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*Essenza e Natura: Husserl e Merleau-Ponty sulla fondazione dell'essere vivente*

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The phenomenological notion of *Eidos* traditionally implies an underlying metaphor, which we could define as *spatial* and which is founded in turn on the pervasiveness of the notion of representation. The description of psychic states is carried out with constant use of the notion of *determination* and notions associated with it: aspectuality, accessibility to perspective, viewpoint. Such a metaphor impels phenomenology to understand thought as a geographical territory whose essential component can be identified in the notion of *map*. Opaque notions such as those of background, horizon, indistinct, latency assume a descriptive sense only in so far as they depend on clear notions such as focus, explicit, distinct, manifest. Merleau-Ponty adopts a profoundly different conception of essence, characterized by a temporal and dynamic point of view. From the epistemological point of view, Merleau-Ponty's position ratifies the priority of the indeterminate and of the sub-categorical from which consciousness takes its starting point genetically. From the ontological point of view, the crucial notion of *flesh* offers a phenomenological foundation of living being in its natural (even though not naturalistic) frame.