



G. H. MEAD'S SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM: ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR SELF-FORMATION

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ABSTRACT Among the classics in symbolic interactionism we find A. Smith, C. H. Cooley and G. H. Mead. Smith is commonly remembered for his idea of the invisible hand, rather than his ideas on sympathy or moral sentiments; Cooley for his idea of the looking-glass self, in the sense of self-reflection, rather than self-feeling; and Mead for how we through attitude taking become selves with minds, rather than with emotions. In this paper Mead's thinking on self-formation is perceived from a perspective that focuses on emotion. Especially, Mead's idea on emotional experience as a felt inhibition of our interchanges with the other is examined. As a result, a systematization of the logic behind Mead's theory of the evolving self is presented. Three distinct forms of Mead's most well-known notion – taking the attitude or role of the other - come to the forefront: (1) *functional identification* (2) *self-feeling*, and (3) *self-reflection*. By examining Mead's symbolic interactionism from a perspective that focuses on emotion I wish to bring the body and the emotions back into the field of symbolic interactionism. The aim is, also, to present an understanding of body and emotion as social.

INTRODUCTION

WE DO LIVE or at least should live in the shadow of the death. You have probably heard the statement before. I will, however, reformulate it. As I see it, we do live or at least should live in the shadow of the fact that we are born and die alone. Saying this, I do not mean that others are not or cannot be present when we come into this world or when we leave it. What I am trying to say is rather that when we are born it is *our* body that is born, not the body of another person, and when we die it is *our* body that dies, not another's. I am, then, referring to the idea that we are existentially identical only with ourselves. This idea is central within classic symbolic interactionism. As I see it, the thinking of George Herbert Mead, the portal figure of symbolic interactionism, is all about the idea that life, at least, the life of mind, self and society, is to overcome our existential loneliness by different ways of communication, by trying to understand and be understood by each other. Accordingly, life is not about the solitude of our biologically given bodies, but about creating and recreating a community with others. Such a community is dependent on common experiences that make it possible for us to identify with each other. A bit paradoxically, it is our biologically given body that enables this sort of identity – a functional identity. In its most primitive sense functional identity is to do the same things as others do, to perform the same bodily attitudes or the same tasks as others. Contrary to our existential identity, we are only functionally identical with others. According to Mead ([1938] 1972; 1982), it is within the act – the process in which we co-exist with others within the outer world – that we acquire a



functional identity. In my interpretation, he means that it is our functional identity, rather than our existential identity, that is the foundation of the inhibition of the act.

THE INHIBITION OF THE ACT is central to the symbolic interactionism of Mead in many different aspects. Among others it enables (1) self-feeling and (2) self-reflection – the capacity of being an object to oneself, a minded self within society (Engdahl 2004, chapter 3, and chapter 6). Within the discussion of the symbolic interactionism of Mead or his theory of self-formation as dependent on communication with others, scholars usually tend to ignore the sort of inhibition of the act that Mead understands as a function of self-feeling – emotional experience.¹ Reading Mead from a perspective that focuses on emotional experience, however, the centrality of both functional identity and self-feeling as the foundation of self-reflection becomes evident. If the two former forms of sociality is neglected it is not possible to grasp his idea that “(w)e must be others if we are to be ourselves” (Mead [1924-25] 1981: 292). Accordingly, three different forms of Mead’s most well-known notion – taking the attitude or role of the other – come to the forefront; (1) functional identification, (2) self-feeling, and (3) self-reflection. These forms of sociality or attitude taking provide us with theoretical tools to explain our social transformation from biologically behaving organisms into emotional and reflective persons (Engdahl 2004: chapter 3; chapter 6). As we will see, Mead explicitly points out the *inhibition of act* or *problematic social interchanges* as the key to *self-feeling*, which he means is the content of the self, and *self-reflection* which he understands as the structure of self. At the same time, he emphasizes that our *functional identity* is the foundation of the inhibited act.

First, I will discuss the idea of attitude- or role-taking in form of functional identification. Second, I will discuss the idea of attitude or role-taking in form of self-feeling. Third, I will make some concluding remarks, which elaborate the idea of attitude or role-taking in form of self-feeling and show its relation to self-reflection. By examining Mead’s symbolic interactionism from a perspective that focuses on emotion I wish to bring the body and the emotions back into the field of symbolic interactionism. The aim is, also, to present an understanding of body and emotion as social.

¹ Even within the sociology of emotion, Mead’s idea of emotion tends to be ignored. Among others, Arlie Hochschild (1983: 212) writes: “George Herbert Mead did not talk about emotions, but he further cleared a path for doing so from an interactional perspective (...) Had Mead developed a theory of emotion, he would have begun by elaborating his idea of the ‘I’”. And, Neil J. MacKinnon (1994:1) writes: “We would never guess from reading Gorge Herbert Mead that emotion plays a significant role in the social psychology of the person or in social life”.



FUNCTIONAL IDENTITY

IN THE BEGINNING there is no mind, self, and society. In the beginning, there is the act – co-existing human organisms that are dependent on each other to enable an individual membership of a society of minded selves. When Mead talks about the act as the “primitive unit” (Mead 1982: 27) or “the unit of existence” (Mead [1938] 1972: 65) he has human interdependence in mind. “[T]he individual reaches his self,” Mead ([1934] 1967: 233) writes, “only through communication with others, only through the elaboration of social processes by means of significant communication, then the self could not antedate the social organism. The latter would have to be there first.”

WHAT IS TYPICAL OF THE HUMAN SOCIAL ORGANISM, (or the human biological organism within the act,) is that it has the ability to communicate in ways that involve participation in the other, the appearance of the other in the self or functional identification with the other (Mead [1934] 1967: 253). Indeed, our ability to influence ourselves as we influence others or to converse with significant gestures is built upon, to quote Hans Joas ([1922] 1996: 183), “communication via gestures that does not presume the prior existence of boundaries: namely, symbiotic unity or identification.” It is through this sort of communication that we acquire a social or common structure of responsive gestures to outer and inner stimuli. Symbiotic unity or identification should, thus, not be confused with the idea that it would be possible to be existentially identical with the other. It should rather be understood as the ways in which we instinctually are synchronizing our bodily movements with those of others, and, thus, develop common structures of social behavior or a functional identity. Though our body takes the same shape as another they are not one and the same body (compare Miller 1973: 14f.). Accordingly, our sameness has not so much to do with the fact that we are “physiologically differentiated relatively slightly” (Mead [1934] 1967: 238), but with the fact that our physiological makeup works in ways that enables the incorporation of common or social structures of habitual responses to certain stimuli.

TO DESCRIBE WHAT IS MEANT BY HABITUAL RESPONSES, Mead ([1934] 1967: 15) writes, “[t]he offering of a chair by a person of good manners is something which is almost instinctive.” Our habitual reactions look “almost instinctive” since they, like our innate responses, are “non-intentional” (Bales [1966] 1998: 122).

As long as the act of offering a chair to a person is completed without any complications, there is no awareness of it as good manner. It is simply done in relation to others, without the inhibition necessary for being self-conscious, in this case, conscious of the self as well mannered. Still, our habitual reactions provide us with corporal images of our past within the act – of certain expectations on self and society – that enables the



inhibition of the act. The difference between truly instinctive acts and habitual reactions is that the former is automatically triggered by specific social situations, whereas the latter allows for something happening between stimulus and response – the inhibition of the act. When Mead writes that “[i]t is characteristic of the child that it does not inhibit but follows the first current that opens,” (1982: 30), and that “[i]nhibitions are not well worked-out in the case of the baby. He cannot stop himself” (1982: 40), he refers to the newborn’s lack of a developed social structure of habitual responses, against the background of which the act can be inhibited.

AS I UNDERSTAND MEAD, our functional identity or social structure of habitual responses is the link – to borrow the words of Tim Ingold (2000: 3) – “between the biological life of the organism in its environment and the cultural life of the mind in society.”

To illustrate the process in which we acquire habitual reactions or a functional identity Mead uses, for example, “mob-consciousness”:

We get illustrations of that in what we term mob-consciousness, the attitude which an audience will take when under the influence of a great speaker. One is influenced by the attitudes of those about him, which are reflected back into the different members of the audience so that they come to respond as a whole. One feels the general attitude of the whole audience. There is then communication in a real sense, that is, one form communicates to the other an attitude which the other assumes toward certain part of the environment that is of importance to them both (Mead [1934] 1967: 253).

However, it does not take extraordinary experiences like mob-consciousness to catch up in each other’s motion, share a certain rhythm and focus of attention. Within the act, we are continuously engaged in this sort of joint travel back and forth in space. Someone laughs and we begin to laugh. People around us are happy and we become happy. Emotional communication is almost infectious. Mead argues:

In your relations to other persons, it is your own hostile attitude to the other person that is your evidence of his hostile attitude toward you. Change that takes place in yourself is an indication of the attitude in the other. [---] The child finds itself in a situation in which those about it are unhappy and it is itself unhappy. The child’s social weapon is its cry. It is advantageous for the child to cry when it is in a situation where others are unhappy. This situation in the surrounding company is one which is dangerous to the child, and we have the response, the natural explanation from the evolutionary point of view. The suckling process is the natural response to the cheerful attitude. You have a series of attitudes which call out responses. These so-called expressions represent the beginnings of social acts, not merely the physiological accompaniments or merely a mechanical physiological reaction (Mead 1982: 38 f.).

With those lines Mead illustrates our functional identification with the outer world or what Sandra B. Rosenthal and Patrick L. Bourgeois (1991: 87) calls “primordial, pre-personal sociality or corporal



intersubjectivity of the lived body [...]” In accordance with Joas and Miller, they claim that “[t]his pre-personal coexistence is the social foundation for role taking. It is the ‘being with’ which underlies the taking of roles. Such intercorporeality underlies the very ability to take roles, for taking the role of the other presupposes ‘being with’ the other” (Rosenthal and Bourgeois 1991: 88). In my interpretation of Mead, it is our functional identity or the corporal intersubjectivity of our lived body that is the content of the self, which we becomes conscious of through emotional experience or self-feeling, and which is structured through self-reflection. I think that this is what Mead has in mind when he writes the following lines:

We find a great group of primitive instincts which are social in the sense that the responses arise in answer to indications of various movements in other individuals of the group. That these indications are all early stages in activities which when checked give rise to emotional experiences, in the individual, and answering responses in other members of the group. Their importance as indications of socially important conduct is vital and has led to their selection and preservation and final development into the language of signs and articulate speech. Furthermore, the earliest stage in the reflective process, the earliest objectification in the child and the race, has been among these social instincts, and here the objectification has been mediated by those early stages in the act which inevitably give rise to emotion, so that the content of the object is and must be emotional and that these indications of the on-going act have been both the function of stimulating the social response and indicating the import of the act to the individual and the socii. I would convert the proposition and insist that all objects whose content is emotional are selves – social objects, for which position the psychology of art, the theory of *Einführung* would afford abundant illustration (Mead, “The social Character of instinct” *Mead papers*, [date unknown]: 5).

As I see it, this means that our functional identity, acquired through our inescapable adaptation to our social environment within the act, is what we initially become conscious of as the self when we take the attitude or role of the other towards ourselves. Put differently, self-feeling or emotional experience is consciousness of our socially formed bodies, rather than of our biologically given bodies. Indeed, our past within the act, which makes possible self-consciousness, materializes initially in form of our social bodies or style of flesh.

SELF-FEELING

CONTRARY TO FUNCTIONAL IDENTIFICATION of functional identity, emotional experience or self-feeling implies a break or barrier to our immediate tendencies to act. In this way functional identification and emotional experience are distinguished from each other. Emotional experience includes bodily awareness of the other and the self as different but interrelated, whereas functional identification is a process of corporal sociality that lacks such sort of self-consciousness.

To understand this line of argumentation, we must recognize the distinction Mead makes between expression of emotion and experience of emotion. Following Wilhelm Wundt, he argues that pleasure “can be a symbol



only for the observer, not for the person experiencing the pleasure. This is an aesthetic explanation rather than a psychological one, representing the attitude of the individual who stands outside looking on. It does not explain the gesture as it arises in the experience of the individual” (Mead 1982: 34). Contrary to Wundt who understands our experiences of emotion as simple results of a series of feelings, Mead, in accordance with Dewey, understands experiences of emotion as *felt inhibitions of the act*.

One of the differences between physical and social conduct is the emotional content, which is much more vivid in social conduct. As a rule, the so-called physical stimulations are not expressions of the emotions and do not call out responses that we call expressions of the emotions. Emotions arise under tensions. In social conduct there is constant adjustment and readjustment, hence emotion. (Mead 1982: 43).

The experience or feeling of emotion arises only if our expression of it does not lead to the completion of the act – if the act collapses (Mead 1982: 40). “If a man could strike at once when he clinches his fist there would be no emotion, for there would be no checking, no inhibition,” Mead (1982: 34) argues.

ACCORDING TO MEAD, our emotional experiences are not acts that we habitually perform. They presuppose inhibition of such activities. They are corporal evaluations of the self from the standpoint of the other. In my interpretation, Mead thinks that it is with help of such evaluations that we feel ourselves as we travel back and forth in space – between the concrete position of the other and the concrete position of the self. Accordingly, our emotional experiences are what primarily transform exterior to interior. Mead suggests that our emotional experiences, in the form of felt inhibitions of the act, make us discover “insides” or the content of the self (Mead [1932] 1959: 119ff.; [1938] 1972b: 143f., 186f., 212f.).

The question is what it is we feel as the self or what the content of the self really is. My reading of Mead’s symbolic interactionism suggests that we should avoid an understanding of emotional experiences or the content of the self as sense perceptions of the outer world that automatically trigger innate structures of social behavior.

The few times, however, that Mead’s ideas on emotion are recognized it is often treated in this way. Chappell and Harold L. Orbach (1986: 78) write the following when they try to capture Mead’s understanding of emotion:

Essentially, emotion, as the affective side of mind or psychic activity ([Mead] 1903) that arises from the inhibition or blocking of ongoing activity, serves to arouse the organism to solve the problem that is blocking the completion of the ongoing act. It thus serves as a motor basis for the individual’s



mobilization of resources to solve the problem, because the solution of the problem is what releases the tension created by the emotional state.

Further, they argue that “Mead, like Dewey, sees specific emotional attitudes as representing biological processes that have emerged and persisted because of their evolutionary survival value. Socialization provide customary and valued forms for the use and control of emotion (habits and manners, for example), but these can break down in extreme situations such as crowd or mob or other form of collective behavior, when original animal responses take over” (Chappell and Orbach 1986: 78).² In some sense this sort of perception of Mead’s thinking on emotion is understandable. It appears to be in accordance with, for example, his claim that “[t]here is of course, a great deal in one’s conversation with others that does not arouse in one’s self the same response it arouses in others. That is particularly true in the case of emotional attitudes” (Mead [1934] 1967: 147).

But this claim is not in accordance with Mead’s overarching aim to show that emotional experiences are corporal evaluations of the self from the standpoint of the other. Recall his claim that “[i]n your relation to other persons, it is your own hostile attitude to the person that is your evidence of his hostile attitude toward you” (Mead 1982: 38). Nor is the idea of emotion as a biological given, which Chappell and Orbach suggest that Mead advocates, compatible with his belief that the inhibition of the act felt in our emotional experiences is made possible only against the background of a socially given structure of responses or habits, in addition to our biologically given structure of responses. Such an argument simply points at an understanding of our *emotional experiences as corporal awareness of our habitual expressions of emotion, which arises when those expressions become inhibited within the act.*

TO AVOID CONFUSION, let us consider two examples that illustrate the idea that the core of emotion is a result of our interchanges with the other. More specifically, the examples illustrate the claim that the content of the self is an evaluative inhibition of the act, experienced from the perspective of the other, on the basis of a functional identification with the other.

The first example illustrates the inhibitions of the act, in the form of negative evaluations:

A little boy is sitting on a white bathroom-floor. At a distance, it looks like he paints it brown. Getting closer it is obvious that he is playing with his excrement. One moment the boy is alone in the play with his excrement. The next moment he has company. A tense person is running towards him. A wry face is closing in on him. A voice yells in falsetto. The boy is unable to continue his play with the excrement in the same uninhibited

² Compare Chappell and Orbach’s conception of Mead’s view on emotion with John D. Baldwin (1985); Lloyd Gordon Ward and Robert Throop (1992); Moira von Wright (2000: 97ff.).



manner as the moment before. After repeated interruptions of this kind, the boy habitually avoids his excrement. His body becomes tense – it closes itself – in relation to the excrement. He feels something not yet named by him. But, the other has a name for it – disgust. The scene of the little boy playing with his excrement is repulsive. Playing with his excrement, the boy, looking at himself from the standpoint of the other, experiences not only the emotion of disgust, but evaluates himself as disgusting in such a situation.

The second example illustrates the inhibitions of the act, in the form of positive evaluations:

My thirteen-month-old daughter is watching BET (black entertainment television), in the living room. I enter into the room, notice that she moves her body (she dances, I think), and hear that she makes vocal sounds (she sings, I think). I cannot help myself. I run toward her, with a big smile on my face, enthusiastically clapping my hands. When my eyes meet her eyes she stops dancing and singing. There is silence, and then she begins to clap her hands. We are smiling at each other, and I start to shake my head and move to the music. She stands still for a couple of seconds. Then she starts to dance together with me. We have fun. I like dancing. I love dancing. We clap our hands again. We even scream as loud as we can as I turn up the volume. I then feel that it is just a matter of time until she will love to dance as much as I do.

THE TWO EXAMPLES relate to Mead's (1982: 40) idea that "[i]nhibitions are not well worked-out in the case of the baby. He cannot stop himself." In addition, it shows that the child, who takes the emotional attitude of the other toward the situation that it finds itself in, gradually becomes more apt to stop itself. When repeatedly taking the emotional attitude of the other towards itself in certain situations, the child develops a structure of social behavior in the form of emotional attitudes. This structure makes the child approach the outer world from an anticipated corporal perspective. When the child's habitually expressed corporal attitudes become problematic or challenged within the act, emotional experience, in the form of a corporal evaluation of its relationship to the outer world, arises. The child becomes aware of itself as standing in a particular relationship to the outer world. In other words, self-feeling arises.

CONCLUDING AND ELABORATE REMARKS

E MOTIONAL EXPERIENCE IS SELF-FEELING, in the specific sense of a corporal evaluation of the own existence within the act. As such the content of the self, which we become aware of as the self when we have emotional experiences, is neither a biological nor reflective given, but rather it is what our bodies have become on the basis of our functional identification with others.



Let me elaborate on this claim by using Young's research on bodily comportment. In her essay, "Throwing Like a Girl" ([1980] 1990), Young implicitly makes a distinction between our motor acts and our emotional experiences. Motor acts refer to abilities like walking and talking, whereas emotional experiences refer to the manner in which we walk and talk, among others. As I will suggest, our emotional experiences are strongly related to the style in which we with help of our motor capacities approach the outer world, the other, and ourselves. We could talk about our emotions as *the style of our flesh*, which tells who we are.

ACCORDING TO YOUNG, the style of the flesh is about to be or not to be. Throwing like a girl is *not to be*, whereas throwing like a boy is *to be*. Indeed, it seems like girls in general embody an attitude of *not being* when they throw. This suggests that they make as little use of their bodies as possible. Young posits that this is visible in Erwin W. Straus (1969) study of photographs of young boys and girls. "The basic difference that Straus observes between the way boys and girls throw," Young ([1980] 1990: 145) writes, "is that girls do not bring their whole bodies into the motion as much as the boys do. They do not reach back, twist, move backward, step, and lean forward. Rather, the girls tend to remain relatively immobile except for their arms, and even the arms are not extended as far as they could be." The motion restriction of girls is not limited to throwing. It is shown in their existence within the act, altogether, Young claims.

Not only is there a typical style of throwing like a girl, but there is a more or less typical style of running like a girl, climbing like a girl, swinging like a girl, hitting like a girl. They have in common first that the whole body is not put into fluid and directed motion, but rather, in swinging and hitting, for example, the motion is concentrated in one body part; and second that the woman's motion tends not to reach, extend, lean, stretch, and follow through in the direction of her intention (Young [1980] 1990: 146).

The flesh of boys tends to be open toward the outer world, whereas the flesh of girls tends to be closed from the outer world.

Even in the most simple body orientations of men and women as they sit, stand, and walk, one can observe a typical difference in body style and extension. Women generally are not as open with their bodies as are men in their gait and stride. Typically the masculine stride is longer proportional to a man's body than is the feminine stride to a woman's. The man typically swings his arms in a more open a loose fashion than does a woman and typically has more up and down rhythm in his step. Though we now wear pants more than we used to and consequently do not have to restrict our sitting postures because of dress, women still tend to sit with their legs relatively close and their arms across their bodies. When simply standing or leaning, men tend to keep their feet farther apart than do women, and we also tend more to keep our hands and arms touching or shielding our bodies (Young [1980] 1990: 145).



In my interpretation of Young, the style of the flesh is acquired from functional identification with outer world or the other. In turn, it is the basis of emotional experiences – our corporal evaluations of our relations to the outer world or the other. Accordingly, self-feeling is constituted by corporal attitudes.

IF WE ARE GOING TO TAKE SERIOUSLY the difference in corporal attitudes shown between the two sexes, our conception of functional identification must take into account that others approach us differently depending on their sociocultural categorization of us in terms of girl or boy, woman or man, and presumably, also, in terms of colored or white, and sick or healthy among others. This is important to emphasize because we do not choose our sex, our skin color, or our health status. More importantly, it implies that those are not qualities that decide who we are or want to be. Rather, they are part of the basis on which others approach us. Clearly, it shows that it is basically others' attitudes towards us that bestow the outer world with powers to which we become subjects (compare McCarthy 1984: 118).

We, however, are able to change our corporal attitudes toward the outer world or other in spite of sociocultural categorizations. This is not easy. We are often emotionally aware of the style of our flesh within the act, i.e. corporally evaluate our relation to the outer world or the other, but we are seldom conscious of the style of our flesh at a reflective level of the act, i.e., incorporate it in our answer to questions about who we are or want to be. The reason for this is that our emotional expressions are usually performed in a habitual manner. As aforementioned, it is only when our emotional expressions and experiences within the act are inhibited to an extent that make them problematic for the completion of the act, that we become conscious of them at a reflective level. It is at this point, communication about emotion with help of significant symbols, and in turn emotion-management starts.

AN EXAMPLE OF THE ABOVE ARGUMENTATION is what happened when the staff at two different Kindergartens outside of Gävle in Sweden videotaped themselves helping the children get ready to go out in the mornings. The videotaping was part of a project that aimed at gender role equality among children, which was initiated by the equality-expert Ingemar Gens at the county administrative board of Gävleborg in 1996. Before observing the videotapes the staff was convinced that they treated all of the children in the same manner. During the observations, the staff made a count of the words directed towards girls and directed towards boys. The final analysis showed that 80 % of the words were directed towards girls, and mere 20 % of the words were directed to boys. Difference seemed also to be displayed in how the personnel used words. The staff seemed to *communicate* with the girls when helping them to get dressed, whereas the boys were



commanded to get dressed. Nonetheless, the communication with the girls was immediately interrupted as soon as a boy shouted out. In addition, the videotapes showed an episode of when a little boy who asked nicely for help repeatedly goes without being noticed. The boy eventually throws himself on the floor and screams. After the staff viewed the videotapes, they realized that their attitudes toward the children reinforced the typical gender roles among them. This was consistent with earlier stuff on the children's communication around the dinner table. For example, a girl was asked with words if "someone could pass the milk, please" and a boy said "öhhh." Another girl at the table seemed to know that he wanted milk. After discussing the problem at hand, the staff decided to divide the girls and boys into different groups based on sex. Without any boys seeking attention, the girls could be encouraged to focus on themselves and their own needs. Without any girls being experts on communication and understanding, the staff had to communicate with the boys to be able to understand what they wanted. The staff then realized that it, for example, takes as long time to make a boy into a cowboy as it takes to make a girl into a princess, and boys are in no more hurry to *play* cowboy than to be *dressed up* as a cowboy. The boys, certainly, did not mind as the staff communicated with them (Gens 2002). It did not take long before the changed attitudes of the staff toward the children resulted in changed attitudes in the children themselves:

A pre-school teacher came home from an excursion in the forest, and was very upset. One of the children had devoted itself to trample to death all the snails that they have found a lot of in a glade. [...]
– It is not the whole world, is it? Boys do so, was the reply to her frustration.
But it was not a boy. It was a girl (Gens 2002: 60, my translation).

The observations support Young's ([1980] 1990: 147) claim that "[t]here is no inherent, mysterious connection between these sorts of typical compartments and being a female person." To some extent, they support Young's idea that the typically timid, uncertain, and hesitant attitude of women engaging physically with things results "from lack of practice in using the body and performing tasks" (Young [1980] 1990: 147). More importantly, they show the significance of the approach of the other towards the self when it performs motor acts. It is, first and foremost, the other's corporal attitudes that determine our emotional selves, if we are going to feel ourselves as timid, uncertain, hesitant, or the opposite, as well as feminine or masculine.

The examples above are used to illustrate that *it is emotional attitude taking that makes us into interacting human beings, who experience emotions, in addition to behaving human organisms, who experience sensations or have sense perceptions.*



In turn, this implies a distinction between our experiences of emotions, in the form of corporal evaluations of our relationship to the outer world or the other, and being conscious of those emotional experiences as a part of our selves. The latter only takes place if our expressions of emotion (or emotional experiences) do not work as means of the completion of our cooperative acts with others.

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