Meaning and Feeling in the Anthropology of Emotions

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In his book on Jewish festivals, Hayyim Schauss describes a scene during the Rosh Hashanah observances in an Eastern European synagogue early in this century:

> The greatest and most exalted moment of the services comes when the ark of the Torah is opened and the chant of *Un'saneh Tokef* begins. An unnatural fear grips the hearts of the worshipers. They pull their prayer shawls over their heads and recite the words in a loud voice, with tears and sobs. . . . [At the end of the chant] the moans die down and the congregation calms itself somewhat at the words: "But Repentance, Prayer, and Charity avert the evil decree." [1938:147–148]

"How does he know?" the reader may ask. "How can he tell us so unself-consciously what others are feeling?" The issue is not acute in this case since Schauss is writing a description without theoretical pretensions. But imputations of emotions to others are found regularly in the writings of anthropologists and other social scientists. Consider, for instance, the descriptions offered in Victor Turner's work on the Ndembu of Zambia. The *Ihamba* ritual of the Ndembu attempts to cure a victim of spirit attack. At the conclusion of the rite, the male participants, including Turner, "jubilantly told the women" of its successful outcome. The women "all trilled with joy. Men and women who had been on cool terms with one another until recently, shook hands warmly and beamed with happiness. . . . Several hours later a mood of quiet satisfaction still seemed to emanate from the villagers" (Turner 1967:391).

These passages consist of descriptions of perceptible signs and inferences from these to the emotional experiences of others. Are these descriptions, as the authors themselves seem to assume, expressions of direct empathy and understanding? Had Schauss felt an unnatural fear grip his heart at the chanting of Un'saneh Tokef? What if half of the members of his congregation were just pretending to feel an unnatural fear grip their hearts, and were really thinking about something else? Schauss, at least, was a member of the society being described, one Eastern European Jew writing about others. Turner, on the contrary, was a Scottish Catholic anthropologist writing about Central African practitioners of a traditional African religion.

In nocturnal rituals called *jāgar* (vigils) in which I have participated in the Central Himalayas, in the midst of narration, possession, and dance, participants laugh, feel sad (or later say they

Emotion terms are used in everyday discourse to indicate experiences that involve both meaning and feeling, both mind and body. Most attempts to theorize emotions, however, tend to reduce them to one side or the other of these dichotomies; anthropology is divided between views of the emotions as primarily biological and as primarily sociocultural in nature. In this article I consider these approaches and propose three ways around the meaning/feeling dichotomy: through a rereading of the intellectual past of the modern West; through analytic methods that seek to reconstruct affective resonances; and through a realization that feeling-tones, as well as meanings, are conveyed in the writing and reading of ethnography. In this article I draw on comparative material from the Central Himalayan region of Kumaon in northern India. [emotion, meaning, feeling, anthropological theory, South Asia, Himalaya]

did), and in the end seem to me to experience a sense of relief very much like that of Turner's beaming Ndembu. When the bard sings the tale of Prince Ganganāth's abandoning of his home and his mother and asks, "O Master Ganganāth, why did sorrow *[udekh]* strike you? Why did sadness *[bairāg]* strike you?" and informants tell me that the performance of this part of the story makes sadness strike them too, I have to ask whether their *udekh-bairāg* is the same as the "sorrow and sadness" that I have experienced and imputed or that of my probable readers in the West.

Such questions lie behind much of the debate surrounding the anthropology of the emotions. They presuppose, I argue, a set of organizing dichotomies: that human phenomena are either of nature or of nurture—that is, that they appertain either to a universally identical biology or to a locally specific sociocultural tradition; that emotions and feelings are fundamentally inward and private, while words and meanings are public; that, while ideas can be translated and interpreted, emotions cannot. These dichotomies nest within a specific way of organizing concepts that is characteristic of the modern West, particularly in its more explicit and theoretical discursive modes, and that involves a radical distinction between a realm of expressive freedom characteristic of our minds and one of determinism characteristic of our bodies and the physical world. This opposition—common to the humanities, the natural sciences, and the human sciences—is rendered in anthropology by a contrast between a universally law-bound realm of nature and a realm of culture, the latter marked by particular and distinctive concept patterning. For the natural realm, nomothetic explanation is appropriate; for the cultural, idiolectic interpretation (an opposition put particularly bluntly in Harris 1968). These are old and comfortable dichotomies in the modern West, dating from at least as early as the 17th century (Leavitt 1991). When Western scholars work with material that fits easily into one or the other side of these dichotomized sets, they can develop interpretative criticisms or explanatory sciences that deal with them comfortably. But when they are faced with material—like emotion—that does not fit neatly into either side, they tend to squeeze it into one side or other of the dichotomy and so distort it.

In dealing with emotions, a number of fields show a history of swings between these dichotomous poles. In both psychology and philosophy, a long period of assuming that emotions are primarily bodily and only secondarily cognized (as in the theories of Charles Darwin and William James) was challenged by approaches that sought to shift emotions over into the camp of cognitions by defining them as a type of appraisal or judgment,[1] a position articulated influentially by the philosopher Errol Bedford (1986[1957]). A similar dichotomy marks anthropological theory: biologically and psychodynamically oriented anthropologists have assumed or claimed that emotions are bodily and universal; cultural and cognitive anthropologists, that emotion is an "aspect of cultural meaning" (Lutz and White 1986:408) and therefore radically variable.

But emotions are especially interesting precisely because they do not fit easily into these dichotomies. On the contrary, it is precisely emotion terms and concepts that we use to refer to experiences that cannot be categorized in this way and that inherently involve both meaning and feeling, mind and body, both culture and biology. To give a simple example: what we describe as a fluttery feeling in the stomach may be anxiety about a public presentation or the result of an unfortunate lunch, or it may be some horrible combination of the two. But we will not call that feeling the emotion of anxiety if we are convinced that the lunch is the only factor involved: to call an experience anxiety, or anger, or happy excitement, it must be associated with a series of culturally defined *meanings* that go well beyond the digestive. At the same time, neither a definition of anxiety nor an appraisal of an anxiety-provoking situation is the same thing as being anxious: to be anxious is to have a *feeling* associated with a meaning. This view, which refuses to assimilate emotion either to pure sensation or to pure cultural cognition, to

feeling or meaning, was expressed by the philosopher Moreland Perkins (1966, 1972), initially in response to Bedford's claim that emotions are really just a type of judgment.

New angles have been proposed since the anthropology of the emotions started to expand in the early 1980s; indeed, to present the field adequately would require a multidimensional organization of issues well beyond the scope of this article.[2] Some hardy souls are trying to redefine the problem, differentiating among personal experience, biological sensation, and cultural categorization (Crapanzano 1992[1989]; Shore 1993; Shweder 1985); others are challenging the congruence of the dichotomies, insisting on the variability of biology and on commonalities across cultures (e.g., Hinton 1993). We may be moving toward a recognition that emotions as we understand them necessarily involve *both* thinking and feeling; in psychology, at least, this view seems to have emerged partly as a response to the influx of cross-cultural data coming from anthropologists (Kitayama and Markus, eds. 1994). But the arguments in department hallways and at professional meetings continue to pit biological universalists who want to explain against cultural particularists who want to interpret. A. L. Hinton has recently labeled these symmetrical schools "biological reductionism" and "cultural reductionism" (1993), and a major symposium started out from precisely this opposition (Shore 1993).

Two points need to be made to clarify my own approach to these issues. One has to do with the question of identifying a concept across cultures and languages, the other with the relationship between theoretical language and everyday language.

Most anthropologists and psychologists accept that something they call emotion is a universal phenomenon and proceed from there. Anthropologists, it is true, sometimes criticize what they see as the Western concept of emotion (e.g., Lutz 1988), but, interestingly, they do not cease to use the word or the concept itself. It seems to me that for anthropology, a field centrally and distinctively concerned with cultural differences, it is crucial to begin by recognizing our own categories as explicitly as possible, but suspending our assumption of their universal validity (Allen 1985:29) in a process that is comparable to the phenomenological "bracketing" of perceptions. The flood of anthropological studies of the 1980s and 1990s has made it abundantly clear that different societies define something that Westerners call emotion in different ways. In many places in the world dichotomies between mind and body, and culture and nature, are either irrelevant or of secondary or tertiary relevance, at most playing a part in a larger set of concepts organized along different lines and assuming different divisions.

I therefore begin by bracketing "emotions" as Western cultural categories that may—but do not necessarily—overlap with the semantic fields of categories used in other societies. My initial goal is not to say what an emotion *is*, but rather what "we"—defined roughly, for the purposes of this article, as Western and Western-trained social scientists—ordinarily mean when we talk and think about emotions, and so what categories of other cultures we tend to "recognize" as emotions rather than as something else. What is so "recognized," it seems to me as it did to Perkins, consists of experiences that involve both meaning and feeling, both mind and body, and that therefore crosscut divisions that continue to mark theoretical thought. Cultural bracketing still allows us to consider some models of emotions as better than others in that they respect the specific complexity of what we usually mean by emotion terms and concepts instead of reducing them to something else.

Note that I keep mentioning what we "usually" or "ordinarily" mean by emotions. A second aspect of my argument is its reliance on ordinary language usage as opposed to the constrained languages of formal theory. This is a fairly common approach in philosophy: a central part of Perkins's argument with Bedford is an appeal to the everyday use of emotion terms. Perkins points out, for instance, that whatever the theoretical merits of Bedford's argument that emotions are a species of judgment and fundamentally different from bodily feeling, it cannot easily account for the fact that we all—at least when we are not producing formal philosophy—use

the same verb *(feel)* in reference both to emotions and to bodily sensations. The point turns out to be valid for many languages (Wierzbicka 1994). It illustrates a central contention of this article: that common practice and language, which must deal with complex lived situations, can be in advance of apparently more sophisticated theoretical discourse—whose constraints of explicitness and rigor sometimes force it to maintain conceptual dichotomies that are simply unworkable in actual life. In daily life we regularly entertain, and regularly impute to others, experiences that centrally and indissociably involve both meaning and feeling. The concepts glossed by emotion terms in everyday English—and of such lexical sets as *sentiment, émotion, affectivité,* and *passion* in French, or *Affekt* and *Leidenschaft* in German—are all, in spite of the distinctiveness of each set, designations of such experiences as such, and so represent concepts that bridge bodily and conceptual domains.[3] This differentiates emotion concepts from those that clearly seem to us to fall on one side or the other of the meaning/feeling divide: a bright or a mistaken idea on the one hand or a delicious or disgusting taste on the other is easy to place theoretically in a way that emotions are not. It is their bridging character that makes emotion concepts both constantly apt and useful in our everyday lives and language and simultaneously "hard to think" in most theoretical discourse.

The anthropological equivalent of everyday linguistic usage is relatively unreflexive ethnographic practice. Interestingly, this is precisely the kind of practice that has come under such fierce fire for the last ten years (especially since Clifford and Marcus 1986). Such practice includes "naively" describing the emotions of others, as in the quotations I excerpt at the beginning of this article. Biologically minded theorists tend to see such emotional descriptions as unproblematic examples of empathy based on the universality of the experiences that are expressed in weeping and beaming in all societies, while culturally minded theorists reject such descriptions as projections of the authors' own categories onto their subjects. Meanwhile, ethnographers continue to empathize—that is, to use the ethnographic-practice version of ordinary language: they continue to offer descriptions of the emotions of others, descriptions that, given the strictures of available theory, must appear either self-evident or naive. While anthropologists in their role as theorists have tended to produce models that assimilate emotion to either feeling or meaning, anthropologists as practicing ethnographers continue to rely on the unstated assumptions of everyday usage. While it goes against the hyperreflexivity of recent years, this may not be a bad thing.

In the first part of this article I present what I take to be major anthropological approaches to the emotions, starting from either a universal body or particular cultures. I argue that exponents of each approach, faced with the difficulty of conceptualizing a phenomenon we constantly and naively assume to involve both mind and body, reduce it to only one side of this dichotomy. At the same time, each of these approaches has made important contributions—biological approaches by maintaining the value of feeling as a distinctive characteristic of experience we call emotional, cultural approaches by revealing the variety of ways to define and understand what we call emotion and, equally, by showing that emotion need not be assumed to be purely private and individual. Then, in the second part of the article, I propose three possible strategies of rethinking and research that are implied by a view of emotion that does not assume mind/body, culture/biology, interpretation/explanation splits. Regularly throughout the article, I shift to illustrative anecdotes and minianalyses drawn from field research in the Kumaon region of northern India.[4]

A first strategy is to rethink these divisions by returning to their historical sources, articulated in the 17th century, and see what other options existed when they were fresh. I propose that anthropologists consider the philosophy of Spinoza as an alternative to both the universal, mechanistic, body-based explanatory model of Descartes and the particularistic, expressive, mind-based interpretative model of Leibniz, which between them have dominated modern theoretical thought.

This history leads to a view of emotions that suggests analytical alternatives both to unreflective empathy and to the mapping of explicit categories. These derive from efforts to analyze emotions as these are channeled or provoked in ritual, as well as from a psychoanalytically inspired anthropology of personal histories. Both of these movements have sought to specify the emotional tone of events and symbols by tracing out the associations they evoke for the individual or group in question. The insights of these approaches can be used to refine an analysis of cultural "pathetics" (Monnoyer 1988) along with the already sophisticated techniques available for interpreting symbols, semantics, and social scenarios.

The idea that emotion involves both meaning and feeling suggests, finally, a deeper appreciation of just what it is that happens in the writing and reading of ethnographies. While it does seem naive to assume the universality of particular affective responses, it is perfectly possible to play on one's own and one's reader's emotions to attempt to convey those of the people under study, not only in their meanings but also in their feelings. This is precisely what happens, without explicit acknowledgment, in good ethnography.

two starting points for the anthropology of emotions

I have argued that anthropologists, accustomed to the divided categories of bodily feeling and cultural meaning, have tended to place emotion only on one side. Here I will illustrate some of the trends that make up each of these broad tendencies.

emotion as bodily feeling   The position that emotions are bodily and universal is a long-established one: Darwin noted the comparability of the expression of emotions in humans and other animals; in psychology, the James-Lange theory holds that emotions are the subjective experience of physiological events. For such views, emotion is essentially bodily feeling, with its meaning-element literally an afterthought. This biologically based and universalist view has been reinforced through the identification of correlations between a limited set of facial expressions and a limited set of "basic emotions" across many cultures (e.g., Ekman 1974[1970]). Scholars in this tradition conclude that basic emotions are transcultural and that, while they may be nuanced in different ways in different societies, at core they must be biologically determined and always the same. As the psychologist Carroll Izard puts it, "the experiential component of emotion is a quality of consciousness or feeling, and at this level the emotion state is invariant across cultures" (Izard 1980 as cited in Levy 1984:223). Many anthropologists influenced by biological and psychodynamic models (e.g., Gerber 1985; Hiatt 1984; Spiro 1984; and the presentations cited in Shore 1993) hold that basic emotions are biological and treat culture as a factor of variation in "a kind of 'two layers' theory" (Lutz and White 1986:412, cf. 410–414).

The role of biology was defended with particular ferocity by Edmund Leach in a review of Clifford Geertz's book *Negara* (1980). Geertz claims here that passions are as cultural as politics (1980:124); Leach calls this "complete rubbish" and attributes it to the false idea that "human individuals are products of their culture rather than of their genetic predisposition" (Leach 1981:32; discussed in Levy 1984:216–217). He attributes this position to an extreme culturalism of the North American sort.

Aside from attempts to account directly for emotions in biological terms, a view of emotions as universal, biologically based feelings has marked much symbolic and cultural anthropology. This has taken two forms. On the one hand the corporality of emotions may be held to put them outside the scope of the human sciences; emotions may then be ignored, or so the implicit logic runs. On the other hand, the corporality of emotions can be taken to mean that they are immediately understandable across cultures; the proponents of this view empathize.

The position that emotions should be ignored is probably not a real one, but certainly exists on the level of projection. It has been attributed to Claude Lévi-Strauss by critics who see him as the proponent of a "cerebral savage" (C. Geertz 1973[1967]).[5] In fact, Lévi-Strauss sees emotions as always related to ideation and comes close to propounding a model of emotion involving both meaning and feeling (1971). But his main concern is to define himself in opposition to affective universalists, maintaining what he sees as the sole alternative position: one must opt either for "drives" or for "logical necessities" (Lévi-Strauss 1985:257–259). Lévi-Strauss chooses the latter, and polemically continues to identify affectivity with the former.

While drawing less fire, the positions of some cognitive and symbolic anthropologists have approached the avoidance of emotions of which Lévi-Strauss has been accused. In definitions of culture as systems of knowledge (Tyler 1969) or "systems of symbols and meanings" (Schneider 1976), the feelings associated with cognitions and/or meanings are either ignored or relegated to a biological "system" rather than to a cultural or social one.

But the idea that emotions are primarily bodily feelings also suggests that they are accessible across cultures. The great proponent of this view within anthropology was Victor Turner, for whom the anthropologist's empathic response to field situations, based as it is on a shared human bodily nature, can provide a universal key to the diversity of cultural patterns. "Symbols . . . have an orectic as well as a cognitive function. They elicit emotion and express and mobilize desire. . . . At [this] pole cluster a set of referents of a grossly physiological character, relating to general human experience of an emotional kind" (Turner 1967:39, 54).

This view characterizes a good deal of North American psychoanalytic anthropology, which identifies emotions with biological instincts. A similar assumption of physically based universal empathy is also found in some of the new anthropologies of the body (discussed in Lock 1993) and of the senses (Howes 1992).

Empathy certainly occurs in field research, as in all of life. One thinks one recognizes anger or amazement among people whose way of thinking may be quite mysterious, and these apparent recognitions grow more refined as one becomes more familiar with the "common idiom" of expression (Turner 1967:39). One can then chronicle these observations, build on them, and try to use them to illuminate social structure or ritual symbolism, or indeed the play of feeling in everyday life or ritual practice. Similarly, using one's own body in fieldwork, instead of just a set of theoretical tools, yields knowledge that is otherwise unavailable (see Jackson 1989:146–149).

The problem with biological explanatory models and primarily empathic approaches is that they assume that language and other symbolic systems are purely referential in function. An English term such as *hate* and whatever Ndembu or Kumaoni word the scholar uses to gloss it are held to label a single experience that exists in itself outside of linguistic, social, and cultural specifics. *Hate, joy,* and so forth, are fixed reference points; all that differs is the idiom of their expression (but cf. Needham 1972:210). Naturally, given the dichotomies that I have already cited, the easiest place for a Western scholar to find such fixed reference points is in biology. While it is necessary to record and consider one's own responses and to use them to help to understand another society, it still seems to be a leap of faith to assume that, simply because we both have (are) human bodies, ethnographers experience the same emotions as those among whom they live. To set the ethnographer's reactions at the center of analysis is to ignore the possibility that Ndembu or Kumaonis may *have* responses not mapped by the concepts brought by the ethnographer from home. Whatever the status of feeling, we know that the world of Ndembu *meanings* is quite different from that of a Scottish ethnographer; no amount of analysis of the latter is going to give an understanding of the former.[6] One may go even further: for Clifford Geertz, "the extolled 'empathy' usually comes down to attempting to place the experience of others" within the framework of the Western concept of the person

(1984[1974]:126); some constructionists "reject empathy as a naive and ethnocentric practice, a form of Western imperialism over the emotions of the Other" (Lynch 1990a:17).

It is certainly true that a visitor to Kumaon shares the sense of relief after a healing ritual, the fear felt over a serious illness, the shock and grief at an unexpected death. People do laugh out loud in the middle of some ritual narrations, and, once I had figured out what they were laughing about—the brilliant return of the hero Goriyā and his devastatingly clever reply to his seven wicked stepmothers—I too felt what I would describe as a sense of triumph and sudden amusement at this point in the story. And when the bard sings of Prince Ganganāth leaving his home and his mother forever, several people assured me that they, like the hero of the story, felt sorrow and sadness. These were emotions with which I could empathize, especially given the circumstances that my wife and I faced at the time: far from home, in what for us seemed difficult physical conditions, with each receiving frightening news of the bad health of a parent back home.

At the same time, however, differences emerged between the sadness I carried with me and Ganganāth's udekh-bairāg. Because I will discuss the specificity of Ganganāth's imputed experience below, let me cite a different example here. We were walking down a hot, dusty mountain road, coming home from a wedding with three or four other people. One woman had her small daughter along, and the child was hot, tired, grumpy and wanted to be carried. The mother was tired too, had no intention of carrying the girl, and, annoyed by her whining, gave her a smack. The daughter screamed. So far so good: I recognized the opening shots in a battle of wills between parent and child of the kind that one could see at any time in a North American shopping center. What happened next, however, gave me pause: the mother did not get angry; she *laughed.* She found her daughter's screaming funny and kept giving her a little whack from time to time, apparently to provoke the tears of rage that she found so amusing. This was clearly a different emotional scenario than the one with which I thought I was uncomfortably empathizing, and it implied different meanings: in particular, a set of definitions of children that were not those that I had brought with me.

Here a universal biological model leaves us with the same sense of empathy with which we entered. Many examples suggest, to the contrary, that the "idiom of expression"—which differs from society to society (not to mention among classes, genders, regions, and linguistic and ethnic groups)—is more than a mere overlay: it is involved in emotional experience itself.

Some efforts have been made to take account of the role of meaning in emotion from a biological or bodily starting point. Particularly significant in this regard is the emergence of an anthropology of the body as well as recent work on psychosomatics and symbolic effectiveness, all leavened with a good dose of philosophy and social theory. We now have on the table the idea of a socialized and socially situated body that is very different from the body as universal biological "lowest level" (Desjarlais 1992; Howes 1992; Lock 1993; Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987), and that owes as much to phenomenology as it does to physiology. In biologically oriented work, attempts to consider the contributions of both culture and biology may be taking the form of a "processual" and "dialectical" approach to emotions (Hinton 1993; Shore 1993). In psychoanalytic anthropology, there has been some shift toward a less "universal instinct"–based and more social view of emotions (e.g., Obeyesekere 1990; Pandolfi 1991). And clinical anthropology has seen major collaborations between biomedical and cultural analysis of emotions (as in Kleinman and Good 1985). All these developments hold out the possibility of theoretical realignments.

emotion as cultural meaning   A view of emotions as essentially a part of mental, rather than bodily, functioning long dominated philosophical psychology. Within experimental psychology, in explicit opposition to James, Walter Cannon (1927) located emotional responses in the brain itself, implying that emotional feeling is fundamentally different from physical sensation.

Cannon's work continues to be cited to argue that mental and symbolic events can have direct physiological effects, leading, in extreme cases, to phenomena such as "voodoo death" (Cannon 1942). Bodily feeling is in this case the result of a mental event. Much of the anthropological literature on ritual healing and symbolic effectiveness (Lévi-Strauss 1967[1949]; Moerman 1979) proposes this kind of causality.

More recently there has been a sustained attack on the bodily and universalist view of emotions and a corresponding view of them as profoundly cultural. Already in 1962 Clifford Geertz wrote that "not only ideas, but emotions too, are cultural artifacts in man" (1973[1962]:81), and he showed how feelings can be used to convey sociocultural messages (e.g., 1973[1972]). In the 1970s and early 1980s cultural anthropologists and like-minded philosophers elaborated the position that since we can't get inside other people's heads and hearts, we must instead work out other people's *definitions* of emotions. In accord with this interest a genre of analysis developed around the explication of emotion vocabulary and the interpretation of emotions as cultural categories (e.g., Bibeau 1981; Briggs 1970; H. Geertz 1974[1959]; Myers 1979; M. Rosaldo 1980; Lutz 1986[1982], 1988). This movement, while drawing on philosophy and psychology, can be understood as an attempt to extend established methods of cultural analysis (notably those developed by Geertz) to the emotions, which thereby become yet one more cultural domain or cultural system.

An analytical strategy that seeks to interpret people's own definitions of and assumptions about emotions has the virtue—for anthropologists, the cardinal virtue—of preserving the distinctiveness of local understandings, often revealing a world of meanings that the participants take for granted and outsiders generally miss entirely. As Lutz and White put it, it becomes a question of "the translation of emotion concepts and the social processes surrounding their use" (1986:407–408). Such efforts at translation have shown the limitations of Western assumptions about emotions and have sometimes provided side illumination of Western ethnotheory itself (Lutz 1988, 1990).

What can this kind of an approach offer regarding emotions in Kumaoni culture? In Kumaon, as elsewhere in South Asia (Inden and Nicholas 1977; Lynch, ed. 1990), words that would be translated "anger," "sadness," "happiness," and so forth, also indicate states of bodily movement, both within a person and between a person and other beings. This way of conceptualizing emotions draws on more general idioms, one of the most pervasive being that of hot and cold, which Kumaonis use to characterize types of people, places, times, foods, medicaments, temperaments, and bodily and mental states, to mention only a few domains. The common element is that hot conditions involve greater movement within an entity and interaction among entities, while cold ones involve less movement and greater isolation (cf. Marriott 1976). The appropriate balancing of these qualities is understood as a proper flow that takes the form of health and happiness for the person, of peace and prosperity for the collectivity, of "happiness and delight" for "this mortal sphere," as some Kumaonis put it. Negative emotions are discussed and acted upon as imbalances involving too much or too little bodily and interpersonal movement and positive ones as a balance between these extremes. Anger *(guss, narāj)*, for example, is most often treated as a "heaty" state expressed in violently interactive behavior. In an already cold being, on the other hand, anger may be experienced as a disastrous excess of coldness. Sadness, regret, and sorrow *(udās* or udekh) are usually conceptualized as the slowing of movement within the person and of interaction between persons. Here again, however, someone whose tendencies are hot may react to grief or sorrow by loud outpourings and violent movement. In the myth Prince Ganganāth, "struck by sorrow," ceases to eat or sleep and finally withdraws completely from his homeland, his royal estate, and his family; his mother, hotter at the outset (as women generally are held to be), beats her knees on the ground and weeps "a hundred maunds of tears." In contrast to such excessive emotions happiness and contentment

(khusi, sukh) are described in a language of balance and harmony and are evoked by images of the daily round and things in their proper places: "cow in the cowshed, mother in the house."

The categories of hot and cold are at once psychic and somatic, material and mental, as well as sociological, geographic, gastronomic, cosmological, aesthetic, medical—I could extend this list considerably. An interpretation of Kumaoni idioms for describing emotional life thus cannot be restricted to this domain but requires opening up a wider realm of expressions and meanings. Kumaoni ethnopsychology cannot be detached from Kumaoni ethnosociology—since different castes are assumed to have different emotional make-ups—or from Kumaoni calendrics—since the seasons participate in hot and cold—or, to offer another example, from Kumaoni ethno-or-nithology—since a number of birdsongs signify and evoke emotions (Leavitt 1994); and, as in other South Asian traditions (cf. Brenneis 1987, 1990), it cannot be detached from aesthetics.

Classical Hindu thought has produced an elaborated theory of emotional essences or *rasa*—literally, "tastes," "juices," or "saps"—stereotypical subjective experiences that are indissociable from culturally-marked situations and ideas (Brenneis 1990; Lynch 1990a:17–19; Ramanujan and Gerow 1974:128–136), experiences that can be "tasted" in art outside their real-life situations of occurrence and that are not reducible to their definitions. Other cultural systems of defining emotions also divide up human meaning/feeling along axes other than those so important in the West. We are barely beginning to consider the implications of this variety for the development of our own models.[7]

While the value of such studies is evident, so are their limitations. To define emotions as emotion words or concepts or models of emotion is to lose the feeling side of the phenomenon and reduce emotion to a kind of meaning. The experience and expression of emotion do not always take place in explicit categories (Crapanzano 1992[1989]; Levy 1984). Even the evidence from linguistics itself makes a reduction of emotion to emotion terms or concepts highly problematic, since emotion, however defined, is expressed at every level of language, in intonation and grammar as much as in vocabulary (Irvine 1990; Ochs and Schieffelin 1989). This means that emotion is "recognized" as being expressed outside language that is explicitly about emotion—that, in other words, "language has a heart" that is quite distinct from explicit cultural models and vocabularies.

From the original concern with emotion vocabulary, culturally oriented work on the emotions has turned toward their "social construction" more generally (Harré 1986). One tendency within this movement has been to recognize the social nature of emotions and analyze them by re-placing them in the stereotypical social situations or scenarios that are expected to call them forth (Lutz 1988; M. Rosaldo 1980; Schieffelin 1985). A related trend is to explore cognitive and cultural "models" of emotion (Holland and Quinn 1987), arguing sometimes that these can have "affective force" (D'Andrade 1992:226). I do not want to downplay the complexity of this literature or its potential for suggesting new theoretical directions. Particularly important is the constructionist insight that emotions are social, and not purely private, in nature. This, too, seems to have been foreshadowed in ordinary language, which does not hesitate to attribute emotions to dyads, groups, or interacting networks. The implication of this insight, if we accept that emotions involve both meaning and feeling, is that bodily feeling, too, is social in nature.

The constructionists' insight, however, has tended to be sidetracked by an early equation of the social with the cognitive and conceptual as opposed to the bodily and felt. Indeed, Bedford's cognitivizing essay is reprinted at the beginning of the flagship volume of the movement (Harré 1986). Many constructionists seem to have assumed that if emotion, like cognition, is social, then emotion must be a kind of cognition.

I do not intend to attempt a thorough critique of this literature. Let me only note some of the language used: in constructionist writings, emotions have been described or defined as "rational" and "cognitive," as "aspects of cultural meaning systems," "guideposts to cultural knowledge about social and affective experience," "cultural models," "judgments," "apprais-

als," "evaluations," "idioms," and "interpretations."[8] Some anthropologists have explicitly denied a link between emotion and bodily feeling: an emotion is not an "internal state" (Lutz and White 1986:408); "emotions are not passions" (Lynch 1990a:10). The philosopher Robert Solomon puts this position baldly: "an emotion is not a feeling (or a set of feelings), but an interpretation" (1984:248; also Armon-Jones 1986:50–54). The best answer to this is the equally straightforward observation of Robert Desjarlais that "an emotion, by definition, implies something 'felt' " (1992:101).

In constructionist writings the disjunctive "rather than" is sometimes used to striking effect. Emotion is "about social life rather than internal states" (Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990:1–2; cf. Lutz 1988:4); it is "a form of discourse rather than . . . things to be discovered beneath the skin or under the hat" (Lutz 1988:7); and "rather than seeing them as expressive vehicles, we must understand emotional discourses as pragmatic acts and communicative performances" (Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990:11). Such phrasings imply a choice between mutually exclusive terms: if emotion is discursive, performative, and social, then it cannot be bodily, expressive, or personal. On the contrary, as I have argued, emotion words are precisely the ones we use when we do not want to be forced into this choice—when we want to talk about experiences that are all of these at once. Why shouldn't a pragmatic act and a communicative performance also be a bodily experience and an expressive vehicle? This, if we take it seriously, is to say that emotions are beneath the skin and under the hat, even if what is beneath the skin and under the hat is social too.[9]

A tension sometimes appears between cognitive models of emotion and non-Western theories whose fundamental divisions appear to lie elsewhere. Lutz, for instance, after positing that "internal feeling states have commonly been assumed to be the primary referents of emotion words in Western thought" (1986[1982]:267), points out that work in Oceania suggests a model that is based not on internal states but on "the relation between a person and an event (particularly those involving other people). . . . The Ifaluk see the emotions as evoked in, and inseparable from, social activity" (1986[1982]:283). Yet the Ifaluk term that Lutz uses to define the linguistic domain of emotion literally means language "about our insides" (1986[1982]:268), and, throughout her article, the verb used in relation to emotion terms is *feel*, including *feel inside*. Might we not say instead that a part of Ifaluk vocabulary is made up of terms that refer to experiences involving both meaning and bodily feeling, one cross-culturally available figure for which is "what is inside"? It would be these terms, in turn, that Westerners "recognize" as belonging to a domain that they call "emotion." This is not necessarily because emotions are transcultural universals, but because otherwise the ethnographer herself would not have identified *this* vocabulary set, rather than some other, as "emotion words." Lutz's data do not suggest that the Ifaluk are natural cognitivists or social constructionists—making them right while American folk theory is wrong—but that they have a way of talking about their insides that is not separate from their interpersonal experiences.[10]

Some constructionist writings illustrate both an anxiety about the body and feeling and an inability to get away from them in discussing emotion. To give just one example, one of the movement's key statements proposes

> a new approach to emotion, an approach distinguished by its focus on the constitution of emotion, and even the domain of emotion itself, in discourse or situated speech practices, by its construal of emotion as about social life rather than internal states, and its exploration of the close involvement of emotion talk with issues of sociability and power—in short, with the politics of everyday life. [Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990:1–2]

Is this hard-to-parse sentence really meant to mean that emotion—"and even the domain of emotion itself"—is constituted primarily in verbal language? Later in the same text, the authors write that "emotion can be said to be *created in,* rather than shaped by, speech" (Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990:12). What is intended here by the terms *language, speech, discourse?* Discourse

is said, following Foucault, to be something way beyond mere verbal language (Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990:10), and begins to look like all of social life. The body comes back a few pages later in the form of "body hexis" (from Bourdieu 1977[1972]), but it must fight its way in through some forbidding syntax: "[This] does not mean that we do not recognize the possibility that emotions are also framed in most contexts as experiences that involve the whole person, including the body" (Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990:12). I count two negatives, three qualifiers, and an epistemic modal here. How is this sentence different from saying that "emotions involve the body," except in repeatedly expressing the authors' unhappiness with this idea?

It is Bourdieu's notions of habitus and hexis, themselves refittings of Marcel Mauss's recognition of socialized body techniques (1950[1936]; cf. Lyon 1995:256), that give constructionists a way to allow the body back into their theories, even if it is à contre-cœur. For many anthropologists these concepts have come to represent a way of including in their work a lived body that is as social in nature as it is biological, a body for which there would be nothing problematic about experiences centrally involving both meaning and feeling. Constructionists, too, sometimes write of emotions as "acts of thinking and feeling" (Lutz 1988:225), and a number of scholars are struggling directly with the implications of considering emotions as "feeling-thoughts" (Wikan 1990, 1992; cf. Desjarlais 1992; Hinton 1993; Lyon 1995).

The tension between a primarily semantic or definitional view and an attempt to grapple with the continuing presence of feeling can be traced in some of Michelle Rosaldo's founding work in the field, both in her 1980 book Knowledge and Passion and in papers published after her death in 1981. While Rosaldo is cited by authors sympathetic to biology as a prime representative of the cultural-meaning side of the dichotomy (Hinton 1993; Lyon 1995; Spiro 1984), she came to view emotions as "both feelings and cognitive constructions" (as cited in Levy 1983:128) involving "a mix of intimate, even physical experience, and a more or less conscious apprehension of, or 'judgment' concerning, self-and-situation" (M. Rosaldo 1983:136, n.4).[11] A specific diacritic of emotions as emotions is precisely that they are felt. "Emotions are thoughts somehow 'felt' in flushes, pulses, 'movements' of our livers, minds, hearts, stomachs, skin. They are embodied thoughts, thoughts seeped with the apprehension that 'I am involved' " (M. Rosaldo 1984:143). This apprehension, then, is clearly not simply a cognition, judgment, or model, but is as bodily, as felt, as the stab of a pin or the stroke of a feather.

toward a rethinking/refeeling of emotion We have seen that individuals on both sides of the meaning/feeling divide have made efforts to cross it. But the equation of meaning with the particularly cultural and feeling with the universally biological still often forces a biological explanation of the familiar, a cultural interpretation of the strange. A biological base is not, however, only responsible for similarities: it is what provides for variation as well. It is the specific shared nature of human biology that makes possible the enormous variety in human languages, cultures, and social patterns. Even here, however, variation is not infinite, and a social constructionism freed from cognitivist assumptions might lead toward the recognition that societies, too, share many characteristics, and that these similarities, like social differences, are likely to be felt in the body.[12] Such a view goes a long way toward explaining something of that peculiar sense of intimate familiarity in the midst of strangeness, of intimate strangeness in the midst of familiarity, that so many field researchers experience when confronting the emotions of people in a different culture, and that is not nearly so common or disturbing when considering grammars, economies, cosmologies, or kinship systems.

Globally, in spite of tendencies to fall back into meaning- or feeling-based approaches to emotions, a convergence may be taking place between sociocultural approaches and the more nuanced biological and psychodynamic ones around something like a notion that socialized human bodies, bodies that normally exist as groups and in interaction rather than as isolated entities, have their being in recurrent situations that call forth the meaning/feeling responses we

recognize as emotions. Such an extended concept seems truer to our common experience of emotion, in daily life and in ordinary ethnography, than a vision of emotion as either springing from the depths of the body or being laid over individuals as a pervasive cultural grid.

three ways around the meaning/feeling divide

In the remainder of this article I propose three strategies that respect the depth of the meaning/feeling dichotomy in our own thinking but avoid reducing emotion to one side alone. The first is to reconsider those alternatives to mind/body dichotomizing that have been offered within the Western tradition itself. The second is to propose an analytical strategy that draws on methods elaborated in psychoanalysis and ritual analysis. And the third is to seek to recognize some effects of the writing of ethnography that make it a better vehicle for the translation of affective experience in practice than has been allowed for in theory.

Western constructions of emotion: a detour via the past   A historical reconsideration of the meaning/feeling dichotomy is one way of gaining some perspective and perhaps of finding alternative formulations that have been ignored or forgotten along the way. We thus move into the past in two steps: first, to the Russian psychologist L. S. Vygotsky's work in the 1930s; then, following his lead, back into the 17th century, when the oppositions we are discussing were first formulated in their modern form.

Vygotsky's major contribution to psychology and, I think, to anthropology, was to argue that human consciousness is socially produced through the mediation of systems of signs. Vygotsky (1972[1933])[13] divides approaches to the emotions into two schools, one starting from the body, the other from the mind. He observes that the two options imply different modes of discourse. Models starting from the body—Vygotsky cites James—seek to be explanatory, while those that start from the mind—the philosophical psychologies of Brentano, Scheler, and Dilthey—are descriptive and interpretative. Vygotsky sees both as deriving from a philosophical split between a mechanical body and world that are explained through causal chains and a mind that expresses a spiritual essence. He notes that both sides of this dichotomy were laid out by Descartes in the 17th century.

Vygotsky's reading of the past is congruent with the philosopher Louis Althusser's view of modern Western philosophy as dominated by two discursive modes based on different ways of conceptualizing causality: on the one hand, explanatory models exemplified in Descartes's mechanical body and world and leading to the approaches that are usually attributed to the natural sciences; on the other, expressive, interpretative models that seek essences behind appearances. Althusser traces this second approach back to Leibniz and his universe of monads—self-referring "worlds" that must be interpreted through the identification of essences behind appearances (Althusser and Balibar 1970[1968]:186–191). This expressive causality and the multiplicity that it assumed were extended by the German Romantics, Humboldt, and Hegel to cover national, linguistic, or civilizational essences (Brown 1967; Miller 1968; Steiner 1992). This tradition informs Boas's notion of "the genius of a people" (Stocking 1968:214), leading to the Boasian and post-Boasian concept of "a culture" as both the whole of which a people's particular activities are parts and the explanatory pattern that can be derived from commonalities across the range of a people's actions and ideas.[14] While Cartesian mechanism has dominated the natural sciences, varieties of monadism have been central to literary criticism, the humanities, some schools of history, and other forms of what the Germans call *Geisteswissenschaft,* spiritual or mental science. These remain the terms in which the culture/biology split in anthropology and the mind/body split in philosophy and psychology are set. For both, culture/mind is to be apprehended through potentially endless interpretation within

unique, self-referential fields of meaning, while biology/body is apprehended through universally valid causal explanation.

Both Vygotsky and Althusser, having identified this opposition in its fully articulated form in the 17th century, find—independently, I believe—a 17th-century alternative to both in the philosophy of Benedict de Spinoza. Rather than try to summarize Spinoza, let me cite one of his commentators: Spinoza's philosophy involves

> a rejection both of mechanistic determination of psychic states by bodily states . . . and of a psychic determination of bodily states. . . . Every change in a psychic state is a change in a bodily state, necessarily; but not causally. A change in the psychic character, or intensity, or quality of an emotion does not *lead* to a change in a bodily state; it *is* one. . . . The import of this identity . . . is that it refuses to assign the study of the emotions either to an exclusively physiological, causal-determinist model of explanation, or to an exclusively descriptivist, phenomenological, or teleological model of explanation. . . . The whole construction of [Spinoza's] psychology . . . depends on the conception of a bodily organism—a "complex body" or a "composite of composites"—adequate in its complexity to feel, to suffer, to enjoy, and to think. [Wartofsky 1973:349–350]

This description is based on an overview of Spinoza's philosophy, which posited that God and Nature, and mind and body, are one substance that we perceive and conceptualize as distinct because of our own nature. This radical identification of mind and body never became a pillar of Western theoretical thought, caught as it was in debates between philosophies of a mechanical law-governed universe/body and those of a multiplicity of self-referring minds/cultures. But there is something weirdly familiar about Spinoza to a modern Western reader—as if, unlike the rigorous heroics of Descartes or Leibniz, he were simply formalizing the intuitions of our daily experience. "Every philosopher has two philosophies," wrote Bergson, "his own and Spinoza's" (as cited in Yovel 1989:5).

Spinoza's own definitions of the emotions (1985[1677]: part IV) are of great interest in light of recent developments in anthropology. His model and target is Descartes's last work, *Les passions de l'âme* (1988[1649]), which represented passions as the point at which the spiritual mind interacts with the mechanical body through the delicate movement of the pineal gland. Spinoza assumes no division, but treats emotions as positive or negative vectors of cognized feeling that take on the tones labeled by emotion terms depending on the *situation* of the subject. This model takes emotions out of the realm of pure individuality and into an interactive world lived by mind/bodies.

If we were to follow these leads, to choose Spinoza's and Vygotsky's complex models instead of the comparatively simple biological or cognitive ones, where would they take us? We would have to see emotions as primarily neither meanings nor feelings, but as experiences learned and expressed in the body in social interactions through the mediation of systems of signs, verbal and nonverbal. We would have to see them as fundamentally social rather than simply as individual in nature; as generally expressed, rather than as generally ineffable; and as both cultural and situational. But we would equally recognize in theory what we all assume in our everyday lives: that emotions are *felt* in bodily experience, not just known or thought or appraised.

analyzing collective emotional experience Two loosely defined schools in anthropology have developed analytical techniques that deal with emotions without reducing them to feeling or meaning alone. Starting with a proposal by Radcliffe-Brown (1922), the anthropology of ritual analysis has treated ritual acts and symbols as ways of evoking and channeling shared sentiments and associations for social ends (Munn 1974). Victor Turner was, of course, the best-known practitioner of this mode of analysis; but here again we must distinguish between Turner as an analyst of specific data and Turner as a theorist of universal bodily instincts. More recently, a number of anthropologists have sought to refine the specifically affective side of ritual analysis (Kapferer 1979; Lewis 1980; Schieffelin 1985). Common to these scholars is a

recognition that ritual provokes more than ideas; as Kapferer puts it, "emotion is not only conventionally expressed in ritual, it is felt" (1979:3). Parallel to this tendency, some psycho-analytically and clinically oriented anthropologists have produced detailed cultural analyses based on individual or small-group histories, analyses that present emotions and their transformations, often in ritual (Corin 1995; Crapanzano 1977, 1980; Devisch 1993; Obeyesekere 1977, 1981, 1990; Zempléni 1977), sometimes drawing on cultural definitions of emotions and on recurrent social situations as sources of understanding (Ewing 1987; Pandolfi 1991; Poole 1987; Wikan 1990, 1992). Work from these two perspectives has not limited itself either to empathized feelings or to cultural definitions. On the contrary, both analysts of ritual and analysts of individual case histories have felt free to seek explanations/interpretations in a great range of material: in childhood memories, current life situations, cultural expectations, myths, definitions, observed emotions, the physiology of bodily movement, and anything else that seems pertinent in a particular case. Both groups have been willing to go beyond the explicit discourse and definitions of the people involved, to impute motivations and to reconstruct implicit associations and resonances, whether individual or collective. Given that human beings often feel and express their emotions without labeling or analyzing them verbally (Levy 1984), such reconstruction seems a necessary part of interpreting affective experience in a way that does not reduce it to explicit cultural cognition.

The tendency in theoretical thought to see emotion as purely private and inward is, again, a reduction of our common experience that emotion is, while intimately felt, also both communicated to others and shared by groups (Perkins 1972). Much of what we identify as emotional experience in the West and elsewhere, while experienced by the individual subject, appears to be highly stereotypical in nature, corresponding, as constructionists have maintained, to recurrent social situations and shared cultural definitions. To recognize this is not necessarily to assimilate emotions to cultural definitions or appraisals of situations—an emotion is neither definition nor appraisal, even if it necessarily involves these—but to recognize that the body, too, is social and cultural. Affective or felt associations, like semantic ones, are collective as well as individual; they operate through common or similar experience among members of a group living in similar circumstances, through cultural stereotyping of experience, and through shared expectations, memories, and fantasies. A major festival like Christmas among English-speaking North Americans is accompanied by a stereotypical set of emotions. Certainly, we do not all actually feel these emotions: for many, Christmas is primarily lived, according to self-reports and actions, in a mode of disgust at overindulgence or in a heightened sense of loneliness. But this does not mean that Christmas evokes feelings at random, or that one's feelings about Christmas depend exclusively on factors that will change entirely from person to person. They depend, rather, on personal elements that to a large degree are common to those who share common experiences and a common exposure to stories, songs, images, and ritual practices—all features that reinforce a message of comfort and joy, homeyness, and familial good cheer. For most English-speaking North Americans, I am quite sure, such evocation of "Christmas cheer" or "Christmas spirit" extends beyond the words or images used to provoke it to involve what we commonly call feelings. The exact nature of one's feelings will depend on background and circumstances but include a range of positive and negative emotions that are themselves reactions to the central stereotypical emotion of familial and universal love and coziness.[15]

If we accept the transindividual nature of culturally marked emotions, it should be possible to map associations that are predominantly affective in nature and that centrally involve bodily feeling without necessarily passing via conscious judgments or explicit definitions.[16] This would involve identifying components of emotionally marked action, locating situations in which these recur, and identifying feeling-tones typically associated with these situations. Such an approach

would be part of a larger analysis of cultural productions involving both conceptual and affective aspects of their reception (Leavitt 1984).

Let me give another example from Kumaon. The telling of Ganganāth's departure, the context and surface features of its performance, touch on many shared Kumaoni awarenesses and expectable reactions, provoking both conceptual and affective resonances in this already "primed" population. An analysis of the *conceptual* associations of the incident would have to replace it in the context of the myth of which it is part and in the broader context of its telling: here, most saliently, the fact that in ritual the story of Ganganāth is usually told along with that of the local divinity Goriyā. This joint telling points up aspects of both that would not stand out so prominently were they recounted separately. Ganganāth and Goriyā are opposites in personal characteristics, social roles, and patterns of movement (Ganganāth takes off forever while Goriyā goes back and forth, into exile and then back home); Ganganāth exemplifies excess, Goriyā happy balance. The contrasting natures of the two gods link both of them into the model of emotional life as involving patterns of movement within the person and between persons, in which balanced activity is required to maintain one's happy place in the world, and excessive or insufficient movement explains/equals both negative feelings and negative behavior. To-gether, the two myths provide contrastive commentaries on issues of general concern to Kumaoni villagers: the difficulties and responsibilities of householding versus the temptation to renounce the world; issues of tyranny, anarchy, and justice; the interaction of character and life pattern or of intra- and interpersonal bodily movement.

But this conceptual modeling is not all that happens in ritual performances of these myths. Myth and ritual evoke and manipulate not only ideas but feeling as well, and it is also possible to consider their elements in terms of their emotional associations and the feeling-tones they may be expected to evoke. In this case the specific setting of Ganganāth's departure, the context of his excess, is full of *affective* associations for the singers and hearers of the tale. Ganganāth does not simply depart. The bard dwells on his abandonings: Ganganāth leaves behind his household, his ancestral lands, his buffaloes, his cows, his friends, his cat, and—saddest of all and most emphasized—his mother. This accumulating of abandonments resonates powerfully in a social order in which a person is identified with, and defined by, a place in the cosmos, a lineage, and a set of responsibilities.

Ganganāth's precipitate and permanent departure from his home means that he is cutting himself off from the major identifying aspects of the self: in space, since he is leaving his own place and becoming a wanderer; in time, since he is stepping out of the rounds of household, agrarian, and ritual life; and in society, since he is abandoning his place as prince, as citizen of his kingdom, and as lineage and family member. At an age when he is about to assume the responsibilities of householding (heightened and focused because, in his case, his household includes the entire kingdom), Ganganāth instead gives everything up and heads off on his own. The period of late adolescence, just before marriage and the imposition of adult responsibilities, is in fact the most common time for Kumaoni men to run away and join the yogis. It is hard for us to imagine the utter desolation of such a choice, especially as contemplated by those who stay at home—who are, after all, the ones who sing and hear the story. What one is leaving behind is not just home and family, but one's very identity.

The poignancy of Ganganāth's act is heightened by the bard's insistence on the fact that the hero is abandoning his mother. For Kumaonis, the mother embodies close, protective love as distinct from the demanding love of the father and the patrilineage. Where the father bears the responsibility for producing a responsible lineage member, the mother is not only free to indulge the child but also tends to see the child as the seal of her acceptance into her husband's household after having to leave her own. The figure of the mother stereotypically condenses associations of warmth, support for personal identity, and a safe place in the universe.[17] Note that these are not just concepts or appraisals: they are highly charged with feeling for most rural

Kumaonis as a result both of common personal experience—whether in memory or in expectation—and of an ideology that channels and foregrounds them.

Ganganāth's sad departure contrasts with the associations of the story of Goriyā's departure, which culminates in his returning from exile and sitting on his mother's lap, his birthright reclaimed. Goriyā's happiness is that of homeyness, safety, coziness, reunion. Ganganāth, by contrast, epitomizes the associations of Kumaoni bairāg with abandonment and separation—the breaking of the state that Goriyā achieves. Note that these associations are all implicit in the story and ultimately draw not only on shared cultural knowledge but, equally, on shared or stereotypical feelings that these people associate both with that knowledge and with common remembered or fantasized experiences. Where the conceptual structure of these stories may be reconstructed from their overall patterning, indices to their affective resonances occur at particular points of the performance where the emotions of the singer and/or hearers "break through" and are made manifest.

To be more specific: when Goriyā returns to his mother, he sits in her lap, and, in response to her child's presence, milk spurts forth from her breast. Goriyā, the bard tells us, "takes a milk bath." It is hard to imagine a more "orectic" and grossly "physiological" scene than this, and indeed the argument from which these words of Victor Turner's are drawn (see page 519 above) is all about bodily fluids. It is certainly true, as Turner says, that the representation of many bodily fluids both is associated with strong emotion and, to a degree, evokes it. The situation, however, is necessarily complex and multiple. On the one hand, such representation is also loaded with meanings, in this case with ideologies about body fluids that have been highly elaborated in both classical and folk contexts in South Asia. Simultaneously, this scene must resonate for its listeners with memories of childhood, of mothers' bodies, of being with—watching, listening to, smelling, eating with, sleeping next to—mothers and children, of being a nursing mother for some, of being a child for all. And the emotional resonance of this specific scene of Goriyā's delight must heighten the bleak finality of the scene of Ganganāth's abrupt and shocking separation. He leaves his mother in a scene equally marked by bodily fluids: instead of a stream of milk, a stream of tears.

Such retracing of affective associations is not the same as seeking the native's point of view. On the contrary, an explanation for the jāgar ritual based on categories of hot and cold seems closer to Kumaonis' own conception of the ritual process: a binding of an angry and wildly moving god. But there is more than this to jāgars, and a great deal of what happens, while perceptible, is not theorized by the people themselves. Kumaoni ethnotheory is primarily concerned with the god's reactions, not those of the human audience. The only Kumaonis I met who explained the ritual in terms of human reactions were skeptics who saw the ritual as a way for people to entertain themselves; one local wag described jāgars as *pahāri sinema,* hill people's movies. And while people are clearly moved in the course of a ritual performance, I was not offered explicit discourse on this experience—any more than most of us are ready to proffer explicit discourse that articulates precisely why we are moved by a movie or a song.

Ganganāth's sorrow is refracted by Kumaonis through memories and fantasies of social— which means interpersonal, interbodily—situations. These involve the whole body and feeling, not appraisals alone. They involve specific meanings, not only universal instincts.

empathy and sympathy: on the translation of emotion   The model on which I am drawing for these analyses implies that emotions are no more purely private than are acts of cognition. While we do not know what someone else is feeling, this is true only in the same sense that we do not know absolutely what someone else means when he or she says something. In both cases we interpret: we postulate meanings for the words, gestures, or tears. In both cases we are likely to misread these signs unless we share a common language and culture with their

producer or unless we have learned the sign-system involved. The question, then, is not one of truth but of translation.

Social constructionists have presented translation as the central task of the anthropology of emotions, but they mean the translation of meanings about emotion, of "cultural discourse on emotion" (Lutz 1988:5). Unlike the translation of other discourses such as those of ethnobotany or kinship, however, the translation of emotion theories is likely to have effects beyond the simple communication of theories as such. Emotion is not like other domains; it is more than "another country heard from" (C. Geertz 1973:23). In its writing and its reading, the ethnography of emotion as a genre seems particularly likely to set off evocations and resonances to produce a total effect that goes beyond the semantic.

This is to say that there is more at stake in the ethnography of emotional life than the extension of our methods of analysis. If emotions, while not simply signs, are understood to be mean-ing/feeling experiences that are organized and mediated through systems of signs, then at least tentative translation should be possible between the meaning-and-feeling system under study and the system that the ethnographer shares with the reader of or listener to ethnography. The translation of emotions can seek to convey something of the feeling-tones as well as the meanings of emotions, using the shared affective system of ethnographer and readers as raw material. This means that ethnographers of affect must work on their own feelings, modifying them to model the emotional experiences of people of another society, and must recast this experience in language that can have a parallel effect on others in their home societies.

This brings us back to the question of empathy. I have noted that Kumaonis regularly greet Goriyā's return with laughter or say that laughter is the appropriate response to this part of the story; and they say that sadness strikes them at Ganganāth's leave taking. As a visiting researcher familiar with my own laughter and sadness and those of my family and friends and of beings read about in books and seen in movies, in plays, and on television, I felt that I recognized, or re-pathized, Kumaoni laughter and tears. Such empathic recognition is part of human interac-tion; empathy happens. What I would argue is that such empathy, while perfectly real, is not an end to understanding but the beginning of the search.[18]

The problem with empathy is not that it involves feeling but that it assumes that first impressions are true. Instead of adhering to first impressions, however, it should be possible to reexamine and rework one's initial empathic reaction in light of a better grasp of the culture one is seeking to understand—Turner's "common idiom" of emotion. This kind of reworking of one's own affect is a very different thing from the spontaneity of empathic communion. It is an activity that might be called sympathy rather than empathy: not a feeling *inside* what someone else is feeling *(em-patheia)*, but a feeling *along with (sum-patheia)*, a realignment of one's own affects to construct a model of what others feel.[19] This realignment of one system to model another is precisely what anthropologists do in the case of cultural meaning systems, on the assumption that these are socially and publicly produced rather than "locked in the head"; but it follows in just the same way if emotions are understood not to be exclusively "under the hat," not "locked in the heart," the liver, or the belly (even if that is where people say that they feel them), but as forming systems of differently toned feelings/meanings that are learned by socialized bodies as typical responses to social scenarios and that are expressed (or suppressed) in social contexts. While one cannot directly experience what other people experience, it should be possible to construct intelligible and potentially sense-able models of their experience by using one's own as material on which to work.

Such a project is no more impossible than the apparently paradoxical, but still standard, anthropological task of describing a very different worldview in English. As John Lucy (1985) has pointed out, Whorf's ideas on the relation of language to thought, often caricatured, concern *habitual* thought and language, not the range of possible uses to which a language can be put—uses that include twisting one's own discourse to try and convey the sense of a different

one, which is precisely what Whorf tried to do. Like meanings, feelings, too, are largely matters of habit. And just as a specialized use of one language can translate habitual patterns of another, so one can attempt to translate habitual patterns of feeling through a specialized ethnographic discourse.

This reworking and translation of affect is what literature does, and it suggests a new meaning for the observation that ethnography is a form of writing (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Cohen 1994:180–191). But where this claim has most often led to an identification of ethnographic writing with hermeneutic or deconstructionist literary criticism, a better analogy might be with literature itself.[20] Like all literature, the ethnography of emotion is concerned with providing a sense of possible ways of feeling, accessible yet distinct from those to which the reader is accustomed. Indeed, an anthropological account of the emotions could escape the limits of the written word: a choreographed ethnography or ethnographic opera would display the nonverbal signs of emotions along with verbal ones. Something of the kind already exists in certain films—I am thinking particularly of Japanese historical dramas such as Inagaki's 1963 film *Chushingura*—that, in a couple of hours, offer an education in an unfamiliar system of facial expressions, movements, and interpreted feelings.

This translation of feeling through meaning in fact goes on in most good ethnography, whether or not the author intends it, and whether the author as theorist operates in an empathic or a semantic mode. Two monographs come to mind, both now considered classics in the field. In his book *Sound and Sentiment* (1982), Steven Feld writes freely about the sadness of the Kaluli of New Guinea, assuming, on the whole, that he and the reader both know what sadness is and can use that knowledge in a discussion of Kaluli. And yet in spite of this fundamentally empathic approach, and without any formal mapping of the Kaluli vocabulary of sadness, Feld's ethnography as a whole is rich enough to convey a strong sense of the otherness, the distinctiveness, of Kaluli sadness. Inversely, Michelle Rosaldo, wary of empathy, devoted *Knowledge and Passion* to an unraveling of Ilongot discourse about the emotions; but in spite of this fundamentally semantic approach, her analysis is, again, sufficiently rich to give a strong sense of what certain Ilongot emotions *feel* like. For a Western reader, both works are sentimental educations. Both play on our feelings as literature does—not, as in literature, primarily to please us or to make us better or wiser in general but to give a sympathetic (that is, a constructed) sense of what others experience. And the same can be said for other ethnographies of emotion produced by proponents and critics of both sides of the dichotomy. These ethnographies furnish sufficiently rich data—in the form of definitions, anecdotes, and descriptions of expressed emotions, lived situations, and the author's own reactions—to change a reader's sensibilities to some degree.

Have I been able to provoke this process here, with the extremely brief account of Ganganāth's sad situation? Despite the limitations of my literary skills and of the information I have been able to present, I can only hope that this account has given a hint of what being *bairāgi* might feel like, that, indeed, it has provoked the willing reader to try it out imaginatively not only in the mind but in the whole complex body, drawing on Ganganāth's adventures and associations to taste the tone of his specific sadness: the breaking of a state of love, safety, and continuity in intimate relationship with one's own others, an uprooting from roots that define one's self.

conclusion

A model of emotions that takes their complexity as everyday concepts seriously would see them as experiences that we recognize as involving both cultural meaning and bodily feeling. While they are subjectively felt and interpreted, it is socialized human beings—that is, thinking human bodies—who are feeling them in specific social contexts. This means that they are

socially and symbolically produced, expressed, and felt. They thus require (and are susceptible of) translation across societies and symbol systems, translation not only of their meanings but, to a certain extent at least, of their feeling-tones. In this light, while empathic descriptions of awestruck celebrants in a synagogue and Ndembu glowing with relief may seem naive, they are not misguided: they depend for the accuracy of their resonance on the quality of the ethnographies in which they are embedded. Whether or not the ethnographer is a member of the society under study is a secondary issue, since, again, not truth but translation is at stake. While any translation may be wrong, this is a risk to which anthropologists, like other translators, are accustomed; the issue has never been one of absolute certainty but of the relative plausibility of alternative models. Finally, the authenticity or intensity of emotions—whether or not half the congregation is thinking about supper when they should be gripped with an unnatural fear—also becomes a separate question. Collective symbolic productions such as the Un'saneh Tokef, the Ihamba ritual, or the recited story of Ganganāth generally may be observed to provoke typical reactions in a group of people who share what I think we may call an affective system. The fear at Un'saneh Tokef, the bairāg of Ganganāth's departure, the coziness of Christmas—all these potential affects are inscribed in their occasions, whether or not particular individuals feel fear, sorrow, or "coze." And this potential typical affect is precisely what ethnographers have been describing over the years even while some theorists have said that such a thing was impossible and others that it was self-evident. Here—as has happened time and again in the history of anthropology—the practice of ethnographic description, free as it is to draw on the resources of everyday language, has been more sophisticated and richer in implications than the more limited positions taken in general theory.

notes

1. The major positions in psychology are illustrated in the introductory chapters to the summative volume *Emotions, Cognition, and Behavior* (Izard et al. 1984). Of the three editors, each of whom represents an important theoretical position, Izard sees emotions as feelings, analogous to bodily sensations; Kagan sees them as involving both feeling and cognition; and Zajonc maintains the relative independence of emotion and cognition as systems. Historically, psychological approaches to the emotions have been classified as either discrete or dimensional (Dienstbier 1984:484–486). The first view, going back to Darwin, holds that there is an array of discrete emotions "hardwired" into human biology. This view is maintained today in research seeking or assuming a limited number of "basic emotions." The dimensional model, which goes back to James and Lange, treats emotion as an undifferentiated general force that is molded according to the situation. It returned to the fore in the 1960s with the work of Schachter and Singer, who claimed that a single state of arousal is interpreted positively or negatively depending on the context. In spite of the castigation of James by some culturalists (e.g., Solomon 1984), it is the dimensional view that allows a stronger role for culture, which can be seen as molding an inchoate biological force. As James himself put it, prefiguring the analysis of emotion vocabulary:

If one should seek to name each particular [emotion] of which the human heart is the seat, it is plain that the limit to their number would lie in the introspective vocabulary of the seeker, each race of men having found names for some shade of feeling which other races have left undiscriminated. [as cited in Kagan 1984:39 and Wierzbicka 1994:136]

2. Lutz and White (1986) distinguish five "divergences" illustrative of the "classic theoretical or episte-mological tensions" found in the literature. Other overviews include Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990; Kitayama and Markus 1994; Lynch 1990a; Pandolfi 1991:171–184; and Sobo 1994.

3. The very words *meaning* and *feeling* may be locally and linguistically marked; it is hard to imagine how to translate them into French, with words that cover both (e.g., *sens*) or German (with *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* sharing the semantic space of *meaning*). For this article let us simply say that I am exploring the semantic resources of English. On emotion vocabulary in European languages see Wierzbicka 1994:148–153 and Wikan 1990:307, n.10.

4. Kumaon, which was a kingdom until the end of the 18th century, today comprises three districts in the mountainous part of the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. Rural Kumaonis are terrace agriculturists and small-scale pastoralists who live in small, generally one-caste villages. They practice their own variety of Hinduism along with the orthodox version. Culturally and linguistically, the region is part of the Central Himalayas, which also include the neighboring region of Garhwal. The Kumaoni language is a member of the Pahari family, a group of Indo-Aryan languages spoken all along the lower Himalayas, of which the best known representative is Nepali. While Kumaoni is spoken at home and in rituals for the regional divinities, Hindi is the language of education, government, and most commerce. I conducted my field research in 1981–82 in villages south of the old capital of Almora.

5. G. B. Milner writes that "emotions have practically disappeared" from Lévi-Strauss's work (Milner 1969:21), Michelle Rosaldo that he "abolishes 'affect' as something other than a consequence of cognitive processes" (M. Rosaldo 1984:151, n.2). Some of Lévi-Strauss's less temperate statements add to the credibility of this reading: "Affectivity [is] man's darkest side" (Lévi-Strauss 1962:99). Elsewhere he remarks: "A manifestation of affective life that did not reflect, on the level of consciousness, some noteworthy incident that is blocking or accelerating the work of the understanding would no longer be in the domain of the human sciences; it would fall into that of biology" (1971:597, translations by J. Leavitt).

6. For discussions of empathy, see Lutz 1988:69–70; Lutz and White 1986:415; and Wikan 1990:36–37, 1992.

7. Much of the literature on the emotions comes from studies of Pacific societies and shows that here emotions are conceptualized as relational in nature and thus immediately part of social situations (Brenneis 1987; Lutz 1986[1982]; Myers 1979; Watson-Gegeo and White 1990; White and Kirkpatrick 1985). South Asian theories, by contrast, tend to essentialize emotions as collective ideal experiences (Brenneis 1987, 1990).

8. These terms are drawn from Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990; D'Andrade and Strauss 1992; Holland and Quinn 1987; Kirkpatrick and White 1985; Lutz 1985, 1988; Lutz and White 1986; and Lynch 1990a, 1990b.

9. In fact many languages and traditions do not distinguish between emotional feeling and bodily sensation. See Sobo 1994 for a specific case and Wierzbicka 1994 for cross-linguistic data.

10. Some authors criticize Western ethnotheory for dichotomizing but locate the dichotomy not between meaning and feeling, but between cognition and emotion (Besnier 1990:420; Lutz 1985:75). In the context of Western mind/body and meaning/feeling dualism, using emotion rather than, say, physical sensation as one of the terms has the paradoxical effect of reinforcing the meaning/feeling dichotomy: emotions become a kind of cognition. For another reading of Ifaluk emotion vocabulary see Wierzbicka 1994:140–142.

11. While Rosaldo returns to a more "meaning"-oriented tone in her essay "Toward an Anthropology of Self and Feeling" (1984), it must be remembered that the purpose in this case was to address a field that she felt was still dominated by biological and psychodynamic universalism.

12. In a reflection on his own reactions upon the tragic death of his wife, Michelle Rosaldo, Renato Rosaldo (1984) discovers that for him, too, grief and rage are closely linked, something that had seemed mysterious to him when described by Ilongot informants. He proposes that emotions are felt as similar across cultures because they arise from similar situations across societies.

13. Vygotsky discusses James/Lange and Cannon in the fourth of his *Lectures on Psychology* (1987[1932]). The extension to Spinoza comes in the manuscript *Theory of the Emotions* (partially translated as Vygotsky 1972[1933]).

14. See also Dumont 1986, Leavitt 1991, and Stocking 1968.

15. On the collective nature of emotional expectations see Markus and Kitayama 1994. Edward Schieffelin has put the matter clearly:

There is a culturally normative dimension to what a person must feel, no less than to how he must behave in social circumstances, which provide an opportunity, a compulsion, and a program for feeling that way; people normally do feel the way they are supposed to on a given occasion. Indeed, these norms of appropriate feeling represent the standard against which a person who feels something else may be judged deviant by himself and by others. [1985:106]

16. Compare Edward Sapir's distinction between referential symbolism and condensation symbolism (1949[1934]:566).

17. On mother/child relations in North India see Inden and Nicholas 1977, Kakar 1978, and Kurtz 1992.

18. Compare the explicitly introspective/extraspective project of Unni Wikan (1990, 1992), who sees her goal as creating "resonance" between the readers and the subjects of the ethnography, with her own experience as the mediating factor. Robert Desjarlais (1992:13–29) proposes the reconstruction of emotional experience in ethnography.

19. "Sympathy runs parallel, while empathy unites" (Fogle 1973:222).

20. In the 1930s Gregory Bateson was already drawing parallels between ethnography and literature and arguing that the ethnographer might well seek to "inform" the former with the "emotional tone" that is conveyed in the latter (1958:2). Moreland Perkins uses literature to illustrate his claim that feeling is an essential part of what we mean by emotion (1966:155–160).

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