Merleau-Ponty *Phenomenology of Perception*, Part II, 3 "The Thing and the Natural World"

III. The Thing and the Natural World: 345 / 299 / 348

A) **Perceptual constants.**

90. Constancy of form and size. 345a / 299a / 348a

- Privileged perception
  - Optimality
  - Constancy suggests a norm established amidst the variations of appearances
- Kinesthetic situation
  - Body permanently stationed before things
  - Appearance always enveloped for me in a certain bodily attitude
- Lived constitution
  - Involvement from a certain p.o.v.
  - Experiences hang together
    - "the body remains in it (i.e., the field of presence) but at no time becomes an object in it" 354)

91. Constancy of color: the “modes of appearance” of color and lighting. 351b / 304b / 354b

- The gaze – bodily involvement in the world
  - Natural involvement between appearances and kinesthetic unfolding
  - My body is my general power of taking up an abode in a certain setting
    - "The lighting is merely one element of a complex structure, the others being the organization of the field as our body contrives it and the thing illuminated in its constancy." (363)
      - Functional correlation: lighting – organization of field – phenomenon of constancy
- Organization of a field qua opening upon a world

92. Constancy of sounds, temperatures, weights. The constancy of tactile experiences and movement. 362b / 313b / 365b

- Constancy-for-my-body

B) **The thing or the real.**

93. The thing as norm of perception. Existential unity of the thing. The thing is not necessarily object. 366b / 317b / 370b

- Thing as an inter-sensory entity
  - The object arouses a certain motor intention which aims at the thing itself
  - A kind of symbiosis
- Significance of a thing
  - Unity of a thing suggests unity of a body and correlated form of behavior
    - "A form of behavior outlines a certain manner of treating the world. In the same way, in the interaction of things, each one is characterized by a kind of *a priori* to which it remains faithful in all its encounters with the outside world." (372)
    - Given in the flesh
    - Perception is a communion
      - Union of subject and world
The thing is a 'unity of value'
- Present to me practically

94. The real as identity of all the givens [données] among themselves, as identity of givens and their meaning. 372b / 322b / 375b
- In-itself-for-us
  - Total appearance, cf. 376

95. The thing “before” man. The thing beyond anthropological predicates because I am in the world [au monde]. 376a / 325b / 379b
- Body schema – movement towards a world (381)

C) The natural World.
96. The world as typic. As style. As individual. The world shows itself in profiles but is not posited by a synthesis of understanding. The transition synthesis. 377b / 327b / 381b
- World as permanent being
  - Unity of being as typic, a style
  - Horizon of all horizons

97. Reality and the incompleteness of the world: the world is open. The world as kernel of time. 381b / 330b / 385b
- Temporality
  - Contradiction
    - Reality of world suggests presumption of completed synthesis
    - Horizonality of perspectives disallows adequation
  - World is the nucleus of time
    - Consciousness is the abode of ambiguity (387)
      - i.e., subjectivity – "the living present is torn between a past which it takes up and a future which it projects" (388)
    - "The ideal of objective thought is both based upon and ruined by temporality." (389)

D) Counter-proof by the analysis of hallucination.
98. Hallucination incomprehensible for objective thought. Return to the hallucinatory phenomenon. 385b / 334b / 389b
99. The hallucinatory thing and the perceived thing. 389b / 338b / 394b
100. Both arise from a function deeper than knowledge. “Originary opinion.” 393b / 341b / 398b
- Urdoxa – the momentum which carries us beyond subjectivity (400)
  - Hallucination has the value of reality
    - Does not take its place in the stable and intersubjective world, i.e., "it lacks the fullness, the inner articulation which makes the real thing reside 'in itself', and act and exist by itself." (395)
  - The antepredicative world
    - A total style of its own for which each thing
"my confidence in reflection amounts in the last resort to my accepting and acting on the fact of temporality, and the fact of the world as the invariable framework of all illusion and disillusion: I know myself only in my inherence in time and in the world, that is, I know myself only in ambiguity." (402)