

ARISTOTLE AND HUSSERL ON THE WORLD AS COSMIC OIKOS

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Abstract

This paper addresses the question of the relationship between human beings and the world as a common ground of experience or as a *cosmic oikos*, as present in Aristotle and Husserl. Both Aristotle and Husserl sustain an *absolute or cosmological sense of place* – *topos koinos* – and a *relative one* – *topos idios* –: Regarding the latter, while Aristotle attributes to natural places a potency that involves the potentiality of bodies to reach their ultimate form, such that natural places contribute to the definition of ‘what’ each body is, that is, to its essence, for Husserl place is interpreted existentially as the one I recognize as my own, as the only place that supports me and is inhabited by me. Concerning the former, both authors start from the proper place in order to determine the common place through an iterable process of being-in. For both, place and earth are the realms we inhabit and thus the primordial home that carries and protects beings living in community. Earth and sky encompass all things and beings, while the horizon and simple places are both boundaries that can be transgressed, allowing thus for movement and change. Hence, earth and sky can be understood as primal home-places, that is, as our *cosmic oikos*.

Keywords: cosmic oikos; world; earth; sky; body; Husserl; Aristotle

Introduction

An interesting parallelism can be shown in the Aristotelian and Husserlian understanding of the world: The analysis of place refers to the world not only as the general context of things and places, but also as cosmos: “as an objective

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spatio-temporal world, star world with the earth being below it.”¹ For Husserl, the possibility of a “mundane teleology” lies in the elaboration of an “ontology of nature”, which is to be based on the lifeworld as a ground of perception.² For him, however, “world” does not mean an “epitome of objects, but the subjective-relative ‘how’ of the appearance of objects, namely, the universal horizon”.³ In this sense, Aristotle’s concept of the world also encompasses experience of it, for – just as with Husserl – a relationship of ‘belonging’ spans between human beings and world: The human being is *in the world* because it *concerns* him⁴; it represents a totality that means far more than a ‘totality of things’. On the one hand, for Husserl the world is not cancellable, that is, given in an apodictic way, whereby objects have a contingent character, whereas for Aristotle, the universe is eternal, and everything worldly is subject to becoming or contingency. On the other hand, for both authors the world functions as a field of knowledge or activity for the experiencing human being. Hence,

¹ Husserl, Edmund: *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Dritter Teil: 1929–1935*, Kern, Iso (ed.), Nijhoff, Hua XV, Den Haag 1973, p. 667.

² Of all the concepts of phenomenology coined by Edmund Husserl, that of the lifeworld has had the strongest influence on philosophical thinking about the world. The term is usually associated with Husserl’s 1936 treatise *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*, Biemel, Walter (ed.), Hua VI, Den Haag 1954, engl. trans.: *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, Carr, David (transl.), Evanston 1970, but is in continuity with earlier works that introduced transcendental phenomenology. This concept first appears sporadically in his Göttingen Lectures of 1907, in the so-called “Dingkolleg” published as *Ding und Raum, Vorlesungen 1907*, Claesges, Ulrich (ed.), Hua XVI, Den Haag 1973 (eng. trans.: *Thing and Space, Lectures of 1907*, Rojcewicz, Richard (trans.), Springer 1997), while the Husserliana tome XXXIX: *Die Lebenswelt. Auslegungen der vorgegebenen Welt und ihrer Konstitution. Texte aus dem Nachlass (1916–1937)*, Sowa, Rochus (ed.), Dordrecht 2008, contains the most comprehensive collection of estate manuscripts on the subject. The scope of my enquiry is thus limited to these late texts.

³ Held, Klaus: „Husserls neue Einführung in die Philosophie: Der Begriff der Lebenswelt“, in Gethmann, Carl Friedrich (ed.), *Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft: Studien zum Verhältnis von Phänomenologie und Wissenschaftstheorie*, Bouvier, Bonn 1991, pp. 79–114, here p. 111. See Breuer, Irene: „(Erzählte) Welten als Spielraum offener Möglichkeiten“, in Bartsch, Christoph; Bode, Frauke (eds.), *Welt(en) erzählen: Paradigmen und Perspektiven*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2019, pp. 43–64.

⁴ See Husserl: *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Dritter Teil: 1929–1935, op. cit.*, p. 342: The “primal mode of approaching is empathy”. For the other “concerns me as other already by the fact that I, before all contact with him, eo ipso not only experience his life, [...] but live with it, co-perceiving, co-believing, co-judging [...] etc.” (Translation of the author). In the original: Der „Urmodus des Angehens, ist die Einfühlung“. Denn der Andere „geht mich als anderes schon dadurch an, dass ich vor allem Umgang mit ihm *eo ipso* sein Leben, [...] nicht nur erfahre, sondern mitlebe, mitwahrnehmend, mitgläubend, miturteilend [...] usw.“ This approach is here transferred to the realm of inhabiting a home world as an equally primordial experience. See Brague, Remi: *Aristote et la question du monde*, PUF, Paris 1998, pp. 212f.

in Aristotle and Husserl we can speak of a world as a *common ground of experience* or as a *cosmic oikos*.⁵

The development of this thesis is structured as follows: In the first part of the paper, I will deal with the conception of the world as ‘*topos koinos*’. I argue that both authors start from the proper, own place in order to determine the overall place, the *topos koinos* or the world, in which we are in through an iterable process of being-in. I will show that for Husserl and Aristotle alike, place has a lifeworldly meaning: On the one hand, Aristotle claims that beings only achieve their full actualization once they arrive to their proper places, such that places are constitutive to their essence. On the other hand, for Husserl it is from this bodily place that not only the system of place, but the entire world order emerges, a world that is intersubjectively constituted as a community. For both, places involve the relationship with others, such that they cannot be conceived in isolation. The second part delves into the conception of the lifeworld and local regulations, that is, it concerns the possibility of motion and the horizonticity of experience. Just as for Husserl the horizon is both the link between present and future experiences and the boundary between finitude and infinity, the place in Aristotle is at the same time the boundary and the link between the elements as well as the all-encompassing boundary of the cosmos. For both philosophers, place is intrinsically related to movement and interaction: For Aristotle, place is the condition of the possibility of movement, while for Husserl, this order of foundation is reversed, since it is the bodily movement which constitute a place. The fourth part enquires into the conceptions of place as support and the correlative conception of earth and sky as ‘primordial places’. Being all-encompassing, earth and sky embrace the world as the common ground of experience, that is, as a *cosmic oikos*. Lastly, the conclusion summarizes the results obtained so far.

1. World as *topos koinos* – place as *topos idios*

For Aristotle, as well as for Husserl, the sun, the elements, and the earth form outstanding places as “outstanding regions of space”⁶, between which all things move and develop according to their nature. For, as Kant noted, a region differs essentially from a mere position of things: Position determines the relation of a thing

⁵ See Breuer, Irene: *Ort, Raum, Unendlichkeit. Aristoteles und Husserl auf dem Weg zu einer lebensweltlichen Raumerfahrung*, Orbis/Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 2020.

⁶ Fink, Eugen: *Zur ontologischen Frühgeschichte von Raum-Zeit-Bewegung*, Nijhoff, Den Haag 1957, p. 212.

in space and presupposes the region according to which the positions in space are ordered in such relation. The region consists of the relationship between the system of these positions and the absolute space of the world as the general space as unity, and the reason we can distinguish between regions is their relationship with our body.⁷ The arrangement of the body's schema is transferred to the areas – an idea that is already present in Aristotle and that Husserl seems to have adopted in his conception of the body as the zero center of orientations.⁸ The region, however, is something more than an abstract scheme of order, for it has a lifeworldly meaning: for Aristotle, the world as the whole of places has, as it were, 'regions' that are not mere directions of orientation but have their own 'quality' and carry bodies: the sun, the fire in the sky, the earth as the heavy. For unlike places, which as an

⁷ Kant, Immanuel: „Von dem ersten Grunde des Unterschiedes von Gegenden im Raum“, in Weischedel, Wilhelm (ed.), *Werke in Sechs Bänden*, Bd. I, WBD, Darmstadt 1998, p. 993f. The area, however, is originally related to the absolute and original space as a concept, because only this makes the relation of corporeal thing possible. In Husserl's earlier writings, this distinction between absolute space and sensuous location returns. However, it is later overcome by the idea of a supporting location as place. Hence, Husserl carries out an *inversion of the order of foundation*: While in his early manuscripts (see, for example, Ms. D 13 XV, 1918–teilw. 1910), Husserl in the wake of Kant conceives of space as a necessary form that allows for the individual identification of sensuous things, that is, as an a priori form of sensibility and the condition of possibility of experience, already in 1926/1927 Husserl revises this conception and asserts that what is primordially experienced in perception is the real presence as a modus of the real appearance of time, the real in its place, that is, as the form or Gestalt in the special presence of here and there. Place as location is thus related to its orientated givenness, whereby the lived body is conceived of as the center of orientation, with reference to which located space as place is constituted and experienced (see Ms. D 10 I, 1932). See also Breuer: *Ort, Raum, Unendlichkeit...*, *op. cit.*, chapter 2.

⁸ The body not only constitutes itself by the localization of its sensings but it is the source of space and higher objectivities too. It is no other than our body as a “*medium of all perception*; [...] the *organ of perception*” (Husserl: *Ideas II. Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. Second Book. Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*, Rojcewicz, Richard; Schuwer, André (trans.), Kluwer, 5th ed., Dordrecht 2000, p. 61), who ensures the relationship between things and their surrounding space. Its role is therefore essentially productive or constitutive. The starting point of the constitutional process of objectivities and space is the reduction of the surrounding world to the pure primordial space, which is localized perspectively around the living body as the “bearer of the zero-point of orientation” (*ibid.*, p. 61). The body is not simply the centre in terms of which all perceived things are situated, but also the lived-body of free movement, of approaching and distancing, of grasping and repelling. The well-known thesis concerning static space constitution reads: “All spatiality is constituted, i.e. comes to givenness, in movement, in the movement of the Object itself and in the movement of the ‘Ego’; along with the change in orientation that is given thereby” (Husserl: *Thing and Space...*, *op. cit.*, p. 131). Insofar as each place in its surrounding space is defined by my body's ability to reach an unmoving thing, place can be understood as an embodied place (*Leibort*). Thus, place and body are essentially intertwined: The body is therefore spatialized, as it exercises its constitutional functions in space and is itself spatially extended, while space, that is, place is in turn embodied, as place is defined by my ‘being here’, that is, my being the zero-point of orientation. In short, place is ‘em-bodied’ and body is ‘em-placed’.

envelope can be filled at will by bodies entering and leaving, the areas as ‘actual places’ stand in an essential and unchanging connection with the simple elements that they carry. Areas form a unity, so to speak: sky, earth, air, water, the above and below are not determined by the human body’s schema, like right and left, but absolutely or cosmologically. Hence, we can speak of a relative definition of place, that is as the innermost motionless boundary of what contains⁹, in the sense that it presupposes the existence of a body which is contained by its own boundary and by the boundary of the body surrounding it. However, the natural places of the elements, as well as the natural place of earth as the center point in the universe, and, more generally, the bodies making up the finite spherical universe, involve an absolute or cosmological sense of place, defined by the order of the cosmos. Hence, the earth as well as all four elements have a natural place that is unique and that belongs to the essence of such element. As Aristotle writes in the *Physics*:

Again, the locomotions of the natural simple bodies (such as fire and earth and the like) not only show that place is something but also that it has some power, since each body, if not impeded, moves to its own place, some above and some below. These are the parts and kinds of place: above, below, and the rest of the six dimensions. These are not just relative to us. Relatively to us they – above, below, right, left – are not always the same, but come to be in relation to our position, according as we turn ourselves about [...]. But in nature each is distinct and separate. ‘Above’ is not anything you like, but where fire, and what is light move [to]. Likewise, ‘below’ is not anything you like, but where heavy and earth-like things move [to]. So they differ not by position alone but in power too.¹⁰

Aristotle clearly attributes to place a potency, which, according to a passage from *De caelo*, means that the bodies’ potentiality to achieve their ultimate form is actualized when they reach their natural places. In *De caelo*, Aristotle writes: “That which produces upward, and downward movement is that which produces weight and lightness, and that which is moved is that which is potentially heavy or light, and the movement of each body to its own place is motion towards its own form.”¹¹ Hence, as Peter Machamer emphasizes, “a body’s movement toward

⁹ Aristotle: *Physics* IV 4, 212a20, in Hussey, Edward (trans.), *Aristotle Physics. Books III and IV*, Clarendon, Oxford 1993.

¹⁰ Aristotle: *Physics* IV 1, 208b9-23, *op. cit.*

¹¹ Aristotle: *De caelo* IV, 3, 310a30-35, in Ross, William D. (ed.), Stock, John L. (trans.), *The Works of Aristotle Translated into English*, Vol. II, Clarendon, Oxford 1930.

its own place is movement toward its own form”¹² Place, as taken in its absolute sense, contributes to the definition of ‘what’ each body is, that is, to its essence, insofar as only in it, the gradual process of actualization of a being achieves its full accomplishment.¹³ This absolute or cosmological sense of place is also present in Husserl: the sky extends far beyond what appears as the horizon in our earthly sphere of life. The inconceivable vastness of the sky is understood as the hidden reverse side of its appearance: the sky as a region.¹⁴ In its inconceivable vastness, the heavenly region is, contrary to Aristotle’s view, infinite: for Husserl, the region as unknown vastness involves the transgression of the horizon as an enclosure of the experienceable.

Earth and sky encompass all things as their outermost boundaries. Only with reference to the *topos koinos*, the common place, is the definition of the essence of place complete; for the outer shell of the cosmos as the boundary of the world vessel encompasses space, which consists of manifold places. Heaven, then, is the place of all places and contains a system of qualitatively differentiated places, according to the top-bottom arrangement and the different contents.¹⁵ As mentioned, earth and heaven, in which human beings have an outstanding position, can be interpreted in lifeworldly terms: Although “man is not the best thing in the world” – this is wisdom as knowledge of the “things that are highest by nature” – it “is the best of the animals”.¹⁶ As the most excellent of all living beings, the human being maintains a relationship of belonging with the world: although he is in the world as one among the many things, he is not so in the same way, inasmuch as its presence in the world is at the same time a presence of the world for him.¹⁷ “I” am

¹² Machamer, Peter: “Aristotle on Natural Place and Natural Motion”, in *ISIS*, Vol. 69 (1978), pp. 377–387, here p. 380.

¹³ See Breuer: “Aristotle and Koyré: from motion as process of formal actualization to inertial motion as state: On Zeno’s paradoxes of motion (and beyond)”, in *Metodo*, Vol. 11, Nr. 2 (2024), pp. 15–68.

¹⁴ Held: „Himmel und Erde als Invarianten der natürlichen Lebenswelt“, in Young-Ho Lee; Soon-Young Park (ed.), *Phenomenology of Nature. Festschrift in Honor of Kah Kyung Cho*, Korean Society for Phenomenology, Seoul 1998. Held refers to Heidegger’s *Feldweggespräch „Zur Erörterung der Gelassenheit“*, where he determined the horizon as the side of the world facing us as a ‘region’. In the excerpt published during his lifetime (GA vol. 13) from this conversation, the ‘Welten’ of the world is replaced by the ‘Gegnen’ of the ‘Gegnet’ (pp. 69–71), “where this old dialectical word stands for the incomprehensible vastness of the region”.

¹⁵ See Fink: *Zur ontologischen Frühgeschichte...*, *op. cit.*, p. 218, and Craemer-Ruegenberg, Ingrid: *Die Naturphilosophie des Aristoteles*, Alber, Freiburg 1980, p. 98f.

¹⁶ Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*, VI, 7, 1141a21, 1141a34, in Barnes, Jonathan (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle, The Revised Oxford Translation, Vol. II*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1991.

¹⁷ Brague: *Aristote et la question...*, *op. cit.*, p. 212f.

the one who is within the celestial sphere that concerns me in an outstanding and special way. As Aristotle writes in the *Physics*,

[s]ince some things are said in respect of themselves, some in respect of another thing, and place may be either (a) the ‘common’ place, in which all bodies are; or (b) the special place which is the first in which a body is (I mean, for example, that you are now in the heavens, and you are in the air because you are in the earth and similarly in that because you are in this place which surrounds nothing more than you), then, if place is the first thing surrounding each body, it will be a kind of limit.¹⁸

The human being has a peculiar, special place that can only be understood through its relationship to the world: This determines the way in which it, just like every other living being, is in his own exclusive place. Hence, as Simplicius explains,

That place taken strictly is the primary container he showed from the fact that a certain place is spoken of as common, in which all or many bodies are, as in the universe [...]. I am in one of these as in a common place because other bodies are in it also. But when I am said to be on earth, or at home, as being in this particular place, in that it contains nothing but me, then that is my private place, in which I am primarily contained. The private place is the one that strictly contains me.¹⁹

Insofar as the form of an element is only realized when the element is in its proper place, in an analogous way we can assert that a human being only actualizes its form, that is, fulfils the process of determining what it really or essentially is, once it is in its proper place or *topos idios*, where the body comes to rest, since “everything remains naturally in its proper place”.²⁰ This means that an element, such as for example, the earth, in its natural place is given form or shape by the surrounding water, the innermost containing boundary of the earth. In our context, this means that a human being attains its proper form or nature once it forms a natural organic unity with its proper place, wherein it finally rests. Hence, my proper place, that is, the one that concerns only me and to which I belong, can be understood as my proper, individual *oikos* – the only place that not only belongs essentially to me, but also wherein my core, that is, my essential nature, achieves its full development.

¹⁸ Aristotle: *Physics* VI, 2, 209a31-209b2, *op. cit.*

¹⁹ Simplicius: 535, 19, in Urmson, John O. (trans.), *On Aristotle's Physics 4.1-5, 10-14*, Duckworth, London 1992.

²⁰ *Physics* IV, 5, 212b33, *op. cit.*

In the above passage, however, Aristotle speaks to a “You” and explicitly addresses it. This “you” is neither an object nor someone in general, but a particular though anonymous ‘you’ that stands in relationship with me – as the one who expresses himself – in what Bernard Waldenfels calls a “reciprocal basic experience (*reziproker Grunderfahrung*)”, such that “the other in its uniqueness, is already present here, but as co-constituting for what I encounter”.²¹ For the other seems to be ‘mit-da’: Human beings are no longer isolated, not alone, but accompany each other, such that together they experience a *common world*. Thus, it is not merely a question of experiencing my presence in the world and the presence of the world for me²², but of expanding this connection to a *shared, common world* with a stranger, for Aristotle and Husserl alike. So says Husserl:

I stand on the ‘ground’, in the room, on the street.²³

The sky above me, the uniform earth below me, the same sky, the same earth. Hence now the new: the cardinal points, sunrise, sunset, cardinal points determining. From every home place, or from every place where I stand – it always remains that from there the sun rises eastwards, approximately at the same place in my field of perception, on the horizon, etc.²⁴

What I have in force doxically as being worldly is in force for me as being valid through communicating others for me and them in one. Worldly being is being for us together, for each through the communicating others, as far as unanimity reaches.²⁵

Husserl emphasizes that this being together with the other involves an “experiencing, evaluating, acting theorizing [...]”. The togetherness of others is togetherness

²¹ Waldenfels, Bernard: *Das Zwischenreich des Dialogs, sozialphilosophische Untersuchung in Anschluss an Edmund Husserl*, Nijhoff, Den Haag 1971, p. 53f. In the original: „Das du, will sagen: der Andere in seiner Einzigkeit, ist hier bereits gegenwärtig, aber als mitkonstituierend für das, was mir begegnet.“

²² See Brague: *Aristote et la question...*, *op. cit.*, p. 287. “Ce que le passage d’Aristote implique, c’est bien l’être-au-monde de ce à quoi on peut dire ‘toi’ [...]. Le rapport à l’univers informe et gouverne la manière humaine d’être et son lieu propre.”

²³ Husserl, Edmund: *Die Lebenswelt*, *op. cit.*, p. 152. In the original: „Ich stehe auf dem ‚Erboden‘, im Zimmer, auf der Strasse.“

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 153 (my emphasis). In the original: „Der Himmel über mir, die einheitliche Erde unter mir, derselbe Himmel, dieselbe Erde. Von daher nun das Neue: die Himmelsrichtungen, Sonnenaufgang, Sonnenuntergang, Himmelsrichtungen bestimmend. Von jedem *Heimort* aus bzw. von jeder Stelle aus, an der ich stehe – es bleibt immer so, dass von da die Sonne ostwärts aufgeht, ungefähr an derselben Stelle meines Wahrnehmungsfelds, am Horizont. etc.“

²⁵ Husserl: *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Dritter Teil: 1929–1935*, *op. cit.*, p. 465. In the original: „Was ich doxisch als weltlich seiend in Geltung habe, ist für mich in Geltung als durch mitseiende Andere hindurch für mich und sie in eines geltend. Weltlich Seiendes ist für uns gemeinsam, für jeden durch die kommunizierenden Anderen hindurch, seiend, soweit die Einstimmigkeit reicht.“

for me, and we are thereby in the unity of a function”²⁶, that is, “the other is for me not only ‘object’, but ‘co-subject’”.²⁷ We are thus united by a commonality of experience and actions within a shared world and a common place. Place, then, is not just a categorial determination of a particular body or just a predication of being, as can be read in Husserl’s early writings, but is rather to be interpreted existentially: It is “my” private place, my ‘home place’ that not only contains me, but in which I am ‘at home’ as part of a universe that also concerns me²⁸: My place is the one I recognize between earth and sky as my ‘own’ – *topos idios* – and only one. From the ‘here’ I see that it is the same world; it is ‘familiar’ to me²⁹, because in its persistence it shows a constancy of the phenomena that take place in it (sunset or sunrise, etc.) and an “empirical over-all style”³⁰ in the sense of a familiar environment. The ‘here’ is no longer to be understood as an abstract “zero point”, but as the place that not only supports me and is inhabited by me, but to which I am affectively bound to.³¹ It is from this bodily place that not only the “system of place (*Ortssystem*)”, but the entire world order emerges. Thus, the world in its “uniqueness”³² is to be understood as a *cosmic oikos*: “World is the universal field into which all our acts, whether of experiencing, of knowing, or of outward

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 465. In the original: „Das ist ichliches Miteinandersein, miteinander erfahrend, wertend, handelnd, theoretisierend fungierend [...]. Das Miteinander der Anderen ist für mich ja Miteinander, und wir sind dabei in Einheit einer Funktion.“

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 455. In the original: „Aber der Andere ist für mich nicht nur ‚Objekt‘, sondern ‚Mitsubjekt‘.“

²⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 342.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 430: “Since man is not always on the march and can only live in an already familiar, already known world of known realities [...], his environment is insofar always a finite living world.” In the original: „Da der Mensch nicht immer auf dem Marsch ist und überhaupt nur leben kann in einer schon vertrauten, schon bekannten Welt bekannter Realitäten [...], so ist seine Umwelt insofern immerzu eine endliche Lebenswelt.“

³⁰ Husserl: *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, Carr, David (trans.), Northwestern University Press, Evanston 1970, p. 31.

³¹ The consciousness of kinaesthetic feelings and of motility in general is the primary sphere in which all sense is engendered, this consciousness being essentially a bodily one. Feelings and sensations, not only allow us to recognize and experience ourselves as experiencing lived bodies, but they allow us to know and recognize ourselves as the bodies who endow the surrounding world with sense. Hence, place is originally constituted by an affective bodily self-consciousness, which in its turn, allows for a bodily self-knowledge, an experiential self-knowledge that expresses itself in bodily drives and affections and deploys itself in habitual actions within the surrounding world. See Breuer: „Die sinnlich affektive Verflechtung von Welt, Raum und Leib in Husserl and Merleau-Ponty“, in *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft*, Heft 66, Nr. 2 (2021), pp. 55–80, and the same author: „Husserl und Merleau-Ponty: Die affektiv-leibliche Erfahrung des architektonischen Raumes“, in *Gestalt Theory*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (2020), pp. 287–302.

³² Husserl: *The Crisis... op. cit.*, p. 143: “The world, on the other hand, does not exist as an entity, as an object, but exists with such uniqueness that the plural makes no sense when applied to it. Every plural, and every singular drawn from it, presupposes the world-horizon.”

actions, are directed. From this field, or from objects in each case already given, come all affections, transforming themselves in each case into actions.”³³

The world itself is experienced in a double sense: On the one hand, it is “given”, in the diversity of possible apperceptions, and in passivity it is given in a uniform overall apperception, and on the other hand, it is “given thematically”, that is, structured according to individual objects as substrates of predications.³⁴ It is also experienced as a *home world*, as an inside that offers protection. Husserl, just like Aristotle, compares the home world to a “sphere” that departing from the center as home place, increases through a layer-by-layer expansion of familiarity thanks to the sedimentation of habits and the associated constant formation of horizons. As Aristotle argues, “the earth is in the water, the water in the air, the air in the ether, and the ether in the world”, the world, however, “is no longer in anything else”, since the cosmos is finite.³⁵ Similarly, Husserl repeatedly asserts this ‘in-another’ relationship not only between the spheres of space constituting the world, but also as regards time and the successive opening of horizons:

Unanimity of the constitution of beings, of certainties of the respective normally constituted sense, of units of validity – progresses in circles and stages, conical rings, progresses from the living present to living present in the process of sedimentation, of horizon formation.³⁶

Either the horizon expands on the side of the ‘outside’ in the concretely pre-drawn horizon style: the environment gains a more comprehensive, ring-shaped (spherical shell-shaped) expanded sphere of space: again and again with the same and concretely analogously shaped unknown outside.³⁷

Formation of environments that are step-shaped founded in each other, each higher step ring-shaped expanded by newly fulfilled spatiality.³⁸

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

³⁴ Husserl: *Die Lebenswelt...*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

³⁵ Aristotle: *Physics* IV, 5, 212b20-22, *op. cit.*

³⁶ Husserl: *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Dritter Teil: 1929–1935*, *op. cit.*, p. 438, in the original: „Einstimmigkeit der Konstitution von Seienden, von Gewissheiten des jeweiligen normal konstituierten Sinnes, von Geltungseinheiten – schreitet in Umkreisen und Stufen, Kegelringen fort, schreitet fort von lebendiger Gegenwart zu lebendiger Gegenwart im Prozess der Sedimentierung, der Horizontbildung.“

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 430, in the original: „Entweder der Horizont erweitert sich nach Seiten des ‚Draussen‘ im konkret vorgezeichneten Horizontstil: Die Umwelt gewinnt eine umfassendere, ringförmig (kugelschalenförmig) erweiterte Raumsphäre: immer wieder mit dem gleichen und konkret analog geformten unbekanntem ‚Draussen.‘“

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 429, in the original: „Ausbildung von Umwelten, die stufenförmig ineinander fundiert sind, jede höhere Stufe ringförmig um neu erfüllte Räumlichkeit erweitert.“

Both authors thus start from the proper, own place in order to determine the overall place, the *topos koinos* or the world, in which we are in through an iterable process of being-in. By the concept of ‘world’, Husserl means not only the spatially or objectively experienced, but “the universal communal subjectivity, living, performing, apperceiving, etc.”; for the subjects are not “something beside the world or in the world”, but are presupposed in their performing life as ‘I and we’, as a community, who as experiencing subjects carry the world in themselves as an “‘ideal’, freely available unified entity”.³⁹ “I and we” are thus bearers of the world⁴⁰, which as a unity of our life is already a constituted, given world.⁴¹

2. Lifeworld and local regulations: motion and horizonticity of experience

For Husserl, this home world as a lifeworld is necessary finite⁴², because it has its outer horizon “as its other”.⁴³ The ‘inside’ corresponds to an ‘outside’: “The inner horizon of the home world has an outer horizon as its reverse side”, an outer horizon of the still unknown, the unanticipated.⁴⁴ Thus, on the one hand, for Husserl, unexpected events await us beyond the horizons of every-day experience. When this horizonticity is fully unfolded, we also encounter a world as soil (*Boden*) and idea: Insofar as the world is pre-given and experienced, the universal horizon is associated with the concept of soil, and as open and experientable, with the concept of idea. “While the connection to the soil consolidates the horizonticity around what is pre-given, the reference to the idea projects it towards what is not yet given,” observes Walton.⁴⁵ For Aristotle, on the contrary, the cosmos as a whole is a known extension of one’s own place and therefore harbors nothing unfamiliar, despite the fact that the

³⁹ See Walton, Roberto: “La interpelación de la tradición en la Fenomenología Trascendental”, in *Escritos de Filosofía 39–40, Tradición e Interpelación*, Academia Nacional de Ciencias, Buenos Aires 2001, pp. 165–186, on the tradition-boundness of natural life within a community as a substrate of habitualities.

⁴⁰ Husserl: *Die Lebenswelt*, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁴² See Husserl: *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Dritter Teil: 1929–1935*, *op. cit.*, p. 624f.: “Then, to be sure, I find myself in the same world and finite sphere of the world as the strangers of this sphere”; in the original: „Dann finde ich mich zwar in derselben Welt und endlichen Weltssphäre wie die fremden Menschen dieser Sphäre.“

⁴³ Held: „Heimwelt, Fremdwelt, die eine Welt“, in *Perspektiven und Probleme der Husserlschen Phänomenologie*, Phänomenologische Forschungen Bd. 24/25, Karl Alber, Freiburg 1992, p. 314.

⁴⁴ Husserl: *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Dritter Teil: 1929–1935*, *op. cit.*, p. 429.

⁴⁵ Walton: *Intencionalidad y Horizonticidad*, Aula de Humanidades, Bogotá 2015, p. 315.

crossing of causal chains can always trigger accidental and unexpected events. On the other hand, for Husserl the “there” is the “here” of the alien body: it is a ‘there’ alien to me. The “here” is thus the primordial point of space and in this respect is to be understood as the “ultimate central here”, in relation to which all other things are “there”. The “here” is characterized by the fact that it “has no other besides it in relation to which it would be a ‘there’”.⁴⁶ However, the fact that this world is not only my own is due to the fact that strangers are ‘there’: “the intrinsically first other (the first ‘non-Ego’) is the other Ego”.⁴⁷ Through “change of place” the foreign place becomes my “here”; my former “here” would, in my opinion, turn into one that is foreign to me if my Ego were not able to expand its environment through retention of the former “here”. The primordial place is still that in which objects and living beings differ: The “there” is where I am not now, whereas for Aristotle the place a body occupies is that of the ingress and egress of bodies that are partly alien to one another.⁴⁸ Husserl would agree with Aristotle, however, that this “being-in/at-a-place” participates in the whole through the mediation of other bodies and their places and that, conversely, this whole only becomes a whole through its parts – not as a magnitude, but as the concurrence of their individual determinations.

It is not only for Husserl that the cosmos or the lifeworld as such is finite⁴⁹ and as a system of locations essentially a *referential context*: In order for contact and interaction between the elements to be possible, they must, according to Aristotle, be different in kind and species; for *kinesis* only takes place between opposites. This can only take place by “differentiating and determining the elements in their qualities (*pathe*) or opposites between them and their connection with their cosmological location”.⁵⁰ In this connection, Aristotle claims in *On Generation and Corruption*:

⁴⁶ Husserl: *Ideas II*, *op. cit.*, p. 165f.

⁴⁷ Husserl: *Cartesian Meditations. An Introduction to Phenomenology*, Cairns, Dorion (trans.), Nijhoff, The Hague 1960, p. 107.

⁴⁸ A distinction must be made here between natural and forced movement: While natural motion involves the striving of the elements towards their natural places, violent motion is exerted upon them by another agent, which distances them of their proper places by the use of traction, pushing, carriage or rotation (see Aristotle, *Phys.* VIII, 4, 255b31f.; *Phys.* VII, 2, 243a15). On the one hand, in order for the elements to reach their own, natural places, they must change part of their properties, and this is only possible by each sharing a part of its determinations with its neighbors (See *De Gen. et Corr.*, II, 4, 331B2F). On the other hand, the body enters a place filled with air, whereupon the air takes over the place left behind by the first body. Here the body, as a mixture of elements, shares some of its properties with the air (see *De Caelo* III 6, 305a32).

⁴⁹ See Husserl: *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Dritter Teil: 1929–1935*, *op. cit.*, p. 205: “thus, its environment is insofar always a finite lifeworld”; in the original: „so ist seine Umwelt insofern immerzu eine endliche Lebenswelt.“

⁵⁰ Wiplinger, Fridolin: *Physis und Logos*, Alber, München 1971, p. 345. See commentary by William D. Ross to *Physics* IV, 5, 212b29–34: “To understand this passage we must remember 1) that in

The elements are four, and any four terms can be combined in six couples. Contraries, however, refuse to be coupled; for it is impossible for the same thing to be hot and cold, or moist and dry. Hence it is evident that the couplings of the elements will be four: hot with dry and moist with hot, and again cold with dry and cold with moist. And these four couples have attached themselves to the apparently simple bodies (Fire, Air, Water, and Earth) in a manner consonant with theory [...]. Thus, the differences are reasonably distributed among the primary bodies [...].⁵¹

Each element is thus at the same time referred to its neighbors as to the whole and vice versa, in a double sense, that is, according to quality and movement. This is also the case with Husserl, as Klaus Held shows: The possession of the one identically persisting world takes place in the passage through the multiplicity of horizon-like possible experiences of objects, and conversely, the “having (*Habe*)” of the one object takes place in the passage of the multiplicity of horizon-like given modes of appearance.⁵² However, the concept of horizon in Husserl is ambiguous: On the one hand, it has the character of a unity vis-à-vis an encompassed multiplicity and stands in the relationship of a whole to its parts; on the other hand, it is “open” as a boundary – in the sense of “changeable” – insofar as it determines not the ‘what’ but the ‘how’ or the nature of that which appears in it.⁵³ In summary, just as for Husserl the *horizon* is both the *link* between world consciousness and object consciousness and the *boundary* between *finitude and infinity*, a *place* in Aristotle is both the *boundary* and the *link* between the elements as well as the all-encompassing *boundary* of the cosmos.

For both philosophers, place is intrinsically related to movement and interaction: According to Aristotle, for movement or transformation to take place, the places must be different in quality and have the ability to open up. For Husserl, for the ‘here’ to be able to change into a ‘there’ and vice versa, a place must be able to ‘open up’ through movement, whereby, in contrast to Aristotle, it is constituted by the body movements or kinaesthesia in the first place. For Aristotle,

Aristotle’s cosmology earth is normally concentrated round the centre of the universe, water forms a layer outside earth, air a layer outside water and fire a layer outside air; 2) that in his system each of these is characterized by two of the *prótai enantiotétes*. Earth is cold and dry, water wet and cold, air hot and wet, fire dry and hot.” in *Physics*, a revised text with introduction and commentary by W. D. Ross, Clarendon, Oxford 1936, p. 579.

⁵¹ Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption*, II, 3, 330a30–40, in Barnes, Johathan (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle (The Revised Oxford Translation)*, Vol. 1, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1991.

⁵² Held: „Husserls neue Einführung...“, *art. cit.*, p. 88.

⁵³ See Claesges, Ulrich: „Zweideutigkeiten in Husserls Lebenswelt-Begriff“, in Claesges, Ulrich; Held, Klaus (eds.), *Perspektiven transzendental-phänomenologischer Forschung*, Nijhoff, Den Haag 1972, pp. 85–101.

movement means encounter and the place for this is precisely its concretion.⁵⁴ This also applies to Husserl's understanding of place; for the place encompassing the 'here' and 'there' enables the encounter of the I and the Other. Furthermore, for Aristotle, since place is the boundary of the encompassing body, its permanence is necessary for movement to take place, as such, it remains contiguous to the moving body, as a detachable shell. For Aristotle, hence, place is the condition of the possibility of movement, while for Husserl, this *order of foundation is reversed*, since only movement turns a 'here' into a 'there' and thus only secondarily, constitutes a place. Both, Husserl and Aristotle, thus conceive of the world as related to objects; for both, the world is an ontological twofold concept: On the one hand, the world is to be understood as a total context of objects or elements, as a "universe of things [...] the spatiotemporal ontia", that is, an "ontic universe [*ontisches Universum*]"⁵⁵; on the other hand, it is to be understood as world of perception, a field of activity, as already stated: "World is the universal field into which all our acts, whether of experiencing, of knowing, or of outward action, are directed. From this field, or from objects in each case already given, come all affections, transforming themselves in each case into actions."⁵⁶ Hence, the world is the totality of what can be experienced and as such, it is human-centered, that is, "subjective-relative".⁵⁷

3. Place as support – earth and sky as primal places

"Place is the encompassing for a moving thing, place gives support", argues Heinrich Hüni.⁵⁸ As mentioned above, the essence of place can only be determined in relation to the lifeworldly cosmos. In the world, place and earth are, according to Aristotle, something resting that supports people and things and carries them as

⁵⁴ Hüni, Heinrich: „Über den natürlichen Vorrang des Ortes vor jeder Art Raum bei Aristoteles“, in Berlinger, Rudolph; Fink, Eugen; Imamichi, Tomonobu; Schrader, Wiebke (eds.), *Perspektiven der Philosophie, Neues Jahrbuch*, Bd. 19, Ridopi, Amsterdam 1993, pp. 245–256.

⁵⁵ Husserl: *The Crisis...*, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁵⁷ See Held: „Husserls neue Einführung...“, *art. cit.*, p. 108: The determinations of the lifeworld are: "1. It is the world of perception. 2. It is the horizon of all practice, including practice that transcends the world of perception. 3. It is historically changeable (insofar as it forms the given non-thematic ground of perception for a respective de-perspectivisation in historical practice). 4. It persists beyond history (insofar as the thematic acquisitions flow back into the non-thematicity of the world of perception)."

⁵⁸ Hüni: „Über den natürlichen Vorrang des Ortes...“, *art. cit.*, p. 251.

they move, something that a void is not able to do.⁵⁹ In his late texts⁶⁰, Husserl also emphasized the primacy of the earth and described it with the biblical image of the ark: “The primal-ark does not move”: Husserl inverts the Copernican theory in order to account for the habitual interpretation of the world given in intuition.⁶¹ Just as the earth cannot lose its sense as an “primordial home”, my body cannot deny its sense as an “primordial body”: As Husserl writes:

The Earth cannot lose its sense of being as a ‘primordial Home’, as the ark of the world, just as my own Body cannot lose its sense of being completely unique as a primordial own Body [*Urleib*] from which each own Body derives a part of the sense of being.⁶²

There is thus a “constitutive dignity”, that cannot be altered by the homogenization that is involved by the loss of what is properly terrestrial, that is, when the earth is no longer considered as soil but as any other physical body, as Roberto Walton emphasizes.⁶³ The earth as the “primordial home” and as an *oikos* not only supports and accommodates human beings in the life-world⁶⁴, but is also the ground of my corporeality, “the ancestral ground (*Stammboden*)” and the “primordial ground of my movements (*Urstätte der Bewegungen*)”.⁶⁵ Only on it, do rest and movement make sense. Its rest, in contrast to that of the bodies, is not a mode of movement, but is rather absolute. Place is and must be experienced as resting: Locomotion in a ship (Aristotle) or in a chariot (Husserl) presupposes the certainty of the immobility of the shores or the ground⁶⁶, such that no deceptive inversion of the mode of experience occurs.

But the earth “as a whole” cannot be perceived as a body, because in its “endlessness (*Endlosigkeit*)” or rather, in its vastness, it cannot be experienced by us

⁵⁹ See Aristotle: *Physics* IV, 9, 217a, *op. cit.*

⁶⁰ See Husserl: *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Dritter Teil: 1929–1935*, *op. cit.*, p. 667 (Ms. of September 1934).

⁶¹ See Husserl: „Grundlegende Untersuchungen zum Phänomenologischen Ursprung der Räumlichkeit der Natur – ‚Die Urarche bewegt sich nicht‘“, Ms. D 17, in Farber, Marvin (ed.), *Philosophical Essays in Memory of Edmund Husserl*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1940, pp. 307–325.

⁶² Husserl: „Grundlegende Untersuchungen“, *op. cit.*, pp. 307–325, here p. 311.

⁶³ Walton: *Intencionalidad y Horizonticidad*, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

⁶⁴ See Held: „Heimwelt, Fremdwelt...“, *art. cit.*, p. 336.

⁶⁵ Husserl: „Grundlegende Untersuchung...“, *art. cit.*, p. 317.

⁶⁶ See Rabanaque, Luis R.: „El papel de la Cinestesia en la Constitución de la Tierra como Suelo de Experiencia“, in *Escritos de Filosofía 39–40, Tradición e Interpelación*, Academia Nacional de Ciencias, Buenos Aires 2001, pp. 151–164, on the role of the walking kinaesthesia in the noematic constitution of the earth as ground of experience.

in the totality of its modes of experience⁶⁷, just as the sky cannot, since the sky is “in no way corporeal” but is rather experienced as a kind of “surface”.⁶⁸ Hence, the singular finite things or beings as “‘finite’ substrates” that are characterized by their “being-in-something (*In-etwas-sein*)” and thus by their dependency, must be distinguished from the world as infinite and “absolute substrate” which is not ‘in-something’ but is itself “something total (*All-etwas*)” that embraces all things: “Only the world is independent, only it is absolute substrate in the strict sense of absolute independence; it does not subsist as a finite substrate does, namely, in relation to circumstances exterior to itself.”⁶⁹ Hence, the world as the ground of finite beings can be conceived of as apodictically given – that is, with absolute and therefore non-cancellable certainty – though it is endowed with a relative apodicticity when compared to the absolute apodicticity of subjectivity, as Walton remarks.⁷⁰

Neither the world nor my body can be experienced by me as a concrete body-thing (*Körper*): Husserl’s understanding of one’s own body as the starting point of all constitution imposes a limit on possible experiences: they are limited to my possibilities, to my ego, to which, however, the whole historicity “inseparably belongs”⁷¹; a conception that is supplemented in Husserl’s late texts by that of an intersubjective constitution. In Husserl’s words:

This world of this onta, constituted for me through the horizon of the others, is *eo ipso* common world for all these others, as likewise constituted from them. This world is constituted as a common spatio-temporal world in which I and my others (that, is, we), as constituents of the world, as the transcendental subjects of all constituent apperceptions, are themselves for themselves and for others as worldly existing human beings, as bodies existing out of transcendental intersubjective constitution, which are bodies for their souls.⁷²

⁶⁷ Husserl: „Grundlegende Untersuchung...“, *art. cit.* p. 310f, p. 313; *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Dritter Teil: 1929–1935, op. cit.*, pp. 275f.

⁶⁸ Husserl: *Die Lebenswelt...*, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

⁶⁹ Husserl, Edmund: *Experience and Judgement, Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic*, Landgrebe, L (rev., ed.), Churchill, J.; Ameriks, K. (trans.), London, Routledge & Kegan Paul 1973, pp. 137–138.

⁷⁰ Walton: *Intencionalidad y Horizonticidad, op. cit.*, p. 354.

⁷¹ In the light of the later intersubjectivity theory, in which the “we” precedes the “I”, this view must be revised: By embracing the whole world, the world community can be understood as a body.

⁷² Husserl: *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Dritter Teil: 1929–1935, op. cit.*, p. 466; in the original: „Diese für mich durch den Horizont der Anderen hindurch konstituierte Welt dieser Onta ist *eo ipso* Gemeinwelt für alle diese Anderen, als ebenso für sie konstituiert. Diese Welt ist konstituiert als gemeinsame raumzeitliche Welt, in der ich und meine Anderen (also wir) als die Welt Konstituierenden, als die transzendentalen Subjekte aller konstituierenden Apperzeptionen selbst für sich und für Anderen sind als weltlich seiende Menschen, als aus transzendental intersubjektiver Konstitution seiende Körper, die Leiber sind für ihre Seelen.“

It is therefore a mutual constitution: I constitute the others, and the others constitute me. This pre-given world can thus only be constituted retroactively through an intersubjective community. We as a community find ourselves in a surrounding space as a system of places, that is a system of possible ends of bodily movements or as a system of natural, own places in the Aristotelian sense. The earth itself has no 'place' of its own, as Husserl explains; it could therefore be called a 'primordial place' in the same sense as our 'absolute here'. In its mode of appearance, it also has a reverse side that remains inaccessible and closed to us in perception. It manifests itself in an experience of "resistance (*Widerstand*)" on the one hand in the sensation of touch, in that tactile qualities can be felt, which may disturb our well-being; and on the other hand, in bodily mobility, since the tensioning of our body's force corresponds to a resistance of the ground.⁷³ Aristotle is also quite aware of the relevance of the resistance of the earth in order to allow for movement, as he shows in his *Progression of Animals*:

Now of animals which change their position some move with the whole body at once, for example jumping animals, others with their parts, for example walking animals. In both these changes the moving creature always changes its position by pressing against what lies below it. Accordingly if what is below gives way too quickly for that which is moving upon it to lean against it, or if it affords no resistance at all to what is moving, the latter can of itself effect no movement upon it. For an animal which jumps makes its jump both by leaning against its own upper part and also against what is beneath its feet [...].⁷⁴

Hence, the hardness of the earth resists our penetration, but at the same time provides indispensable support for the movement of living beings.

Earth and sky build up a two-fold unity, insofar as they surround all things as the outermost. Space extends between them as the world-vessel of things. Thus, all things are encompassed by heaven. However, on the one hand, the space "between earth and sky" is not an "intermediate space" like that between bodies. On the other hand, a body covers one layer of the surface of the sky just as things cover each other. However, this "in-between space" is a "space as air space and space enabling movement"⁷⁵: This means that space is pre-given to us in the lifeworld. Only through reflection can we recognize that our kinaesthetic movements endow it with sense. The sky in its appearance is further to be understood as the "horizon of the reachable

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 652: "Resistance and physical mobility belong [...] constitutively together." In the original: „*Widerstand und körperliche Beweglichkeit gehören [...] konstitutiv zusammen.*“

⁷⁴ Aristotle: "Progression of Animals", 705a4-10, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle, Vol. I.*

⁷⁵ Husserl: *Die Lebenswelt...*, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

distance”, as the limes or limit of the visible, whereby the invisible⁷⁶ is that which resists our seeing. The horizon and the “place of places” (the world) have the character of a unity vis-à-vis the multiplicity of things, and with place they have in common that they are “encompassing” with respect to what is encompassed by them:

Things, objects (always understood purely in the sense of the life-world), are ‘given’ as being valid for us in each case (in some mode or other of ontic certainty) but in principle only in such a way that we are conscious of them as things or objects within the world-horizon. Each one is something, ‘something of’ the world of which we are constantly conscious as a horizon.⁷⁷

Horizon and simple places are both boundaries: Unlike the horizon, the *place does not determine what lies within its perimeter*. However, just like the horizon, the place can be both exchanged and transgressed. For as soon as we pursue the references of the horizon through the kinaesthesia of walking, the circumference of the place as well as the horizon are transformed simultaneously through the conversion of the invisible into the visible and vice versa – just as the invisible side of an object – and thus the content of the references. Besides, the sky, insofar as it is not experienced as a horizon, grants us, as it were, orientation to the earth in the night – as a fixed star sky (the “fixed stars <have> a fixed locality”⁷⁸) or as a “celestial body” – it presents itself, as Aristotle already noted, as a resting boundary. For that which revolves eternally and around itself has no movement in the inner-worldly sense, such that it rests eternally in itself.

5. Conclusion

The preceding reflections could be complemented with further research on the relationship between finitude and infinitude, which concerns not only the idea of the totality of experience, but the world as conceived in terms of its unicity and unity, its difference and multiplicity, its harmony and disharmony, that is, by considering the whole range of its possible modes of givenness. But also, the constitution of space itself deserves a fuller development that does justice to Aristotle’s and Husserl’s extensive enquiries. Equally deserving is an enquiry into the modes of infinity, like number

⁷⁶ See Waldenfels: „Das Unsichtbare dieser Welt oder: Was sich dem Blick entzieht“, in Bernet, Rudolf; Kapust, Antje (eds.), *Die Sichtbarkeit des Unsichtbaren*, Fink, München 2009, pp. 11–29.

⁷⁷ Husserl: *The Crisis...*, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

⁷⁸ Husserl: *Die Lebenswelt...*, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

and extension, its actuality and possibility, this without disregarding the problem of the infinitization and idealization of space, issues that exceed the scope of the present study.⁷⁹ My concern was here to posit the notion of a *cosmic oikos* and interpret it existentially: In this connection, I argued that both Aristotle and Husserl maintain a sense of an absolute or cosmological place (*topos koinos*) and a relative place (*topos idios*). As for the *topos idios*, on the one hand, Aristotle ascribes to natural places a power that implies the potentiality of bodies to reach their final form, so that they contribute to the definition of ‘what’ each body/lived body is, i.e. to its essence. On the other hand, for Husserl, place is interpreted existentially as that which I recognize as mine, as the only place that sustains me and is inhabited by me. In relation to the *topos koinos*, both philosophers start from one’s own place in order to determine the common place through an iterative/dialogical process of being-in. For both place and earth are the primordial home in which we live and therefore the original home that sustains and protects beings living in community. Earth and sky encompass all things and beings, while the horizon and simple places are boundaries that can be crossed, thus allowing for movement and change. Earth and sky can therefore be understood as primordial home-places. Between these distinct areas of space, earth and sky, beings are ‘in the world’, since the relationship to the universe conditions and governs the human way of being at the own place and inhabiting it. The way for a body of ‘being-located’ is inseparable from that of ‘being-in’, this meaning that place is ‘em-bodied’ and body is ‘em-placed’. This is not a relationship to the world as a sum of objects, but rather a twofold ‘opening up’: On the one side, to that which appears to us and also to that which resists us, that is, the invisible and the untouchable; on the other, to the possibility both of accomplishing the full determination of both our form and essence and of communitarian living and praxis. For this, the earth and sky as “primal places” offer us the necessary support and protection, as such, they constitute our *cosmic oikos*.

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⁷⁹ See Breuer, *Ort, Raum Unendlichkeit... op. cit.*