Ideas II* (Hua IV, p. 333/345). Culture arises through sedimentation and is subject to the primary and secondary passivity that affects, more or less, all subjective life. And to this extent it slips away from our freedom and resists our attempts to subject it to rational norms. We often appropriate others’ cultural accomplishments passively, accepting them as valid without critique; or, in contrast, we might have a habit of rejecting certain others’ accomplishments or claims without consideration. Individually and communally, we sink into cultural habits without authentically renewing their meaning. The pervasive humanization of the surrounding world is both an achievement of our subjectivity, and a challenge to authentically and reasonably exercise this subjectivity.

Husserl describes the sense of a cultural object as a “psyche” that its body expresses (Hua IX, pp. 229–30/176). That this is expression and not indication illustrates how far we are from the narrow sense of “expression” analyzed in the *Logical Investigations*. The hammer is itself neither significantly expressive like a speaker (putting certain thoughts on record) nor significantly expressive like a sentence (being used by a person to put certain thoughts on record). In terms of *Logical Investigation I*, the relation grasped by the onlooker between the hammer and its cultural sense could only be indicative. The hammer’s physical structure indicates its ability to hammer, and for those with the proper cultural knowledge its physical structure indicates its having been designed, constructed, and used as a

hammer. The indicative interpretation of our understanding of cultural objects is not incorrect (the hammer can indicate in these ways), but it is misleading because not complete and not fundamental.

First, the indicative interpretation would make two things where one is present; the body of the hammer and its cultural sense are essentially unified. We naturally live in this unity, only later abstracting the real and unreal elements of this whole.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the connection between a hammer and its use is unreal rather than real. It is no sensuous property of the hammer that it is designed and used to hammer. This property belongs to it only as mediated by the intentionality of the maker, user, and the society for whom hammers are common and typified objects. This unreality undermines the direct real relation between two facts that indication requires. Indication involves the apprehension of a real relation between indicator and indicated, which real relation grounds the transition from positing the existence of the indicator to positing the existence of the indicated. Construing the relation between the physical object and its cultural sense as primarily indicative naturalizes the cultural object, by abstracting from the necessarily mediating subjective acts that have made the thing what it is. The circuit from physical object to its cultural identity runs through the thoughts of the cultural community. One can take the relation as indicative only when one assumes as fact the subjective constitution of the unreal sense. But that is to say that primordially the relation is not indicative, and that cultural objects resist naturalization inasmuch as intentionality itself resists naturalization.

As one construes the relation between the living body and the subjective life animating it, so one will naturally understand the relation between a cultural object and its sense. It is an abstraction to view the living body as a mere physical thing, and so it takes an act of abstraction to see a cultural object as a mere physical thing—though both, because of their real founding layers, have a place in the causal system of physical things. Such a view of the person naturally leads to an abstract-materialist conception of culture, of which John Searle provides an interesting contemporary example because he aims to offer an intentional analysis. Like Husserl, Searle emphasizes that seeing the raw physical object at the base of cultural

<sup>16</sup> The Heideggerian critique of Husserl's analysis of cultural objects—namely, that Husserl falsifies our natural experience by making the awareness of the body of the cultural object prior to the awareness of its unreal, cultural sense in such a way that the straightforward unity of the object is disrupted—would be valid had Husserl not developed the broader meaning of expression and used it to explain cultural objects, and had he not grounded all of this in the analogy with the person, the essential unity whose bodily and spiritual moments are distinguished only in abstraction from the personal whole. We grasp the tool as indicative of its use only when we are distanced from its expressive unity, either when we intentionally distance ourselves in theoretical reflection or when we are *de facto* distanced due, e.g., to an alienation from the culture of which it is a part. Of course, it remains true for Husserl that the "material world is manifestly prior in itself to the world of culture. Culture presupposes men and animals, as these in turn presuppose matter" (Hua IX, p. 119/90). The priority here is ontological (the real, as part of its sense, exists independently of being intended) and not necessarily temporal for the individual subject. We do not first see physical things as meaningless and lifeless, and then learn to understand them as persons or as having cultural sense. (Animism is false because it confuses the unreal "psyche" of the things of our surrounding world with real psyches, but it is a more natural position than naturalism, which abstracts from the spiritual predicates that the objects of our surrounding world have acquired and that constitute their identities for us.)

objects takes an abstractive effort: “children learn to see moving cars, dollar bills, and full bathtubs; and it only by force of abstraction that they can see these as masses of metal in linear trajectories, cellulose fibers with green and grey stains, or enamel-covered iron concavities containing water ... The complex ontology seems simple; the simple ontology seems difficult” (1995, p. 4). Searle fails to recognize that “the force of abstraction” is needed here because seeing the dollar bill as a mass of cellulose fibers *is* an abstraction, the one typical of the naturalistic attitude, in which one focuses only upon the founding real layer of the thing. Searle goes on to explain social objects such as hammers, benches, paintings, money, and baseball bats as use-objects that acquire their identity through (sometimes unconscious) intentional states imposing functions. Searle’s work is not without its merits as an intentional analysis of social reality. But his account becomes more materialist and theoretical than intentional and descriptively faithful to the phenomena when he reduces the identity of cultural objects to their use and when he reduces a good deal of our intentionality regarding social objects to a non-intentional biological mechanism (“the Background”) in order to explain passive acculturation. We often, he emphasizes in justifying his biological theory of acculturation, acquire pragmatic competence with cultural objects though we have never had intentional states of their uses or of the rules for using them. This pragmatic competence is acquired, he claims, by a non-intentional, neurophysiological mechanism (see Searle 1995, chap. 6). But even if his account of this biological mechanism could explain our pragmatic competence with typical cultural objects, still, that is all that it would explain. The cultural sense—including the *sense* of this use and much else—would be left behind. His account can seem plausible only when one abstracts from the thickness of culture, and plucks out for reflection only the behavioristically construed “use” of things. Typical use does not exhaust the meaning of even the simplest cultural use-objects, not only because our individual histories color these objects in our personal experience, but also because our social histories do as well. Being at home in a culture or subculture is not mere pragmatic competence, but sharing in the meanings that the thing’s history has given it for the community. Though not a thoroughgoing physicalist, Searle is here misled by the naturalistic attitude: as Husserl’s analysis of culture as originating in empathy shows, only an analysis of the intentionality operative in the personalistic (i.e., natural) attitude can yield an understanding of cultural objects. If a materialist (i.e., a naturalistic) account of the person were fully carried through, according to Husserl, all culture would simply disappear, forced from view by an abstraction.

Likewise, it is an abstraction to view the subjective life animating the body as a thing apart from the body, so it takes an abstraction to consider a thing’s cultural sense apart from its embodiment. A dualist conception of the person leads to an abstract-idealist conception of culture—as though it were thought alone, and not also the bodily activity expressive of thought and the sedimentation of our past thoughts and actions, that creates the intersubjective cultural sense. Convictions are largely changeable through argument, but culture is less malleable. One cannot expect to change culture without changing behavior, which is often more entrenched than thought, or without harnessing rather than ignoring the historically sedimented spiritual accomplishments that face us everywhere we turn. The difficulty of

reforming or redirecting a culture becomes more obvious when we recognize the error of such an abstract idealism. The means required to reform or redirect a culture also becomes apparent when we reject this error: certainly correcting one's own and others' convictions through argument is necessary to effect a true cultural change, but what must be first and foremost for one attempting cultural change is expressing the aimed-for, reformed culture in one's own meaningful actions. It is not through arguments alone or even primarily that we, or our culture, can improve. Thus, in rejecting an abstract-idealist conception of culture, we see one implication of the hypocrisy or incontinence that infects, more or less, all civilized life. Even when we do not wish it to, our concrete actions determine the meaning of cultural realities for ourselves and others more directly than thoughts and words alone do. In this rejection of an abstract-idealist conception of culture, we can also begin to recognize the importance of ritual and other public embodiments of the cultural convictions that we judge central to good social life. Even though rituals may often seem empty because they are often not performed authentically, they wisely concretize such convictions for us by harnessing the power of the primitive source of all culture. Instead of rejecting ritual as merely formal, superstitious, or superficial bodily activity, we should seek to renew it by performing it authentically or to reform it when it is no longer performable authentically.

And this leads us to one of the most prominent themes in Husserl's later philosophy. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries were full of people calling for reform or radical change in Western culture, and Husserl was among them. The early Husserl often focuses inordinately upon language, and especially scientific language, as expressive of the accomplishments of human subjectivity. There are many factors leading to his intensified concern for cultural renewal in the years following World War I, but I do not think it coincidental that it is when Husserl begins to understand culture in general (and not merely language or scientific language) more richly as expressive of subjective life and as the concrete embodiment of our joint, intersubjective accomplishments, that he begins to emphasize cultural renewal more urgently and profoundly. Understanding the later Husserlian theme of cultural critique and renewal requires first understanding how culture itself arises in the concrete expressiveness of the living body and the sedimentation of expressed meanings. His call for critique and renewal is distinctive not just because he is not focused merely on economic or political change, but because he sees the source, depth, and extent of the humanization of the surrounding world and thus sees the intense spiritual danger of a cultural crisis and the difficulty in addressing it.

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