„Phenomenologies“ of Social Practices

After the so called „turn to everyday´s life“ in the social sciences (cp. Böhme 2004: 136f.) culture is not any more connected only to objects of cultural value, cultural techniques, outlets and orders, but also to everyday´s knowledge and acting. It is assumed that the inventories of cultural knowledge show at everyday´s actions from which they emerge, differentiate and consolidate. Culture is then understood as „[…] a variety of discursive practices which are […] not neutral, but internally organised into a hierarchy, forming a complex network of sites with diverse centres and interests producing meaning“ (Oswald 1997: 62). Such a research on practices focuses on the participation and partaking of the acting persons in social practices and on their cultural framings. In acting an individual engages in an already existing ungoing of actions. Here, practices involve the diverse intentions of the individuals, as Thomas Alkemeyer (2006: 121) points out. The interest of research focuses on the question how the texture of the references of acting appears and comes into play in practices.

This approach will be elaborated by referring to bodily phenomenology: Here, the sociality of mankind is supposed to play a central role in the context of the constitution of the self, of others and of the world. At the same time such a constitution is connected to bodily processes. Culture is then regarded as a consequence of a „formed up bodiliness“ and at the same time as a „forming of the body“ (cp. Schultheis 1998). In our acting such formations are partly visible. The object of my presentation is an explication of the bodily phenomenological concept of the relationship of bodiliness and sociality. The aim is to delineate a research on practices based in bodily phenomenology. This approach will be unfolded in more details by referring to the results of an empirical study on cultural formations in the playing of a five-year-old girl.