

Ontological Foundation of Aesthetics in the Philosophical Concepts of Merleau-Ponty and Dufrenne

Summary

The aim of this paper is to open up the foundations of an aesthetic ontology, which are found in Merleau-Ponty's theories of sense perception. In his analysis of sensory perception, the philosopher approaches the concept of the living body of this world and argues that it is precisely the existential body, whose conception contradicts modern positivist treatments, that is the cradle of our perceptual consciousness. It is in this body that the thinker opens up the aesthetic kernel: in the primordial state of corporeality, the dichotomies inherent

in thinking disappear, the fundamental distinction between subject and object disappears. Painting opens up this body par excellence. Dufrenne, who develops a coherent theory of aesthetics and justifies it ontologically by proposing the concept of the aesthetic object, takes a step back from this conception. It is the latter that creates the culmination of the aesthetic experience and opens up to the observer an alternative ontological terrain in which the sense of feeling unfolds as an alternative epistemological category.

Keywords: M. Merleau-Ponty, M. Dufrenne, aesthetics, truth, aesthetic object, body, ontology, phenomenology.