

Phenomenology of Movement

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Abstract

The subject is a movement directed to the outside, that is to say, the subject is desire. Desire is the “tension” towards the “extrême dehors” (Edmund Husserl) that we call the world. In all of his works Maurice Merleau-Ponty reaffirms, without thematizing it, a conception of life as movement, and of body as action and desire: man is “un certain manque de...”. In other words, it is the distance between myself and the absent that drives me to move, to annul the distance through motion. As Jan Patočka writes, it is precisely through movement that the subject inscribes himself into the world and becomes visible to others. Thus life is nothing but the unfinished act of moving into space and thereby creating space – the space in which we, as desire and movement, encounter both others and the world. As the act of moving is the way one appears to another, every relationship is based on appearing. In short, life is the movement that leads us towards the world and coincides with our desire to make it appear. This desire, as Renaud Barbaras will eventually claim, remains a longing.

149

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