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THOMAS J CSORDAS

Embodiment and experience

The existential ground of culture and self

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2 Society's body: emotion and the "somatization" of social theory

M. L. Lyon and J. M. Barbalet

This chapter shows how the body may be incorporated into theory simultaneously at the individual and social levels, and in the biological and cognitive domains. We will show that it is through emotion (feeling/sentiment/affect) that the links between the body and the social world can be clearly drawn.

We begin with a brief consideration of two recent sources of the ideological representation of the body in modern Western society: the "consumerist" body, and the body as a terrain of medical theory and practice. The conceptions of the body implicit in these converge in so far as they postulate the body as more or less passive in the face of subordinating forces. These forces render it partial in terms of either its full potential capacity or its relationship with the human person embodied in it. These considerations are of concern because scholarly treatments of the body are developed in contexts unavoidably implicated in ideological constructions.

A quite different conceptualization of the body is proposed in the second section of the chapter. A model is developed whereby the body is understood not merely as subject to external agency, but as simultaneously an agent in its own world construction. Here the body is not treated as a discrete physicality external to the self. The body is intercommunicative and active; and it is so through emotion. Emotion is an integral part of all human existence. Emotion activates distinct dispositions, postures and movements which are not only attitudinal but also physical, involving the way in which individual bodies together with others articulate a common purpose, design, or order. The role of emotion in this is essential, for we will show that emotion is precisely the experience of embodied sociality.

This model of the body is supported in the third section of the chapter by a brief reading of the ethological and phenomenological literatures. These articulate a basis for an understanding of the integral role of emotion in social life in a manner which clearly indicates both an embodied form of emotion, and also the role of emotion in bodily agency.

Contemporary ideological constructions

Since the mid-1980s there has been a growing concern with the human body in social theory. The treatment and understanding of the matter has been almost without exception one-sided, for it has focused on the body as an *outcome* of social processes. This is the strength of the work, for example, of Michel Foucault (1979, 1980) and Norbert Elias (1978 [1939]). They each indicate the ways in which human bodies have been transformed by social processes. But Foucault and Elias have little to say about bodies as social agents. The bodies they deal with are the bodies of individuals subjected to forces over which they have no control.

For Foucault, the body is the text upon which the power of society is inscribed. In studies of particular organizations – hospitals, asylums, prisons, schools – Foucault has developed the idea that a new mode of power emerged in the eighteenth century which does not relate to subject populations as an external and repressive sovereign power, as it had up until this time, but functions rather as a disciplinary power which is "a synaptic regime of power, a regime of its exercise within the social body, rather than from above it." He says that "power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives" (1980: 39).

Like Foucault, Norbert Elias (1978 [1939]) develops an account of the way in which bodies are changed through social processes. But unlike Foucault, in his study, *The Civilizing Process*, Elias provides a central role for emotion in the socialization of natural and bodily functions. Elias details the variation in attitude through historical time toward certain "natural functions:" eating, nose blowing, spitting, bedroom behavior and relations between the sexes. In doing so, Elias shows how the body, or more particularly bodily functions, are shaped through historically driven social forces. Elias's argument is that in the course of its development "civilization" has entailed changes in human behavior which include the restraint, regulation and transformation of bodily and physical impulses. In particular, the role played in the regulation of behavior by changes in the feelings of shame, embarrassment and delicacy are highlighted by Elias. Feelings of shame and embarrassment constitute a compulsion to check one's own behavior, and to enforce a conformity on oneself with what the subject feels to be appropriate standards. Thus, as Elias puts it, the "feeling of shame is clearly a social function molded according to the social structure" (ibid.: 138).

Elias argues that the feeling of shame is a social restraint and that it is only in modern society that feelings of shame are generalized to the transgression

itself irrespective of the social context in which it occurs (ibid.: 134). Elias explains this change in terms of the development or intensification of the social division of labor (ibid.: 137–8, 152). It is under these conditions that "everyone becomes increasingly dependent on everyone else ... [and that] the socially superior feel shame even before their inferiors" (ibid.: 138).

An implication of this is a tendency to regard the body as a more or less passive recipient of social processes. Elias refers, for example, to the "regulation or molding of instinctual urges," to the "transformation of aggressive expression of pleasure, into the passive, more ordered pleasure of spectating," and to the "whole molding of [man's] gestures" (ibid.: 139, 202–3). In Elias, the embodied social *agent* remains underdeveloped.

An adequate understanding of social agency requires a concept of embodied agency. This is because emotion, which is necessarily embodied, functions in social processes as the basis of agency. Emotion has a role in social agency as it significantly guides and prepares the organism for social action through which social relations are generated. The body cannot be seen merely as subject to external forces; the emotions which move the person through bodily processes must be understood as a source of agency: social actors are embodied.

Action is necessarily bodily and involves physical movements of great complexity which are not merely individual but also always associative. There is now a growing awareness of the somatic dimensions of action in social theory. When over thirty years ago the sociologist Dennis Wrong asserted that "we must start with the recognition that in the beginning there is the body" (1961: 191), there were few social theorists who would have agreed. This is no longer so today. But the current interest in the body in social theory generally fails to emphasize the body as agent, and has little to say about the role of emotion in the social body, in spite of Elias's example. The question of why the interest in the body has developed in recent years is therefore subordinate to the question of "what is the body which draws attention?" It is not obvious what "the body" is, as different concerns have different conceptions of it.

The understanding of the body in scholarly writing is not remote from the conventional and everyday notions of it found in popular discourse. Concepts arise in social and historical settings, and scholarly as well as everyday notions of the body share generalized social milieux. It will be shown that conventional conceptions of the body are well articulated with scholarly notions of it.

Whilst the scholarly interest in the body is relatively recent, in general people have always, indeed necessarily, had a practical interest in bodies. What we feed and clothe are our bodies; we seek comfort and pleasure in our own and other's bodies; we are concerned with the health of our bodies; and,

in general we use our bodies as instruments of our desires. In addition to these more or less direct applications, which are conducted below the threshold of consciousness, it is with our bodies that we express our feelings and dispositions and actively occupy the spaces we inhabit.

In a real sense the body mediates biological and social processes. The conception of the body which operates at any given time in any particular society will therefore be characteristic of its circumstances. For example, without proposing that these are in any sense exclusive sources for an understanding of the body, the current Western conception of the body is molded by two particular influences which fashion our scholarly but no less socially embedded understanding of it. The first is the "consumerist" body, the second is the body as a terrain of medical practice.

To these two bodies could be added others, of course, as Bryan Turner (1984), John O'Neill (1985) and others demonstrate. But the purpose here is not to generate symbolic "bodies" which can be related to physical bodies analogically or metaphorically. Rather, it is to indicate the main sources of ideological representation of the human body through the grounded experience of concrete practices in which bodies are unavoidably implicated.

The idea of the "consumerist" body is outlined in Mike Featherstone's discussion of "The Body in Consumer Culture" (1982). Featherstone argues that since the 1920s, with the development of the popular cinema, a mass circulation press driven by advertising, and rising real wages and consumer credit, images of youth and beauty became loosely associated with the desire for mass consumption goods of various types. Under these circumstances the body is not only a vehicle of pleasure but a new expression of self. The consumerist body is the body we dress, feed and exercise as projects in their own right. This is the body which exists as the body we, but especially others, see. It is difficult to place too much importance on this fact because in the current configuration of the market economy the body becomes a possession which, through its appearance, provides opportunities for social and professional advancement: appearance, display and the management of impression are the capital goods of the consumer economy (Featherstone 1982: 27–8).

Two things in particular can be added to Featherstone's account. First, it is important to remember that the consumer culture described by Featherstone arose at the time when manual labor, in which the body is active in production, began to decline as a proportion of all paid employment. Developments in productive organization increased the numbers of clerical, supervisory, administrative and managerial jobs. In addition, the growth of commodities markets gave rise to large numbers of sales, service, and accounting jobs. Today the proportion and numbers of manual workers in advanced Western societies is even less than it was in the 1920s, added

to which is the fact that in practically all Western economies today the majority of manual jobs are performed by foreign workers.

Thus the laboring body has been displaced from current consciousness and is not merely separated from the consuming body, which exists in its own right, but does not even stand next to it as an alternative conceptualization. The body generated in (post-) modern economic relations is the consumerist body: there are no competing images. With the domination of mental over manual labor the phenomenal experience of the body and its ideological and common-sense representation is consumerist.

The second thing about the consumerist body which needs to be brought out, and which follows from what has just been said, is that it is significantly passive in the way that the laboring body is not. It is passive in that persons are seen to possess their bodies, and it is passive as an object of gaze and exchange. The consumerist body is very much the body we have and do things to. In addition, as it exists in terms of its appearance, the consumerist body is objectified in its relations with others. Even when a person is advantaged in some way by his or her body's appearance, the body is not an agent in any meaningful sense, but is an object of exchange. The significance of this will be indicated below.

The body as a terrain of medical practice, defined and created by medical science, has enormous importance both for our practical or everyday understanding of the body, and for our understanding of approaches to the body in social science. There are three qualities of medical theory and practice which define the body. First, the bio-scientific model at the root of medical epistemology necessarily regards the body as an object external to the enquiries which yield knowledge of it. Second, the medical model contains an implicit authority prerogative in which the practitioner is in control of the body of the patient, and through his or her body, the patient him- or herself. This is linked to the first point above in so far as medical authority is considered to be based on professional scientific knowledge. The skills of medicine are diagnostic and treatment (surgery or drugs) oriented and these require the patient to be subordinate to the practitioner. Third, biomedicine and its practitioners deal with malfunctioning organs or other subsystems of the body, and with the symptoms thereof, not with "the body" as such. It is interesting to reflect why the medical account and not other partial accounts of the body, such as those of morticians, prostitutes, and assassins, for example, have been so important in informing the social-scientific and general discussions of the body.

Following these three qualities of medical theory and practice, the medical conceptualization of the body is clear. The medical body is passive; any active capacities it may display are regarded as internal to its physiology, and these can be revealed to external observers as objective knowledge.

Second, the body is readily subordinated to the authority of medical practice. It is disciplined and made, or at least made better, through the social institution of medicine. Finally, the medical body is a partial body. It is partial in a dual sense: it is the internal body, and it is the body patients have, but not the body patients are in the full sense. This last point is the source of the limitations of the biomedical understanding of healing, made more apparent to medical science itself through recent research developments. This is especially so, for example, in the development of interdisciplinary fields such as psychoneuroimmunology where new research techniques have made possible the exploration of correlations between diverse types of behavioral and physiological data through measurement of immune-system functioning (Lyon 1990, 1993; see also Foss and Rothenberg 1988: 114–31; Haraway 1991: 203–30).

The nature of the "medical body" has been of central importance in the generation of a reaction to it, and an incitement to a new interest in the body (Frank 1990: 131; Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987). This is particularly true in its relationship to women and "women's complaints." This is to say that there has been a resistance to what has been perceived as the authoritative control of female bodies by a predominantly male medical profession. Reaction to this control (along with resistance to male authority in other domains such as technology, art, literature, sexuality, and consumerism) has been crucial in informing the feminist conception of the body. The idea of "Our Bodies, Our Selves" captures much of the understanding of the body which arises in the feminist reaction to the medical body, namely that "whatever is my body is my self" (Frank 1990: 131). The feminist claim that "what you do to my body you do to me" challenges the ethos of medical practice in so far as it challenges the authority relations of medicine. But feminism can only challenge the epistemological foundations of medicine when it insists that knowledge of the body be taken beyond the realm of cognitive and disembodied practices.

In his review of recent books on the body Arthur Frank reminds us that "[f]eminism as a praxis has taught us to look first for the effects of politics in what is done to bodies" (ibid.: 132). If this were the full extent of the feminist conception of the body it would have to be said that it shared terrain with the medical perspective in so far as the body is regarded as a thing subjected to forces in which it has no formative role. Indeed, as with the work of Foucault, critiques of the passive body may be used to perpetuate that passivity if the fundamental issue of bodily agency in social theory is not addressed. Whether the subjection of the body to some external agency takes the form of consumer imperatives, medical intervention or male violence, the body remains more or less passive in the face of subordinating forces which treat it as or render it partial, either in terms

of its full potential capacity or its relationship with the person embodied in it.

Part of the reason for the contemporary scholarly interest in the body is the recentness of consumerism and its critique, the growing power of medical authority, and the rise of the feminist critique. These have shaped the ideological representation of the body. But this representation and its practical everyday reality is not the primary source of academic interest in the body. This interest in the body has a different source. Axel Honneth and Hans Joas (1988: 121) have argued that the critique of the Western "scientific" form of rationality and the quest for "subjectivist" and "individualist" sources of social change, have together introduced the body into current social theorizing. Similarly, Frank cites "the contradictory impulses of modernity" toward "transcendental reason" and toward the fragmentation of life (1990: 132). These are entirely compatible with the idea that within modernism the body can provide a grounded truth. As Frank (1990: 133) puts it: "[t]here is a desire to use the physical reality of body as final arbiter of what is just and unjust, humane and inhumane, progressive and retrogressive". This is particularly the case with respect to the feminist critique of consumerism, medicalization, and science, in so far as "Feminism as a praxis has taught us to look first for the effects of politics in what is done to bodies" (Frank 1990: 132).

The representation of the body in scholarly discussion significantly reflects the ideology of the body found in the consumerist and medicalist formulations. In so far as this is so, the scholarly treatments of the body in society fail to see it as anything but a social artifact, rather than an active source of social processes and institutions. Yet it is primarily because of this latter capacity that the body is important to social theory: an appropriate conceptualization of it forms the basis of a theory of institutions and processes that goes beyond the rationalist and, ironically, individualist accounts of social phenomena.

None of this denies that the body is a subject of (and subject to) social power. But it is not merely a passive recipient of society's mold, and therefore external to it. The human capacity for social agency, to collectively and individually contribute to the making of the social world, comes precisely from the person's lived experience of embodiment. Persons do not simply experience their bodies as external objects of their possession or even as an intermediary environment which surrounds their being. Persons experience themselves simultaneously *in* and *as* their bodies. We all do this especially when we feel the reality of our presence in the world: emotion is central to an understanding of the agency of embodied praxis.

A model of body and emotion in society

In the various representations of the body found in the current literature there is a surprising under-representation of the body as a "corporate" body, not in the strictly legal sense (although that is not disallowed), but in the sociological sense. It is worth recalling that Durkheim, for example, acknowledged a simultaneous individual and social ontology of emotions, as well as their inextricability from thought and belief (Durkheim 1954 [1912]), which is parallel to the argument advanced here.

The body of the Church, for example, exists as a congregation and a community, and, to take a phrase from Lenin, an army can be conceived as "a body of armed men." "Body" in these cases is not a mere metaphor, although it is frequently understood this way, as in the biblical quotation (I Corinthians 12:12): "For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." The Christian congregation and the army corps are made up of human bodies of particular types of disposition, brought together as a unity at particular times through cognitive and affective orientations. Indeed, the role of feeling and emotion in the creation of a corporate or collective body is through engaging aspects of the individual body in a particular and direct manner. Thus prayer and song in the Church, and route marches and drill in the army function to generate relevant feelings and emotions by and at the same time through engaging particular aspects of the body in a particular manner, depending on the organization in question.

Further, if the body is to be fully understood as a social phenomenon, then it is necessary to avoid a conceptualization of it which draws exclusive attention to the subject individual. Rather, it is important to conceptualize the body in a manner which directly refers to the interactive and relational, and therefore social (as opposed to socialized), aspects of the body. Instead of conceptualizing the bodies of individual persons in terms of the social constraints to which they are subjected, which focus attention on individual characteristics as individual propensities, it is more appropriate to emphasize the active bases of the embodied agent in relational and social forms.

The interactive dimension of agency acquires a broader basis when the social actor is understood as an embodied agent. Anthony Giddens (1984: 36) has commented that the "body is the 'locus' of the active self, but the self is obviously not just an extension of the physical characteristics of the organism that is its 'carrier.'" This type of objection disappears when the body is conceived not in its individual, biologically bounded form, but extended to include its social relations. For instance, Randall Collins (1981: 995) has said that for those who participate in it "social order must necessarily be physical and local," and also that the physical world includes

"everyone's own body." By extension, social order pertains to the other bodies which are in some relation with one's own.

Following this type of reasoning it is possible to characterize particular social institutions in terms of the forms of bodily relations which they entail and which in turn make them possible. Thus Marx, for instance, accounts for capitalist factories in terms of the way workers utilize the "natural forces of [their] bod[ies]" in production, and find their bodies fragmented by the "detail dexterity" of factory work (Marx 1979 [1867]: 173, 340). This type of account allows us not only to characterize social institutions as particular types of relations between particular dispositions of bodies, but to see these bodily relations as the basis of the foundation and reproduction of these institutions. It is of interest that Collins (1981: 995) says, for example, that "[t]he most repetitive behaviors that make up the family structure are the facts that . . . the same men and women sleep in the same beds and touch the same bodies, that the same children are kissed, spanked and fed." In this way it is possible to characterize different social institutions in terms of the distinct engagement of aspects of bodily disposition which pertain to them.

It can be seen, then, that bodies in social relationships, what can be called the "social body," are a complex of differentiated and simultaneous relationships between distinct aspects of individual bodies, depending on the social relationship or institution in question. The social body in this sense can be thought of as something like a somatized Dahrendorfian "homo sociologicus" (Dahrendorf 1968: 19–87). The body in society can therefore be seen as an ordered aggregation of particular and specific types of relationships between individual bodies or, rather, the relevant aspects of individual bodies.

The biological implications of social embodiment should not go unnoticed. For example, physiological changes brought about by co-presence and interaction have been observed and reported in the research literature of a number of disciplines including psychology, sociology, anthropology, and immunology (e.g. Kiritz & Moos 1974; Barchas 1976: 316–17; Ekman 1984; Freund 1988, 1990).

In the depiction of the body in society as "more than individual" and as institution-making, we move away from the body as merely subject to domination and passive. The body is intercommunicative and active. In a significant social sense the body referred to here is not simply the body we have but the body we are. The depiction of the social body above serves to overcome the tension between having and being a body, as treated by Helmuth Plessner (1970 [1941]) and taken up by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1967: 68), and in effect referred to by Giddens in the quotation above. Emotion is precisely the means whereby human bodies achieve a social ontology through which institutions are created.

The idea that the body is active in making its social world is given force and meaning through the idea that active bodies are also emotional bodies; that emotion is embodied. In general terms emotion is a concept which refers to the sense, including bodily sense, of evaluating experience. As Klaus Scherer (1984: 296) puts it, "one of the major functions of emotion consists in the constant evaluation of external and internal stimuli in terms of their relevance for the organism and the preparation of behavioral reactions which may be required as a response to those stimuli." The link between emotion and action is complex and certainly not mechanical. The role of emotion in various aspects of sociality such as associative behavior, group formation and integration, and the dynamics of social differentiation is treated in a growing literature (Collins 1984, 1990; Kemper 1984; Scheff 1988). Indeed, the idea that emotion is implicated in human social agency or praxis has its antecedents in the thought of Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx who argued that it is through their senses and bodily activity that people feel, and it is through their emotions that people's activity has practical direction and force (Barbalet 1983: 31–62). These writers in particular encourage the view that the body is implicated in social agency through the facilitating role of emotions.

What we wish to emphasize here is that emotion is not only embodied but also essentially social in character. As Richard Lazarus, James Coyne and Susan Folkman (1984: 230) suggest, emotion is best regarded not as an "inner thing" but as a "relational process." Even at the organismic level, it cannot be conceived as a discrete psycho-physiological phenomenon. Both the limbic system and the neocortex are associated with the experience and expression of emotion. The function of each area can be seen to be integrated in the assessment of stimuli and choice of course of action (Pribram 1984: 30–2). These are precisely the areas associated with social behavior (Emde 1984; Pribram 1984).

The social relations implicated in emotional experience involve the body: not simply the body as a physical entity subject to external forces, but the body as agent. The distinction between having and being a body referred to above is in effect drawn by Levy (1984) in his discussion of Tahitian emotion. Without necessarily subscribing to the way in which he distinguishes between "feeling" and "emotion," it is interesting to observe that Levy shows that emotion engages the body not as a subject of self but as self; the self is embodied. In Levy's account feelings are an awareness which do not involve "the self" whereas emotions do (1984: 401–2). On this criterion, to say "my foot hurts" indicates a feeling (of pain), whereas to say "I am in pain" indicates an emotion. What is of interest here for our purposes is that the feeling-state described by Levy refers to the body (or part of the body – the foot) as a possessed "mine": I have a foot (or body),

whereas the emotion statement refers not to possession but to self: I am my body.

It is important to be aware of the different implications of different conceptions of emotion. Those accounts which focus on cultural presuppositions, vocabularies of emotion, and other cultural constructions (e.g. Hochschild 1979; Shott 1979; Lutz 1988) suppose that social relationships are less important to emotional experience than the culturally given cognitive structures in terms of which social relations are supposedly given their meaning. In this approach the bodily basis of emotion is generally ignored or even denied. Accounts in which social relations are the basis of emotion (Barbalet 1992; de Rivera and Grinkas 1986), in which particular configurations of practical power or status, for example, are associated with particular patterns of emotional expression, offer a very different appreciation of the bodily dimension of emotion. In this latter perspective bodily processes are centrally implicated in emotion, as the social-relational formation of emotion is a relation of embodied agents (de Rivera 1977; Kemper 1978; Scheff 1988).

The concept of emotion required for the idea of embodied agency makes explicit what is too frequently left implicit in the scholarly discussion of emotion. This conception requires two qualities. One is the notion that emotion is socially efficacious, that is, that emotion has social consequences. The other is the idea that emotion has a social ontology, that emotion as an experience involving physical and phenomenal aspects has simultaneously a social-relational genesis. This is important because the emotional basis of the social body as it has been described above is in a significant sense founded in the structure or pattern of social relationships.

The role of emotion in social embodiment

The central role of emotion in embodied social life is an ontological issue, the foundations of which can be outlined by a consideration of sources in ethology and phenomenology. In *The History of Manners* (1978 [1939]) Elias wrote on the means by which social conditioning of the body occurs. Much later he returned to the question of emotion as an element in the "civilizing process" in an article on the origin and function of emotion in human society (1987). In this he opposes nature and culture and searches for the "hinge" connecting them. He locates this in the interrelationship between biological potential and the biological propensity for learning, a process which occurs in a social context (1987: 351). Drawing on the communicative functions of emotion, Elias makes the obvious and well known but none the less important point that while emotional capacities are "innate," emotional expression occurs in, and the linguistic and cultural

categories of feeling are learned in, the context of human social life (ibid.: 361). Elias's argument, however, is primarily behaviorist, treating emotional capacities as modified by the social context, and he does little to explore the role of emotion in the social agency of the body.

The communicative and social functions of emotion are, of course, true of primates in general, and a consideration of the origins of affectivity, and its continuities between human and non-human primates is instructive. Emotion is not a central topic in ethology; it is primarily dealt with in terms of its role in motivational systems of behavior, such as in the way fear might be regarded as the motivational basis for a particular observed behavior. But within the ethological literature generally and in work on emotion influenced by ethology, the evolutionary foundations of emotion have been addressed. Such material provides a basis for the better understanding of the role of emotion in social embodiment (Emde 1984; Plutchik 1984; Pribram 1984; Reynolds 1981).

The idea, typically associated with nineteenth-century social evolutionary thought, that emotion is a remnant of more "primitive" capacities somehow progressively submerged by the development of reason, is still prevalent. It is an unacknowledged element in much social science and continues to exert influence, implicitly at least, in social theory and is responsible in part for its cognitive bias. The issue of the primacy of emotion in cognition and the role of cognition in emotion has excited a recent debate in the psychological literature on emotion (Lazarus 1984; Zajonc 1980, 1984).

The central place of the emotional expressive system in primate evolution and its importance and further elaboration in humans has been addressed by an ethologist, Peter Reynolds (1981). He sees any theory of human evolution which presupposes "the development of reason at the expense of emotion or of learning at the expense of instinct" as counter to the behavioral evidence (ibid.: 36). Human evolution, he states, "does not climb the 'ladder of reason'" (1981: 38).

Reynolds, following Pribram, functionally differentiates the cognitive mechanisms evolved for the assessment of internal and external consequences of action into two main types which he terms the affective and the instrumental modalities of action (ibid.: 80). These affective and instrumental modalities have evolved simultaneously, and, according to Reynolds, are functionally interlocked: "both can call upon learned and innate behavior and in man, at least, both are active simultaneously" (ibid.: 80). The two function together in a complex and integrated, non-hierarchical relationship: "This conception of the relationship between reason and emotion as one of integration rather than of subordination cannot be over stressed, for it constitutes one of the great liberating concepts of ethological

science, a concept that stands in marked opposition to the major emphasis of Western thought" (Reynolds 1981: 81).

What is crucial here for our purposes is that affective systems have become "specialized for the mediation of social relationships" (ibid.: 82). Reynolds goes on to say that affect or emotion should not be regarded as expressive of private and idiosyncratic states, but should be understood "as the phylogenetically specialized channel by which internal states are made public" (ibid.: 82). From this perspective it becomes clear why human affective communication "does not lapse into disuse, as the Ladder of Reason would predict" (ibid.: 82). It is for these reasons that affectivity and instrumentality cannot be regarded as distinct or opposite but are necessarily functionally integrated in directing social behavior.

What is not developed in Reynolds but which must be made explicit is that emotion is necessarily embodied. A full although varied account of the body as agent in world experience, its "being-in-the-world," is in the phenomenological literature and especially in the work of Merleau-Ponty. This phenomenological perspective has been recently taken up by a number of anthropologists (e.g., Jackson 1981; Csordas 1990). However, our position extends this phenomenological notion of the body as an active agent in world construction through the consideration of the role of emotion in the process of social embodiment.

The phenomenological literature varies enormously in what role it assigns to the body in the generation of the "subjective matrix of experience." Merleau-Ponty was perhaps the most explicit in his acknowledgement of the importance of the body as agent of experience in his work on the phenomenology of perception (1962 [1946], 1964), although the importance of the body was not ignored in the work of other phenomenologists (e.g., Husserl, Marcel, Scheler, and Schilder).

Merleau-Ponty grounded perception in the experienced and experiencing body. The world as perceived through the body was, for him, the ground level for all knowledge, for it is through the body that persons gain access to that world. This bodily being is experienced through spatial and motor functions, in speech, language, gesture. This being present in the world also includes the incarnation in a body in both space and in time, i.e., in history and culture, and thus involves the ever-present experience of social being (Merleau-Ponty 1962 [1946]: 56–7; 360–5). Persons discover the social world, he states, "not as an object or sum of objects, but as a permanent field or dimension of existence (ibid.: 362). One "may well turn away from it, but not cease to be situated relatively to it. Our relationship to the social is, like our relationship to the [natural] world, deeper than any express perception or any judgement" (ibid.: 362).

Writing before Merleau-Ponty, Max Scheler could be seen to prefigure a

partial development of the points made above in his work on the phenomenology of feeling (e.g., 1954 [1913]; 1961 [1912]). Scheler is mentioned here because the main aim of his phenomenology of feeling was the very breaking down of the Cartesian distinction between reason and emotion. In reacting against the rationalist condemnation of feeling as mere subjectivity, he attempted to show that there are feelings which have an "objective" character as opposed to the more personalistic idea of internal "subjective" feeling (Spiegelberg 1982: 293), and that these "objective" feelings occur in a social context (see, for example, Scheler 1954 [1913]: xlvii–xlviii, 8–50). In a sense, what Scheler was grappling with, in our terms, was "social emotion," the need to be able to represent the feeling dimension of "being-in-the-world."

Classic works on the senses and perception in phenomenological psychology provide fruitful examples for the further grounding of the agency of the body in social life. Such work, too, as in the case of the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty, can be extended through a consideration of the role of emotion in this process. Perceptual psychology is concerned with what the perceiving organism brings to perception. James Gibson's work, for example, on the functions of the haptic system in the apprehension of the world (1962, 1966), can be seen to complement the use we have already made of material drawn from ethology and from phenomenology more generally.

The haptic system, from the Greek term meaning "able to lay hold of," is, according to Gibson (1966: 97), "[t]he sensibility of the individual to the world adjacent to his body by the use of his body." It is the apparatus through which information about both the body and the environment are gained (ibid.). The notion of the haptic system, including the concept of haptic touch, implies its active nature: "The haptic system, unlike the other perceptual systems, includes the whole body, most of its parts, and all of its surface. The extremities are exploratory sense organs, but they are also performatory motor organs; that is to say, the equipment for feeling is anatomically the same as the equipment for doing" (Gibson 1966: 99). Gibson's "feeling," of course, refers here to touch, rather than emotion. However, the haptic system must be seen as part of a dynamic and social process, for "in social touch, the haptic system with all of its subsystems comes into full perceptual use" (ibid.: 134). The work on haptic touch is useful in developing a sense of the agency of the body in both individual and social existence, and may thus contribute to the elaboration of the model of embodied feeling central to the argument of this chapter.

The role of feeling in social embodiment is more clearly acknowledged in the work of Heinz Werner and his associates. Werner and Wapner (1949) developed the "sensory-tonic field theory of perception" in order to depict

perception as a "total dynamic process," in which the relationship of the organism to context is given full consideration, including "projective" characteristics of perception such as emotion (ibid.: 91). Later, in his work on symbolization, Werner writing with Kaplan (1978: 477) argues that the development of human symbolic capacities incorporates affective and sensorimotor response patterns of earlier (pre) symbolic behavior, but in ways which result in new cognitive, functional elaborations of these patterns (see also Werner and Kaplan 1963). Kaplan, in a later work, sees the primary form of symbolization, in which "abstract intangible states of affairs are realized in a concrete medium" (e.g., in mythopoetic thought), as associated with a sense of actuality and intensity of feeling (1979: 223).

A more explicit and particularistic concern with the embodiment of emotion is apparent in current research on the neurophysiological foundations of emotion (e.g., Ekman et al. 1983; Papanicolaou 1989) and on the integration of cognitive and emotional functions (e.g., LeDoux 1989). This work is important in the understanding of the interrelationships of affect, learning, and memory, but also the further understanding of practical action (for memory see, for example, Bower 1980; Casey, 1987; Bowles 1988).

Thus, the embodied agent cannot be treated simply in terms of how his or her experience of the world forms the basis of knowledge. This is not sufficient to explain action. Feeling must be integrated in an account of both the experience of the world and the understanding of action within it. An understanding of emotion and its foundation in sociality is part of and makes sense of embodied experience, and in turn locates within the body the basis for its agency in the world. Thus, emotion is essential to any conception of social life, as a link between embodiment on the one hand and the practical activity of social life, that is, the praxis of the body, on the other.

Conclusion

The interactive and relational aspects of emotion are, in fact, as etiologically crucial and constitutive as the psychological and cultural. The supra-individual and social-relational bases of emotion are unavoidable. The suggestion here is that the concept of embodiment need not reinforce the idea that the individual is necessarily to be understood in terms of his or her "internal" processes, but rather that the concept of embodiment itself can lead to a deeper awareness of the sociality of being and emotion. Further, the approach to embodiment developed here, in that it provides an understanding of social agency in terms of the sensory and affective foundations of embodiment and therefore of experience, indicates by extension the interdependency of the social with the biological foundations of the experiencing organism.

What has been emphasized in this chapter is how we may conceptualize the "social body," that is, how the body can be understood simultaneously at an individual and a social level, and as agent as well as object in the social world. We have discussed the crucial role of emotion in the being of the body in society. Our goal has been to develop a framework for seeing the body as agent in, and as locus of intersection of, both an individual psychological order and a social order, as well as for seeing the body as both a biological being and a conscious, experiencing, acting, interpreting entity. We have argued that it is through the agency of emotion that this synthesis is accomplished and may be understood, for it is through emotion that the intersection of individual order and social order may be most clearly seen.

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Students of culture have been increasingly concerned with the ways in which cultural values are "inscribed" on the body. These essays go beyond this passive construal of the body to a position in which embodiment is understood as the existential condition of cultural life. From this standpoint embodiment is reducible neither to representations of the body, to the body as an objectification of power, to the body as a physical entity or biological organism, nor to the body as an inalienable center of individual consciousness. This more sensate and dynamic view is applied by the contributors to a variety of topics, including the expression of emotion, the experience of pain, ritual healing, dietary customs, and political violence. Their purpose is to contribute to a phenomenological theory of culture and self – an anthropology that is not merely about the body, but from the body.

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