

MOVEMENT AND TIME

Anna Hogenová

Faculty of Pedagogy, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic

Submitted in September, 2005

The author outlines the principal ideas of the relation between movement and time from phenomenological point of view.

Keywords: Time, movement, urimpression, retention, protention.

INTRODUCTION

"In the poured gift the jug presences as jug (sic)" (Heidegger, 1993) thus it is not what is perceivable through our senses. It is not the color of the jug, or the material, from which it is made; it is not its size in the sense of its volume, or the size in the sense of its surface. The essence of the jug is based in the "origin of the jug", that is, "the gift of the pouring our (sic)". This additional note has an enormous meaning for the whole area of thinking. The essence of the body is nothing measurable on the surface of the body or inside it, the essence of movement is nothing measurable on the moving object, the essence of an illness is nothing measurable on its manifestations, the essence of good is nothing pragmatically measurable on single manifestations of good in the area of the senses, etc. It is important to return to the things themselves (*Zu den sachen selbst!*), we can hear in our ears the well-known phenomenological imperative. It is the same with time; it is not possible to understand it as something, which is measured in changes. Why? Because a change happens in time, it seems that it is not a number of movements (*arithmos kineseos*) that can uncover its essence. Aristotle also described time in its continuity, he did not ask the opening question that leads to the beginning of the sense of the thing. Movement and time relate essentially to each other, but why it is so? It is again in darkness. If there is something mysterious around us, then it is time, despite all measuring instruments, of which there are so many and which have high quality and reliability. What is the origin of time?

In his "Lectures to phenomenology of inner time perception (sic)" (Husserl, 1970). Husserl came very close to the "origin of time". From here it is also very close to understanding movement, as time is "something" flowing and running. Husserl describes here the flow of cogitations (the flow of thought contents). After a transcendental epoché, this flow can be divided

into urimpressions (experiences of the original "now"), retentions (retained urimpressions) and protentions (pre-memories – *Vorerinnerungen*, pre-expectations). Protentions arise by means of the so-called variation of retentions, which is in fact a synthesis of the covering of retentions. All this mysterious process starts with an arousal of interest (*inter-esse*, inside a thing). Interest launches this intentional synthesis and its result is an invariant (no more a variable), which becomes a protention. This protention then projects expectations towards the future and is a part of the intention of "being to the world" (*zur Welt sein*). This intention towards the world is then a basis of our life movement, because it gives us direction. But it is not so simple. Our life movement is as it were pulled by something what owns us, in relation to which we are helpless; this is what we call "being" in phenomenological philosophy. Being is the original opening, into which we enter by manifesting ourselves to ourselves as well as to others (we phenomenalize). In this original opening not only people and ourselves but above all things around us and relations between them manifest themselves to us. And thus everything becomes manifest by entering into its appearance, into its form, into its semblance. And it is this entering into an appearance, which became the basis of phenomenology. We have been waiting for two thousand years for the question: "How do things manifest?" But the depth of thought of thinkers during these two thousand years was not in vain, on the contrary, it was the unavoidable and necessary condition (*sine qua non*) for the origin of this most substantial question: "How do things manifest?"

But let us return to the topic of movement and time, which is the core of this article. By being able to distinguish urimpression from retention I can perceive movement. If an urimpression stayed unchanged in retention, then I would live only in the presence, which would mean, that I would not be able to perceive time nor would I be able to perceive movement. Thus movement is based in the possibility to distinguish an urimpression

from a retention. If it is not so and this is possible, for example in autism, then a human being is fastened to “now” and therefore he or she cannot distinguish events, meanings and relations. Simply, he or she cannot project the world, our personal “dasein” as well as we ourselves; such a person differs from us. Why? Because he or she lives in a different time and dissects his or her flow of cogitations differently. Is not this a beginning of some psychiatric illnesses? What has caused this change of inner time perception? How can we understand it?

We can see that the topic of the inner perception of time is an absolutely unquestioned field of possibilities for understanding many things, not only movement itself. It is a pity that so few thinkers are interested in this topic. Why is this topic so interesting? Because it enables us to understand the movement that we want to teach somebody. In a specific individual there are many protentions originating from past movement experience, which also protends the way of accepting habitus (the whole) of the movement figure that we want to teach our student. A movement figure always immerses into protentionality that has already grown in us and it has grown into us in a way that is very hard to influence by our controlled rationality and will. Cartesians are convinced that we can directly teach a new movement structure without thinking about what has been fixed in the given individual, in his body in the sense of pexis. To remove what is already inherent in our body “intelligence” is very hard. We know it from the lessons of skiing and gymnastics. Psychologists speak about movement habits, phenomenologists speak about body protentionality and it is possible to understand its essence from syntheses of retentions. Motoric intelligence is actually based on the ability to immerse the structure of new movement into protentionality, which is the result of our whole body experience from the past. The past comes into the future as a project. The past is not dead junk and retentions are not just stored in a reservoir of our body memory. It is much more difficult. In the same way we hear the whole melody of a song, even though we have a single tone in the urimpression, we carry in ourselves protentionalities that project our body movement. This is always related to what we call our psyche...

It is not right to speak only about body “intelligence”, there is always an intentional interconnectedness between retentions of the body and retentions of the mind; this all happens due to intentionality, which is the basis of our habitual relation to the world as well as to ourselves. The body in question here is the body in the sense of pexis. It is not soma (the shape of the body), or only sarx (the flesh under the skin). Therefore it is not only doctors and biologists who can make decisions about the body, but also psychologists, kinanthropologists and philosophers. This is the new thing.

Motoric intelligence is based on intentionality, syntheses of retentions and their protending. Husserl often

says that syntheses of retentions or variation happen passively or actively. This is very important. Passive variation of retentions is not within our power or will. There happens something that was best understood by Nietzsche when he speaks about the reason of the body, which is according to him a better reason than is the reason of our mind. Passive syntheses of retentions are a domain of what is sometimes called talent, etc.

No retention gets lost, it enters the process of variation with other similar retentions and the result of it is in fact a protention, when said very simply. Therefore it is necessary so that a child picks up a lot of body retentions in the time of his or her childhood, because all these retentions provide a base for his or her ability to learn a new movement by “pre-establishing, pre-choice”, his or her body intentions. This is a reason why, for example, a dog that has been leashed his or her whole life long does not have such good abilities to perceive the surrounding world, to project him or herself into the surrounding world, when unleashed. All retentions that have entered into protentions after syntheses with others create a basis for body “intelligence”, talent, and body creativity. It is also necessary to stress that these are never only retentions of the body, though we use the term. There is always an interconnection between the sense of the soul, the mind and the body pendant. Therefore we speak about intentionality that is “a mental inexistence”, which in this context means only this: retentions interconnect no matter if they are retentions of the body or the mind. It is here where unity arises, which becomes almost the only crystal of the vital will, the whole, which cannot be divided into physical and psychological wholes, and if this happens, then it is a mistake. The body as pexis can be understood as the body based in intentionality, in which all four Aristotelian causes are to be found (*causa materialis, formalis, finalis, and efficiens*).

Human life movement cannot be understood only causally, as it is in most of the scientific reflections. A human being is not only an effect of an external cause, as for example Marxists thought, neither is it only an effect of inner forces, as some subjective idealists thought, but human life movement is a result of many cooperating sources among which we count arché (the beginning of mobility), dynamis (possibilities of choice), *energeia* (accomplishing of the chosen possibility), and telos (purpose of movement). Arché is what we contain in our heredity, which we have regardless of our own egoism or its choice. Dynamis is nothing else than possibilities that open in front of each human being. They are always possibilities that are pre-marked by protentions, but not only by them. Purpose (telos) also plays an important role here, as it opens the inner openness that is based in protentions. Thus the inner openness (protentionality) is also opened by purpose (telos). In this context it is necessary to realize that telos has to be

comprised in the inner openness too, in protentionality. Therefore intentionality is a mental inexistence. It is important to complete this reference that has led many times to the objection of ideal subjectivism with Heidegger's reference to the fact that the inner opening of the human being is always opened also by being itself. In case of temporal setting into presence we have to speak about opening through Dasein. A human being is opened by attunement, attuning himself to the situation at a certain point of time, in now. A human being attunes him or herself by being in depth what functions inside. Being is no image, it is no concept, it is no object, therefore we often speak about "nothing" and we say that being "noths" (Sein nichtet). This circumstance is hard to translate from German into other languages and it is just this respect, which causes major problems when trying to understand M. Heidegger.

"If in case of movement the moved body was kept in the consciousness unchanged in each position, then the passed space would seem to us to be continually filled up, but we would not have an idea of movement. The idea of succession arises only by retaining the previous perception in the consciousness not unchanged, but is in modified in a special way, from one moment to another" (Husserl, 1970). What causes a change of validity of the original urimpression in retention is the essence of intentionality, which we have not understood till now. The content of urimpression stays the same, only the way of conceiving of this "urimpression" changes, and thus it becomes retention. Ambiguity in perception is a difficult part of phenomenology. We reach it only after performing transcendental epoché, because only in this purified view are noesis and noema shown to us. Noesis is the way of conceiving of noema, therefore a noesis carries in itself pre-established noema. This is a very strange part of Husserl's philosophy, and it becomes the target of criticism of those, who mostly have not understood it. Many philosophers are convinced that philosophy is nothing else than a description of the philosophy of someone else in the way of objectivistic conceiving, that is, in strictly scientific description. In fact, such a work is not philosophy, it is only the creation of a protocol about the philosophy of others through which very often the "living searching heart" of the given philosophy is completely destroyed. Husserl wants something else. He wants to penetrate into the essence of a thing. He does not describe time as a flow of changes to the things around us, but he describes the flow of time in the flow of cogitations and this is possible only after transcendental epoché, not after Cartesian epoché. And it is the flow of cogitations through which we can describe movement and that is why this reflection starts with time and leads to movement. What flows in us is initially divided into urimpressions, retentions and protentions. And it is important that this flow is not only a chain of associations, but all the above mentioned syntheses are

being performed in this flow, then they protend in the form of noeses, which give us together noemas.

Yet, there is also something, what is put into this flow from outside. Heidegger calls it being, as we could see above. Being possesses us, only we do not know how, and it is this question which has puzzled philosophers from the beginning of the world. It is always a different aspect, but there is always mystery in play, and most contemporary philosophers search for it in language.

Movement of a human being does not involve only the body or the mind, but both. Therefore, an athlete does not take care of the body only, but always also of the mind. If he or she thinks only about his or her muscles, then also his/her mind is very simple and animal. The effort to win always means to overcome the self, to transcend one's own limits, that is, to be more. In fact, it is an effort to gain a higher stage of one's own being. If this intention is changed into a run after so called performances, it actually means a form of selling one's own body. In the result of movement there is always the whole intentionality, which is the yield of syntheses of retentions, regardless of the body and mind. All is in one whole that projects the world and gives us the possibility to understand. Thus we have never experienced a pure presence, there is always a yield from the past and even an expectation of what is going to come in the near future. Movement is life itself and sport movement is only a part of this life movement, nothing else. Our thinking and evaluating is also movement. This is all, in the unity of intentional syntheses, projected into the world around us through intentions of "being to the world" (zur Welt sein). Cartesian division into the body and mind performed its simplifying task till the end, however having destroying consequences, which have not been seen through till nowadays, even though Cartesianism is often discussed.

Urimpressions change into retentions. Interest (inter-esse) then launches syntheses of retentions either in potentiality or in activity. This intentional performance of our flow of cogitations shows us that we cannot understand human movement only mechanically. Anthropometrics, physics and biology are not sufficient. It is time to understand human movement in relation to thinking, evaluation and voluntativity, not only in psychological, but also in philosophical form.

In connection with movement and intentionality there is another circumstance that is also important. If we perform transcendental epoché then we will find four kinds of phenomena in our flow of cogitations. It is important to distinguish them if we wish to understand movement wholly. The important thing is that the phenomenon of real immanence is what we directly experience in our original presence. This phenomenon is the basis of the possibility of apodictic evidence, that is, the highest one of all that does not allow any possibility of an opposite. What is, in our flow of cogitations, con-

tained as retentions or protentions is called phenomena which is really transcendent, because these phenomena are always in us, “non-hyletically” prepared for projects of our lived world. In the area of sport we often call this talent, good or bad habits, etc. In phenomenology we also find phenomena really transcendent and really immanent. This is difficult to understand, because phenomena of real transcendence are actually all things in the world around us, about which we believe that they are part of our so-called objective reality. This demand is mostly so certain that no one of us usually realizes it and we speak about the real world and an ideal world. The last part of phenomena is called really immanent and by it we mean psychological phenomena, which are treated as things of the objective reality, though they are intentional performances of immanent character in the area of our retentions. These phenomena are often used as biological entities and are explained with help of laws of biological and natural sciences, which results in reduction of human movement to physical, mechanical or biological movement, without objections. This happens because the distinction of really transcendent phenomena and really immanent phenomena has in fact disappeared, it is not understood, it has stayed in the darkness. Thus sport movement and movement of the body is reduced only to mechanical, physical, chemical and biological movement without any relation to social movement, that is, historical, and mental and spiritual movement. The need of falsification of the results of scientific investigations then unambiguously determines the direction of scientific research, that is, the creation of scientific questions. Already an asked question implicitly contains the need of empiricism as the only approach to human movement. Then it is not possible to explain movement that is inherent in speech, that is, the movement of transcendence and its task in the present life. A human being is then reified and because he does not know it, he cherishes his status in everyday life. He calls it the only sense of life and becomes a mere consumer.

It is interconnected with the habitus of his thinking and evaluation, that is, a human being is interested in means only, not in the ends; he is interested in legality, not in legitimacy. Then sport becomes a “playground” for lawyers and doctors, and any dignity of human movement and transcendence of human abilities in the sense of epiphany is missing.

Time plays an immensely important role in human movement, it is not time from physics and from the Newtonian conception of the relation of movement and time, but it is a distinction between the conceiving of an object and the contents of this object. The same

content of an object can be given in different modes of conceiving, that is, as an urimpression, retention and protention. We can know about movement only from these different conceptions of the same thing, that is, to conceive of it and to know about this conceiving. If this differentiation is not possible, the human being is autistically captured in an urimpression as in something, what cannot be modified. Intentionality is a general name for the possibility of this differentiation. The mental inexistence of an object (intentionality) is above all the ability to conceive of things in view of different values and in spite of it to establish continuity of these conceptions. It is also a reason why movement and perception are two “native sisters”. It is possible to reach this knowledge only after performing transcendental epoché, because only in this case we can understand what is noema and noesis. It is not so simple. Noesis is the way of conceiving of the same thing, it is a way, in which noema is also constituted. Therefore noesis has an enormous meaning in epistemology. Noetical pre-validities project our world, though we do not explicitly know it. They direct us. A person who seizes noeses in our thinking will own us. Noeses are the result of the syntheses of retentions that are launched by the arousal of interest, the concentration of our attention. That is why questions are more important than answers.

A person, who regulates the level of questioning in the society, creates general noeses, in which the world is projected. That is why it is so important to speak about a new kind of responsibility, mainly in media. Movement is not only movement of the body, but it is also movement of entering into appearance, as it is absolutely frequent in phenomenology. Movement does not concern only the body in sport, but it also concerns the validity of the meaning of this movement. It is not Cartesian movement, but movement of indivisible body and mind. Therefore in this paper we so often connect both these parts.

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion it is necessary to say that we find the essence of movement in intentionality that we can understand only under the condition of performing transcendental epoché, because it is necessary to learn to distinguish the content of an object from conceiving of this object. And it is this view that stays hidden in the Cartesian point of view in science as well as in normal life. The key to “movement” lies in noeses and moemas, retentions, urimpressions and protentions.

REFERENCES

- Heidegger, M. (1993). *Básnický bydlí člověk*. Praha: Oikumene.
Husserl, E. (1970). *Přednášky k fenomenologii vnitřního časového vědomí*. Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství.

POHYB A ČAS

(Souhrn anglického textu)

Článek vysvětluje vztah pohybu a času z fenomenologického hlediska.

Klíčová slova: čas, pohyb, urimpresa, retence, protence.

Assistant prof. PhDr. Anna Hogenová, Ph.D.



Charles University
M. D. Rettigové 4
116 39 Prague
Czech Republic

Education and previous work experience

Philosophy

First-line publication

- Hogenová, A. (1996). *Etika a sport*. Praha: Univerzita Karlova.
Hogenová, A. (1997). *Etika sportu*. Praha: Karolinum.
Hogenová, A. (2000). *Areté jako základ olympijské filosofie*. Praha: Karolinum.
Hogenová, A. (2002). *Kvalita života a tělesnost*. Praha: Karolinum.
Hogenová, A. (2005). *K filosofii výkonu*. Praha: Eurolex Bohemia.
-