

Analecta Husserliana

The Yearbook of
Phenomenological Research

Volume CXXI



Eco-Phenomenology: Life, Human
Life, Post-Human Life in the
Harmony of the Cosmos

Edited by

William S. Smith

Jadwiga S. Smith

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Springer

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ISBN 978-3-319-77515-9

ISBN 978-3-319-77516-6 (eBook)

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77516-6>

Library of Congress Control Number: 2018943300

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Printed on acid-free paper

This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer International Publishing AG part of Springer Nature.

The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

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Auditory Phenomena and Human Life: Phenomenological Experience

Ineta Kivle

Abstract The present study analyzes auditory phenomena from the point of view of hermeneutical phenomenology and shows their interconnectedness with the understanding of *man, hearing and listening* within the context of human life as the horizon of meaningful sonority and silence. The central questions to be answered in this study are these: What is experienced as sound and sonority? How does a human see himself in inclusion of his being from where he listens, understands, and speaks? The study explores the classical standpoints of Husserl's phenomenology and other philosophical apprehensions which confirm that auditory phenomena is not to be apprehended solely as an isolated horizon but as being permeated by the visible, the perceptible, and the comprehensible.

Keywords Husserl · Sound · Auditory phenomena · Sonority · Silence

Auditory Phenomena Philosophically Considered

Philosophical interpretations of auditory phenomena¹ describe them using terminology² and explore them from standpoints that differ from the descriptions and methods used and standpoints assumed in other sciences and theorizing. Philosophers' interest in considering auditory phenomena as thinkable objects touches upon the differences and similarities between sound, music, voice, and speech, matters which are not to be found in the works of other theoreticians.

Auditory phenomena differ from each other.³ Therefore, to give an adequate description of them, one needs to take into consideration both the way the phenomenon is given in experience and the way we make use of philosophical approaches. In any case, to clarify auditory phenomena philosophically means to relate them to the experience one is going through and to view them as thinkable objects.

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Notes

1. In phenomenological discourse, sound, speech, and voice are called not audible but “auditory phenomena” whereas phenomenology reveals how sonority is constituted. The expression “audible phenomenon” is used more in the natural sciences and in the audio and information technology industries.
2. The phenomenological and hermeneutical approach to auditory phenomena are based on Husserl’s programmatic statements of phenomenology, Heidegger’s analyses of *Dasein*, and the methods of hermeneutical interpretation.
3. Sound, speech, voice, and music are organized auditory phenomena that differ from noise, crackling, or crashing. This study concentrates on sound and sonority. The phenomenology of music and voice requires a special philosophical approach and has been carried out by philosophers of sound and music Don Ihde, Thomas Clifton, Joseph Smith, Bruce Ellis Benson, etc. Music as the most complicated of organized auditory phenomena includes questions about art and historical tradition. However philosophical analyses of speech and voice is insinuated in the philosophy of language based on Wittgenstein’s cognitions, Heidegger’s ontology of language, Derrida’s critical analyses of Husserl’s views on language, etc.
4. All references to Husserl’s writings follow this standard form – (1.31) indicates the 31st section of the first of his books in the Works Cited list.

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