

information about the self would thus divide around the stigmatology of the outer surface and a teratology of deformed structures.

A sociology of the body is not sociobiology or sociophysiology. It is not reductionism, although it is genuinely and literally a materialist analysis. As I shall elaborate later, a sociology of the body is a study of the problem of social order and it can be organized around four issues. These are the reproduction and regulation of populations in time and space, and the restraint and representation of the body as a vehicle of the self. These four issues presuppose the existence in Western society of an opposition between the desires and reason, which I have suggested articulates with a further set of dichotomies, especially the private/public, female/male dichotomies. The control over the body is thus an 'elementary', 'primitive' political struggle. The sociology of the body is consequently an analysis of how certain cultural polarities are politically enforced through the institutions of sex, family and patriarchy. This institutionalization is itself subject to certain major transformations of society (for example, from feudalism to capitalism) and the saliency of the four dimensions (reproduction, regulation, restraint and representation) is historically conditioned.

Locations for a Theory

While sociology has not overtly incorporated a sociology of the body, it has inherited the classical Western dichotomy between desire and reason which has informed much recent debate within sociological theory. This implicit theory has not been adequately or systematically examined. Crudely speaking, we can divide social philosophy between one tradition which treats nature/body/desire as the source of value and happiness in opposition to society/technology/reason, and a second tradition which regards desire/pleasure/the body as the negation of human value located in the life of the mind. My argument is that, mainly implicitly, sociological theory has been shaped by the opposition: civilization versus desire. As Daniel Bell has noted:

The rational and the passionate – these are the axes around which social thinkers have organized their conceptions of human nature since the dawn of philosophy. But which is to prevail if men are to be just and free? For the classical theorists, the answer was plain. (Bell, 1980: 98)

That answer was the necessity of subordinating passion to reason in the interests of social stability and social order: Apollo over Dionysus. While that polarity has characterized Western philosophy from Plato onwards, the debate about passions received a significant impetus in the nineteenth century following the opening of a new discourse on sex in the late eighteenth century. First there was the Marquis de Sade (1740–1814), whose work has recently attracted considerable reappraisal (Barthes, 1977; Carter, 1979; de Beauvoir, 1962), and second there was the neglected

Charles Fourier (1772–1837). For Fourier, civilization stood in opposition to passion and, by imposing artificial social duties on desire, destroyed the ‘natural’ liberty of the subject:

All these philosophical whims, which are called duties, have no relationship with nature. Duty comes from men; attraction comes from God; and to understand the designs of God it is necessary to study attraction, nature by itself without any reference to duty. ... Passionate attraction is the drive given us by nature prior to any reflection; it is persistent despite the position of reason, duty, prejudice, etc. (Beecher and Bienvenu, 1972: 216)

Fourier is often claimed as a formative thinker within the socialist tradition (Kolakowski, 1978); Marx was, for example, sympathetic towards Fourier’s economic analysis, but in general Fourier’s emphasis on sexual liberation was not incorporated within Marxist thought. Neo-Marxism and critical theory have been forced to incorporate a modified Freudianism in order to be able to analyse the relationship between sexuality and society. This turn to Freud was especially evident in the work of Herbert Marcuse (1969). The materialist tradition of the nineteenth century largely rejected Fourier’s utopia, but maintained his sharp dichotomy of desire and reason. Furthermore, Marx’s concept of active materialism in the notion of labour did not attempt to deal with materialism as physiology.

The major attempt to resolve the mind/body dichotomy in the nineteenth century which provided part of the background to Marxism came from Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872). In his later work, Feuerbach attempted to solve the traditional puzzle of mind and body through the idea of sensibility. Feuerbach attempted to give this idea of sensibility a materialist basis by grafting it onto the digestive theories of Moleschott’s *Theory of Nutrition* of 1850. The unity of thinking and being in the exchange between man and nature was located in man’s appropriation of nature by eating. While Feuerbach assumed that the traditional riddle of materialism and idealism had been solved by the chemistry of digestion, which he summarized in the slogan ‘Man is what he eats’, Feuerbachian man, as Marx and Engels recognized, remains passive. Feuerbach failed to extend his ‘diet-materialism’ by recognizing that ‘The dialogue between my stomach and the world in real activity, is mediated by the dialogue between production and consumption, the social dialogue of human praxis that Marx developed in his political economy’ (Wartovsky, 1977: 416). While Engels dismissed Jakob Moleschott as a ‘vulgar materialist’ in the *Dialectics of Nature* (Engels, 1934), he regarded Feuerbach as an idealist, partly because Engels saw Feuerbach’s intention as, not to replace religion, but to perfect it through anthropology. Feuerbach’s philosophy remained idealist because it had no genuinely historical dimension and his thought was limited despite his attempt to resolve the classical problems of philosophy in the developments taking place in chemistry:

For we live not only in nature but also in human society, and it too no less than nature has its historical development and its science. It was therefore a

question of bringing the science of society, that is, the totality of the so-called historical and philosophical sciences, into harmony with the materialist base, and of reconstructing it on this base, but this was not granted to Feuerbach. (Engels, 1976: 25)

There is an irony in this rejection of physiology as the basis of materialism. Given this hostility to physiology, the question of the human body and its relationship to production and reproduction via the institutions of the family and patriarchy largely disappeared from Marxist philosophy. The main exception to this assertion is to be found in the work of the Italian Marxist, Sebastiano Timpanaro, who in *Sul Materialismo* (1970) argued pessimistically that in death nature has its final and irreversible triumph over man. The problem of the body was submerged by this rejection of physiological materialism, which was regarded as ahistorical and passive. At the same time, Marx rejected the argument of Malthus and Malthusians that population pressures had a major importance for the analysis of economic growth and prosperity. The population issue had to be rendered as an historical question, not as a static restraint on the economic base: 'Every special historic mode of production has its own special laws of population, historically valid within its limits alone' (Marx, 1974, vol. 1: 693). For Marx, the idea that the accumulation of capital could be explained by reference to the control of sexual urges was a myth of hypocritical bourgeois theorists. Despite Marx's perceptive criticisms of the static nature of physiology as a basis for materialism, the consequence of these rejections was that Marxism did not, despite appeals to the notion of 'dialectics', address itself to the classical desire/reason problem. Furthermore, as a science, Marxism tended to embrace technical rationality. Consequently any interest in emotions, passions and desire, on the one hand, or populations and reproduction, on the other, was either diminished or seen to be the result of heresy, especially methodological individualism. Contemporary theoretical interest in the body/desire couple has thus been primarily stimulated by debates with Freudianism, which have emerged in two wings of modern social theory – critical theory and structuralism.

Critical Theory

The early work of the Frankfurt School (Jay, 1973) saw the struggle by man to dominate nature through technical rationality as resulting in political slavery and the renunciation of feeling. This theme can be seen explicitly in Adorno, especially in Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1973) where they explored the myth of Odysseus and the Sirens. Odysseus avoided the temptation of the Sirens' songs by blocking the ears of his sailors with wax and by lashing himself to the mast. This myth represents the psychological logic of bourgeois civilization in which the workers have to deny and sublimate their emotions in favour of hard work and practicality, while the bourgeois capitalist must restrain and discipline desire in the