

The Meaning of Feeling: Banishing the Homunculus from Psychology

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Current approaches in psychology have replaced the idea of a centralized, self-present identity with that of a diffuse system of contextually changing states distributed ecologically as psychologically embodied and socially embedded. However, the failure of contemporary perspectives to banish the lingering notion of a literal, if fleeting, status residing within the parts of a psycho-bio-social organization may result in the covering over of a rich, profoundly intricate process of change within the assumed frozen space of each part. In this paper I show how thinking from this more intimate process may transform current views of metaphor, the unconscious, and the relation between affect and cognition.

Introduction

Psychological theorizing today, in dialogue with the results of researches in phenomenological and pragmatist philosophy and anthropology, points to an important re-envisioning of the role of concepts such as inter-subjectivity, metaphor, the unconscious and emotion in the functioning of a psychological organization. While today's diverse embodied, enactive approaches (Clark (1997), Damasio (2000), Gallagher (2005), Lakoff & Johnson (1999), Ratcliffe (2007), Varela, Thompson, and Rosch (1991)) have made significant advances over the more traditional perspectives in psychology which they target (first generation cognitivism, symbolic computationalism), I suggest that these newer perspectives have failed to depart sufficiently from older approaches in one important respect.

Specifically, I will argue in this paper that the capacity of contemporary psychologies to depict a meaning-making organization generating thoroughgoing affectation, interaction and novelty may be hampered by their reliance on a notion of psycho-biological and interpersonal entities as discrete states. Residing within each of the myriad temporary subagents and bits comprising a psychological system is a supposed literal, albeit near-meaningless, identity. While the role of identity in embodied approaches is less prominent than in classical cognitivist frameworks (newer approaches replace the idea of a centralized, self-present identity with that of a reciprocal system of contextually changing states distributed ecologically as psychologically embodied and socially embedded), I allege that a failure of current approaches to banish the lingering notion of a literal, if fleeting,

status residing within the parts of a psycho-bio-social organization may be responsible for the covering over of a rich, profoundly intricate process of change within the assumed frozen space of each part.

What could be the basis of my claim that the diverse assortment of embodied models offered by researchers like Gallagher, Varela, Clark, Damasio and Johnson have in common the treatment of the parts of a psychological organization as ossified centers resistant to novelty, considering that the dynamical properties many of these approaches specifically determine psychological processes as non-representational and non-decoupleable "...variables changing continuously, concurrently and interdependently over quantitative time..." (Van Gelder, 1999, p.244)? And what is a 'part' anyway?

Interaction Before Identity

Let me begin by offering the following thought experiment: What if, rather than an element of meaning (perceptual, conceptual, physiological) being juxtaposed or coinciding with what preceded and conditioned it in the manner of contact between two distinct entities, we were to imagine that the context of a prior event and the presencing of a new event indissociably belonged to the same event? I do not have in mind a simple compacting together of past and present as distinct and separable things, but a way at looking at the relation between a meaning and its background which sees not just the interaction BETWEEN things but the things, entities, parts, bodies THEMSELVES as already kinds of qualitative change, not states but passages, a non-contradictory way of intending beyond what is intended.

I want you to entertain the notion that the primordial 'unit' of experience is not a form that is transformed by contact with another entity, not a presence that is changed by a separate encounter with another presence, but an experience already other, more than itself in the very moment of being itself, not a form, presence or shining OCCUPYING space but already a self-exceeding, a transit, a being-otherwise. What I am suggesting is that there are no such things as discrete entities. The irreducible basis of experience is the EVENT (many events can unfold within the supposed space of a single so-called entity). Events do not follow one another in time (or in parallel) as hermetically sealed links of a chain. Each event does not only bear the mark of influence of previous events, but carries them within it even as it transforms them. An event is a synthetic unity, a dynamic structure devoid of simply identity.

In making this claim, I am contributing to an already rich philosophical discussion on the phenomenal experience of time. This conversation has recently been joined by a number of psychologists (See Gallagher (1998) , Van Gelder (1996) and Varela (1999b)), who support the idea of the *nowness* of the present as differentiated within itself. They recognize that the present is not properly understood as an isolated ‘now’ point; it involves not just the current event but also the prior context framing the new entity. We don’t hear sequences of notes in a piece of music as isolated tones but recognize them as elements of an unfolding context. As James (1978) wrote: “...earlier and later are present to each other in an experience that feels either only on condition of feeling both together” (p.77).

The key question is how this ‘both together’ is to be construed. Is the basis of change within a bodily organization, interpersonal interaction, and even the phenomenal experience of time itself, the function of a collision between a separately constituted context and present entities? Or does my dynamic ‘now’ consist of a very different form of intentionality, a strange coupling of a past and present already changed by each other, radically interbled or interaffected such that it can no longer be said that they have any separable aspects at all? I contend that, even taking into account a significant diversity of views within the contemporary scene concerning the nature of time-consciousness, including critiques of James’ and Husserl’s perspectives,¹ current psychologies conceive the ‘both-together’ of the pairing of past and present as a conjunction of separate, adjacent phases or aspects: the past which conditions the present entity or event, and the present object which supplements that past. I am not suggesting that these phases are considered as unrelated, only that they each are presumed to carve out their own temporary identities.

For instance, Zahavi (1999), following Husserl, views the internally differentiated structure of ‘now’ awareness as consisting of a retentive, primal impression, and protentional phase. While he denies that these phases are “different and separate elements” (p.90), claiming them instead as an immediately given, ecstatic unity, their status as opposing identities is suggested by his depiction of the association between past and present as a fracturing, “... namely, the fracture between Self and Other, between immanence and transcendence” (p.134).

This Husserlian thematic, rendering past and present as an indissociable-but-fractured interaction between subject and object, inside and outside, reappears within a varied host of naturalized psychological ap-

proaches that link time-consciousness to an embodied neural organization of reciprocally causal relations among non-decoupleable parts or subprocesses. While these components interact constantly (Varela (1996b) says "... in brain and behavior there is never a stopping or dwelling cognitive state, but only permanent change punctuated by transient [stabilities] underlying a momentary act" (p.291)), it doesn't seem as if one could go so far as to claim that the very SENSE of each participant in a neural organization is intrinsically and immediately dependent on the meanings of the others. I suggest it would be more accurate to claim that each affects and is affected by the others as a temporary homunculus (little man) or self perceives an object. Varela (1999a) offers "...lots of simple agents having simple properties may be brought together, even in a haphazard way, to give rise to what appears to an observer as a purposeful and integrated whole" (p.52). The bare existence of each of these agents may be said to PRECEDE its interaction with other agents, in that each agent occupies and inheres in its own state, presenting its own instantaneous properties for a moment, apart from, even as it is considered conjoined to, the context which conditions it and the future which is conditioned by it.

Perhaps I am misreading Varela and other enactivist proponents . Am I saying that these contemporary accounts necessarily disagree with Merleau-Ponty's (1968) critique of the idea of the object-in-itself?

...the identity of the thing with itself, that sort of established position of its own, of rest in itself, that plenitude and that positivity that we have recognized in it already exceed the experience, are already a second interpretation of the experience...we arrive at the thing-object, at the In Itself, at the thing identical with itself, only by imposing upon experience an abstract dilemma which experience ignores (p.162).

On the contrary, as different as Merleau-Ponty's and various enactivist accounts may be in other respects, it seems to me that they share a rejection of the idea of a constituted subjectivity encountering and representing an independent in-itself. Mark C. Taylor (2001) characterizes the enactivist ethos thusly; "Contrary to popular opinion and many philosophical epistemologies, knowledge does not involve the union or synthesis of an already existing subject and an independent object" (p.208). In a very general sense, what is articulated by Varela, Gallagher and others as the reciprocal, non-decoupleable interconnections within a dynamical ecological system functions for Merleau-Ponty as the 'flesh' of the world; the site of reciprocal intertwining between an In Itself and a For Itself, subject and object,

consciousness and the pre-noetic, activity and passivity, the sensible and the sentient, the touching and the touched. My point is that current accounts may also have in common with Merleau-Ponty the belief that subjective context and objective sense reciprocally determine each other as an oppositional relation or communication (Merleau-Ponty calls it an abyss, thickness or chiasm) between discrete, temporary and contingent contents. "...that difference without contradiction, that divergence between the within and without ... is not an obstacle between them, it is their means of communication (Merleau-Ponty 1968 ,p.135)."

By contrast, I assert that the 'now' structure of an event is not an intertwining relation between contingent, non-decoupleable identities, states, phases, but an odd kind of intersecting implicating perhaps a new understanding of intentionality; intentional object and background context are not adjacent regions(a within and a without) in space or time; they have already been contaminated by each other such that they are inseparably co-implicated as a single edge (Try to imagine separating the 'parts' of an edge. Attempting to do so only conjures a new edge). Time itself must be seen in this way as immediately both real and ideal. Events don't speak with their surrounds. They ARE their surrounds; the current context of an event is not a system of relations but an indivisible gesture of passage.² Gendlin (1997b), in his groundbreaking book 'A Process Model', offers an account of the nature of psychological organization which I consider in many respects closely compatible with my own.

He explains:

In the old model something (say a particle or a body) exists, defined as filling space and time. Then it also goes through some process. Or it does not. It is defined as "it" regardless of the process "it" goes through. "It" is separate from a system of changes and relationships that are "possible" for "it." (p.50)...

In the old model one assumes that there must first be "it" as one unit, separate from how its effects in turn affect it...In the process we are looking at there is no separate "it," no linear cause-effect sequence with "it" coming before its effects determine what happens. So there is something odd here, about the time sequence. How can "it" be already affected by affecting something, if it did not do the affecting before it is in turn affected?...With the old assumption of fixed units that retain their identity, one assumes a division

between it, and its effects on others. (This “it” might be a part, a process, or a difference made.) In the old model it is only later, that the difference made to other units can in turn affect “it.” (p.40)

If one assumes separate events, processes, or systems, one must then add their co-ordinations as one finds them, as if unexpectedly...“Inter-affecting” and “coordination” are words that bring the old assumption of a simple multiplicity, things that exist as themselves and are only then also related. So we need a phrase that does not make sense in that old way. Let us call the pattern we have been formulating “original inter-affecting”. This makes sense only if one grasps that “they” inter-affect each other before they are a they (p.22).

Gendlin’s account somewhat resembles embodied cognitive and dynamical systems approaches in its rejection of symbolic representationalism and decoupleability, but I believe there are crucial differences. For instance, in current models, interaction spreads in a reciprocally causal fashion from point to point, whereas for Gendlin, each point somehow implies each other point; each part of a meaning organization somehow “knows about”, belongs to and depends intrinsically on each other part. And this happens before a part can simply be said to exist in itself (even if just for an instant) .

What kind of odd understanding concerning the interface between identity and relation could justify Gendlin’s insistence that the inter-affecting between parts of a psychological organization precedes the existence of individual entities or states? Allow me to creatively interweave Gendlin’s text with my own, and suggest that an ‘entity’ can never be understood as OCCUPYING a present state, even for a moment. Its very identity is differential not simply because its relevance is defined by its relation to its context (embodied cognitive notions of the subject-object relation), but because the essence of the event is this intersection. What is other than, more than an event (its just-past) is built into its own center in such a way that the relation between events is never an arbitrary conditioning the way it seems to be allowed to be in current accounts(as I will discuss in more detail later). That is why an event is better conceived as a transit than a state.

The most important implication of this way of thinking about the organization of meaning and intention is that the interaction between events can be seen as maintaining a radical continuity and mutual dependency of implication. To say that an event exceeds itself , in the same moment and the same space, as both past and present, is not simply to think the now as immediately a differential between the new and a prior context. It is to envi-

sion a new event and the context out of which it arises as BELONGING to, PART OF each other's senses in a radical way, rather than just as externally cobbled together spatially or temporally as a mutual grafting, mapping, mirroring, conditioning between little bodies. This duality within the event is not to be understood as a fracture, opposition or chiasm between an already composed past carried over from previous experience, and an arbitrary element of novelty related to this past across a divide of thickness.

As Gendlin (1997b) argues, "The continuity of time cannot first be made by things next to each other, because such a continuity is passive; each bit IS alone, and must depend on some other continuity to relate it to what is next to it..." (p.71). For instance, fresh intentional experience does not simply sit alongside a prior context; it explicates the immediate past. Gendlin characterizes this past as an an implicatory whole:

...explication is not a representation of what "was" implicit; rather explication carries the implying with it and carries it forward. An explication does not replace what it explicates. If one divided them, one could try to divide between what is new and what is from before. Then one part of the explication would be representational, and the other part would be arbitrary. An occurring that carries forward is an explicating. It is neither the same nor just different. What is the same cannot be divided from what is different (p.71).

What does it mean to say that what is the same can't be divided from what is different? I would like to suggest that the very being of an event of meaning already is composed partly of that which it is not, that which it is no longer. The role which this 'no-longer' plays isn't just as a duplication of 'what it was'. It is a fresh, never before experienced version of my past which forms part of the essence of a new event for me. What do I mean by this? Not only does a fresh event belong to, carry forward, imply the immediate context which it transforms, but this inter-contamination between past and present operates at the same time in the opposite direction. The carried-forward past which, as I have said, inseparably belongs to a new event, is already affected by this fresh present. What does this imply? Gendlin (1997b) explains, "When the past functions to "interpret" the present, the past is changed by so functioning. This needs to be put even more strongly: The past functions not as itself, but as already changed by what it functions in" (p.37).

It is not as if other accounts do not recognize the transformative character of recollection. It would be pointed out by any psychologist who had digested Merleau-Ponty's lessons concerning reflection that the attempt to return repeatedly to an object of attention in order to preserve its identity hopelessly contaminates the purity of that identity with the sediments of new context. Mark C. Taylor (2001) writes: "Neither complete nor finished, the past is repeatedly recast by a future that can never be anticipated in a present that cannot be fixed. Anticipation re-figures recollection as much as recollection shapes expectation." (p.198).

My claim is not, however, that the past is partially or eventually affected by the present, but that its modification is globally and immediately implied by present experience. The past is inseparable from the future which is framed by it. Because all meanings are referential, they don't appear out of thin air but from a prior context. On the other hand, the past in its entirety is at the same time implied and transformed in present context. There is no past available to us to retrieve as an archive of presumably temporarily or partially preserved events of meaning. As we will see, this view may run counter to current approaches according to which habitual pre-noetic bodily, linguistic and cultural schemas are presumed to shape experiential processes ("...the body in its habitual schemas retains a [pre-noetic] past....that helps to define the present" (Gallagher, 1997, p.144)), and thus to constrain and structure the experience of novelty, without themselves being immediately and globally refashioned in accord with the self-changing direction of intentional movement .

The Literal is Metaphoric

To this point it may strike readers that the argument being made amounts to a quibble. Even if it were to be accepted as correct, what of theoretical and practical advantage is gained over dynamical, embodied approaches by reworking the relationship between an element and its context in the way I am suggesting? How does this amount to more than a shuffling around of dimensional concepts? It is important to understand that it is not just dimensional slots that are being questioned here but the central characteristics of what are considered entities (conceptual, bodily, interpersonal), their alleged power to arbitrarily and polarizingly condition each other as well as, paradoxically, to resist the advent of novelty.

To criticize a system in continuous inter-relational motion for resist-

ing novelty, merely because it is depicted as interactions among innumerable, dumb bits which may only exist for an instant of time, may seem to be a spurious accusation to make. But as I hope to show, this seemingly insignificant property of stasis built into these dumb bits of a dynamical, embodied and embedded ecological system expresses itself at a macro level as homunculi-like schemes, assemblies and narratives (sensory-motor, emotive, perceptual, conceptual and interpersonal) whose creative interplay and thematic consistency may be restricted by the presumption of a distinction between their existence and interaction. (Varela (1991) describes these bits as "...a whole army of neurallike, simple, unintelligent components, which, when appropriately connected, have interesting global properties. These global properties embody and express the cognitive capacities being sought" (p.87).

A prime example of what I mean when I allege that a separation between the existence and interaction of components of such systems polarizes their functioning can be found in the way that current embodied approaches attempt to explain the mechanism of conceptual metaphor. For instance, Lakoff and Johnson (1999) , in their effort to overturn the older view of metaphor as a secondary and inferior linguistic form in comparison with literal meaning, depict metaphor as a rich and indispensable component of abstract conceptualization.³ Briefly , a metaphor is a correlation between conceptual domains, projecting patterns from the source domain onto the target domain. Neurologically, metaphor originates in a conflation between domains, a simultaneous activation of neural schemes in both the source and target.

Johnson insists that metaphors are not formal structures, but embodied and situational. The cognitive domains, or "frames," out of which metaphors are formed "are not fixed structures or images, but rather dynamic patterns of our interactions within various evolving environments" (Johnson,1997, p.156). Even if frames are not permanently fixed schemes, they do have the ability to conserve their structure over time. It is this conservative power that allows frames to define, contain, mirror, map onto, apply to and correlate with particular new experiences. "Conceptual metaphorical mappings appear to preserve image-schematic structure, and , in so doing, they map spatial inference patterns onto abstract inference patterns" (p.156). Lakoff and Johnson (1999) explain:

Abstract concepts have two parts: 1) an inherent, literal, non-metaphorical skeleton, which is simply not rich enough to serve as a full-fledged concept; and 2) a collection of stable, conventional metaphorical extensions that flesh out the conceptual skeleton in a variety of ways (often inconsistently with one another) (p.128). In general, central senses of words are arbitrary; non-central senses are motivated but rarely predictable. Since there are many more non-central senses than central senses of words, there is more motivation in a language than arbitrariness (p.465).

While Lakoff-Johnson believe everyday thought is largely metaphorical, they don't accept that all meanings are metaphorical ("...all basic sensorimotor concepts are literal" (p.58)).

We can extract the following points from Lakoff-Johnson's model:

1) Metaphors are not discrete concepts themselves but correlations between two pre-existing conceptual domains.

2) Metaphors preserve the structure of the source domains that they borrow from.

3) Metaphors enrich a concept's non-central senses with motivated meaning, but a concept's central senses are arbitrary.

4) Not all concepts are metaphorical

The logic of these points can be traced back to the belief, maintained in different ways across a diversity of psychological perspectives, that a concept has an 'inherent, literal, non-metaphorical skeleton'. As Lakoff and Johnson affirm, an entity which inheres as its own state is arbitrary at its core, and can relate to another meaning only in a separate move. Metaphor considered in this way is not an intrinsic property of concepts, but a secondary function that may or may not apply to a particular concept. And when it does apply, metaphor doesn't so much transcend the semantic gap between concepts as co-opt it by grafting meaning comparisons and mirrorings onto originally arbitrary, pre-existing conceptual cores.

To re-think the notion of an intrinsic conceptual state as the differential structure of transit I have delineated in this paper is to change and enlarge the role of metaphor (and to re-define intentionality) in important ways. I have argued that an event (whether conceived as conceptual or bodily-physiological) is itself, at one time and in one gesture, the interbleeding between a prior context (source) and novel content (target). Gendlin (1995) says, in such a crossing of source and target, "each functions as already cross-affected by the other. Each is determined by, and also determines the other (p.555)".

Thus, the weak and ambivalent integrative function accomplished by Lakoff and Johnson's model of metaphor as a correlation between conceptual domains may conceal a more fundamental integration working WITHIN and BEYOND so-called concepts. By this reckoning, all events are metaphorical in themselves, as a mutual inter-affecting of source and target escaping the binary of representation and arbitrariness.

Gendlin (1997a) explains:

Contrary to a long history, I have argued that a metaphor does not consist of two situations, a "source domain" and a "target domain". There is only one situation, the one in which the word is now used. What the word brings from elsewhere is not a situation; rather it brings a use-family, a great many situations. To understand an ordinary word, its use-family must cross with the present situation. This crossing has been noticed only in odd uses which are called "metaphors"...all word-use requires this metaphorical crossing (p.169).

Let's spell out the larger implications of this argument. All events of intentional meaning in-themselves accomplish the powerful integrative function that has traditionally been attributed to metaphoric relations between concepts, not by grafting or mapping one pre-existing state onto another but by bringing the outside inside as the intimate self-transfiguration that is an event's gesture. By contrast, current embodied psychologies appear to maintain an opposition between inside and outside, subject and object, context and novelty, which not even the operation of metaphor (or other narrative structures) can overcome. The integrative potential of conceptual-linguistic consciousness is limited from the outset by the presumption of an irreducibly arbitrary, literal core within entities. Of course, one could argue that, whether or not Lakoff-Johnson's approach explicitly indicates it, dynamical embodiment theories afford the knowledge that there could be never such a thing as a 'strictly' literal meaning, since a conceptual element only conveys meaning through differential, non-decoupleable relations with other elements in a process with no permanent or transcendent center of origin. As Mark Taylor (2001) explains 'Each symbol within these networks is a node in a web of relations. Indeed, a symbol is nothing other than the intersection of relations knotted in nodes' (p.211). In this sense a kind of quasi-metaphoricity already obtains for so-called literal concepts. However, I have hypothesized that for current approaches this relation between a

concept and its wider context is conceived as a conjoining of discrete contents, thereby preserving the primacy of a literal core at the heart of this quasi-metaphorical intersecting.

Consciousness As Its Own Exceeding

How might my claim concerning the intrinsic metaphoricity of intentional consciousness help to shed new light on the wider realms of interactions within which intentionality is embedded, encompassing such processes as the unconscious, bodily affectivities, and interpersonal interactions? Not surprisingly, contemporary approaches seem to view these wider interactive functions shaping intentionality in the same disjunctive terms that they apply to linguistic processes. Gallagher(1998) writes: ‘There are many pre-noetic [outside of awareness] limitations on intentionality: the effects of the unconscious, embodiment, language, historical traditions, political and social structures, and so on’(p.160). He refers to these as “... happenings that go beyond intentional experience and yet condition that very experience” (p.160). Descriptions from split-brain, perceptual priming, hypnosis and other dissociative studies have been employed to lend support to this idea of a partial independence among processes which are otherwise claimed to be thoroughly interactive.

As was the case with metaphor, what is at stake in all these examples is the question of whether what is presumed to come at intentionality from an ‘outside’ in the form of semi-arbitrary conditionings, (whether that outside is located as the quasi-metaphoric graftings between conceptual states, the unconscious, the body, or the interpersonal world) is not better understood as arising out of hitherto undiscovered resources concealed within so-called intention itself.

Rather than originating in an invasive, displacing outside, I suggest that psychological processes unavailable to explicit consciousness are nevertheless implied by and belong to it (and vice-versa), not in the sense of a content that arbitrarily contributes to awareness in the manner of interactions between partially independent regions, but as an integral bodily background intrinsic to, but not directly articulated in, each moment of awareness. In this view, the ‘hidden hand’ of the unconscious, the body and culture conditions awareness not as a separate outside, but rather exceeds conscious control from within each experienced event, as the hidden hand of integral background context (intra-noetic rather than pre-noetic). Gendlin (2000)

puts it this way; “The puzzle about the body knowing our decisions before we consciously know them might make us miss the fact that there is an inwardly experienced body, and that the reflective and bodily-sentient person is much wider than conscious control” (p.110).

While it is easy to identify a present experience in terms of what appears fresh and unique about it, to superficially disassociate its function and sense from a concurrent environment of activity, it is much more difficult to detect the often exceedingly subtle way in which what appears as a break from its context is always partly composed of a modified version of that outside and carries that defining coloration and thematics within itself via its metaphoric structure. The influence of language, culture and biological inheritance don't operate behind the back of consciousness but are carried forward with it as an intricate implicatory whole; in each moment this inheritance insinuates itself into but (this is very important) is simultaneously and indissociably re-contextualized by its participation within and as the present event (thus it is always a new variation of this inheritance which participates in the event) .

An experienced event carries forward, knows and modifies one's entire history, leaving nothing of the original behind. The way that each aspect of psychological functioning (including what would be called intentional, bodily-sensate and intersubjective processes) implicates and belongs inextricably to each other part, generates a dynamic network of intersections of intersections, metaphors of metaphors, guaranteeing that the person as a whole always functions as an implicatory unity at the very edge of experience. Consciousness, body and world intersect in this single gesture, co-implicating continuity and qualitative transformation in such a way that intentional experience maintains a unity which recognizes itself, at every moment, the 'same differently'.

Simply in struggling to write a single line of text on a page, such as what I've written here, I find myself experiencing in oh so subtle a fashion a whole universe of moods, thoughts, sensations, distractions that intervene to interrupt the supposed thematic continuity of the writing. This I do in a shifting of attention in myriad ways from what is on a page to what is not and everything in between; in a transit from awareness of conceptualization to sensation to recollection to emotion to action to dreaming, when I seemingly lose my train of thought and, succumbing to creative fatigue, find myself observing visual textures of my surroundings, listening distractedly to ambient sounds, noting the touch of cool air blowing on my skin

from a fan. But how is this bouncing from mode to mode of awareness to be understood?

Gallagher(1998), echoing sentiments of other enactive cognitive researchers, understands linguistic consciousness to be organized into separated fragments of schematized linear narratives which jostle, interrupt and transform each other via parallel interactions. He says that rather than simply being an “orderly successive flow” under conscious control, consciousness is a “hodgepodge of multiple serialities that often disrupt one another”(p.194). I suggest it is not quite either of the two.

The apparent interruptedness and randomness of the multitude of apprehensions intervening in the attempt to read the words you see on this page is not the haphazard competing, clashing or inter-conditioning among schematically organized narrative meanings. It is rather an integral temporal continuation of the already self-transforming thread which constitutes the wandering thematics of my thesis. To be distracted from the narrative text at hand is not to break with the peculiarly integral nature of moment to moment experience, whose continuity is not that of an ‘orderly successive flow’ if such an order is understood as logical derivations of an already composed scheme. It is instead a carrying-forward which re-invents its direction, sense and past every moment, beyond conscious control, without rending the intimate fabric of its anticipative continuity.

Thought has the feel of at the same time a completion and a through qualitative alteration not just of what immediately preceded it, but of my entire history. My most precious and defining superordinate concerns, including my core sense of myself in relation to my past and to others, my ethical and spiritual beliefs, are implied, carried into and through (as always an absolutely new version of them!) all situations and activities, an ongoing silent background which participates implicitly in (and is simultaneously completely, if subtly, reinvented by) the meaning of even my most trivial experiences. Simply to repeat a word, mark, gesture, object of sense ‘identically’ is to generate both a new sense of itself and a new philosophy of the world, of myself, in some way (installing non-propositional reflectivity and interpretation at the very heart of so-called pre-reflective self and inter-self-awareness). The otherness of culture intervenes in each supposed repetition of the ‘same’ word, and this comes from within that event’s own resources as simultaneously empirical (introducing novelty) and subjective (carrying forward my history), embodied and embedded before any conditioning by a ‘separate’ outside, whether that outside be formulated as mind, body or

world. No activity, no matter how apparently trivial, redundant or solipsistic, fails to redefine in some small but complete way my most global perspective of myself, leaving nothing left over of a would-be original pre-noetic past to schematically control the present from behind and outside of it.

The Meaning of Feeling

How can I more precisely convey the nature of this process, this world of integrally and holistically interaffecting texturizations which I say operates from within and exceeds what have been assumed as the irreducible units of bio-psycho-social meanings? I believe it is not possible to adequately grasp its dynamics without coming to terms with its central character as 'felt' or affective. What do I mean here by feeling? The notion I have in mind involves bringing together in a new way traditional understandings of thought and affect. I am certainly not alone in advocating a view of affect and cognition as inseparable processes. While more traditional approaches in philosophy and psychology treated affective phenomena as at best peripheral to, and typically disruptive of, rational processes, embodied cognitive theories such as those of Panksepp (1998), Damasio (2000), Varela (1999b), Johnson (1993), Ratcliffe (2002), Colombetti and Thompson (2006) and Ellis (1995), take pains to present emotion and thought as an indissociable interaction.

According to current accounts, cognitive and affective processes are closely interdependent, with affect, emotion and sensation functioning in multiple ways and at multiple levels to situate or attune the context of our conceptual dealings with the world. According to the newer thinking, affective tonality is never absent from cognition. As Ratcliffe (2002) puts it, "moods are no longer a subjective window-dressing on privileged theoretical perspectives but a background that constitutes the sense of all intentionalities, whether theoretical or practical" (p.290). In affecting reason, feeling affects itself.

I am in agreement with these sentiments, as far as they go. However, I am prevented from enlisting the aid of these ideas in support of my own position by my suspicion that the supposed inseparable relation between reason and affect functions for these writers as a polarity between cognitive states and affective activations, analogously to the treatment of the operations of metaphor I discussed earlier in this paper. In other words, I am fearful that their conceptualization of the role of affect may uphold the very idea of homocularity that my notion of feeling is meant to undermine,

thereby acting as a monumental obstacle to grasping a more radical account of affectivity. In any case, the weight of entrenched suppositions burdening the topic of feeling must be lifted in order to illuminate the delicate terrain I am aiming at. It is therefore crucial that I address commonalities among these accounts before I can mark out a route from their thinking to mine. Let me begin with Francisco Varela's characterization of affect.

Varela (1999b) suggests that affective dynamics initiate gestalt shifts in thought and action. Unlike older views, for Varela intentionality is not assumed to rely on an outside mechanism in order to stir itself into motion. Nevertheless, cognition still relies on such intervention in order to significantly change its direction of movement. The general understanding Varela indicates of the relation between affective movement and the thinking which it affects seems to depend on the idea of emotion as the change of a temporarily persisting stance (scheme, state, dispositional attitude). Conceptual narratives are assumed to have a self-perpetuating schematic tendency about them, requiring outside intervention from time to time to produce qualitative change. The processes within a living system, including psychological functions, cannot be counted on to be intrinsically transformational in a way that is optimally adaptive, but must be channelized into changes in direction of action and conceptualization by extrinsic motivating sources.

We find a similar account of the role of emotion in Ratcliffe's (2002) synthesis of Heidegger and neurophysiology. Ratcliffe says emotion and embodiment are "incorporated as essential components in cognition", but emotion and cognition are clearly not identical; "...emotions and moods are not explicitly cognitive but neither are they independent of cognition" (p.299). They originate as bodily sensations structuring cognition from outside of it. Emotion and cognition can 'conflict' and emotion can "override cognitive judgement" (p.299). Ratcliffe cites Ramachandran's clinical observations of individuals with anosognosia, who apparently distort environmental information which contradicts an internally generated narrative. Ramachandran and Ratcliffe attribute this behavior to damage to connections between emotion and cognitive centers. Ratcliffe concludes from this that, in typically functioning persons, emotion signals from the body are presumed to pack a contentful punch large enough to break through a psychological narrative's resistances where weaker percepts from the environment cannot.

It seems, then, that for Ratcliffe and Varela, intention is a capacity for manipulating objects of thought, but emotion, as valuative valence, provides the criteria for such processing. They are apparently not able to

find the resources strictly within what they think of as intentional thought to de-center thinking processes, because they treat cognition as tending to form temporarily self-perpetuating narratives which can distort or keep out contradictory input from the world. So they rely on the body, in the form of emotion cues, to come to the rescue and bring the stalled cognitive apparatus back in touch with a dynamically changing world. The mechanism of emotion is assumed to intervene in order to infuse a stagnant narrative with a new direction and meaning.⁴ Ratcliffe (2002) asserts: “Without emotional responses, one is not uprooted from a coherent interpretations of events...” (p.306). Although these emotion cues are claimed to be inseparably linked with conceptual processes, this linkage amounts to more of a concatenation between pre-existing states than a more radical indissociability. This may be due to the belief that feeling originates developmentally within the individual independently from cognition, as action readiness circuits that, Panksepp (1998) claims, are “completely biological and affective but..., through innumerable sensory-perceptual interactions with our environments, [become] inextricably mixed with learning and world events”(p.303).

For all their differences, I claim that Ratcliffe and Varela share with other contemporary accounts of affect and emotion what I call the ‘adaptationist’ presumption that meaning is shaped in a semi-arbitrary way by inputs which come to influence it from a pre-existing outside. The same assumption determining the structuration of metaphoric intentionality, the relation between consciousness and the unconscious, and even narrative intersubjectivity. as arbitrary mapping, mirroring or conditioning functions between literal, schematic states, guides the relation between affect and perception-conception. Damasio (2000) puts it this way: “...as a result of powerful learning mechanisms such as conditioning, emotions of all shades eventually help connect homeostatic regulation and survival values to numerous events and objects in our autobiographical experience”(p.54). According to this thinking, physiological processes of feeling adapt and coordinate with a partially independent cogitative environment, authorizing adaptationism as a causal explanation of origins.

Viewed as an adaptation, emotion is linked to a milieu outside of itself (cognition) and with which the logic of the bond is indirect, partially arbitrary in the sense that it is capable of being made irrational, as is supposedly the case with nonadaptive mutations. There is a partial independence assumed between the participant aspects of reciprocally adaptive interactions. The cobbling can be uncobbled unilaterally. Emotion can aid reason, but can also be dysfunctional. Damasio (2000) summarizes:

Emotions are curious adaptations that are part and parcel of the machinery with which organisms regulate survival. In short, for certain classes of clearly dangerous or clearly valuable stimuli in the internal or external environment, evolution has assembled a matching answer in the form of emotion” (p.54).

In sum, with regard to affectivity, Ratcliffe, Varela, Panksepp and Damasio appear to treat as reified content what could be better understood as transformative process. Hypostasizing and abstracting the intricate movement of experiencing into emotion ‘signals’ and self-perpetuating narratives, relating to each other in quasi-arbitrary brain-body interactions, misses the internal integrity of meaning processes. An emotion viewed as a schematic signal or cue originating outside of cognition can only be presumed to significantly modify and structure cognitive meaning if one profoundly under-appreciates a more primary mobility structuring (and exceeding) so-called cognitive control from within itself. Specifically, what confirms and reinforces a thinking also always alters the direction and sense of that thinking in a subtle but global way. So-called symbolic processes find their meaning reshaped well before any exposure to a separate bodily, conceptual or interpersonal outside.

By the same token, what would be considered transformational or disturbing to a particular way of thinking could only have sense relative to the orientation of that thinking itself; any modifications of thinking would have to emerge out of the resources of that thinking in a way that preserved an always ongoing integrity and implicatory self-consistency in the movement of experience. What disturbs a perspective belongs to it; the disturbance is born intimately from it. In intending, I am not simply being directed toward ‘objects’, in the sense of revisiting something that was already there. Experiences don’t come at me, they unfold from me and into each other as both a carrying forward of an intentional thematic and a subtle, but global, re-defining of me (and them).

I believe what is needed is a model of recursivity uniting self-referential continuity and absolute alterity, the so-called pre-reflective and the reflective, in the same structure, the same moment. Not a model which looks for the impetus for subversive novelty in supposed effects which are grafted onto and condition states of meaning from outside of’ them, but as the very core of an event. Let us, then, venture the following definition of affect, applying to such terms as emotion, feeling and desire as well: Every experienced event

of any kind (perceptual, conceptual, bodily-sensory) is an affect, and every affect is a change in affect. If every event of meaning is an advent of qualitative novelty, then cognition is affective not simply in the sense that a background affective tonality, mood or attunement frames the activity as a whole, as “a kind of cradle within which cognition rests” (Ratcliffe, 2002, p. 296), but in that each moment of engagement is an inseparable interbleeding between the continuation (not as a duplicative representation but as an already modified version) of a prior context of attunement or thematics, and a change in that attunement. This implies a rejection of two long-standing assumptions supporting the depiction of affect and cognition as distinct states. Contrary to these assumptions:

1) Intentional experience does not need to be pushed or pulled into action, or change of direction, by extrinsic (pre-noetic) forces. Every moment of experience is already intrinsically affective (self-displacing), assuring that even the most apparently non-emotive, ‘rational’, reflective type of awareness, such as supposedly characterizes affectively neutral empirical accounts, qualitatively, intuitively, hedonically transforms the meaning of what it references. Feelings belong to, operate within, carry forward, and transform what are called conceptual meanings even before any specific experience of bodily activation. This qualitatively transformative effect in moment to moment experience is often subtle enough to go unnoticed, explaining the apparent analytical stability and inter-subjective objectivity attributed to empirical phenomena, the allegedly self-perpetuating coherence of linguistic narratives, and even the illusion of a stable ongoing pre-reflective self-awareness.

2) ‘Raw’ affect is an intrinsically (non-representational, non-propositional) reflective intentionality. So-called bodily sensations of feeling not only manifest the characteristics of metaphoricity and narrative consistency traditionally associated with conceptual thought, but in fact are not categorically distinguishable from what has been called conceptual meaning in any stable way.

Let me elaborate on my first assertion. What do I mean by my claim that what has been called symbolic, rational thought is inherently qualitatively transformational? What finer, more mobile process may be obscured by current notions of linguistic reasoning? Penetrating the veil of the homuncular permeating our language of the things within us and around us is not a matter of discovering smaller, faster, dumber, more interactive ‘bits’ within the units of current approaches, for that would simply displace the

issues we've discussed onto a miniaturized scale. It is a matter of revealing perhaps an entirely different notion of the basis of entities than that of the freeze-frame state. This is where a finely-tuned detection of feeling-in-thought becomes crucial.

Many researchers may agree that, even apart from the specific contribution of the body as they understand it, intentional entities have a qualitative 'feel' in the sense of representing a meaning which is in some measure unique to the individual ('the feeling of what it is like'). It is widely understood today (see Putnam (1990)) that objective fact and subjective valuation are inseparably intertwined such that an inter-subjective, third person science can never entirely eliminate interpretive gaps in communication. I am trying to convey a different way of understanding the 'feel' of things than this idea of a supposedly 'pre-reflective' self-awareness of qualitative meaning. What I have in mind is a notion of feeling which combines and redetermines current understandings of thought, affect and expression.

Prior to any notion of cognition and affect as distinguishable constructs, this idea of feeling as event has its entire effect exhausted in its being just barely more than itself, as just the most insignificant and gentle whiff, feel, tinge of novelty. Within and beyond such terms as cognitive states and bodily affective signs, lies a universe of barely self-exceeding accents, modulations, aspects, variations, ways of working. Not variations or modulations of STATES but modulations of modulations.⁵ The subpersonal, personal and interpersonal worlds generated from (but never overtaking) this intricate process may be clumsily described via the 'homuncular' terminology of patterned interactions between discrete parts, but at the cost of missing the profound ongoing internal relatedness and immediacy of this underlying, overflowing movement.

Count from one to ten and discover how the intent and meaning of this supposed repetition of identical increments shifts in very subtle ways as soon as you begin . Look at the period at the end of this sentence. Notice how the feel, the sense of it (and you) changes immediately and constantly as you continue to gaze as it for a few moments. Can you sense-feel this 'it' undergoing change not as a series of different freeze frame states ('what it is') but as self-exceedings of self-exceedings ('how it changes'), trans-formations without form? Even the most momentary identification of a so-called state conceals a whole journey of feeling transformations, colorations, hedonic tonalities, remaking each moment my entire past (bodily, linguistic, cultural) along with my whole sense of myself. Yet we name this auto-multiplication

'a' sign . In doing so are we painting a whole vicinity of varying affective textures with one brush? No, the brush itself is experienced implicitly AS this multiplicity even when we are not explicitly aware that we are accessing more than a uniform state. It is precisely the way that a name, a sign continues to be the same differently (meaning that what IT is, and who WE are, is utterly and completely transformed, but in the most exquisitely subtle way, moment to moment, and WITHIN a single instantaneous moment) in our experience of it that allows us to see a name, sign, concept, percept as an apparent unity across these changes, and to communicate it to someone else the same differently as further developments of it, and they to receive the information from us the same differently as even further self-variations, and share it interpersonally, empirically, 'objectively', the same differently (I suggest that the precision of science, as well as the illusion of a constant, pre-reflective self-awareness, rests on this mobile continuity within, between and beyond so-called signs). To overtly RECOGNIZE what had traditionally been assumed as a unity as this ever-developing multiplicity is not to go from stasis to motion but to FURTHER ENRICH an already ongoing process.

Now my second point may become clearer . I asserted that affect is an intrinsically (non-propositional) reflective, quasi-thematically unfolding intentionality. My depiction of the little 'I' implied by a concept as an illusionary effect of an intricate texturizing sequence of affective variations of variations, metaphors of metaphors, gently reinventing itself and me (and undermining from within the alleged constancy of 'pre-reflective' self-awareness) moment to moment the same differently, establishes a gentle tapestry of feeling transformations as the hidden basis of what have been called concepts, BEFORE the participation of specific bodily sensation. And when an evolving situation brings into play the experience of bodily affects, such activations don't add any special capacities of hedonic-aesthetic feeling not already involved in the utterly contextual structuration of thought from the start. What so-called specific bodily sensation contributes is a meaningful quasi-thematic elaboration of the already richly felt, globally self-transforming, fully embodied-embedded unfolding of intentional experience.

If feeling, understood this new way, IS the very core of so-called conceptual and perceptual thought, merging narrative-thematic consistency and global self-transformation, the pre-noetic and the noetic, in the same gesture, then the presumed partial independence of rationality and affect vanishes, and the distinction re-emerges as aspects inherent in each event.

The interaffecting of context and novelty which defines an event simultaneously produces a fresh, particular modulation of change (empirical aspect) and a unique momentum (hedonic component) of self-transformation. From this vantage, the valuative, hedonic (the perceived goodness or badness of things), aesthetic aspect of experience, underlying 'non-emotional' appraisals as well as our sadnesses, fears and joys, simply IS our vicissitudes of momentum of sense-making through new situations, rather than arising from the content of special objects.

Affective valences are contractions and expansions, coherences and incoherences, accelerations and regressions, consonances and dissonances, expressing how effectively we are able to anticipate, comprehend, relate to, and thus how densely, richly, intensely we are able to move through, new experience. If we can believe that a unique qualitative moment of momentum, ranging from the confused paralysis of unintelligibility to the exhilaration of dense transformative comprehension, is intrinsic to ALL events, then perhaps there is no need to attribute the origin of aesthetic pleasures and pains to the functioning of a limited class of entities like bodily affects, even if it is understandable why this kind of assumption has survived for so long in psychology.⁶ From the standpoint of verbal expressivity, what has traditionally been called emotion often appears to be a minimalist art, because it is the situational momentum of experiencing slowing or accelerating so rapidly that feelings seem to distill meaning down to a bare inarticulate essence. When the momentum of our reflective thought shifts in such dramatic ways (acceleratively enriched in joyful comprehension, impoverished in grief, ambivalent in fear, alternately disappointed and confident in anger), such so-called emotional events may appear to be a species apart from conceptual reason, a blind intuitive force (surge, glow, twinge, sensation, arousal, energy) invading, conditioning and structuring perceptual and conceptual thought from without as a background field. It is said that such 'raw' or primitive feeling is bodily-physiological, pre-reflective and non-conceptual, contentless hedonic valuation, innate, passive, something we are overcome by. At other times, meaningful situational change may be intermediate, just modulated and gradual enough that content seems to perpetuate itself in self-cohering narratives. Such situations have been called rational, voluntary, factual, reflective, stable, conceptual, non-aesthetic. However, as I have said, these dichotomies: hedonic versus reflective, voluntary versus involuntary, conceptual versus pre-reflective bodily-affective, are not effectively understood as interacting states of being; they are relative variations in the momentum

of a contextually unfolding process which is always, at the same time, within the same event, intentional-reflective and intuitive-affective.

Am I suggesting that emotion be thought as a 'cognitive' appraisal, cut off from bodily sensation, movement and expression?⁷ On the contrary, it is precisely the treatment of cognition, bodily sensation and expression as separately pre-existing processes (even when treated as mutually structuring each other via 'intentional-affective' syntheses) which I am questioning.

The point isn't that bodily responses to experience via such avenues as the endocrine, autonomic nervous system and the motor pathways are irrelevant or peripheral to the intentional experience of emotion, but that, whether we talking about the experience of so-called conceptual appraisal or bodily sensation, the phenomenological scene of emotion (or any other aspect of bio-psycho-social functioning) does not depend on an arbitrary concatenation or mutual conditioning between discrete components. Prinz (2004), Colombetti and Thompson (2006), Damasio (1999) and others deny such a thing as a totally disembodied emotion, arguing that the feeling of emotion is affected in degrees concordantly with the severity of damage to avenues of connection with the body. I support their larger claim that experiential processes, including what are called cognitive and affective, function as radically, contextually inter-relational. However, I want to turn their views around a bit. Feeling does not depend on the fact that the brain, as a spatial locale and repository of temporary states of content, always has some access to the body, as a separate locale with semi-independent contents.

I have said that feeling functions from within so-called reflective thought, and that bodily affect is intentional. But if both the former and latter are true, it is not because body sensation structures cognition (or vice-versa). Rather, it is because these stratifying abstractions are but inadequately formulated moments of a process of sense-making uniting the hedonic and the intentional prior to any distinction between, or intertwining of, mind and body. Before I could speak of the occurrence of emotion as mental appraisals structured and conditioned by a background field of physiological energetics and behavioral expressions, I would have to re-figure all of these modes, what would be referred to as the "motoric", the "sensate", the "cognitive", as unstable metaphorical figures emerging contextually out of each other over the course of an indissociably reflective-affective global movement of experience which would imply the unraveling of the basis of categorical distinctions currently orienting the understanding of these terms.

When I am frightened, whether I focus on my attitude toward the world, my rapid heartbeat, my facial expression or bodily preparation for action, each of these aspects emerge out of each other as a fully reflective, metaphoric carrying forward and further transforming of the deepening implications of this tentative, confused situation. All these aspects already belong to, and in fact have their meaning ENTIRELY defined as variations-continuations of the thematic unfolding of my sense of the emerging threat, subtly remaking my entire past while always maintaining a sense, no matter how surprising, unpredictable or disturbing a new present appears, of implicatory belonging to this prior history.

Intermingled with my wandering in and out of significant shifts in experiential momentum, from doubts, terrors, and confusions to later confidences and contentments, will be more subtly self-transforming moments whose continual intuitive shifts of meaning, purpose and affective momentum are hidden so effectively that it may fool me into believing that this more plodding progress of comprehension represents the appearance of a different species from that of pronounced feeling, the realm of affectively neutral (or constant) cognitive states. However, such entities as narrative schemes and conceptual forms may in fact have no actual status other than as empty abstractions invoked by individuals who nevertheless, in their actual use of these terms, immediately and unknowingly transform the hedonically felt senses operating within (and defining) such abstractions in subtle but global ways. Feeling, the event, the interbleeding of subject and object, transformation without form: all of these terms reference the same irreducible 'unit' of experience, concealed by but overrunning what symbols, bits, assemblies, bodies, frames and other states are supposed to do. A 'single' sign (whether so-called conceptual or bodily-affective) is already a panoply of intimately changing variations and momenta of felt meanings, in (as) the instant it is accessed, infusing the allegedly conceptual with feeling (and the sensate with intentionality) from within its very core, embodied before any consultation with a separate bodily 'outside'.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I suppose the coherence of this paper's claims concerning metaphor, the relation between consciousness and the unconscious, the basis of interpersonal understanding, cognition and emotion ultimately hinges on the reader's detection of what I have inadequately described here

as a world of integrally and globally inter-affecting textures of felt sense-making functioning within, and beyond, what have been assumed as the irreducible units of bio-psycho-social meaning.⁸ Leaving aside many other questions left unanswered by my very preliminary sketch, I anticipate that resistance on the part of readers to entertaining the possibility of a fine realm of experience alleging itself to be both more intrinsically self-transformative and implicatively self-consistent than current views allow for will be tied less to its transformative impetus than its integrative aspects. That is, the claim for the sort of intricate order I have been making cannot fail to arouse the suspicion that, despite my protestations, a closet irrealism, idealism or subjectivism must be operating behind the scenes to justify the radically implicative internal belonging I have emphasized for this perspective.

To the anticipated charge of essentialism I can only answer that, from my vantage, it is current psychologies which appear burdened with the weight of an idealism: their belief in temporary discrete states stifles the intimately interactive potential of their embodied, embedded approaches, by making the whole works dependent on irreducible units of formal resistance and polarization. Events understood as interaffectings of interaffectings, working within and beyond relations among presumed temporary essences (conceptual, affective-bodily, interpersonal), do not achieve their gentle integrative continuity through any positive internal power. On the contrary, they simply lack the formidability of static identity necessary to impose the arbitrariness of conditioning, mapping, mirroring, grafting and cobbling, on the movement of experiential process.⁹

Notes

¹ I support Husserl's depiction of experience as an indeterminate intersubjective movement of temporality. However, I agree with the argument, made in different ways by commentators such as such as Derrida (1973), Gallagher (1998) and Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger, that Husserl's retentive-protentive model of time-consciousness slighted the genetic and historical in favor of a transparent present and a historicist time.

² This gesture cannot be reduced to a subjective mechanism of consciousness or objective relations between particles. Like the idea of the interpenetration of fact and value informing phenomenological philosophical perspectives, this is a quasi-transcendental (simultaneously subjective and empirical) claim concerning the irreducible nature of reality and time itself, and operates

both as a pre-condition and a re-envisioning of subjective consciousness and empirical bodies.

³For related models, see Gentner's (Gentner, D., Bowdle, B., Wolff, P., & Boronat, C. (2001)) structure mapping model, Glucksberg and Keysar's (1990) attributive categorization approach, and Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory.

⁴For Ratcliffe emotions selectively organize cognition not just by prompting the interruption of a current narrative, but also by facilitating the assimilation of new events into an ongoing context. Ratcliffe (2002) cites Ramachandran's account of patients with Capgras syndrome as evidence that affect can serve to inform the cognitive system that a previously experienced object is similar or identical to a current one.

⁵ This should not be confused with Husserl's perspectival variations in the perception of an object. It is not just in 'deliberately' reflecting upon or changing position with respect to perceptual entities that we modify their content; I suggest that even a certain phenomenological notion of pre-reflective perceptual self-awareness may amount to an abstraction derived from, but blind to, an intricate fabric of contingent reflective change *within* the space of a so-called perceptual aspect.

⁶ Damasio (1996) writes "We came to life with a pre-organized mechanism to give us the experiences of pain and of pleasure. Culture and individual history may change the threshold at which it begins to be triggered, or its intensity, or provide us with means to dampen it. But the essential device is a given. (p.264)". While I agree with Damasio that the capacity for physical and emotional sensation is certainly dependent upon the existence of particular physiological processes, I suggest that the actual functioning of pain and pleasure is not the production of any sort of pre-existing device or content, but is instead the purely contextual expression of the rhythms of momentum of organismic experiencing.

⁷ See Robert Solomon's (1977) work for a representative cognitive appraisal account of emotion.

⁸ Gendlin (1991) has named this more-than-conceptual realm 'the implicit intricacy'. An interesting difference in our approaches is that according to Gendlin, concepts and the wider experiential intricacy which generates them depend on each other. I suggest, instead, that a concept is but an illusory effect of the wider process of experiencing.

⁹ The focus of this article being psychological texts, I have made little mention of philosophers in the phenomenological tradition such as Hus-

serl, Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger, whose writing has been increasingly appreciated as anticipating recent trends in psychological theorizing. The case can also be made that the post-structuralist philosophies of Lyotard, Derrida and Deleuze have strong resonances with the overarching aims of current psychologies (See Gallagher (1997),(1998), Lyotard (1991)). Gendlin's (1985), (1991) critiques of many of these philosophers supports my contention that none of these authors are immune to the homuncular critique I present in this paper.

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