

Abstract of Doctoral Dissertation

Title: A Reconstitution of the Problem of the Other in Merleau-Ponty's Sorbonne Lectures:

The Human Sciences and Phenomenology

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The Purpose of this thesis is to systematically reconstitute Merleau-Ponty's problem of the other in reading his Sorbonne lectures (1949-52). These lectures are held as child psychology and pedagogy courses, but he referred to psychology and various studies of the Human sciences (which means the study of human beings), including cultural anthropology, linguistics, psychoanalysis, and historical materialism. However, their importance is ignored in most previous studies on Merleau-Ponty. In his philosophy, the relationship between phenomenological philosophy and the human sciences (such as psychology and sociology) is one of reciprocal envelopment. This allows us to interpret his use of human sciences in those lectures in line with his research on the problem of the other. In those lectures, he discussed the rapport between the observer and the observed in human sciences, adults and children, males and females, and between different cultures. These interactions are discussed as rapports between the self and the other. The problem of the other in the Sorbonne lectures' is characterized by the importance of expression in the perception of the other.

In my thesis, I raised three questions—Part 1: How can we perceive the other? Part 2: What do we perceive other as? Part 3: How can we communicate with the other? Following Merleau-Ponty's account, I examine the structure of perception of the other in Part 1. In Part 2, I discuss the modes of the other's appearances. In Part 3, I discuss on the modalities of communication between the self and the other.

This thesis demonstrates the important point that, in Merleau-Ponty's philosophy, human beings are not only bodies enabling primitive communication but, also, historical bodies which carry certain "types" such as race, ethnicity, sexuality, and so on. The problem of the experience of the other, through bodily, social, collective and historical "types" may have great importance today.