

Human Subject as Embodied Consciousness

A Reading of Merleau-Ponty's Existential Phenomenology

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This paper is purported to examine the concept of subjectivity-consciousness from the perspective of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological philosophy and relate this concept to the real complex ordinarily referred to as the human subject. Following Merleau-Ponty, we argue that the human world cannot be fully understood without referring back to the human body. That is why the concept of body has such a central place in the existential phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty. It is not the thing body, but rather the immediately experienced and experiencing, lived and living body of everyday life that Merleau-Ponty confers emphasis on. According to him, the body is the means or the instrument through which consciousness is situated in the world. Thus for Merleau-Ponty, the study of consciousness in the world is a study of consciousness as embodied or what Merleau-Ponty sometimes calls the 'lived body' or body proper. It is only when one exists in a bodily form that one can be in the world. Through the body, I can act upon the things and persons, and conversely, they can act on me.

In the history of modern thought, there can be, and indeed are, two approaches to the understanding of the human subject. One is said to be the empiricist/rationalist account of humans and the other is distinctively phenomenological/existentialist. The empirical studies of the human subject begin with the consideration of humans as an object. It tries to avoid every reference to human consciousness as something which is within. Accordingly, empiricism regarded humans as a specimen of the behavioural set and therefore is a fully analyzable system. One of the most eminent scientific philosophies in which this has happened is Gilbert Ryle's¹ theory of the human Mind. Ryle's method of accounting for the nature of the mind is said to be behaviouristic. He discards the notions like non-materiality and self-consciousness, the design of the

phenomenological - existentialist approach² point toward the ontological structure of human consciousness.

To understand the phenomenological and existentialist approach to human experience, it is essential to realize that the image of the human subject which is projected is that of a being whose presence in the world is a unitary reality in which the human subject and the world are taken integrally grounded in consciousness. Individual and action, self and situation, human subject and the world are bound to each other in their fundamental structure. The phenomenological approach to the concept of the human subject is more than scientific. For, it proceeds from the roots of consciousness and of the human act of experiencing. This approach to the study of the human subject also provides adequate importance to the notion of intentionality – the thesis that human consciousness is intentional- originally put forward by Avicenna and then by Franz Brentano but developed by Husserl. According to it, Consciousness is always the consciousness of something. To be conscious as a human is to be worldly, to have a psychic structure directed towards objects, to know that the world is there. Thus, being intentional is being directed towards the world. The intentionality of consciousness and the emergence of meaning are thus interconnected. Both display consciousness as rooted in experience.

In the existential phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty, intentionality of consciousness and the emergence of meaning are extraordinarily interconnected. They display the inside-out directedness of the human self: they point at something and leave consciousness as its experience, it's "meaner". Just as every meaningful situation implies the presence of a mind, a cognitive faculty, it also shows itself as a meeting-point of the latter with something. It is impossible to conceive of a context where a meaningless experience prevails. In this sense, to be is to be meant for someone, to an ego that posits itself as an I-locus. This chair, for instance, is "caught" by my consciousness as a meant thing; it is, so to say, a "prey" to my meaning assigning consciousness. Thus, the world that is

perceived as meaningful or assembly of meanings can be analysed into simple individual nuances, somewhat like noesis - noema structure; but even when so analysed, meanings remain the basic constituents of our existence in the world. One is then, inclined to say that the human subject is the origin of all meanings.

Merleau-Ponty, claiming support from Husserl, makes a basic and crucial distinction between two kinds of intentionality, the intentionality of acts, which is that of our judgments and express volitions when we consciously and voluntarily take up a position, and operative intentionality, which is only brought to light through the phenomenological reduction, and which Merleau-Ponty characterizes as that which produces the natural and ante-predicative unity of the world and our life, being apparent in our desires, our evaluations and in the landscape we see, more clearly than in objective knowledge, and finishing the text which our knowledge tries to translate into precise language³.

It is this notion of operative intentionality, which Merleau-Ponty sees as the most profound sense of intentionality, and which phenomenology seeks to elucidate. Operative intentionality is that intentionality by which consciousness projects a human setting around itself, a setting in which it lives. What distinguishes it from the intentionality of acts, from posited intentions, is that operative intentionality is ante-predicative, non-thematic: the ground of any explicit and voluntary acts of intentionality, as well as acts of judgments and discursive reasoning.

In Kantianism, Husserl recognizes a philosophy that goes back to the knowing subject as “the ground of all objective formations of meaning and validities of being”, in sharp contrast to the ‘objectivism of common sense and science. The Kantian system represents for him the first effective attempt toward a universal transcendental philosophy, meant as strict science’. Yet while genuinely acknowledging Kantianism, the most significant turning point in modern philosophy towards

transcendentalism. Husserl is at the same time, a sharp critic of the Kantian theory of knowledge, which has been criticized by Husserl as involving “anthropologism” and relativism.

When Kant speaks of unconditioned universality and the necessity of a priori knowledge, he would, after all, refer to the universal constitution of the human mind. Thus an “anthropological moment” is involved in the Kantian analysis of knowledge and experience. As Husserl critically observes, both Hume and Kant, in effect, reduce rationality to a fact, i.e., the fact of human nature, and thereby tend to miss genuine rationality. However, Husserl does admit that in showing how syntheses are made within the sphere of cognitive consciousness, Kant has brought into effect a ‘transition’ to the new discipline of phenomenology. However, Kant had been unacquainted with the phenomenological method.

The Body Image

One of the distinct features of the philosophy of Merleau-Ponty is his emphasis on the analysis of the human body. Traditional philosophers, Descartes for example, had simply distinguished material objects from consciousness; my body is one among other material objects. My body according to the traditional thesis was not different philosophically from the chair in which I sit. If we ask, “Who is this body?” and as soon as we do, we see that there is something very peculiar about thinking of my body as a physical object. There is strangeness within me when I consider “myself manifested to the other and the other manifested to me as a body”. We then tend to think of the body as a certain thing having its laws and capable of being defined from the outside.

Once we assume the body as an object, as an object of physiology, there are “insurmountable difficulties” in trying to ‘reunite’ consciousness with this physiological system. According to Sartre, I never ‘apprehend the contingency of my body as the body for me’. My body is not an object in the world. My body, however, is primarily me, not an object for me. My body is an instrumental centre of instrumental complexes; it is a

point of view as well as a point of departure. My body is “lived and not known”. For Merleau-Ponty, habit is a matter of ‘enlarging’ our body; habit expresses our power of dilating our being into the world or changing our existence by appropriating fresh instruments. To get used to a hat, a car, or a stick is to be transplanted into them or conversely to incorporate them into the bulk of our body. It is true because for Merleau-Ponty the subject who learns to type incorporates the key-blank space into his bodily space.

Merleau-Ponty seems to have conceived the human subject and his/her world as standing in a relationship of mutual ‘participation’. According to him, perception is a means of being in the world, and as such, it is not necessarily an explicit and deliberate thematic act; it is the background from which all acts stand out and are presupposed by them.⁴ The world which is given in perception is the concrete, inter-subjectively life – world of immediate experience. Perception itself is defined in terms of sensory-motor behaviour through which the world is constituted for humans as the world of human consciousness before any explicit or reflective thought about it.

Body Image and the Theory of Perception

My body is not simply another object in the world to which I am mysteriously attached; my body and I are indistinguishable; my body is an object which does not leave me. One could not grasp an object without the meditation of bodily experience. External perception and the perception of one’s own body vary in conjunction because they are two facets of the same act. As Merleau-Ponty claims, “whether a system of motor or perceptual powers, our body is not an object for an ‘I think’, it is a grouping of lived-through meanings which moves towards its equilibrium”.⁵

Our bodily existence and the things it experiences constitute the entire bulk of what is called our ‘being-in-the-world’. Man is a ‘body-subject’, an ‘ego-body’, a ‘body-image’, a body itself. Merleau-Ponty neither

separates the human body from his/her mind nor looks upon the former as a mechanical sequence of actions and reactions. His theory of Body Image is implicitly a theory of Perception. He takes the phenomenal body as the matrix of human existence. It is the centre around which the world is given as a correlate of activities. Through the phenomenal body, as Merleau-Ponty says, we are open to a world of objects as polarities of bodily action. That is why Merleau-Ponty says “The body is to be compared, not to a physical object, but rather to a work of art”.⁶

This theory of bodily perception will let the answer to a most puzzling question in Husserl⁷. When we speak of “looking at an object in its different aspects” and from different viewpoints, how are we to make sense of the notion of ‘different aspects’ and ‘different viewpoints’ after bracketing the world, including my own body? If my body is bracketed, what sense does it make to say that I ‘walk around the object’? Merleau-Ponty has dispensed both with this problematic ‘bracketing’ of existence and rejected the claim that my own body is just another object. Thus he can assert that it is by conceiving my body as a movable object that I can interpret perceptual appearance and construct the cube [I am walking around} as it truly is. It is worth commenting that Merleau-Ponty has turned these insights concerning the peculiar place of my body in the world into a basis for a theory of perception.

Body Image and Perceptual Consciousness

Understanding the human subject, then, comprehends a person in his/her primordial nature. This may be one of the reasons why Merleau-Ponty speaks of the three strata of human behaviour as consisting of (a) the physical (b) the organic or the vital or the physiological and (c) the symbolic. These are not three aspects of human existence, but only three attitudes with which we approach the study of the human subject from the phenomenological point of view; they are in a sense only paradigms. The investigations have shown that human nature cannot be exhausted by the first two. They take the study of man into the realm of creativity.

According to Merleau-Ponty, both the positions-empiricist and intellectualist- are based upon the same conception of the process of perception; one is not even aware of what perception is; it is lived. Both are guilty of a dual error. (1) That of conceiving the world as it comes to be given, as an objective, determinate, ready-made, fully made universe; and (2) that of conceiving perception as sensible and takes place within this universe of science so that the structure and elements of perception are all thought to be fully determinate and unambiguously set in themselves. In other words, perception is the process whereby elements of the universe transmit to the interior of one of its constituents means in which the pattern of the objective universe can be presented unambiguously. The basic phenomenon of perception eludes the categories of objective thought because it is a phenomenon that gives rise to those very categories. To put it into technical terms, the centre of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology is perceived as primarily the phenomenon of the passive constitution or to say passive genesis of meaning which he calls 'operating intentionality'. According to him, operating intentionality is continually at work as the matrix out of which definite meaning develops and comes to be assumed. To sum up, anterior to the objective body, the phenomenal body, a body-knower, we see the subject-agent of perception not as a transcendently pure thinker but as a bodily being. Both of them are one and it can be simply called existence. At its primary level, consciousness is experienced precisely as experiencing the world, and experiencing the world is bodily perception and acts as the genesis of meaning at grips with the world.

Victory over Cartesian Dualism

Various facts may be put forward to confirm the assertion of Merleau-Ponty's victory over Cartesian dualism. Merleau-Ponty, repeatedly asserts that his philosophy is a radical victory over Cartesian dualism, which is characterized by Descartes' sharp dichotomy between the thinking mind and the mechanical body⁸. For this reason, it may be suspected that the affirmation of "body - subject" as the ambiguous unity,

and not a union of bodily being and subjectivity, is the most fundamental affirmation of Merleau-Ponty's philosophy. Secondly, the conclusions that he draws from extensive analysis in his phenomenology of perception are concerned with the subjective character of the human body⁹. To understand what Merleau-Ponty is getting at here, we may give adequate emphasis on what the body as the operative subject is. The body – the subject¹⁰ is not the body described in terms of causal processes, but the field of lived-world experience. It is said to be interiorly united with spheres of meaning. Within this manifold, certain specific configurations develop which are shared in different ways by different spheres. For example, a perceptual sense of space, location of objects in spatiality, the articulation of space, etc are simultaneous achievements in visual development and in one's ability to move, seek and touch objects which enables the body-subject in its various dimensions as a possibility. These modalities as lived significance-bearing and significance-generating organisms are the body-subject. Speaking is one modulation, one possible usage of the body-as experience¹¹. Merleau-Ponty emphasizes that expressing in the language is the process by which the significance of the lived body and its meaning comes to be known and made explicit and decided¹².

Accordingly, when Merleau-Ponty expresses the philosophical awareness of our time, he assigns the central position to the "body-subject" as the victory over dualism. For this reason, we may say that such a thought contains the decisive position of his philosophy. According to Merleau-Ponty, the body is neither a thing in the Cartesian sense nor a pure bodiless thought. The human body has a mode of being of its own, under which it defies description in Cartesian terms. To indicate this mode of being, he uses such terms as "body-subject" and "ego-body".¹³

Thus, for Merleau-Ponty, phenomenology is understood as a direct description of the phenomena incarnated in the world. He denounced any theoretical position of idealism and empiricism which considers the

human subject and world, subject and object, essence and existence, as separate from each other. For him, the human subject is not a contingent combination of mind and body. Rather, the concept of human is primitive and is much better represented by the term body-subject. He considers the body as lived, and a place for human subjectivity. For him, every action we perform, whether emotional or intellectual, is due to body-subject. It is my body that the human is in the world. Therefore, any philosophy which tries to explain the relationship between mind and body as contingent will be reductionist, and such an approach fails in the project of capturing the human subject and his/her world.

Concept of Lived Body

Merleau-Ponty's theory of the lived body is based on the notion that existence is the perception of essences in their primordial or immanent structure. It is this immanence that is taken up in the act of transcendence to become the "presence" that is existence. In short, the essential spontaneity is the material of existential analysis through a phenomenological method. "To experience a structure is not to receive it into oneself passively, it is to live it, to assume it and discover its immanent meaning". The phenomenal body which is the lived experience is a primordial structure that is itself temporality. This is to suggest that the existential presence of the body is the common structure that is manifest in the ongoing immanence and transcendence that is spatiality in genesis. It is only through this structure that the lived experience is manifest.

Merleau-Ponty speaks about the body itself. Many have attributed it to bodily being a person. Subjective character, but the reason was that they considered the body inhabited or animated by an indwelling spirit, a spiritual soul, i.e., by a principle of a different order which is most intimately connected with the body. Merleau-Ponty does not mean this and repeatedly denies it.¹⁴ According to him, the body as the body is existence and therefore of a subjective nature. It is a subject and therefore

does not derive its subjective character from a principle distinct from itself.

According to Merleau-Ponty, the phenomenon of perception reveals a mode of being which is neither that of pure thing nor that of pure thinking, a third genre of being in which body and consciousness are the same phenomena. Thus, Merleau-Ponty states: The experience of one's own body..... reveals to us an ambiguous mode of existence¹⁵. He asserts that the body is not an object... The consciousness I have of it is not a thought.

If the body is withdrawn from the objective world and comes to form a third kind of being between pure subject and object, then the subject loses its purity and transparency. The notion of body and the notion of consciousness is profoundly transformed. It is merely a matter of recognizing that the (idea of) body is formed by a process of impoverishment from a primordial phenomenon of the body-for-us. Concerning consciousness, we have to conceive it no longer as constituting consciousness, pure being-for-itself, but as perceptual consciousness, as the subject of a manner of behaving.¹⁶

The behaviour of the human body can be examined by the genesis of one's experience of 'having' a body. He employs the phenomenological method to describe the most primitive impressions our body gets while it is in the world. A human subject is defined as a meaning-giving existence; it is a centre to which the body acts as a vehicle of perception and movement in the world. The possession of a body implies the ability, to change levels and to 'understand' the space. Space is 'empty' and yet all the objects of perception are situated there. The perception of space is not a particular class of 'states of consciousness or acts. Its modalities are always expressions of the total life of a subject, the energy with which he/she tends towards a future through the body and his/her world. As Merleau-Ponty says "The body is not an object. The consciousness I have of it is not a thought. I have no other way of knowing the human body

than by living it”.¹⁷ The lived body is the unitary agent through which the reception of the world and others, as well as oneself, is accomplished. And, through it, one is known to others as “as the world” and known to oneself in expression.

Merleau-Ponty’s existential phenomenology undergirds the idea that the lived body is the semiotic agency of perception and expression alike. We are not, then reducing the significance of the world or the percept to a collection of ‘bodily sensations’ but emphasizing that the body, in so far as it has ‘behaviour patterns’, is that strange object which uses its parts as a general system of symbols for the world, and through which we can consequently ‘be at home in that world, ‘understand’ it and find significance in it. Thus, the body-subject in the lived body experience is semiotic of being and existence that is manifest, and thus known through the essential agencies of perception and expression.

According to Merleau-Ponty, our bodily existence and the experience it comprises are termed our ‘being-in-the-world’. The human subject is a ‘body subject’, an ‘ego-body’, a ‘body image’, a body itself. What he suggests by the pre-eminence of the reality of our body is that a consciousness that is deprived of the consciousness of being a body would not have access to the world and therefore, whatever meaning we attach to our encounter with the world for its meaning by primarily apprehending the configurational power of the body.

Merleau-Ponty neither separates the human body from the mind nor looks upon the former as a mechanical sequence of actions and reactions. One of the clearest pieces of evidence of the primacy of the body is visible when we are while experiencing something, its direction, magnitude, location, etc., as it is spread over the parts of that thing and collide with it in every instant.

If my body is not a material object, either for myself or for others, then we can extend some interesting theses encountered in our analysis of consciousness as applicable to the body as well. For example, it does not

make sense to say that our body is in space and time; rather one should say that “it (body) inhabits space and time”. Neither does it make sense to talk of the divisibility of the body. For Merleau-Ponty, habit is a matter of enlarging our body; habit expresses our power of dilating our being into the world or changing our existence by appropriating fresh instruments. We can say that the body is not simply another object in the world to which I (that is, consciousness) am mysteriously attached; my body and I are indistinguishable. My body is an object which does not leave me. I for myself am both consciousness and body which are inseparable, as I for others and others for me are consciousness and body that are inseparably united. My relations with others are always a struggle to preserve my freedom, especially to preserve my freedom from the objectifying look of others. To preserve my freedom, I attempt to change the other into an object for me. First, my looks serve this purpose, but more dramatically, I can focus my attention on his body and attempt to reduce him to a pure body. This is, of course, impossible, but the more the other becomes ‘physical’ to me, the more I become from him. What is more remarkable is the extraordinary way Merleau-Ponty has turned the above insights concerning the peculiar place of ‘my body in the world’ into a basis for a theory of perception. According to him, the theory of the body is a theory of experience. External perception and the perception of one’s own body vary in conjunction because they are two facts of the same act. He asserts that by conceiving my body as a mobile object, I can interpret perceptual appearances.

Consciousness as Living Consciousness

Consciousness is analysed by Merleau-Ponty not as a knowing consciousness nor as primarily a reflecting consciousness, but rather as an active, ‘living’ consciousness. He argues that consciousness is first of all a perceiving, feeling, mobile consciousness. It is first of all a practical and a pre-reflective consciousness. Perception need not be analysed as primarily a cognitive notion. Perception may be viewed more broadly as the general “relations of consciousness and nature” or as “the original

relation of consciousness to being”. He takes the problem of perception to be equivalent to the problems of phenomenology as a whole, takes perception to be equivalent to the problems of phenomenology as a whole, and takes perception as the basic activity of consciousness. That is why Merleau-Ponty insists that “all consciousness is, to some extent, perceptual consciousness”. Merleau-Ponty, following the Husserlian dictum, affirms that “all consciousness is the consciousness of something”, and began with the Cartesian doctrine that the existence of consciousness itself is known simply under its existence. Consciousness is nothing but an intentional activity; it is neither an object itself nor an object for itself. Merleau-Ponty’s views on the concept of ‘consciousness’ are much more difficult to summarize largely because he avoids the terms as much as possible usually using ‘consciousness’ as an equivalent of “knowing” or “reflective”. It is the psychological notion of consciousness that Merleau-Ponty takes up in his study. Consciousness is approached from the outside as a part of reality. Like other existentialists, he admits that human consciousness is not “closed” within itself as an object, but is a ‘project of the world’, a relationship of something other than things and persons.

Consciousness according to Merleau-Ponty, in the first place is not a matter of ‘I think’ but ‘I can’. Consciousness is directed towards the thing through the intermediary of the body. The sense of ‘cogito’ in which he is interested in is that of a kind of vestigial self-consciousness that accompanies all our actions and thoughts. Thus, consciousness is inseparable from the body and is grounded in perception. Accordingly, his book *Phenomenology of Perception* is purported to understand man’s place in the world by understanding what perception is. He insists that we cannot understand perception as long as we insist upon an absolute distinction between the perceiving subject and the perceived object.

Merleau-Ponty's Account of Descartes' Cogito

One of the important contributions of Merleau-Ponty to the phenomenological world, in particular, is his interpretation of Descartes' cogito. Merleau-Ponty's fundamental criticism of Descartes can be summarized thus: if the object of my perception can be doubted, why not the subject also? Merleau-Ponty thus questions the indomitability of consciousness. The Cogito of Merleau-Ponty is open to doubt just as much as his object of thought. Thus, Merleau-Ponty emphasizes that perception is a kind of activity wherein it is impossible to separate the act itself from its term. Perception and the perceived have necessarily the same existential modality; it is impossible to dissociate from perception the consciousness of the thing perceived. Thus Merleau-Ponty will say that it is not the 'I think' which will contain the 'I am, but rather the 'I am' in its transcendence, takes up the 'I think' and incorporates it in its existential movement and through which consciousness also becomes existential.¹⁸ Similarly, Merleau-Ponty rejects the notion that consciousness constitutes the world in the sense of creating it. This would make the world into a simple correlate of thought and turn philosophy into an idealism. According to him, the world is not created by consciousness rather consciousness is in essential dialogue with the world and all meaning is the result of this dialogue. It is in this sense only that consciousness can be said to be constituting.

Merleau-Ponty's philosophic method is phenomenology in a 'radical' form. Although he adheres to the general methodology of phenomenological reduction, he has a different formulation which may be considered the basis of existentialism. Phenomenology is the study of essences, and according to it, all problems amount to finding definitions of essences, the essence of perception, or the essence of consciousness for example. But phenomenology is also a philosophy that puts essences back into existence and does not expect to arrive at an understating of man or the world from any starting point other than of their 'facticity'. It is a transcendental philosophy that places in abeyance the assertions

arising out of the natural attitude, but it is also a philosophy for which the world is always “already there before” as an inalienable presence; all its efforts are concentrated upon re-achieving a direct and primitive contact with the world and endowing that contact with the philosophical status. It is the search for a philosophy that shall be a ‘rigorous science’, but it is also often an account of space, time, and the world as we ‘love’ them. In *Primacy of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty has loosely put this view thus: phenomenology has a double purpose; it will gather together all the concrete experiences of man which are found in history – not only those of knowledge but also those of life and civilization. But at the same time, it must discover in this enrolling of facts a spontaneous order, a meaning, an intrinsic truth, and an orientation of such a kind that the different events do not appear as a mere succession.

By Way of a Conclusion

There would be little point in discussing here the question of how far Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology carried out the last, if not the ultimate, intentions of Husserl’s programme. His version has a right to be examined on its own merits. One of the most characteristic aspects of Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology is his attempt to bring it down from the level of pure consciousness into the world of concrete life, so to say, to incarnate it in individual and social human existence. As he clearly states, “The most important lesson which the reduction teaches us is the impossibility of a complete reduction. This is why Husserl is constantly re-examining the possibility of a complete reduction. If we were in absolute mind, the reduction would present no problem. But since, on the contrary, we are in the world, since indeed our reflections are carried out in the temporal flux on to which we are trying to seize (since they *sich einstromen*, as Husserl says), there is no thought which embraces all our thoughts”.¹⁹

It was one of Merleau-Ponty’s fondest claims that his phenomenology can break the deadlock between realism and idealism and between

empiricism and rationalism by making use of the best insights of Gestalt Psychology in a manner that the Gestaltists themselves had not been able to do. This raises the question of the legitimacy of his critique of the gestalt theory as still enmeshed in an outdated conception of science. He seemed to consider as axiomatic that causation from the psychical world to that of consciousness is inconceivable. He did this often which suggests that the category of causation has no status in phenomenology. But that does not imply that all belief in causation is illegitimate “causalism” from the very start. Not even Husserl had abandoned it to that extent.

What we have pursued in this paper, to some measure, is a closer understating of Merleau-Ponty’s concept of the human subject. The line of thinking that we have presented does not allow a critical account or evaluation of Merleau-Ponty’s philosophy as a whole. His position is presented here mainly for its descriptive value, even though one cannot avoid the dominant ontological tenor in giving an account of it. We tried to argue that, as for Merleau-Ponty, consciousness is a way of being; to be conscious is to communicate with the world and with others, and not others as exterior objects. Accordingly, Merleau-Ponty affirmed the existential situation of the body by its relation to the world. In a limited study like the present one, what is affirmed is the radical way how Merleau-Ponty has re-established the roots of the mind in its body and its world by rejecting the doctrines which treat perception as a simple result action of external things on our body. Merleau-Ponty’s works reveal that it is impossible to reduce ourselves to transcendental consciousness and become wholly conscious. All consciousness, knowledge, and all human understanding are drawn on an ever-present world that is already there and is radically primary.

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