RIVISTA INTERNAZIONALE DI FILOSOFIA E PSICOLOGIA
DOI: 10.4453/rifp.2019.0011
ISSN 2039-4667; E-ISSN 2239-2629
Vol. 10 (2019), n.2, pp. 120-136

RICERCHE

Situating Attention and Habit in the Landscape of Affordances

Elisa Magrì[(α),(β)]

Ricevuto: 10 marzo 2019; accettato: 11 luglio 2019

Abstract This paper aims to situate the roles of attention and habit in contemporary approaches to embodied cognition with particular regard to the conceptualisation of affordances. While Chemero has argued that affordances have a relational character that rules out dispositions, Rietveld and Kiverstein have suggested that engaging with affordances amounts to exercising skills. By critically reconsidering the distinction between dispositions and abilities proposed by Chemero, as well as the standard theory of habit that underpins accounts of skilful coping (including Rietveld's and Dreyfus'), I propose to disambiguate habit from skill and to reassess the phenomenology of dispositions. Dispositions are motivational factors that depend on two elements: (i) sensitivity to context clues, which is regulated by habit and attention, and (ii) the positionality of the subject, which is inseparable from context-awareness. Drawing on Husserl's and Merleau-Ponty's insights, I argue that both (i) and (ii) can accommodate a dispositional view of affordances.
KEYWORDS: Habit; Attention; Affordances; Dispositions; Phenomenology; Embodied Cognition

Riassunto *Situare attenzione e abitudine nel panorama delle affordance* – L'articolo mira a situare i ruoli svolti dall'attenzione e dall'abitudine negli approcci contemporanei all'*embodied cognition*, con particolare attenzione alla concettualizzazione delle *affordance*. Se, un da un lato, Chemero ha sostenuto che l'*affordance* ha un carattere relazionale, che esclude le disposizioni, Rietveld e Kiverstein, dall'altro lato, mantengono che il coinvolgimento nell'*affordance* corrisponde all'esercizio di abilità pratiche (*skills*). Nel riconsiderare criticamente la distinzione fra disposizioni e abilità avanzata da Chemero, così come la concezione standard dell'abitudine che è alla base delle teorie di *skilful coping* (come quelle di Rietveld e Dreyfus), propongo di disambiguare l'abitudine dalle abilità e di rivalutare la fenomenologia delle disposizioni. Queste ultime sono elementi motivazionali che dipendono da due fattori: (i) sensibilità verso il contesto, che è governata dall'abitudine e dall'attenzione, e (ii) la posizionalità del soggetto, la quale è inseparabile dalla consapevolezza del contesto. Basandosi su Husserl e Merleau-Ponty, l'articolo difende l'ipotesi che sia (i) che (ii) possono soddisfare una concezione disposizionale dell'*affordance*.
Parole chiave: Abitudine; Attenzione; Disposizioni; Fenomenologia; Cognizione incarnata

[(α)]Philosophy Department, Morrisey College of Arts and Sciences, Boston College, Stokes Hall North, 140 Commonwealth Avenue - Chestnut Hill (MA) 02467 (USA)

[(β)]A.R.T.E.S. - Graduate School for the Humanities, Universität Köln, Albertus-Magnus-Platz – 50923 Köln (D)

E-mail: emagri@unikoeln.de; elisa.magri@bc.edu (✉)

Introduction

RADICAL EMBODIED COGNITIVE SCIENCE (HENCEFORTH RECS) represents a variety of extended cognitive science, which investigates cognition as a dynamical system of agents and environments. According to Anthony Chemero's description of RECS, «agents and environments form a unified, nondecomposable system, which is to say that they form a system whose behaviour cannot be modelled, even approximately, as a set of separate parts».[1] Chemero's argument is that RECS does not need to ground cognition on either representations or computation, as it provides explanations in terms of what the agent does (or might do) within a specific environment. In doing so, RECS employs the tools of dynamical systems theory to explain how incremental and transformative processes occur within the available context. While such processes underpin enduring changes in the environmental interactions, they also reflect the coherence and structural unity of the system as a whole. In this sense, RECS is successful when it provides equations that offer general counterfactual descriptions of the behaviour of the system as this unfolds over time, avoiding any kind of intermediary mechanisms, either computational or representational. Ultimately, on Chemero's view, RECS offers a framework that is as rigorous as Newtonian physics in its rejection of teleological-based explanations. [2] And yet RECS heavily revolves around the concept of affordances, a key notion of ecological psychology that defies the rigorous exactness of Newtonian physics.

Originally defined by Gibson as possibilities or opportunities for action, the concept of affordances is supposed to capture the interaction that takes place between the animal and the environment at the very level of perception. For Gibson, affordances are real, objective, and physical, and yet they are also meant to «cut across the dichotomy of subjective-objective and helps us to understand its inadequacy. It is equally a fact of the environment and a fact of behaviour. It is both physical and psychical, yet neither. An affordance points both ways, to the environment and to the observer».[3] As noted by Chemero, Gibson's description of affordances suffers from significant ambiguities, particularly as to whether affordances should be conceived in terms of animals' properties, as features of the environment, or in a relational way, as Chemero himself suggests. Indeed, for over a decade, Chemero has been defending a relational view of affordances that aims to do justice to the role of individual abilities in relation to the environment. In this paper, I will concentrate on some ambiguities that surround the conceptualisation of affordances with particular regard to the dimension of individual abilities. My objective is to retrieve and clarify the roles played by attention and habit in producing stable and goal-oriented dispositions across the perceptual field. As I will show, this view helps to clarify in what sense affordances depend on dispositional factors. In order to do so, I will first address a difficulty in Chemero's account before considering whether and how alternative views (such as Rietveld and Kiverstein's) suffice to explicate the relevance of abilities with respect to affordances.

On Chemero's view, affordances are not simply perceived features of the environment. They are relations that hold between abilities and features of the environment according to the structure: "Affords-*f* (feature, ability)". From this perspective, the mutuality between the animal and the environment is neither grounded on intrinsic features of the agent nor do they conform to a selectionist view of the environment (i.e. the thesis that ties affordances close to evolution by natural selection).[4] For Chemero, affordances are relational in that the unfolding of the system "brain-body-environment" is both necessary and sufficient in order to justify the movements of the agent within the environment as well as the relation of such movements to the environment and the agent. In this regard, Chemero draws a difference be-

tween abilities and dispositions, suggesting that only the former and not the latter are constitutive of affordances.

> The problem with seeing abilities as dispositions is that when coupled with the right enabling conditions, dispositions are guaranteed to become manifest. The soluble solid sugar will always dissolve in water in suitable conditions. This is not true of abilities. Having the ability to walk does not mean that one will not fall down even in the ideal conditions for walking. This is to point out that there is something inherently normative about abilities. Individuals with abilities are supposed to behave in particular ways, and they may fail to do so. Dispositions, on the other hand, never fail; they simply are or are not in the appropriate circumstances to become manifest.[5]

Chemero argues that abilities are «inherently normative» in that they may or may not be actualised in all possible circumstances. An example of Chemero's distinction is the following:

> [E]ven on a firm surface, with no wind, while perfectly healthy and sober, I may fail in my attempt to climb a step that affords climbing for me. This is inconceivable in the case of dispositions, which necessarily become manifest whenever their actualizing circumstances are present.[6]

Chemero's example touches on a relevant point, namely the fact that abilities presuppose the mutuality between animal and environment. On Chemero's view, while affordances represent opportunities for action, not all of them solicit actual action in the proper circumstances. As Käufer and Chemero put it in their book, being reminded that you can pull your neighbour's hair will cause you to attend to the affordance but will not move you to act on that affordances.[7] Affordances may not translate into actions in that they provide a range of opportunities for action that animal behaviour may not take up. However, one may still wonder whether dispositions and abilities can be differentiated as neatly as Chemero argues. After all, dispositions, like abilities, do not necessarily manifest themselves in all appropriate circumstances.

To be sure, the vocabulary of abilities and dispositions is quite elusive. In philosophy of language and metaphysics, the link between dispositions and conditionals, which generalises the ascription of dispositions on the basis of conditional accounts, has been questioned more than once.[8] The main reason is that simple conditionals are not compatible with commonplace observations such as «pieces of wood, disposed to burn when heated, do not burn when heated in a vacuum chamber».[9] The core idea of such objections is that the ascription of dispositions in terms of conditionals (*N is disposed to M when C*) cannot account for the fact that dispositions may fail to become manifest even when their conditions of manifestation obtain. To correct this, Fara proposes replacing the ascription of dispositions with habitual sentences like "N Ms when C" (e.g. Mary smokes when she gets home), which is compatible with the existence of occasions on which Mary returns from work but does not smoke.[10] Such objections to the equivalence of dispositions and conditionals posit an important issue to Chemero's account of dispositions as well, for conditionals cannot help discriminate between dispositions and abilities. At the same time, Fara's proposal to replace conditionals with habitual sentences is indicative of an important overlap between the language of dispositions and that of habitual actions. To clarify such an affinity, however, it is essential to look at dispositions from a different standpoint, one that does not take dispositions to be properties of an object (as it is predominant in philosophy of language as well as in Chemero's account of dispositions) but rather motivational and relational factors that are context-sensitive. Doing so will help

clarify the adaptability of dispositions, particularly with regard to their relation to the environment.

Since my analysis will be primarily dedicated to show in what sense abilities count as dispositions, thereby being relevant for the conceptualisation of affordances, I will not consider in this paper the semantics of dispositions. My focus will rather be the relation between dispositions and context-sensitivity from a phenomenological angle. More specifically, I will rely on phenomenological insights that tackle the role played by habit and attention in forming dispositions that are sensitive to the felt qualities of the particular situation. Accordingly, dispositions will be considered as the building blocks of abilities, depending on the interplay of habit and attention for their deployment in appropriate circumstances. As I will explain, dispositions produce attentional stances that calibrate and modulate the perceptual field in a way that is relevant for the agent who takes up the solicitation to act. In this way, I will defend – *contra* Chemero – a dispositional account of affordances, which however will reinforce Chemero's thesis concerning the relationality of affordances.

By considering the structure of dispositions in terms of habit and attention I also intend to highlight the role of habit and disambiguate it from a specific class of abilities, namely skills. Over the last decades, the language of skilful coping has often replaced habit, to the point that the two concepts are not clearly distinguished. This is what I call "the standard theory of habit", which I illustrate in §1, and that bears important implications for the notion of affordances. For example, most recently, skilful coping has been proposed to conceptualise affordances. According, for example, to Rietveld and Kiverstein, «when an individual engages adequately with an affordance this is often an exercise of skill. In acquiring a skill, the individual becomes increasingly expert at responding adequately and appropriately to the actions a particular situation invites. He becomes progressively able to perform both skilfully and unreflectively without giving the matter of how he should act any thought».[11] For Rietveld and Kiverstein, affordances are expressive of what Noë calls action in perception,[12] namely the view that perceptual experience is enacted as thought and action. On this basis, Rietveld and Kiverstein draw a distinction between the existence of affordances and their demand character or solicitation. The former is related to the individual's current concern, whilst the latter consists in motivations to act, which come into play through a state of bodily readiness once the individual improves her grip on the particular situation.

While Rietveld and Kiverstein's argument is consistent with the enactivist approach to embodied cognition, according to which agents rely on sensorimotor skills that inform and enable them to perceive, the case of affordances needs to be reconsidered. The problem in this case is that it equates the motivational force of affordances with the mastery of a skill, such as playing the violin or speaking Japanese. An implication of this assumption would be that affordances should have a goal-oriented structure that aims at continuous improvement.[13] However, this contrasts with our everyday experience of inhabiting a world of practical significance to which we are sensitive without always aiming to improve our interaction with it. Affordances are real and motivational even when the agent does not take up the solicitation to act or exercise any skill in the particular situation.

In the following, I intend to reconsider in what sense affordances build on abilities that count as dispositions, and why dispositions need not to be reduced to skills. In particular, I argue that a dispositional account of affordance helps explain why affordances solicit the agent to act without necessarily prompting them to action. In my view, the solicitation to act is a motivational factor that depends on two elements: (i) sensitivity to context cues, which is regulated by habit and attention, and (ii) the positionality of the

subject, which is inseparable from context-awareness. As I will argue, both (i) and (ii) can accommodate a dispositional account of affordances that is phenomenologically inspired. I will proceed by critically considering the standard theory of habit and skills, before tackling the roles of attention and habit from a phenomenological perspective.

The standard theory of habit

A common assumption about habit is that it reduces attention and saves effort. Normally, this assumption is accompanied and sustained by another thesis, namely the view that attention works selectively, like a spotlight. By reducing conscious attention, habit enables us to perform actions more efficiently and quickly. Both theses constitute what I should like to call the standard theory of habit and attention, which features strongly in psychology and popular culture, as well as in contemporary accounts of skilful coping. To be sure, studies on habit have consistently increased over the last decades with an upsurge of publications that aim to teach how to increase productivity by mastering habit.[14] The standard theory is supported by psychological literature that characterises habits as interfacing with goals in guiding behaviour.[15]

According to this model, habits and goals interact constantly through habit on different levels. First, there is exposure to context cues, which activate mental representations and lead to habit formation. Second, people tailor their behaviour to current circumstances, increasing their reliance on habits where external factors impact their ability to pursue goals deliberately. Third, people can make inferences about their habits and frequent behaviour. These findings suggest that habits are learned automatic responses with specific features that include (a) activation by recurrent context cues, (b) plasticity (e.g. habits activate a range of responses and not just one form of well-known response), (c) sensitivity to rewards associated with context cues that is independent from sensitivity to the outcome of the action, and (d) lack of deliberation: when acting out of habits, the ready response reduces deliberation and narrows the focus.

While the standard view emphasises that habits become instinctual or automatic once ties with the external world are cemented, the role of attention is often taken for granted and reduced to a spotlight that simply registers environmental cues in order to routinise them.[16] From this perspective, it is not clear how recognition of context cues and sensitivity to changes in the environment are activated and consistently involved in the performance of habitual actions if all that is required of attention is exclusive concern with the task to be accomplished. However, any habitual action, like putting the keys on the shelf when I come back home, is compatible with a range of situations in which the habitual action can be delayed or even altered (e.g. I may leave the keys in my pocket because my hands are busy with bags and books, or because my jacket is soaked and I need to take it off first). Such changes in habitual action result from changes in the patterns and intensity of attention in the particular situation. Attentional shifts dispose us differently towards the situation, affecting not only the specific instance of habitual action that takes place in the particular situation but also the overall disposition that produces the repetition of the habitual action over time. This means that habit cannot do without attentional shifts that *recalibrate* the focus of the action in the field rather than *narrowing* it. From this point of view, accounts of habit that privilege the performance of habitual action and sensitivity to rewards over context sensitivity seem more concerned with the analysis of routines and skills than with habit as the overarching disposition that structures the phenomenal field, enabling skills and abilities.

Before considering how the standard theory of habit resurfaces in contemporary accounts of skilful coping, let me explain why the so-called plasticity of habit fails to capture

the complex interrelation of habit and attention. William James was one of the first thinkers to acknowledge that the relation between person and context is crucial for understanding how habit works, and it was precisely in relation to this problem that he provided one of the most fascinating accounts of the plasticity of the brain. According to James, «plasticity, in the wide sense of the word, means the possession of a structure weak enough to yield to an influence, but strong enough not to yield all at once».[17] For James, organic matter, and particularly nervous tissue, is malleable and receptive towards external stimuli. The plasticity of the nervous system consists in modifications of the neural paths that travel between sensory inputs and muscular responses. To put it very simply, nerve-currents are plastic in that they rearrange themselves. For example, once a neural path is formed, it tends to travel more quickly a second time. In this sense, James argued that habits arise as concatenated and organised discharges in the nerve-centres, producing reflexes that hold more strongly the more beaten the neural track is (see Figure 1).

According to James, for each habitual muscular contraction A, B, C, D, E, F, G, e.g. typing, playing an instrument or riding a bike, there is a respective sensation (*a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, *e*, *f*) that is excited when the muscular movement is performed. When the series ABCDEFG is being learned, each movement is tested before moving to the next, hence we have a distinct sequence of sensations *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, *e*, *f*. By contrast, in habitual action, sensations awaken muscular responses in a loop following a first impulse (V), be it a perception, a thought or a volition, which ignites the sequence of movements to be undertaken. As soon as the movement A is produced, sensation *a* awakens B, whose sensation awakens C and so forth.

On James' view, in the course of habitual action, sensations anchor the body in the exercise of the action while our attention is completely off. As James puts it, «they are sensations to which we are usually inattentive, but which immediately call our attention if they go wrong».[18] This means that, in the course of habitual action, attention to relevant movements is diminished, for it would otherwise hinder the execution of the action. In this sense, plasticity is a capacity of the nervous system to develop reflexes that can be appropriately conditioned through repetition and exercise. This is why habit comprises a significant variety of phenomena, including routines, skills, rituals, particular forms of expressions (e.g. mannerism), and collective forms of agency. Ultimately, however, for James, the philosophy of habit is «in the first instance, a chapter in physics rather than in physiology or in psychology»,[19] for «habit simplifies the movements required to achieve a given result, makes them more accurate and diminishes fatigue».[20] Accordingly, the plasticity of habit consists in diminishing conscious attention and in facilitating self-preservation and self-

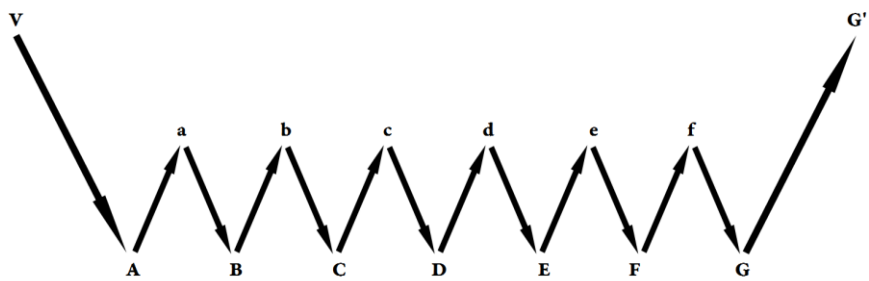

Figure 1: A representation of habitual chain, adapted from W. JAMES, *Principles of Psychology*, cit., p. 116.

conservation.

While James acknowledges that habit extends beyond skills, influencing moral character and social action, he nonetheless holds the view that, on an individual level, habit is a mechanism that works by reducing selective attention and saving energy. Yet the reward mechanism underlying the physiology of habit can hardly explain the consistency of habit in calibrating attention and modulating responses that transform muscular contractions in goal-oriented action. If all that is required of habit is repetition and reduced efforts, how can habits sustain the constitution of repeated schemes of action that extend over time and that require a more complex sensitivity and attunement to reason and events? This is precisely the element that is most problematic in the standard theory of habit, which is also embedded in contemporary accounts of skilful coping, and particularly in Dreyfus' theory.

The main problem inherent in accounts of skilful coping concerns the internalisation of norms and practical rules. For Dreyfus, internalisation is mainly a process built in a practice. As such, it does not require any conscious recognition, although experts are nonetheless sensitive to changes and shifts in the environment. As Dreyfus wrote in his well-known opening address on the myth of the mental: «It is misleading to think that the rules of the game must be internalized, that is, stored in the mind. Rather these rules are normally experienced in the background as a limit on what appears as worth doing. In this way, the expert is sensitive to the rules of the game even if he is not following the rules consciously or unconsciously».[21] According to Dreyfus, the expert must be "sensitive" to the rules of the game in order to be able to track the truth in all possible circumstances without having to deliberate on them. Consider, however, one of Dreyfus' most paradigmatic examples:

> Approaching a curve under wet conditions at a high speed, the expert not only feels that he or she is going too fast, but simply does, with the brake or accelerator pedal, whatever is appropriate. The unconscious, involved relation of the driver to the road is never broken by detached, conscious thought. [...] In this idealized picture of skilful coping it might seem that experts needn't think and are always right. Such, of course, is not the case. While most expert performance is ongoing and nonreflective, the best of experts, when time permits, think before they act. Normally, however, they don't think about their rules for choosing goals or their reasons for choosing possible actions, since if they did they would regress to the competent level. Rather, they reflect upon the goal or perspective that seems evident to them and upon the action that seems appropriate to achieving their goal. We call this reflection "deliberative rationality" [...]. It seems that a beginner makes inferences using strict rules and features just like a computer, but that with talent and a great deal of involved experience the beginner develops into an expert who sees intuitively what to do without applying rules and making inferences at all.[22]

Dreyfus differentiates between the various stages that lead to the formation of expertise, including the beginner's practice (the novice), the transition to expertise (e.g. competence), proficiency, and expertise. On his view, different levels of deliberative rationality may be involved at each stage depending on the level of theoretical understanding and practice that are required for the mastery of that skill. The expert (unlike the novice, the competent, and the proficient subject) has the ability to discriminate between different tasks and situations, identifying those that demand specific kinds of action. When things proceed normally, the expert does not need to make any decision and relies solely on her skills. Indeed, entering the dimension of "deliberative rationality", for Dreyfus, amounts to engaging with inferences that

break with the continuity and the flow of skilful involvement. Yet Dreyfus also maintains that the expert will reflect on the goals or perspective that seems «evident», as well as upon the action that seems most «appropriate» for achieving the goal, despite not thinking about the rules. In a way, this means that knowledge of the goals requires some kind of reflection, which is not necessary when it comes to applying the rules.

To be sure, the theoretical knowledge underlying the acquisition of any skill must be acquired by the expert and internalised. This means that the driver does not need to think about her knowledge of automotive engineering in order to know how to hit the brakes. But she will need to know whether hitting the brakes is appropriate or not in the specific circumstances, and in this case her attunement to the situation must be informed by the appraisal of her goals and perspective. Yet, for Dreyfus, such an appraisal would count as detached meditation if it overrides the application of rules. As Dreyfus puts it, «as the competent performer becomes more and more emotionally involved in his or her tasks, it becomes increasingly difficult to draw back and to adopt the detached rule-following stance of the beginner».[23] It follows that, even in exceptional situations, the expert knows what she has to do without having to deliberate about the rules.

However, if the expert, unlike the beginner, is so involved in the situation that she can rely on her skills without deliberating, how can the expert driver of Dreyfus' former example know when she has to hit the brakes? To put it differently, how will her goals or perspective be *evident* to the expert and her action appear *appropriate* if any understanding of the application of the rules in the particular situation counts as detached meditation? Surprisingly, at this point, Dreyfus maintains that «it is innate and natural for driving behaviour to be unconsciously enhanced through experience by synaptic brain changes without these changes taking the form of conscious or even unconscious rule-modification».[24] Ultimately, it appears that, on Dreyfus' view, the transition from competence to proficiency and expertise rests on the automaticity of habit, namely on James' theory of the plasticity of the brain, according to which synaptic modifications «caused by actions experienced with involvement»[25], reinforce and improve one's involvement in action.

The problem with this view is that it accounts for motor flexibility but it fails to explain sensitivity to relevant context cues and demands. To be sensitive to the rules of the game, as Dreyfus writes, means that the agent is capable not only of responding to sensorimotor solicitations, but to also appraise them. This implies that rules are not stored in the back of the mind but inform the horizon of sense in which the action is carried out. Furthermore, these rules need to be held by the subject in order to be applied. Whether or not the subject deliberates on such rules, the abidance of the self is an essential component of the subject's response.[26] By contrast, on Dreyfus' view, the expert driver who is approaching a curve under wet conditions at a high speed not only feels that she is going too fast, but simply does, with the brake or accelerator pedal, whatever is appropriate of her. In a way, Dreyfus argues that the driver responds efficiently to the affordances of the specific situation, but he overlooks the fact that such response to the situation involves the appraisal of the agent, which informs the capacity of resisting, shifting, or gauging one's involvement in action.

It should be noted that the driver that realises that she is going too fast does not hit the brakes unless the speed of the car enters the focus of her attention. What belonged, until then, to the margins of the subject's consciousness emerges in the action of hitting the brakes as a centre of reference. In this sense, the relation between focus and background or between centre of reference and margins depends on the perceived relevance of the situation. Suppose that the driver is accelerating because she is taking her sick son to the hospital. Contrary to the solic-

itation to slow down that comes to her through her skilful driving, she may accelerate and keep going at a higher speed. In this case, the deployment of expertise is strictly dependent on the configuration of the horizon on the basis of the perceived relevance of the situation, as well as on the capacity of the agent to resist her involvement and change her response due to a better understanding of the circumstances. This means that the exercise of skills presupposes a more complex attunement of the subject to the context of experience, involving a dispositional orientation that is embedded with understanding and reason. In this light, sensitivity to context cues is not a shortcut for synaptic modifications but a quality of a more fundamental disposition to appraise and to respond to the demands of the situation.

Rietveld and Kiverstein partly address the relevance of sensitivity and attention in their analysis of affordances. However, on their view, attention turns out to be part of a training process that aims at improving the efficiency of skills: «the process of educating attention crucially involves other practitioners who selectively introduce the novice to the right aspects of the environment and their affordances».[27] In order to illustrate the relation between affordances and skills, Rietveld and Kiverstein refer to Ingold's description of hunting practices:

> The novice hunter learns by accompanying more experienced hands in the woods. As he goes about, he is instructed what to look out for, and his attention is drawn to subtle cues that he might otherwise fail to notice: in other words, he is led to develop a sophisticated perceptual awareness of properties of his surroundings and of the possibilities they afford for action. For example, he learns to register those qualities of surface texture that enable one to tell, merely from touch, how long ago an animal left its imprint in the snow, and how fast it was travelling. [...T]he instructions the novice hunter receives – to watch out for this, attend to that, and so on – only take on meaning in the context of his engagement with the environment.[28]

On this view, the novice's engagement with the environment is subject to normative assessment as better or worse, as more or less correct given the specific demands of the situation. Skilled agents collaborate with the social and material surroundings in order to learn how to deal with their specific settings. Skilful coordination is, then, for Rietveld and Kiverstein, a result of a socio-cultural practice that matches a form of life. However, this account tends to place too strong an emphasis on the social normativity of affordances, thereby inheriting the limits of Dreyfus' view of apprenticeship. For Ingold, the education of attention is mainly the result of training, whereby the novice is either given instructions in advance or informed in a more robust and conceptual way about the task to be attended. As a result, the role of attention becomes that of a spotlight that habit routinises in order to make it more efficient.[29] Moreover, the mutuality between animal and environment appears to be constrained by social norms, which end up exerting social pressure. By contrast, the abilities involved in affordances seem to require a certain level of spontaneity and adaptability that matches the positionality of the agent prior to the internalisation of social practices.

In this sense, affordances are compatible with a more fine-grained account of both habit and attention as crucial components of abilities. On the one hand, attention is not a mental selector that is under the conscious control of the agent, but an affective and horizontal activity that holds together the animal and the environment. Thanks to attention, sensitivity to context cues is distributed and organised in the perceptual field. On the other hand, the habitualisation of attention cannot be reduced to training or apprenticeship. From a phenomenological point of view, habituality influences attention without diminishing it. Furthermore, as I will explain, habit

ascribes to the subject a basic positionality that precedes and grounds the internalisation of social norms.

Situating attention and habit

From a phenomenological perspective, the standard theory of habit fails to characterise the role of attention and its relation to abilities and skills. The phenomenological view revolves around the key insight that attention is a modification of the intentional directedness to objects, and it spans from conscious concentration to a broader and affective form of receptivity to stimuli (i.e. not involving any reflective effort on the part of the subject)[30]. Importantly, attention should not be considered in a mere theoretical fashion, as if it were only concerned with seeing and grasping objects. This aspect can be further elucidated in light of the example that Merleau-Ponty offers in *The Structure of Behaviour* to explain in what sense the objects of perception are experienced as realities and not as ideal entities, and how practical intentions permeate the field of perception. While in *The Structure of Behaviour* Merleau-Ponty's argument is not meant to address attention, the example of the player in action in the football pitch is very helpful to understand it. For the player, the football field is not an ideal term that can give rise to a multiplicity of perspectives. On the contrary, the pitch is pervaded with "lines of forces" (the yard lines) and articulated in sectors (the "openings" between the adversaries) that are context-dependent, giving a typical style to the horizon. To put it with Merleau-Ponty's words, «each manoeuvre undertaken by the player modifies the character of the field and establishes in it new lines of force in which the action in turn unfolds and is accomplished, again altering the phenomenal field».[31]

As Wehrle and Breyer have pointed out, the player cannot perceive the field of action in isolation from her practical intentions; «[the field] is no static object, rather constitutes a holistic perceptual situation».[32] Merleau-Ponty emphasises that perception has a style, which is established and modified through the unfolding of the agent's actions. Perception reaches its object through continuous adjustments of the perceptual horizon, which involves not just spatiotemporal alterations, but also changes in the salience of the event as this is perceived and felt by the agent. However, this does not produce any top-down view of attention-control mechanism. The perceptual situation is holistically organised in the sense that the relation between focus and periphery adjusts itself dynamically in the course of the action. Far from being exclusively concerned with the yard lines by ignoring all the other elements of the context, the player is horizontally aware of both the lines of forces available to her, as well as of the modifications that the sectors undergo as a result of each manoeuvre she makes.[33]

For example, when the player opens the match by kicking the ball, her horizon is simultaneously reconfigured in a such a way that the player is attuned not only to her possibilities of action and movement, but also to the atmosphere permeating the lines of force (including, for example, her awareness of the humidity of the soil, local weather etc.) as well as to her personal and affective involvement in action (e.g. her awareness of her family being there to watch her). Even though such background information does not occupy the player's reflective engagement, she is nonetheless sensitive to it while attending to the task of opening the match. In this sense, a broader view of attentiveness demarcates the lines of force of the perceptual field in terms of relevance, structuring the perceived environment in a holistic and dynamic way as to include a theme, which centres on the task to be carried out and that demands concentrated attention, and a peripheral horizon, which solicits the agent on an affective level despite the agent not focusing on it.[34]

From this point of view, attention is an

activity that accompanies every experience, and it is inseparable from the constitution of a horizon that is embedded with kinaesthetic and affective features. This means that the link between theme and periphery is not a dualistic relation between two independent items, but rather a continuous and unitary process that unfolds over time, following the motivational ties that are associated with the present experiences (e.g. time consciousness, sensory-motor capacities, personal interests, and so forth). It is precisely in this respect that attention is capable of producing a disposition or *habitus* in which we are not directed exclusively or preferentially to one object, but rather we are disposed towards the affective rays that dynamically articulate and shift the salience of the perceptual environment.[35]

This can be further elucidated in light of Husserl's critique of John Stuart Mill, which provides further elements as to why attention disposes towards the environment rather than exerting a top-down control over it. According to Mill, we attend only to those things that capture our interest, leaving aside all that requires an effort of attention. On Mill's view, anyone who observes her own mental operations would easily become familiar with the law of obliviscence, according to which we pay attention only to those ideas that coalesce together in virtue of association, forgetting all those members of the group that are unattended by consciousness.[36] For instance, after reading a chapter of a book, we do not have any recollection of the printed letters and syllables that passed before us. For Mill, forgetting certain details or features of objects is consistent with the tendency of some ideas to drop out of consciousness.

As Mill puts it, «our consciousness of them [of those ideas that drop out] becomes more and more faint and evanescent, until no effort of attention can recall it into distinctness, or at last recall it at all».[37] From this, the law of attention follows, according to which: «we attend only to that which, either on its own or on some other account, interests us. In consequence, what interests us only momentarily we only attend to momentarily, and do not go on attending to it, when that, for the sake of which alone it interested us, has been attained».[38] Essentially, Mill anticipated James' findings, arguing that attention is a mental phenomenon that works selectively by focusing on relevant tasks and blocking out irrelevant stimuli.

In objecting to Mill's psychological view, Husserl argues that the objects we are conscious of are not simply *in* consciousness as in a box, and that a form of intending (*Vermeinen*) is always present, whether we have an intuition, fancy, remember, or think in an empirical fashion. Such an underlying form of intending, encompassing both intuition and thought, coincides with attention, which is sensitive to the features of the perceived object as well as to the elements of the horizon. [39] This means that, in reading or engaging in any of the skills mentioned by Mill, we are also aware of elements of the surroundings without noticing them. From a Husserlian perspective, it is possible to distinguish between potential attentiveness and actual attentiveness. In the first sense, attentiveness is a form of attunement to the environment, underpinning the capacity to take up solicitations on an affective and sensory-motor level. In the second sense, passive attentiveness evolves into a form of alert attentiveness, whereby the agent notices elements of the surroundings without yet ascribing any thoughts to her own engagement with it. For example, when reading a book in the sitting room with an open window, I am aware of the sounds coming from the street as well as of the movements of other persons in the same room. While my attention is focused on the book, I am passively disposed to respond to potentially new solicitations coming from things or subjects within or outside the sitting room. And yet I do not need to entertain the thought "I am reading in the sitting room" in order to be attentive to the particular situation.

For Husserl, these two forms of atten-

tiveness are central to clarifying why consciousness requires a broader involvement in the context of experience. Only in this way does attentiveness provide the ground for active identification and recognition. Indeed, without attunement or disposition towards the environment, there could not be any active recognition or identification of perceivable objects in the field of perception. It follows that attending to an object of presentation prefigures «an attitude» (*Stellungnahme*), [40] namely the positionality of the perceiver towards the environment, which provides the foundation for objective description and for identification in general.[41] What links together these different forms of attentiveness (i.e. attention as a broad disposition, alert attentiveness, and conscious identification) is precisely the positionality of the self, which manifests itself as an affective tendency, later identified – in Husserl's genetic phenomenology – as interest.

Generally speaking, interest is the feeling of a lack, leading to a tension that wants to be satisfied in further perceptions.[42] Unlike Mill's identification of interest with effort, Husserl argues that for any perceivable element there is a striving, an affective tension on the part of consciousness. Naturally, the awakening of the striving depends upon one's prior experiences with the same or similar object of experience, while being open to always new presentations. In this regard, it is noteworthy that Husserl emphasises in *Ideas I* that every perception is necessarily surrounded by a «foggy horizon, never to be fully determined».[43] As Dwyer puts it, «perceptual absence pervades perceptual presence».[44] The determinability of experience is partly influenced and conditioned by prior experiences and habits, and partly open to new modifications and solicitations available in the present context. This means that the elements that belong to the periphery are not left unattended, despite the fact that they do not occupy the focus of attention. Husserl's view is that attention permeates in different degrees our whole perceptual experience as a form of interest, namely as a feeling or affective tension that drives experience. It follows that any perception that appears devoid of attention or interest is actually a perception with a low level of interest. Thus, the elements of the background are those for which the striving of consciousness is less intense, and yet attention makes us alert to potential new modifications of the thematic field. From this point of view, attention is responsible for the modulation and continuity of our perceptual experience.

Such a view bears important implications for the understanding of habit as well, for attention and habit are strictly interwoven. As noted by proponents of skilful coping, attention can be the result of training, and one of the most relevant features of habituality is the feeling of familiarity that accompanies the performance of a habitual action, whether this is a skill or a routine. However, the conflation of habit and skills often leads to neglect the dispositional role of habit, prompting the identification of the feeling of familiarity with the confidence that comes through repetition and expertise or with the reward of automatic action. By contrast, habit precedes skills as the broad disposition that underlies the acquisition of different abilities. In so doing, habit is inseparable from attentiveness because it modulates its affective intensity, making it more receptive or less receptive to context cues. It follows that habit does not reduce attention, but rather it organises the depth of the margins as to produce a stable and goal-oriented disposition across the whole thematic field. In this way, habit institutes a holistic and horizontal theme in which it is possible to attend to a different object while being engaged in the habitual action itself. For example, I may be thinking of my list of things to do while brushing my teeth.

Accordingly, habit represents a durable disposition that shapes the affective horizon of the experience. Habit works not by sheer automatism (e.g. by routinizing actions and movements), but rather by responding to the

affordances of the situations in a way that is open to alterations and changes. The specific responsiveness of habit comes to light when one considers that habit establishes a felt stance towards the situation. Basically, when I act out of habit, I also posit the horizon of sense which I am navigating as a durable and consistent reality until something else will change or modify my certainty. Reading or playing can be performed smoothly and without focusing on the single acts that underpin them because the perceptual field is held together by habit. This is less the result of a well-ingrained mechanism than the reproduction of an act whose actuality and consistency is established by the felt positionality of the subject. From this perspective, habit disposes us to act uniformly and coherently in virtue of the assent of the subject to adhere to a certain course of action. As a result of this, it appears that the «link between normativity at the level of the expert's socio-cultural practice and the individual's situated and lived normativity» is not to be exclusively grounded on the skills and concerns that the expert brings to the situation,[45] but rather on the positionality of the self who abides by the standards and rules incorporated in the exercise of those very skills.

On Husserlian terms, habit is subject to a form of normative assessment that is not directly governed by social norms or practices, but to the individual positionality that informs our engagement with the environment. This also means that, for Husserl, the skilled agent is not necessarily a novice who has been instructed to pay attention to relevant features of the environment, but a subject who is drawn by her own interest to engage with her environment and that, in doing so, holds on to an attitude of verification (e.g. driven by her appraisal of the situation). Accordingly, on Husserl's view, it is possible to explain in what sense the expert resists and modifies her involvement in the course of action. She does so because the horizon of sense in which the action is carried out is permeated with context cues that call for her response and appraisal. If such a response is dubious or uncertain, the intrinsic certainty that permeates the subject's disposition will be affected, and the course of action will be consequently interrupted, changed, or altered whether or not it is a case of skilful action.

To conclude, a phenomenological perspective allows an exploration of habit as the disposition that regulates individual sensitivity and attentiveness to the demands of the specific situations. Without an account of habit as disposition to respond to affordances, abilities and skills would lack sensitivity to context cues as well as to changes and variations of demands. As I have argued in contrast to the standard view of habit as well as to contemporary accounts of skilful coping, attention and habit represent the building blocks of abilities.[46] As such, they are responsible for our attunement to events and situations in the landscape of affordances without producing sheer routinisation or apprenticeship. On the contrary, the investigation of attention and habit brings to light the intrinsic positionality of the self in its relation to the environment.

Conclusions

I have argued that the conceptualisation of affordances requires a broader view of attention and habit in terms of dispositions. Attention organises the kinaesthetic field, facilitating the discrimination of elements in the thematic horizon and making us sensitive to context cues as well as to the different possibilities for action afforded by the environment. On this view, habit unifies and organises the attentional field in a way that is open to change and revision. Considered in its broader significance and not merely as a selective function, attention and habit turn out to be fundamental for the exercise of abilities because they enable interaction with affordances. To be sure, climbing a step is an action afforded by the environment as well as by the abilities of the perceiver. And yet an agent may fail to exercise her abilities depending not only on changes in the environ-

ment but also because of changes in her disposition, which is modulated by habit and attention prior to the acquisition of skills.

If the difference between abilities and dispositions can be recast in light of the roles of habit and attention, then RECS does not need to rule out dispositions. On the contrary, RECS needs the dispositional function of habituality in order to justify how affordances entail sensitivity to context cues as well as adaptability to changes and modifications of the surrounding. In this sense, there may be room for a dispositional account of affordances, which is compatible with Gibson's and Chemero's thesis regarding the mutuality between animals and environment. Such an account places normativity neither on the side of social norms nor on a selectionist view of the environment, but rather on the dispositional role of attention and habit, i.e. on the intrinsic positionality of the perceiver in the environment, which brings forth her own possibilities for action and movement.

Acknowledgments

I discussed earlier versions of this paper at the Annual Conference of the *British Society for the History of Philosophy* in Durham in April 2018 as well as in *A Workshop on and with Tony Chemero* at University College Dublin in June 2018. I wish to thank Tony Chemero and all the participants in both talks for stimulating and engaging conversations on the topic of this article. I am also indebted to two anonymous reviewers of *Rivista internazionale di Filosofia e Psicologia* for helpful and constructive feedback.

Notes

[1] A. CHEMERO, *Radical Embodied Cognitive Science,* MIT Press, Cambridge (MA) 2009, p. 31.
[2] *Ivi*, p. 70.
[3] J.J. GIBSON, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception,* Taylor and Francis, New York 1986, p. 129.
[4] A. CHEMERO, *An Outline of a Theory of Affordances*, in: «Ecological Psychology», vol. XV, n. 2, 2003, pp. 181-195. For a selectionist account of affordances, see E.S. REED, *Encountering the World. Toward an Ecological Approach,* Oxford University Press, New York/Oxford 1996. According to Reed, natural selection not only fixes certain patterns of behaviour but also creates functionally specific variability. On this view, Reed argues that affordances are concrete and embodied features of a habitat, and they create selection pressure on the behaviour of individual organisms. For an assessment of Reed's account, which reconsiders the integration of affordances in evolutionary theory, see R. WITHAGEN, M. WERMESKERKEN, *The Role of Affordances in the Evolutionary Process Reconsidered: A Niche Construction Perspective*, in: «Theory & Psychology», vol. XX, n. 4, 2010, pp. 489-510.
[5] A. CHEMERO, *Radical Embodied Cognitive Science,* cit., p. 145.
[6] *Ivi*, p. 190.
[7] See S. KÄUFER, A. CHEMERO, *Phenomenology: An Introduction*, Polity Press, Malden 2015.
[8] See in particular C.B. MARTIN, *Dispositions and Conditionals*, in: «The Philosophical Quarterly», vol. XLIV, n. 1, 1994, pp. 1-8 and M. FARA, *Dispositions and Habituals*, in: «Noûs», vol. XXXIX, n. 1, 2005, pp. 43-82.
[9] M. FARA, *Dispositions and Habituals*, cit., p. 43.
[10] See *ivi*, pp. 46-47.
[11] E. RIETVELD, J. KIVERSTEIN, *A Rich Landscape of Affordances*, in: «Ecological Psychology», vol. XXVI, n. 4, 2014, pp. 325-352, here p. 334.
[12] A. NOË, *Action in Perception*, MIT Press, Cambridge (MA) 2004.
[13] This is what Annas calls the "need to learn" and "drive to aspire" that are distinctive of skilful action. See J. ANNAS, *Intelligent Virtue*, Cambridge University Press, Oxford 2011, pp. 16-51.
[14] A prominent example in popular culture is C. DUHIGG, *The Power of Habit. Why we do What we do in Life and Business,* Random House, New York 2012. The core idea of this book is quite simple and straightforward, as it builds on the notion of reward mechanism that lies at the basis of the so-called habitual loop. On this view, an original trigger tells the brain to go into automatic mode; then a routine follows, which can be physical, mental or emotional, and finally comes the reward, which helps the brain remembering how to reactivate the loops in appropriate similar circumstances in the future. On this basis, Duhigg links habituation and addiction: since the brain cannot tell the difference between bad and good

habits, as it is driven by the reward, habits are ultimately neurological routines that overpower conscious reflection and control.

[15] See W. WOOD, D. RÜNGER, *Psychology of Habit*, in: «Annual Review of Psychology», vol. LXVII, 2016, pp. 289-314.

[16] This view of attention is typical of accounts of habit as automaticity, starting with Ryle, who famously opposed habits to skills, suggesting that the former are mere reflexes whilst the latter require an intelligent execution based on care, self-control, and attention to conditions and instructions (G. RYLE, *The Concept of Mind* (1949), Penguin Books, Harmondsworth 2000, pp. 46-47). Attention is not accounted for by B. POLLARD, *Explaining Actions with Habits*, in: «American Philosophical Quarterly», vol. XLIII, n. 1, 2006, pp. 57-69, who however maintains that habits are essential for action and they do not dispense us with responsibility despite being automatic. More recently, Duskos has proposed a more sophisticated and nuanced account of the automaticity of habit, which centres on the distinction between the impulsivity of habits and the spontaneousness of skills. On Duskos' account, the impulsivity of habit is insensitive with respect to "how" the habitual action is carried out. Unlike skills, which are spontaneous and attentive to the peculiar circumstances of the occasion, habits involve sheer repetition and routine, hence they dispense with attention. Duskos' contrast between habits and skills is supported by psychological literature, but it ends up reinforcing Ryle's original claim, assuming that attention works only as focused or selective attention. See C. DUSKOS, *The Spontaneousness of Skill and the Impulsivity of Habit*, in: «Synthese», 2017, in press - doi: 10.1007/s11229-017-1658-7.

[17] W. JAMES, *The Principles of Psychology* (1890), Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA)/London 1981, p. 110.

[18] *Ivi*, p. 123.1

[19] *Ivi,* p. 110.

[20] *Ivi*, p. 117.

[21] H.L. DREYFUS, *Overcoming the Myth of the Mental: How Philosophers Can Profit from the Phenomenology of Everyday Expertise*, in: «Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association», vol. LXXIX, n. 2, 2005, pp. 47-65. For a discussion of Dreyfus's account of skillful coping in relation to the Dreyfus-McDowell debate, see J.K. SCHEAR (ed.), *Mind, Reason, and Being-in-the-World. The McDowell-Dreyfus Debate*, Routledge, London/New York 2013.

[22] H.L. DREYFUS, S.E. DREYFUS, *The Relationship of Theory and Practice in the Acquisition of Skill*», in: P. BENNER, C. TANNER (eds.), *Expertise in Nursing Practice. Caring, Clinical Judgment, and Ethics*, Springer, Dordrecht/Berlin 1996, pp. 29-169, here pp. 42-43.

[23] *Ivi*, p. 40.

[24] *Ivi,* pp. 40-41.

[25] *Ivi,* p. 42.

[26] This is an aspect that is not captured by intellectualist approaches to knowing how, who challenge Dreyfus' view on the basis that knowing how is a species of knowing-that. See J. STANLEY, T. WILLIAMSON, *Knowing How*, in: «The Journal of Philosophy», vol. XCVIII, n. 8, 2001, pp. 411-444. See also Fridland's objections to Stanley and Williamson, E. FRIDLAND, *Knowing-how: Problems and Considerations*, in: «European Journal of Philosophy», vol. XXIII, n. 3, 2012, pp. 703-727.

[27] E. RIETVELD, J. KIVERSTEIN, *A Rich Landscape of Affordances*, cit., p. 331.

[28] T. INGOLD, *The Perception of the Environment. Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling, and Skills*, Routledge, London/New York 2002, p. 37.

[29] Montero has criticised what I call the standard view of habit, arguing that it fails to account for awareness during performance, which is fundamental for improvement in skilful action. As Montero points out, repeating the same action over and over, were it possible at all, would only result in boredom (B.G. MONTERO, *Thought in Action. Expertise and the Conscious Mind*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2016). By contrast, expert agents claim that they think when they perform habitual skilful action, such as dancing or playing, and they also focus on their own movements. This indicates, on Montero's view, that attention does not hinder skilful action, but it actually facilitates excellence and improvement. While sympathising with Montero's approach, I believe that her account tends to privilege only one aspect of attention, namely selective or monitoring attention, and it also tends to put on a pair habit and skills, leaving aside the relation between habit, attention, and the context.

[30] While there is no unified phenomenological account of attention, a common approach can be found in the works of Husserl, Gurwitsch and Merleau-Ponty in so far as they all point out that attention unfolds in the perceptual horizon, distributing the affective relevance of the objects en-

countered. I am referring, in particular, to E. HUSSERL, *Wahrnehmung und Aufmerksamkeit. Texte aus dem Nachlass (1893-1912)*, edited by T. VONGEHR, R. GIULIANI, Springer, Dordrecht/New York 2005; E. HUSSERL, *Erfahrung und Urteil. Untersuchungen zur Genealogie der Logik* (1939), edited by L. LANDGREBE, Meiner, Hamburg 1966 (Eng. trans. *Experience and Judgment. Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic,* translated by J.S. CHURCHILL, K. AMERIKS, Routledge, London 1973); E. HUSSERL, *Analysen zur Passiven Synthesis*, in: E. HUSSERL, *Gesammelte Werke*, Bd. XI, hrsg. von M. FLEISCHER, Martinus Nijhoff, Den Haag 1966 (Eng. trans. *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*, translated by A.J. STEINBOCK, Kluwer, Dordrecht, 2001); M. MERLEAU-PONTY, *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945), translated by D.A. LANDES, Routledge, London/New York 2012, pp. 28-52; A. GURWITSCH, *The Field of Consciousness: Theme, Thematic Field, and Margin*, in: R.M. ZANER (ed.), *The Collected Works of Aron Gurwitsch (1901-1973)*, vol. III, Springer, Dordrecht/New York 2010.

[31] M. MERLEAU-PONTY, *Le structure du comportement*, PUF, Paris 1942 (Eng. Trans. *The Structure of Behavior*, translated by A.L. FISHER. Beacon Press, Boston 1967, p. 168).

[32] M. WEHRLE, T. BREYER, *Horizontal Extensions of Attention: A Phenomenological Study of the Contextuality and Habituality of Experience*, in: «Journal of Phenomenological Psychology», vol. XLVII, n. 1, 2016, pp. 41-61, here p. 45.

[33] This also corresponds to what Romdenh-Romluc calls «centring oneself in one's activity» with regard to Merleau-Ponty's account of attention, which emphasises the agent's apprehension of the environment for initiating and guiding action. See K. ROMDENH-ROMLUC, *Habit and Attention*, in: R.T. JENSEN, D. MORAN (eds.), *The Phenomenology of Embodied Subjectivity*, Springer, Dordrecht/New York 2013, pp. 3-20.

[34] This distinction between thematic field and peripheral consciousness is also distinctive of Gurwitsch's analysis, according to which we experience the dimensions of attention all the time, including their make-up, depth, and relational arrangements. For an analysis of Gurwitsch's theory, see P.S. ARVIDSON, *The Sphere of Attention. Context and Margin,* Springer, Dordrecht/New York 2006. Concerning the structure and modifications of the attentional rays, see B. WALDENFELS, *Phänomenologie der Aufmerksamkeit*, Surhkamp, Frankfurt a.M. 2004; A. STEINBOCK, *Affection and Attention. On the Phenomenology of Becoming Aware*, in: «Continental Philosophy Review», vol. XXXVII, n. 1, 2004, pp. 21-43; T. BREYER, *Attentionalität und Intentionalität*, Wilhelm Fink Verlag, München 2011, pp. 157ff.

[35] See on this also A. GURWITSCH *The Field of Consciousness*, cit., p. 486, who speaks of the "attitude" that is required for the mental activity to be directed to both the perceptual appearances of the thing and its kinaesthetic experience.

[36] J.S. MILL, *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy* (1865), in: J.M. ROBINSON (ed.), *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, vol. IX, University of Toronto Press, Toronto/Buffalo 1979, p. 257.

[37] *Ibidem.*

[38] *Ibidem.*

[39] E. HUSSERL, *Logische Untersuchungen. Erster Teil. Prolegomena zur reinen Logik* (1900). Text der 1. und der 2. Auflage, in: E. HUSSERL, *Gesammelte Werke*, Bd. XVIII, hrsg. von E. HOLENSTEIN, Martinus Nijhoff, Den Haag 1975 (Eng. trans. *Logical Investigations*, vol. I, translated by J.N. FINDLAY, revised by D. MORAN, Routledge, London/New York 2001, § 23, pp. 274ff.). For Husserl's critique of the psychological notion of attention, see also D. DWYER, *Husserl's Appropriation of the Psychological Concepts of Apperception and Attention*, in: «Husserl Studies», vol. XXVIII, n. 2, 2007, pp. 83-118. Dwyer convincingly argues that such a view of attention does not appear in Husserl until the second edition of the *Logical Investigations*, namely after Husserl elaborated his theory of time consciousness.

[40] E. HUSSERL, *Ding und Raum. Vorlesungen 1907*, in: E. HUSSERL, *Gesammelte Werke*, Bd. XVI, hrsg. von U. CLAESGES, Martinus Nijhoff, Den Haag 1973, p. 147 (Eng. trans. *Thing and Space. Lectures of 1907*, translated by R. ROJCEWICZ, Springer, Dordrecht 1997, p. 123).

[41] This is what Husserl also calls the "about-which", *ibidem*. For a discussion of the different senses of positionality in Husserl, see R. DE MONTICELLI, *Alles Leben ist Stellungnahme – Die Person als praktisches Subjekt*, in: V. MAYER, C. ERHARD, M. SCHERINI, U. MEIXNER (Hrsg.), *Die Aktualität Husserls*, Karl Alber, Freiburg i.B. / München 2011, pp. 39-55. For the relation between attention, reason, and reflection in Husserl, see H. JACOBS, *Husserl on Reason, Reflection, and Attention,* in: «Research in Phenomenology», vol. XLII, n. 2, 2012, pp. 257-276.

[42] E. HUSSERL, *Erfahrung und Urteil*, cit., §§ 18-20.

For a discussion of the notion of interest in *Experience and Judgment*, see also M. WEHRLE, *"Feelings as the Motor of Perception"? The Essential Role of Interest for Intentionality*, in: «Husserl Studies», vol. XXXI, n. 1, 2015, pp. 45-64.

[43] E. HUSSERL, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, Erster Band, Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie* (1913), in: E. HUSSERL, *Gesammelte Werke*, Bd. III/I, hrsg. von W. BIEMEL, Martinus Nijhoff, Den Haag 1950 (Eng. trans. *Ideas I. Ideas for a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy. First Book: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, translated by D.O. DAHLSTROM, Hackett, Indianapolis/Cambridge 2014, p. 49).

[44] D. DWYER, *Husserl's Appropriation of the Psychological Concepts of Apperception and Attention*, cit., p. 102.

[45] E. RIETVELD, *Situated Normativity: The Normative Aspects of Embodied Cognition in Unreflective Action,* «Mind», vol. CXVII, n. 468, 2008, pp. 973-1001, here p. 993.

[46] See the enactivist definition of habits as "self-sustaining precarious sensory-motor schemes" put forward by E. DI PAOLO, T. BUHRMANN, X. BARANDIARAN, *Sensorimotor Life: An Enactive Proposal*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2017, pp. 144ff.