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## DISCOURSES AND INTER-CORPOREITY

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Contemporary European theories have focused attention on corporeity, its surface excitations and passions, and even on politically constructed bodies – how do men and women “carry their bodies”. The great variety of such claims suggests transformations in theoretical thinking, yet such changes were already articulated at another level by phenomenological studies: kinesthetic body. It is obvious that to speak of corporeity is possible only on the basis of analyses of corporeal movements. Thus, the aim of this essay is to disclose the structures of bodily movements, constituting the basis of primordial awareness – not “I think” but “I can”. In the essay there are presented a number of theses of post modernists who have not developed adequate analyses of corporeal movements.

**Keywords:** horizons, “I can”, inter-corporeity, kinesthetic body, space-time morphologies.

### Introduction

The task of phenomenology has been both, to describe the essential phenomena of awareness, and through such a description to delimit the transcendental conditions that provide most concrete access to any objectivity and/or subjectivity. Yet currently, such conditions have been replaced by the presumably more concrete phenomena offered by a number of notable thinkers. The present essay purports to take to task the most recent theoretical preoccupation with this replacement: the primacy of “discursive practice”, offered by Michel Foucault, the

concepts of body as a circulation of surface effects, proposed by Gilles Deleuze, and the cynical body articulated by Peter Sloterdijk. It seems to us that these interesting and perhaps radical theses have delimited well the essential phenomena of awareness, but they have not articulated the concrete conditions for the possibilities of these phenomena. This is more so the case when these theses do not demonstrate the connections between their claims and the concrete corporeal–inter-corporeal engagements in the lifeworld of praxis. The latter term is quite inclusive: it connects culturally, economically, ritualistically required activities

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as inter-corporeal and equally individuating, and the continuity in action from generation to generation.

This, we shall argue, is the more basic conception of “history in the practical making” than the history that is continuous only at the theoretical level. The former may have discontinuities, overlappings, resumptions, and multiple depth horizons, while the latter is regarded as a linear purposive teleology. Indeed, the notion of discontinuous history, offered by Foucault, and by various postmodernists, is based on the history of active engagements that need not have a continuity; certain actions are abandoned and others, at times seen as “revolutionary” actions, are initiated. Neither Foucault, nor Deleuze, and indeed not even Sloterdijk, have offered any grounding of their claims in the corporeity and inter-corporeity in and of the lived world. At one level, our task is to outline those prevalent theses and to show that they too have assumed, as their basis, the active inter-corporeity, and the lifeworld whose current constitution in the West is technical. While being writers, they have sedimented their bodily activities to accommodate the current “practical implements” for their writing. Thus, the phenomenological conditions for their possibility of offering their theses is equally the acquired corporeal abilities in correlation to what the current practical implements require of their bodies. In this sense, we shall introduce a lifeworld of praxis that not only includes inter-corporeity, but also the socioeconomic, practical world that calls for certain corporeal activities.

The world “out there” is not an objectivity “in itself” but an instrumental structuration that requires a “pedagogy” of action in correlation to these structurations. While our analyses of the concrete conditions of “awareness” have been offered in different contexts, our points are designed not to deny or negate the current breakthroughs by the theoretical trends we shall articulate, but to open the passively assumed inter-corporeal and “inter-instrumental” awareness that subtend and/or pervade the discursive

analyses of strategies, and the constitution of surface flow of vagabond nomads. Interesting as such nomadic bricolage may be the actors, who interact with each other at this level of surface contacts, must first “move”, i.e. must constitute kinesthetic awareness. As we shall see, the latter is one of the conditions that is granted, even in its cultural variations, as a “tacit” dimension of awareness in all lifeworld instances.

It is only metaphysicians who have posited either mind or language as possessors of signification and meaning, while reducing corporeity to a body mechanism in space-time continuum. Phenomenology, in contrast, has opened the active corporeity as being “prior” to any speculative metaphysics and historicisms. What we propose then is the primacy of the “I can” over the “I think”. The “I” does not stand for a continuous identity but as an indice of the abilities that are correlated to concrete tasks with others. By now it ought to be obvious that the analyses at this level will require a concretization of the primacy of dialogue. The inter-corporeity, in face of tasks, is also a mutual understanding of the corporeal gestures concerned with what we are doing and how it is to be done.

## Discursive practice

The claims of Foucault regarding the most concrete phenomena are focused upon the multiple discourses as strategies that are designed to adjudicate, promote, and establish powers in face of other powers. In Foucault’s terms, there is not one central power, but multiple contesting powers (Foucault 1972, 1979, 1980, 1975, 1990, 1994). This comes from the argument of Friedrich Nietzsche that, in the final analyses, one power cannot be power. Any power requires counter powers. Foucault adds to this thesis the modern notion that there is no one master discourse, but equally multiple discourses as strategies for power. He follows the Nietzschean notion that even language or discourse is not a description of some reality,

but a means to acquire and extend power over other powers (Foucault 1972, 1979, 1980, 1975, 1990, 1994). It is important to understand that an effort to extend power over everything will never succeed because other powers will equally use discursive powers to resist and surpass currently given powers – for a moment. This logic simply states that there cannot be one infinite power, since the very definition of power requires counter-power. That means that there can be only multiple powers, each one requiring the others in order to be powers. In this sense, Foucault's logic suggests that discursive means are essentially strategies to achieve and enhance power in contrast or in opposition to other discourses and their efforts to achieve power. The discursive practice as strategy is a logic that operates on the bases of its own rules and the more basic constructs of a given milieu such as modernity. This means that one can learn the grammar of a discourse and yet, in order to use this grammar as a strategy, one also presupposes the background of a cultural unconscious that allows the grammar to function as if it were "normal". The cultural unconscious is the normalizing condition that seems to structure all human engagements and discourses.

No doubt. There are the cultural phenomena that are unquestioned and structure all other levels (whether such phenomena are unconscious can be answered only metaphysically), yet our contention is that even these cultural phenomena are grounded in the direct engaged awareness of corporeity and inter-corporeity. These engaged modes of awareness are the transcendental conditions for the awareness of the functioning of powers and discursive practices. In order to make sense of discourses, specifically under the assumption that they are implicit power imperatives, there is a more basic awareness that consists of a system(s) of lifeworld orientations, vectors, assumed by particular corporeity. The latter, as a structure of concrete awareness, makes sense of the abstract, discursive power logics. The basic discursive terminology that involves prescription for

action is a terminology that is not derived from discourses. Rather, the discourses themselves must follow the corporeal practical conditions as ways of making senses of discursive strategies. What we suggest is that one cannot understand terms such as "history has no continuity or direction", as Foucault would have it, unless one has a corporeal understanding of directions, orientations, constitutions of practical spaces and times in order to understand the discourses. Discourses, as power strategies, would not be able to articulate what someone must do, where someone must go, or when someone must be somewhere, unless one already has an oriented body. More concretely speaking, even the language of economy cannot be understood as a discursive practice of a capitalist or communist power unless the worker and the ruling elites understand the body orientations in the workplace in correlation to the specific implements requiring concrete corporeal actions in face of tasks (for other details see Lingis 1994).

Foucault claims that there are institutionalized discourses that require the human to subject himself to those discourses in order to acquire strategic power (Foucault 1972, 1979, 1980, 1975, 1990, 1994). Yet, in this case the human must have a corporeal and inter-corporeal awareness of movement, spatio-temporal constitution of places and times and therefore a system of corporeal orientations as a condition for using the discursive strategies. In brief, the discursive logic is two-dimensional; without a multidimensional body that, as an awareness, is coextensive with the signitive movements of vectors of spatiality and temporality of the lifeworld. Without movements that are constituted in the very activity of corporeity, the discourses would make no sense. When we are talking about corporeity and inter-corporeity, we are not suggesting something psychological, individualistic or physiological-scientific. These notions are equally metaphysical, since they try to reduce inter-corporeity to an entity in a pre-given space and time. What we are suggesting is that anyone who is engaged in any strategic

discourse in any culture will also accept passively the awareness of kinesthetic corporeity and inter-corporeity as actions in correlation to tasks to be performed by us in a cultural and socioeconomic setting.

Given the assumption of the discursive practice, there is no way to understand why there should be a discontinuity in history. After all, discourses of any type are significations that imply horizons beyond horizons without any limit. But the breakdown of continuous history is possible on the basis of what we do and what we stop doing, of what we build and what we destroy. To speak architecturally, one mode of building is discarded and becomes a relic for tourists, while other modes of building become the current style. The previous one does not imply nor does it necessarily continue the current one; they can be different and discontinuous. This is to say, the previous acquired corporeal activities of building or even producing are discarded and new ones are constituted in face of new tasks. Thus, the previous "I can" is no longer required and a new "I can" is constituted. In this sense, there is no necessity for a continuous historical subject. Those who cannot acquire the abilities required of the new tasks to be performed are designated as incapable and maybe inferior. In short, their sedimented activities, that constituted their self identity as "I can", are no longer required for the current tasks. Hence, they loose their position, status, pride, dignity, etc., because they "cannot do" the required activities.

While Foucault's discursive strategies purport to imply that institutionalized modes of activities determine what we are and what we do, our point is that even institutionalized discourses require the condition of awareness that is corporeal within whose parameters the discursive practices make sense. If we regard Western modern globalization, that extends technologies of mass production, we shall see that this globalization requires very different inter-corporeal activities than those that were acquired by indigenous peoples. This is to say

that in the period of post colonialism, it is not sufficient to understand modern discursive strategies in opposition to indigenous discursive strategies as clashing powers. Rather, more primordially, there is a required reconstitution of the inter-corporeal transcendental conditions that would be necessary for the functioning in the Western modern setting. This, we contend, is the ground for "historical discontinuity". Given the reconstitution of the lifeworld of a given people by globalizing modernity, there is also a reconstitution of what people do concretely and corporeally in this new lifeworld. If a lifeworld is a system of concrete inter-corporeal signitive implications, these signitive implications appear only on the background of inter-corporeal awareness. I know what I can do, and I know what we can do in face of given tasks, but now I must learn how to do in face of very different tasks, laden with technologies. No doubt, the constitution of corporeity is social and cultural, nonetheless the prescriptions assume that a corporeity take on a structuration process as an acquisition of abilities of "I-we can".

We would like to suggest another argument concerning the primacy of the kinesthetic consciousness *vis-à-vis* Foucault's notion of discursive strategies. As we already noted, the structure of discourse is two dimensional. It does not imply a connection between itself and the tacit understanding of our corporeal and inter-corporeal activities in the lifeworld. This means that Foucault assumes the modern notion of language that must be "applied" on, and thus determine "reality". This is to say, he is following quite uncritically the modern conception that "all theory must be applied" and that "scientific knowledge is power". We do not claim that he is wrong, but wish to point out that his thesis is very much a part of Western modern modernity. The latter also assumed that the only trusted theory is one that can be applied, but has never articulated the transcendental inter-corporeal conditions required to make sense of application. The inter-corporeity

is, according to phenomenology, a process of kinesthetic abilities and their restrictions in face of the given social, economic, and even cultural tasks and the technical means available for their fulfillment.

### The nomad

Two other theorists, Deleuze and Félix Guattari, are engaged in an unrelenting critique of the Oedipal triangle and of psychoanalysis that move its trade within the context of this triangle (Deleuze, Guattari 1996). For Western modern understanding, the myth of the Oedipus complex attempts to locate madness as an alienation from the prevalent social institution of the patriarchal family. The cure for any and all madness is a reconciliation mediated by the doctor, with the family, and a forming of a family of one's own. Deleuze and Guattari point out that this cure does not offer a genuine liberation but instead provides a way of psychiatric participation in a repression of the human by the bourgeoisie at its most far reaching level. For them, the carnal desire does not have an object; rather, it is invested in whole environments, impulses and fluxes, and is essentially nomadic (Deleuze, Guattari 1996). We always make love to the world. Eroticism pervades all; the way a technocrat oils the machinery, the way a judge pronounces a sentence, the way a corporation screws the worker. Only through articulation, exclusion, and isolation that libido becomes invested in objects or persons. The objectification is produced in the constitution of a subject. Yet it is important to note that the objects or persons are intersections of agonistic and protagonistic confluences of biological, social, historical, and psychic fields which have been equally subject to libidinal investments.

The molar structures – organisms and environments – formed from molecular structures, are composed of the processes which are coextensive with their functioning: they do not signify or represent, aim at or mean anything.

Their analysis must, thus, be functional. This is not to say that they function mechanically or even vitalistically. Both theorists, no doubt, would see such designations as speculative. The latter are designed to explicate a unitary function of an organism. But for these thinkers, the organism is a massive number of molecular processes, and each consists in the formation of a connection – an energy flow – and its interruption and consumption. They arm *desire machines*. The nutrition, the oxygen, the earth, the light, are analogates in nature; each system, with its own order, nonetheless connects with the organism as it connects with them. The bee is part of the reproductive system of clover, as is the wind, the human hand and the tail of a dog.

The plan is partially Nietzschean; our customary conception of ourselves as a unitary ego and will, an actor behind the acts, has proffered a pretense of integrality: I am working, and I am enjoying, and I am in love – all reveal at once an illusion of any unity, and the nomadism, the constant renaming of the self, and show that there is no inherent synthetic unity, but selective processes that overlap and accommodate, tense and adjust. At the same time these theorists use basically a modern and partially a Marxian terminology to articulate these primordial processes of communication. The molecular processes are productive and equally reproductive of production. In this sense they never change to negativity, a desire of absences, or a phallic absence beyond all satisfaction. The molecular processes produce couplings that disconnect and disjoin flows and produce satisfaction, a consummate consumption. This conception is a conjunction of readings from biology, child psychology, schizophrenic literature, and above all, Nietzschean reading of sociocultural history.

The Nietzschean concept of savages and nomads is regarded as definitory of infantile stages of our history. A barbarian and/or imperial stage followed, that led to the capitalist stage, whose conclusive development in the positivity of capital as the global and universal decoding and deterritorialization, ends in

savagery and schizophrenia. Schizophrenization is writ large in our social world; it is written even in the way we make love with the world in our day and age. What this comprises is an attack on two factors: the Oedipal triangle, and the structural linguistic reading of events that are pre-linguistic, nomadic, and without names. Moreover, the theoretical issues are more profound; far from being a context of all interpretation where civilization is accessed, reality coded, and socialization enforced, the Oedipus stage itself emerges at a certain conjunction of cultural history. In this sense, it ceases to have a universal and necessary validity, an all encompassing explanatory force, and becomes contingent, historically limited, and a partial mode of speaking. This thesis is already obvious in Foucault's reading of Nietzsche, where the domain of madness and rationality is not seen as *pregiven*, but as set up. Indeed, such a setting up is not at all a theoretical operation, but a social practical invention, leading subsequently to a specific concept of reason that no longer engages in a dialogue with its opposite, but is a monologue about the opposite, the linguistically deemed irrational.

This is precisely the Lacanian linguistic thesis. All the separations of science and theater, explanation and poetics, are linguistic power segregations. This is a modern set up where the socially dysfunctional – in terms of the logic of bourgeoisie industrialism – is regarded as irrational, deviant, *residua* of industrial revolution, is in need of supervision, treatment, are minors who someday might become responsible citizens. Indeed, the rationality becomes not a mere looking into reality, but a very prescription of normalcy and curative practices. When the family, the agrarian community, becomes dismantled by industrialism, the curative institution becomes the father for the modern *residua*. Thus the psychoanalytic theory of modernity is also established to reflect this practice, to give it scientific legitimacy. Here one must accept the subjection to the doctor-father and enter the Oedipal triangle; in case one does not

integrate, interiorize and sublimate its laws, one is classified as neurotic; in case one does not recognize its power, reason and legitimacy, one is named psychotic. This is to say, the retreat in the face of the Oedipal theater would be a return to the pre-civilized, the primary, the nomadism without designated and transcendent objectivities, the realities of daily and scientific discourse, the negativities of the law, the law of modern bourgeoisie rationality, instrumental power of production.

What would then be the extrication not from the conjunction of chemical and biological processes, the constant exchanges and adjustments of energy, constant intersection of processes to gain and release flows, but in terms of the social-psychological drama. The infant who screams with the first breath, with the pain of being born, is a biochemical, unprotected mass. It wants to return to the immediacy of the undifferentiated enclosure, to the inorganic happiness. The infant now must obtain its sustenance from the maternal substance to replenish the liquidous energy lost through its open tubes and porous skin. Thus it clings to the mother and produces, for the first time, surface effects by extending its own surfaces through direct touch and liquids consumed. Here the clinging to the mother produces pleasure. This is the moment at which the infant overcomes the desire to return to the inorganic state and blocks the death wish. The organism does not begin to sense, but must first produce the pleasure of living. It does so on the surfaces and nodes of undisrupted touching, caressing and ingesting, on the surfaces that are constituted by these very processes of attachments.

This layer of orgiastic communication, of primary extension of surfaces, is rejected by Lacanian structural linguistics. The latter derives its force from the phallic signifier constitutive of the symbolic order. The infant enters language as *Phallus*, as an already constituted sign. One can enter language only as an element of language, a signifier, as a part of a symbolic order. The order is not constituted part by part,

such that a signifier would be determined by a signifying singular act, pointing to a signified identity; signs function in and are simultaneously an internal articulation of a field of signifiers, related in mutual oppositions. In this sense, the world is born as a whole through any sign, and the latter, functioning diacritically, can signify anything. The child, thus, enters the field not from outside, but as a Phallic signifier who is constantly referred to alterity, to others, and thus is a zero signifier, a floating signifier, that once was called the transcendental Ego, forever absent, although always appearing as a unfulfillable desire – a total negativity. This is what defines eroticism as a desire.

Deleuze and Guattari posit the orgiastic body as a rejection of the Oedipal setting. While modern culture would designate such a rejection either as neurosis, psychosis, and schizophrenia, they regard this rejection as a complete positivity. For them the orgiastic upsurge is neither a need nor a desire but production (Deleuze, Guattari 1996). It is a force tensing against power, resistance, overcoming and extending into erotic surfaces of pleasure, excesses, gratuities, discharges of the superfluity of forces and tensions that are the primary, non-significative, pre-objective, pre-subjective, and even pre-psychological processes of communication. Here the pleasure is not an object to be obtained, an intentional aim that could be instantiated, but a force that upsurges and dissipates. Yet such force is mobile and fortuitous, appearing here and there, now and then, and from this mobility one could not compose some sort of pleasure principle as a basic aim, drive, or a bond. Deleuze would regard bonding, as the basis of the pleasure principle, as a second layer appearance of the orgiastic in repetition, ritual, patterns that bind and fix the freely mobile intensities, reduce their force. Thus the oppression of the orgiastic carnality does not come from outside, from a language and a consciousness, but is inherent in the very production of the surface pleasures. It could be said that while recognition, the construction of memory, is a

function of a constituted faculty, its constitution assumes a repetition as representation enacted, performed, and not added from outside by a reflexive consciousness. This is equally a new conception of repression: one does not repeat the binding because one is oppressed, but one is oppressed by the very repetition. In this way it makes sense that the repetition does not represent itself, it is never an object for itself, but an enactment posing no distance to itself, a magic that collapses unto itself.

This, now, makes sense of Deleuze's rejection of discursive law and its power in the Oedipal complex. The power of the law is too late. It promises a synthesis of the similar in quality, or as equivalent in quantity. The law allows one to exchange parts, son for a father, paternal and with father's name, and becoming a member of culture and thus significant. But repetition is a fatum of the dissimilar, inexchangeable, irrepeatable and dispersed singularity. A destiny never consists of determinate relations, following step by step, between presents, succeeding one another in accord with the structure of theoretical, sequential time. The dissimilar imply gaps between presents, trace non-localizable connections, actions at a distance, recurrences without temporal distances, resonances and echoes, chances, signals and signs, roles that transcend spatial situations and temporal successions. Thus a singular repeats and has its own singular destiny and any authentic communication would require an attunement to this, the orgiastic carnality with its rhythm that mocks every language and pretended explanation: a total positivity.

It could be surmised that this nomadic positivity pervades even Jean-François Lyotard's conception of the orgiastic body to the extent that the nomadic couplings with surface nodes and productive of force, extend to cover otherwise incomprehensible practices. How is it that empires are set up basically by nomadic "heroes" whose achievements and excesses are not only a spread of the geographic surfaces, but are on the move for novel couplings with

other areas and domains, seeking other “conquests”. Although the imperial patterns seem to establish an inner suppression of the nomadic logic, the latter will irrupt in senseless “games” attended by crowds, lashed from frenzy to coition, only to disperse back to the patterns of self inflicted suppression.

But what, then, does this nomadism take for granted as the condition for its possibility. The very name nomadism suggests the power of movement, supposes kinesthetic awareness. Even the infant’s coupling to the maternal body, the clamping of the mouth to maternal breast, the clutching to her hair, require passive syntheses of movement. The latter, as a kinesthetic body, does not occur part for part, such that when the hand grips the rest of the body remains unaffected. To reach is to reach with a total corporeal gesture, not only by stretching one’s arm, but by kicking one’s leg and twisting the torso. The positive flows and productions of energies and their disruptions on the surfaces depicted by Deleuze and Guattari require more primary abilities, the constitution of kinesthetic body at the passive level (Deleuze, Guattari 1996). Hence it is our task to explicate such a body and its inter-corporeity and, as a matter of experience, policentric access to the world.

### **The cynical body**

Sloterdijk engages in the task of comprehending power from the side of the body. Using the phenomenological method, he articulates two broad modes of cynical “philosophizing”, the body of the “lower” processes, the uncultured, and the “polite body” of the elites, polite at least under the public gaze if not in private domain (Sloterdijk 1988, 1990). Nonetheless, even the elitist high discourses are designed to gratify some body passion, and in the last analysis, the acquisition of power. In this sense the erotic theory of wisdom, philosophy, has ended and is replaced by quest for power. Consciousness, in brief, comes with skin, hair, claws, and teeth.

Sloterdijk, here, evokes Nietzsche’s pronouncement that the philosophers of the future will be physiologists. Body, for Sloterdijk, is the most covered up, most negated set of processes that, in it being negated is most present (Sloterdijk 1988, 1990). This is to say, all the bodily processes that occur without “our permission” have been overlaid not only with fig leaves and other clothing, but also with “pure thought”, or “ideal images”, and even angelic blessings. Yet despite all efforts, the body demonstrates its cynicism by urinating against the wind of idealities.

The “lower parts” of society, the “dirty” and the “polluted” comprise the cynical realism. Although the “high heads” may pretend to escape the grime of the working bodies, the heads, perched on their thrones, must still be seated on their asses, the real proletariat of the social world. Such a proletariat is not overly concerned with ego and status, position and pose, but mainly with the hungry stomach and the toiled (even if it is a hole in the ground). What interests Sloterdijk, at this level, is not so much the facticity of the proletarian preoccupation with this type of the body, but above all, its very presence even among the heads of the high culture. They too are basically concerned with their stomachs and the toilets (even if the stomachs are “educated” to demand gourmet, and the asses are trained to deposit their treasures in a perfumed toilet). As already mentioned, these cynical bodies do not ask for permission; they do their contingent necessities prior to and through all higher necessities, be the latter important matters of state or less important matters of some mother church. To use phenomenological terms, these bodies are engaged with the world “anonymously” and impersonally, so to speak “transcendentally”. They are, after all, the condition for the possibility of all that is deemed to be “higher”.

We have no doubt that Sloterdijk has opened amidst the higher and the highest functions of culture a body that mocks all pretenses of transcending the dirty world. Yet, it is our contention that this lower, although all pervasive body,

has to function even as a working body on the basis of acquired or to be changed abilities in face of socioeconomic and technical tasks. This is to say, that a cynical body, to fulfill even its meager requirements, must engage in socially constituted activities. In this sense, the cynical body presupposes the body in praxis or to speak purely phenomenologically, specifically constituted inter-corporeal kinesthetic system. The hungry bodies that mock the promises of the high heads of economic great future as described by the elites that lead these bodies to victory, will be treated by these very elites cynically as dumb working bodies for somebody else benefit, including the benefit of the elites that explain the reason why these bodies are hungry and cynical. The lower parts, as the real proletariat, is a sign of the proletariat that must subject its inter-corporeal kinesthetic constitutions in face of the requirements of production lines, of the mechanisms which the hand and the eye must manage and to which they must accommodate in their movements. While the workers asses might fart and their mouths may spit, yet in order to participate in the production for a meager wage, the worker will be “trained” in activities that the means of production call for. What we are suggesting is that the condition for the possibility of cynical bodies is the kinesthetic inter-corporeity whose activities cannot be avoided. To speak with Ludwig Klages (1970), the slightest expressivity, even erotic, or cynical, is already a kinesthetic formation of a face, a total body gesture, and not a given state of an ontologically conceived body. We must not forget that even Diogenes of Sinope, parading his cynical body in the market place, had to get there from his barrel and to squat in front of Plato’s house in order to pose as a cynic.

Our phenomenological investigations into inter-corporeity have performed number of tasks. First, they account for the passive and anonymous engagement in tasks with others; and second, they demonstrate the constitution both of once own self-recognition and the recognition of the other. This recognition does

not posit metaphysical entities but articulates engaged corporeities that recognize each other in what they can or cannot do. This is to say, the philosophical issue of individuation and how from the individual we get a community, is answered at the level of praxis and active inter-corporeity. To turn the question around, the last two centuries up to date have offered numerous volumes arguing either for the priority of the individual or for the priority of the social. Our investigations suggest that to posit an individual in distinction from other individuals does not show us in what sense there is an individual self-recognition as individual, nor can we derive society from sum of discrete individuals. In turn, we cannot show how an individual will be derived from the primacy of the society. We are demonstrating that neither is prior and that both are mutually constituted at the level of engaged corporeity and inter-corporeity facing common tasks at various levels.

### Body in action: constitution of space

While in his earlier works Edmund Husserl still spoke of hyletic data as given, but in *Ideas II: Phenomenological Analyses Relating to the Problems of Constitution* (*Ideen II: Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution*, 1952), and in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (*Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie: Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische*, first edition in 1936) this view is undercut by the functioning of corporeity; the latter belongs to the passive side of transcendental subjectivity, yet in such a way that it transgresses the factual and the essential while founding in its generality both. The constitutive activities subtend the hyletic data and show that the latter appear on the basis of kinesthetic constitution of spaciality and temporality. This means that even the primordial data and indeed any surface nomadic nodes of sensuality are apperceptive. The impressional data already have

a form and content and both are mediated by constitutive activities of spatialization and temporalization that provide duration and position for the data. Without kinesthetic apperception there are no impressions, sensations or intensive nodes, and without kinaesthesia there are no apperceptions. The urimpressions are synthetic units of kinaesthesia. In this sense, kinesthetic consciousness is space–time consciousness. This means, furthermore, that corporeity is not constituted but constitutive. It is a system of activities to which sense fields are coordinated and as such is on the side of transcendental subjectivity. This makes precedent of corporeity as “I can”, provided that no phenomenological credence is given to the “I”. It could be said provisionally that the empowerments of corporeity are genetically prior to the appearance of the ego, or the discovery of the “mine” precedes the discovery of the ego.

Here the world and other relationships are pre-delineated. This subjectivity does not have the world as something facing it, but something that is coextensive with it. The world is to the extent our corporeal activities constitute it in synthetic praxis and articulation: we know of it as much as is announced in corporeal activities. The activities are not at our disposal but are what we are in praxis, and the world is the praxis world. In this sense the world is not confronted, but is coextensive with the transcendental becoming. And this is precisely why the world escapes us as an object or subject and remains as an anonymous groundless ground. Nonetheless, it bears in itself the principle both of individuation and other relatedness, their difference and commonality. It pre-establishes a process which can be called mine and differentiated from others on a common ground.

Without the corporeal activities, consciousness of self is a presupposition, a condition for the possibility of experience but not an experience of the individual self or ego. The unity of the transcendental ego might turn out to be a construction, or an explanatory principle which one presupposes in order to explain the

unity of experience, and in recourse to factual experience and its conditions which make it possible. This is the central issue. If this is a result concerning necessary condition which must be presupposed, what constitutes its universal necessity? It might be a hypothesis that could turn out to be unwarranted, or an ideology, disproven in subsequent experiences.

The problematic could be restated in other terms. The basis for which Husserl seeks is to be absolute, and yet the question of the individual is not answered purely on the transcendental arguments for an ego. Individuality is to be sought elsewhere. It is precisely such a search that leads to the absoluteness of the corporeally engaged factual individual and inter-corporeal relationships: contingent absoluteness. How is this contingency to be understood? Earlier discussion would have suggested that it is a fact correlated to an essence, but such a correlation turns out to be impossible since every fact is already a constituted system in a field. In addition, the reflective thinking cannot determine the limits of the facticity of passive activities and hence correlate them to essential insights. Neither facticity nor essentiality will do, specifically if experienced facticity of self in activity does not yield any substantial identity and predicative characterizations. The factual process is not experienced as a brute and dumb fact, to be subsumed as an exemplar of an *eidōs*, but as a system of dynamic abilities, deployed from a here and a now, not in a sense of being inserted in a pre-given space-time, but from which the world is opened in action. The null-point is the corporeity from which all actions unfold, but in such a way that the null-point itself is apperceptive and located in a process of shifting and intersecting activities comprising a field and not a position.

Our contention is that this field and its field nature are pre-delineated in its factual life as a constant activity and a structuration of the perceptual world. The ego is an achievement of factual enablements that are not factual data. In this sense, the ego is absolute fact. Its necessity

is neither essential nor contingent. Both are subtended by the acting corporeity and its systematic engagements with the practical affairs. What follows from such an absolute fact is that any essential and contingent determinations of it are inadequate. In this sense it is without ground. One could claim that the activities are constitutive of, while being unconstituted by, the phenomenal field. Given this it is now possible to take the last step toward the tracing of the question of individuality and inter-subjectivity.

Bodily activities constitute an ineradicable facticity that is not dumb but an articulated process that does not emerge into the foreground – specifically since it is not entitative but constitutive of spacio-temporalization of patterns. The latter are neither interior nor exterior; hence reflective awareness is inadequate to grasp it. Rather it is a taken for granted point of departure for any investigation of the lived world and a field of history. Each gesture and movement is accomplished spontaneously and recognized in correlation to, and distinction from, others. From childhood on there is a vital-kinesthetic exploration of the world and the constitution of corporeal abilities. The latter are neither inner nor outer, but are primarily effective. One can reach something, move something, pull, push, lift and throw. This effectivity comprises its own domain of cognition.

While pre-reflective, corporeal movements constitute their own self-reflexivity and self-reference. In a missed attempt to reach something, the attempt is immediately repeated. The missing comprises an instance of movement which reflects back upon itself and calls for a variation of itself in a second attempt. There is a direct kinesthetic question: can I do this? Revealing at the outset an already articulated field of abilities and tasks with possible variations that never offer a final, factual limitation. Here one builds a recognition of oneself in terms of what one can do. This self-recognition is coextensive with the recognition of the abilities as mine, not because the abilities are mirrored in a psychological interiority or in

a mirror, but because they are kinesthetically reflexive and at the same time coextensive with and differentiated from those of others. I cannot do this means that not only that I have tried and failed but that I have seen others perform it. The correlation of abilities and inabilities is an inter-corporeal experience present in the handling of tasks and undertakings. Corporeal abilities comprise an understanding of commonalities and individuating differences.

The commonality has two components: first the common task in which we are engaged, and second the continuity of activities that differentiate themselves into variations. We lift something, but you do it from that side and I do it from this. While the end you are lifting is heavier, you can, and I cannot lift that end, yet I can lift this end, and thus discover a common activity and its corporeal differentiation. This constitutes a polycentric field of activities and includes others who are not present at the task. “If only Joe were here to lend us a hand”, includes the abilities of Joe as coextensive with, and differentiated from our capacities. Or, “Lucky that Mike is not here; he certainly likes to lend a hand, but tends to be more of a hindrance than help”. The investigations reveal possible variations that take over the suggestion of *Cartesian Meditations* (*Méditations cartésiennes*, first edition in 1931) concerning empathy. At the active level the term empathy can be modified by “filling in”. It is quite a common notion; we do fill in for someone at the job, by taking over a function, or by putting our shoulder to the task from another side. All these functions suggest a commonality and a variation. This is corporeal individuation and inter-corporeal field that is neither a simple fact, nor an essence; it subtends both. Concurrently, there is a level of reflexivity, of direct apperception of the self and the other on the basis of activities that both undertake. Her ability to reach something, and my lack of such an ability, despite my efforts, reflects directly our corporeal commonality of reaching, and our differences. Thus, the I can is prior to the pure I, since the former is individuated and

differentiated from others, and yet is directly aware of them as well as of itself.

It should be by now somewhat more obvious that the ground of history is neither historical nor constituted by a logic of continuity of time, but is the very process of inter-corporeal making, comprising an interconnected field of bodily activities such that the activities, constituting a systematic engagements in tasks, are individuating and coextensive with others. Yet this leads to the reinvestigation of the “factual” tasks and objects to which such tasks are related. The factual states of affairs, correlated to our activities, are equally prior to essentiality and brute factuality. Rather they have an open explorability and generality, specifically with respect to their practical functions. It is to be noted that history is not thought but built, made, in practical engagements. Such engagements reveal another aspect of activities that could be called dimensional, leading to corporeal analogization of the field of praxis. The active handling of objects does not exhibit a one-to-one correlation between activities and the objects. Each activity can range over various and typologically distinct objects and tasks. The hand can pick up a stone, a hammer, a stick and use any of them to pound a stick into the ground. And this constitutes a primal analogization in two senses. First, one can perform similar activities and recognize them directly anywhere and anyplace prior to historical temporalization, and second, the activities perform a passive analogization of objects by using them as interchangeable in face of a task. The hammer, the stone and the stick are analogates by virtue of the generality of our abilities. In this sense the “I can” is a factual generality that cannot be reduced either to a closed essence or a brute fact. One can then claim that the historical field is recognized by the interchanging functions as analogous to one another, capable of filling in one another, and equally by the facts as systems, not revealing essentialities, as was shown at the outset, but various analogical interconnections, recognizable corporeally. It is

this that allows an archeologist a historian, and an anthropologist to reconstruct the so called past on the basis of some handy find. This is to say, these scholars and researchers do not have to date the find in a preconceived temporal sequence – this comes as an occupational tandem subsequently – but to encounter it as an analogate of what they could do with this object and imply that we too already recognize that we could equally do similar things.

This means that there is no necessary interconnection among all activities; some are continued, others discontinued, and still others postponed, thus constituting varied time structures and task structurations that prohibit any teleological direction to history. With such a prohibition, any quest for history as something that is unidirectional and above the activities and tasks that build it, ceases to make sense. The activities are of course interconnected in various ways, inclusive of the above delimited commonalties and differentiations, yet they comprise a field without a *telos*, without a direction and hence a continuous building but not in any sense temporal building. It is rather an atemporal intersection of activities wherein the so called past and the presumed future, as ontologizations, come too late. In brief, the lived world as historical is a world of praxis that does not admit either of essentiality or of facticity; rather both are coextensive with what Husserl describes as “primordial *technē*” (Husserl 1964, 1952, 1932, 1970; Landgrebe 1963, 1968). Any given society in its practical tasks also composes specific sedimented activities of bodies and inter-corporeities that comprise a background concrete consciousness. This sedimented inter-corporeity allows for a foreground activities of certain body movements. When Deleuze, Guattari, and even Georges Bataille speak of the modern production, such as capitalist production, where the owner only buys the worker hands as an attachment to a mechanical productive process, they failed to note that even kinesthetic composition of the hands not only correlate to the tasks to be performed, but also

assume a kinesthetic sedimented corporeity as a background. This is to say body must stand or seat in a particular posture in order to make the hands as a foreground to be able to perform what the worker would say “I can do this job”. Assuming that Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari have argued that the transcendental subjectivity as some sort of universal consciousness is not attainable, they have forgotten or neglected the more fundamental transcendental condition of kinesthetic inter-corporeity as practical awareness prior to being elevated to some sort of consciousness of reality or of objectivities. Society then is a field of tasks requiring inter-corporeal awareness how we do things in this place, and that means already a tacit or passive awareness on whose background various functions are comprehensible.

Those social requirements comprise a field of inter-corporeal activities where what I can do is read directly what the others are doing. Let us take a soccer game where each player reads the body directions and movements in correlation to the entire field of the game. This is to say where are my team-mates and in what directions they are moving and where are the opponents and how they are positioning themselves will also constitute my kinesthetic requirements how do I move toward my teammates and opponents comprising the entire spatio-temporal and kinesthetic field. In this sense, what Foucault claims about the discursive practices as confrontation of powers, requires the most basic awareness of where, when, and how one must act in order to practice the discursive strategies (Foucault 1972, 1979, 1980, 1975, 1990, 1994). What we are suggesting is the passive constitution of spatio-temporal corporeal engagements prior to any understanding what the discursive strategy means. While the above illustrations we offer seems to apply to the field of sports, all social activities engage to require tasks equally constitute a body that is an inter-corporeal a field body.

In industrial or agricultural production one understands one's own tasks in correlation to

the field of tasks that we inter-corporeally perform. If I plow a field and my son leads the mule I know what he is doing and he knows what I am doing in correlation to the tasks we are both performing. We have a passive awareness of the texture of the land, the resistance of the earth, the power of the mule, and our own direct connections which we read from each other activities. If we shift this passive understanding to industrial production, we also can see how people are trained to put a nut on a bolt, how the hand should move, and the nut should fit, by the use of my or the others' hands. This is inter-corporeal kinesthetic understanding that is the consciousness prior to any metaphysical understanding of consciousness. The latter would be interpreted as mind inside of a body, or as something internal in opposition to something external, or even some spirit inhabiting momentarily the physical realm.

What we are saying is nothing novel. It has to be emphasized that any specific awareness is conditioned by the transcendental consciousness. This consciousness is not personal or a possession of some entity called human but rather a formation of corporeal activities in face of concrete social tasks. The very structure of that consciousness is the way that inter-corporeity acts in the world of tasks required by a certain social practice. This means that certain sedimented social tasks also constitute specific inter-corporeal activities that equally become sedimented and regarded as normal. For example, in a capitalistic social economic context certain mechanical fragmented activities are sedimented and therefore constitute the very inter-corporeal understanding. It is like asking somebody who are you? And the answer would be “I am a welder on an assembly line”. No doubt, one could say that he can do other things, but only after some “training in the required skills”.

What is at issue for the now accepted globalizing Western modernization is the compelled reconstitution of corporeal and inter-corporeal practices. The latter must be constituted in

terms of the technical modes of production that require an increasing fragmentation and militarization of activities. This is the condition for the Marxian conception of division of labor and Foucault's conception of modern militarization, not to speak of the behaviorist conception of one-to-one correlation of atomistic stimuli to localizable responses, or what Maurice Merleau-Ponty called the "constancy hypothesis" (Merleau-Ponty 1964, 1963, 1962). This is to say, even the science of human behavior, being globalized by psychology, consists of a radically fragmented corporeal set of activities such that none know what the others are doing. But as is well known, even this psychology is a technique of behavioral modification, whether as industrial, clinical educational, social or criminal psychology.

## Conclusions and implications

There is a long tradition to regard the body as a thing in space, time and movement, such that these factors do not have any essential impact on the body. Whether one is in Vilnius, Tokyo, today or tomorrow, the body will remain the same. Such a view fails to take into account that body not only *is*, but also moves in complex ways in correlation to the environment or the phenomenal field and relationship to the movements and activities of others. In this article the task was to offer a brief investigation of kinesthetic body as an all pervasive phenomenon required to make sense of the claims of various post modern theorists, interested in body awareness. Whether one speaks of body surfaces, or discursive bodies, one must take for granted a direct awareness of the movements of others and, reflectively, of oneself. Moreover, our awareness of space and time is premised on the oriented body, consisting of at least six dimensions (not to speak of dancing bodies which deploy dramatically complex space-time configurations). Simple statement: "let us go forward" tells us not only that we must go from

here to there, but also from now to then – we are "looking toward the future" and "leave the past behind".

The implications of corporeal movement investigations are indefinite, not only in our relationship to the world and interaction with others, but also in our understanding of other species. It can be suggested that the premises of biological evolution are somewhat inadequate insofar as genetics has taken the lead to explain transformations of physiological structures. After all, when speaking of adaptation, we must also speak of moving-shaping a living creatures body to slowly assume a shape that is adequate for interaction with a changing environment. Such investigations belong strictly to phenomenology.

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## DISKURSAI IR TARPKŪNIŠKUMAS

Algis MICKŪNAS

Plėtojant šiuolaikines Europos teorijas daug kalbama apie kūniškumą, paviršiaus dirginimą ir aistras bei apie politiškai suformuotus kūnus – apie tai, kaip vyrai ir moterys „nešioja“ kūnus. Ištisa tokių teiginių įvairovė rodo teorinio mąstymo pokyčius, tačiau juos jau įgyvendino visai kitas fenomenologijos studijų klotas – kūno judesys. Apie kūniškumą įmanoma kalbėti remiantis judesio analizėmis. Tad šio straipsnio tikslas – atverti kūno judesių struktūras, sudarančias pirmąją patirties pagrindą – ne „Aš mąstau“, bet „Aš galiu“. Straipsnyje pateikiamos kelios postmodernių mąstytojų tezės, kurioms nebūdinga nuodugniai išplėtoti judesių analizė.

**Reikšminiai žodžiai:** horizontai, „Aš galiu“, tarpkūniškumas, kinestetinis kūnas, erdvės ir laiko morfologijos.