

The Space between Us

EMBODIMENT AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY IN WATSUJI AND LEVINAS

Joel Krueger

This essay brings Emmanuel Levinas and Watsuji Tetsurō into constructive philosophical engagement. Rather than focusing primarily on interpretation—admittedly an important dimension of comparative philosophical inquiry—my intention is to put their respective views to work, in tandem, and address the problem of the embodied social self.¹ Both Watsuji and Levinas share important commonalities with respect to the embodied nature of intersubjectivity—commonalities that, moreover, put both thinkers in step with some of the concerns driving current treatments of social cognition in philosophy and cognitive science. They can make a fruitful contribution to this discussion by lending a phenomenologically informed critical perspective. Each in their own way challenges the internalist and cognitivist presuppositions informing the currently dominant “Theory of Mind” paradigm driving much social cognition research. Moreover, their respective views receive empirical support from a number of different sources.

I. WHY WATSUJI AND LEVINAS?

Both Watsuji and Levinas share several common philosophical preoccupations that make them productive conversation partners.² For example, both continually argue for ethics as first philosophy. Watsuji’s most important book, *Rinrigaku* (倫理学, *A Study of Ethics*), is a three-volume work in which he argues at length that, as first philosophy, ethical inquiry is logically prior to both humanistic and scientific inquiry.³ Similarly, Levinas insists on the philosophical “primacy of

the ethical, that is, of the relationship of man to man . . . primacy of an irreducible structure upon which all other structures rest” (TI 79).

Moreover, both Watsuji and Levinas conceive of ethical inquiry as a phenomenologically oriented inquiry into the nature of ethical agency. Neither was concerned with formulating abstract principles divorced from the flux and flow of situated moral life; and neither offers an ethical system in the traditional, philosophical sense (i.e., virtue, utilitarian, or deontological). Rather, both are critical of such approaches for how they abstract from everyday life and unfairly posit the disembodied and isolated ego as the primary unit of analysis. As a result, Watsuji and Levinas instead concern themselves with exploring how ethical practice is enacted within concrete human relationships.⁴ They assume a firmly *situated* approach to ethical inquiry—that is, an approach that urges the primacy of action and of our embodied and affectively charged, face-to-face encounter with the other. For instance, Watsuji writes at the beginning of *Rinrigaku* that any ethical consideration “which abstracts away from the practical connections between person and person” is inadequate in that it overlooks the intercorporeal basis of ethical agency.⁵ Levinas likewise urges that ethics is fundamentally a responsive and relational phenomenon that arises in the fundamental encounter with the face of another.

Finally, given this staunchly embodied and situated approach to ethical inquiry, both Watsuji and Levinas develop original and highly creative phenomenological analyses in their respective efforts to unpack the nature of our sociality. For Watsuji, this entails an extended consideration of the experiential structure of social space: the interpersonal “betweenness” (*aidagara*, 間柄) that couples self and other in a dialectical relation of activity and passivity. Likewise, Levinas expends considerable attention explicating the basic structures of what he terms “lived affectivity” (sensibility, fraternity, and proximity) in addition to extended treatments of bodily and affective phenomena (pleasure, anticipation, fatigue, nausea, indolence, insomnia, sexuality, parenthood, and the simple joy of eating) in order to better understand the subtle layers of feeling and engagement that bind the self to a shared world.

In sum, both Watsuji and Levinas work out a phenomenologically motivated ethics beginning with a careful consideration of the lived body in relation to others. Additionally, both thinkers are united in the claim that the lived encounter with otherness is a constitutive part of the development of the self and subjectivity. Despite these similarities, there are some important differences between them, which will be discussed as we progress. Ultimately, however, my emphasis is on their fruitful points of contact and contemporary relevance.

II. WATSUJI ON EMBODIED INTERSUBJECTIVITY

One of Watsuji's most important contributions is his repeated insistence that "human relationships are, in truth, the relationships of our carnal interconnections in space."⁶ The body and space together form the origin and center of Watsuji's ethics. Moreover, he repeatedly emphasizes the way that our *agency* provides the principle of coordination establishing the mutuality of our relationships within shared social space. Watsuji insists that the human relations he is concerned with "are not objective relations established through subjective unity, as is the case with spatial relations between subject and object. Rather, they are *act-connections* between person and person like *communication* or *association*."⁷ For it is within these dynamic act-connections that ethics becomes concretized, embodied within various forms of ethical *praxis* that allow us to manage and negotiate human relationships. Watsuji therefore concludes, "The locus of ethical problems lies not in the consciousness of the isolated individual, but precisely in the in-betweenness of person and person."⁸ This "in-betweenness" (*aidagara*) or lived social space, as the space of action, thus has an intrinsic qualitative character that differentiates it from geometrical space. Spelling out this character of social space—as well as the body that inhabits and negotiates it—occupies the bulk of Watsuji's phenomenological analysis.⁹

The body, Watsuji acknowledges, is "an organism of the sort that physiology expounds."¹⁰ As such, the physical body is our point of contact with the world. It is what allows us to interact with the world, to do things in it and to it—and at the same time to be causally

effected by various things that the world does *to us*.¹¹ But the body is also more than a “mere physiological object.”¹² The body is additionally, and coequally, a *subjective* body: a lived, first-person perspective on the world. The body thus has an irreducibly “dual structure,” according to Watsuji.¹³ It is simultaneously an object as well as an experiential dimension, a bodily subjectivity.¹⁴ What this means is that the lived body is not strictly speaking a *content* of consciousness, such as the visual perception of a tree or the memory of a childhood experience. Rather, the lived body is our anchored first-person perspective *on* the world—the anchored perspective that grounds our egocentric frame of spatial reference by which we are disclosed to ourselves as bodily subjects situated *in* the world.¹⁵ And what is perhaps most philosophically intriguing is that the body simultaneously realizes both of these modalities; it is hybrid. As Watsuji puts it, “Whether considered theoretically or practically, a human body is subjective through and through, so long as it is an element in the activity of a subject.”¹⁶ But there is yet another irreducible dimension of embodiment that requires further elucidation: the *sociality* of the body. He appeals to interpersonal interactions and offers several vivid phenomenological descriptions to make his point.

Watsuji begins by noting that within interpersonal contexts the body of another is never encountered as pure object (i.e., as a “biological organism” or “mere material solid”). In a passage worth quoting at length, he asks:

Is it true to say, when we meet a friend and exchange greetings, that we take for granted that the greeting of our partner is a movement of a physiological body? Is it true to say, on seeing my friend run toward me while calling my name, that I pay attention only to such things as the vehement movement of muscle and the vibration of vocal chords? Everyone knows that this is not the case. In the movements of the human body, that is, in its behavior, we catch a glimpse of the expression of an acting subject, rather than the mere object of physiology. Here, in the way in which a human body exists in daily life, we see not so much a physiological process as expressions of certain practical act-connections. Whether the person whom I asked to help me attain a job says “yes” or “no” by shaking her head vertically or horizontally is nonsense from a purely physiological standpoint, but it is of great practical significance. Through such practical act-connections, the

human body is viewed, as it were, as an individual “person” and not as a mere biological organism.¹⁷

When we encounter another bodily subject, when we encounter a friend standing beside a bronze statue, for instance, we do not encounter our friend as a material solid having the same form as the statue but instead greet and emotionally engage with our friend as a dynamic expression of bodily subjectivity. In other words, Watsuji writes, “It is not that I first touch her hand as a material solid and afterwards come to infer that this material solid is put into motion by my friend’s mind. Rather, from the outset, I touch my friend herself.”¹⁸ The physical body is therefore an expressive vehicle that externalizes, via “practical act-connections,” aspects of another’s subjectivity in such a way that I have immediate perceptual and emotional access to them. Though other aspects of their subjectivity remain transcendent—the first-person perspective entails a certain exclusivity or privileged access, in that I can think and feel things that no one else need know about—it is nevertheless the case that the body, as an expressive vehicle, makes manifest other aspects of subjectivity within the in-betweenness of social interaction. The physiological body, simultaneously a bodily subjectivity, is therefore always saturated with expressive significance.

Vivid descriptions aside, what sort of argument does Watsuji give to support this claim about the bodily basis of intersubjectivity? To begin with, it seems that Watsuji is here endorsing what has recently been termed a “direct perception” view of social cognition.¹⁹ According to this view, the basis of interpersonal understanding consists in empathic perception. Distinct from sympathy—which involves a care or concern for others, such as the inclination to comfort parents grieving over the loss of a child—empathic perception is rather a more fundamental, indeed *the* fundamental, mode of access to another person *as a person*. Prior to cultivating sympathetic feelings of concern for another, we must first experience them as a subject, that is, we must *perceive* them as minded. Empathy is therefore a basic, irreducible mode of perceptual (i.e., intentional) directedness toward another’s subjectivity.²⁰ Importantly, it does not entail that one necessarily feel precisely what one perceives another is feeling (e.g., I can directly perceive another’s grief at losing a child even if I

don't, in that moment, feel grief of a similar character or intensity). In empathic perception, the other's feeling remains transcendent in this sense, however immediately I am able to recognize it. Nevertheless, what is relevant to this discussion is that the thoughts and emotions of others are directly, which is to say *perceptually*, accessible. There is thus no need to posit an intellectual process or mechanism that mediates my experience of another's subjectivity. Rather, it is directly perceivable within the experiential immediacy of empathic perception. For it is here, Watsuji argues, that we experience "bodies viewed as expressions of the subjective or as persons in their concrete qualities."²¹

What justifies Watsuji's direct perception view of social cognition? His main argument leans heavily on the analysis of the German phenomenologist Max Scheler.²² And like Scheler, there seem to be two core aspects to Watsuji's argument: (1) the rejection of analogical inference as our primary means of understanding others, and (2) a rejection of the internalist view of the mind as an entity wholly realized within the head. Together, Watsuji challenges head-on the notion that we never have direct access to the mind of another and insists, to the contrary, that we in fact *do*. Thinking of subjectivity as (at least partially) externalized within the practical act-connections of social interaction thus eliminates the need to posit a mediating mechanism of any sort. And the positive contribution of this view, Watsuji argues, is that by questioning the primacy of a sharp inner versus outer distinction, we are in a better position to develop a "correct understanding of the human body": the human body formulated as a *subjective* body, that is, the expressive vehicle externalizing aspects of our inner life.²³

First, Watsuji rejects the idea that some variety of analogical inference forms the basis for interpersonal understanding.²⁴ According to this view, we first perceive the body and expressive behavior as movements of a "biological body" or "mere material solid." In this view, we perceive "such things as the vehement movement of muscle and the vibration of vocal chords" and, in a stepwise process, secondarily infer the existence of some sort of subjectivity behind them.²⁵ Our inference here is warranted, this view further holds, because we recognize these observed movements as motor possibilities *for us*,

that is, movements we, too, can make and which are causally motivated by our own subjective states. Thus, I infer (as a sort of inference to the best explanation, since I cannot actually *experience* another's subjectivity, the line of argument continues) that there is a similar subjectivity "behind" another's expressive behavior, providing both its causal origin and communicative intention. But again, I can never be certain of another's subjective life, only their publically observable behavior, since minds are, in principle, localized in the head and thus given with an irreducible first-person privilege.

Some variation of this argument from analogy motivates much of the debate within the "Theory of Mind" framework in current social cognition.²⁶ According to this framework, social cognition is fundamentally a kind of "mind reading" facilitated by one of two mediating mechanisms: the predictive theories of Theory Theory (TT) or the simulative models of Simulation Theory (ST).²⁷ Though they differ in their details, both TT and ST rest on the "Myth of the Hidden": the assumption that mental states are, in principle, hidden inside individual skulls, and therefore, that we can only ever attain indirect knowledge of other's thoughts and feelings by first perceiving external behavior and then inferring to inner states via theorization, simulation, or some combination of the two.²⁸

On the face of it, this view seems to square with common sense. Where else could minds be if not in the head? But both Watsuji and Scheler offer several reasons why this view is problematic. Scheler points out that the analogy-based view of social cognition is circular.²⁹ He notes that we are conscious of our own movements *from the inside*, as it were, "as intentions to move" discharged in different forms of expressive behavior.³⁰ But the movements of others are experientially given in a different mode of presentation: namely, they are "represented by the visual image of such movements" given from an *external* observational standpoint.³¹ Thus, there is "*no* sort of immediate resemblance or similarity to the data encountered in our own case," and any inference to the contrary is unwarranted.³² And yet we do experientially encounter others as minded; furthermore, at times we do employ analogical reasoning to sort out what it is we think they are up to. But in these cases, Scheler insists, we only do so once we have already taken another's inner life for granted.

Analogical inference cannot be our basic means of understanding others but instead requires a more immediate form of interpersonal connection.

Likewise, Watsuji insists that the observational stance necessary for analogical inference is a *derived* form of interpersonal relatedness—for, “to deal with a human being as a mere physiological object, we must deprive her of various other qualifications in order to construct an abstract framework of understanding.”³³ But he argues further, “This distinctive way of looking at things arises only within a position in which the practical attitude has become completely eliminated and thus not in accordance with actual everyday reality.”³⁴ Within the in-betweenness of our face-to-face interactions, the other is, to the contrary, always already encountered as an expressive unity, a bodily subjectivity.³⁵ Analogical inference in social contexts is thus a derived form of understanding based on a more primitive connectedness.

Both Scheler and Watsuji further reject that assumption lurking behind the analogical inference model of empathy: namely, the internalist model of mind according to which the subjectivity of another is wholly realized inside the head, hidden to everyone but the subject. This is, perhaps, the most philosophically radical aspect of their respective views. Scheler speaks of the “expressive unity” (*Ausdruckseinheit*) of the embodied mind and of interpersonal engagements as “patterns of wholeness” in which aspects of another’s inner life are given directly and noninferentially.³⁶ In his most well-known statement of the view, he writes:

For we certainly believe ourselves to be directly acquainted with another person’s joy in his laughter, with his sorry and pain in his tears, with his shame in his blushing, with his entreaty in his outstretched hands, with his love in his look of affection, with his rage in the gnashing of teeth, with his threats in the clenching of his fist, and with the tenor of his thoughts in the sound of his words. If anyone tells me that this is not “perception,” for it cannot be so, in view of the fact that a perception is simply a “complex of physical sensations,” and that there is certainly no sensation of another person’s mind nor any stimulus from such a source, I would beg him to turn aside from such questionable theories and address himself to the phenomenological facts.³⁷

According to Scheler, expressive movements such as facial expressions and gestures give us direct and immediate perceptual access to the

mind of another. This is because bodily expressivity, at least at times, serves as material scaffolding extending aspects of another's subjectivity into social space: the in-betweenness of embodied encounters. More radically, the expressive dynamics of our bodily subjectivity—including various bodily and body-related traits such as gesture, posture, facial and whole-body expressions, and so on—play an essential role in driving certain forms of thought and feeling. Mind is thus distributed throughout our bodily subjectivity considered as an “expressive unity.” And what this means, then, is that, quite often, we *do* have direct perceptual access to the mind of another as it manifests within the visuo-spatial dynamics of their bodily expressivity. This direct bodily and perceptual access forms the ground of interpersonal relatedness.

Watsuji affirms this claim, paying special attention to “the spatiality of human being” to support his view here—and in particular, his notion of “subjective spatiality,” which he says is the “essential characteristic of human beings.”³⁸ In chapter nine of *Rinrigaku*, Watsuji observes that culture, which he defines as the effort to collectively establish structures for managing the flow of communication and information, is characterized by its “spatial extendedness.”³⁹ In other words, “all expressions that indicate the interconnection of the acts of human beings—for example, *intercourse*, *fellowship*, *transportation*, *communication*—can be understood only with a subjective spatiality of this sort.”⁴⁰ These structures comprise the “nervous system of society.”⁴¹ Yet they are not mere things. Rather, they carry human intentions and dynamically organize the relationships of those who create and use them. They are infused with meaning. And in this way, then, they scaffold the material space of intersubjectivity—they extend into what we might call the “meaning spaces” of social relationships—and exhibit a “subjective extendedness.”⁴²

However, this “subjective extendedness” also defines interpersonal dynamics on a more immediate face-to-face level. According to Watsuji, as we have already noted, the self is hybrid. The self has an intrinsically “dual structure” in that it is simultaneously a physical body as well as an embodied subjectivity. But this hybridity also extends to its social existence. For the embodied self, Watsuji argues, is additionally both a public as well as a private entity. Its very nature is subsequently established in light of this tension and within the shared

spaces of social interaction. This idea is clarified with his analysis of the Japanese term *ningen* (人間) and the compound *ningen sonzai* (人間存在). *Ningen* is a Sino-Japanese compound that translates roughly as “human being.”⁴³ But a more nuanced rendering is possible, Watsuji insists. He notes that *ningen* already suggests sociality and interpersonal relatedness in that the character *nin* (*hito*), or “person,” implies two individuals supporting one another, while *gen* (or *aida*) means “betweenness” or “relatedness.”⁴⁴ Thus, the poles of singularity and plurality, private and public, inner and outer, are built into the compound *ningen*, reaffirming the basic hybridity of human being. He notes further that human *sonzai*, or “existence,” consists of *son* (“the self-sustenance of the self”) and *zai* (“to remain within human relations”).⁴⁵ Human existence (*sonzai*) is thus “the self-sustenance of the self as betweenness.”⁴⁶ Put otherwise, to be a self is to actively negotiate this perpetual tension or “dialectic,” as Watsuji refers to it, between individuality and sociality. This negotiation unfolds within the space of betweenness, the space of “subjective extendedness.”

To return to social cognition, Watsuji’s conception of the hybrid embodied self, as well as the dialectically constituted character of *ningen sonzai*, is the key to his rejection of the internalist premise that subjectivity is confined to the head. Approvingly citing Scheler’s contention that the spatiality of subjectivity is tied to “the subject’s capacity for movement,” Watsuji further insists, given that “*ningen* is fundamentally individualistic and social and that a mere solitary person... is also an abstraction,” it follows that “the self-movement of the subject... must be an activity affiliated with human relationships.”⁴⁷ In its expressive form, the entire body—and not simply the brain—is a social organ. And therefore the interactive dynamics of embodied encounters—such as gesture, posture, touch, gaze, vocal and bodily expression, coordination, activity and passivity, and so forth—are carnally based, practical action-connections that establish the “subjective extendedness” of the social self. Additionally, the dynamics of bodily expressivity within social contexts serve as the material scaffolding both structuring the lived space of betweenness (i.e., by making aspects of one’s “inner” subjectivity available for direct perception), as well as motivating the back-and-forth dialectic

of interpersonal engagement. Watsuji writes, “When *I* as the subject of practice stands face to face with *Thou*, *Thou* stands face to face with *I* as the subject of practice. One’s physical body exhibits personality in every part and, hence, lures another’s personality in its every motion. It strengthens opposition through hostility and gives birth to unity through affection. It exemplifies what it means ‘to be outside’ through coolness and draws toward ‘the inside’ through friendliness.⁴⁸ The animate, expressive (i.e., self-moving), and hybrid body is in this way the vehicle by which aspects of subjectivity are spatiality externalized within the betweenness of human relationship. For Watsuji continues, “The spatiality of this subject must consist in the subjective betweenness of human beings.”⁴⁹ Therefore, “without taking into consideration spatial extendedness, we are unable to give a satisfactory explanation of the personal relationship between self and other.”⁵⁰ But crucially, Watsuji concludes, this relationality is fundamentally a *carnal* relationality since “bodily connections are always visible wherever betweenness prevails.”⁵¹ In sum, subjectivity is quite literally a distributed, and not merely intracranial, phenomenon, perceptually available within the social space of interpersonal betweenness. As hybrid (that is, as fundamentally a bodily subjectivity), the expressive body’s formal structure ensures this intersubjective accessibility. Before returning to this idea in more detail, I now consider Levinas on the embodied nature of intersubjectivity.

III. LEVINAS ON EMBODIED INTERSUBJECTIVITY

My goal in this section is to offer an overview of what I see as several crucial features of Levinas’s conception of embodiment and intersubjectivity.⁵² Additionally, as a way of setting up the analysis of the next section, I want to highlight several points where Watsuji and Levinas are very much in philosophical sympathy.

Throughout several of his most important works, Levinas develops a rich phenomenology of the body. And like Watsuji, Levinas emphasizes the primacy of our bodily subjectivity in grounding the basic structures of our social existence. As is well known, ethical experience, according to Levinas, arises from the experience of the “the face” (*le visage*) of another. Though the term “face” in Levinas assumes

many connotations in his work, ultimately functioning as a persistent metaphor for all aspects of human subjectivity that escape objectification, its simplest meaning (and the one I am here concerned with) is simply to stand for the encounter with another subject in his or her concrete presence. Yet our experience of another's face is not exhausted by an experience of its surface qualities (e.g., the color of one's eyes, the smoothness of one's forehead, etc.). Rather, the face signifies a deeper and more fundamental relationality that manifests precisely by the way that the other continually harbors a transcendence or *alterity* that resists my comprehensive grasp: "The way in which the other presents himself, exceeding *the idea of the other in me*, we here name face. This *mode* does not consist in figuring as a theme under my gaze, in spreading itself forth as a set of qualities forming an image" (TI 50). So, via the face, the other is immediately present to me as a concrete manifestation of another's subjectivity—but only as a presence that at the same time signifies a withdrawal, that is, a preservation of another's transcendence or (partial) hiddenness. Levinas develops this idea further by introducing two more key terms: "sensitivity" and "proximity."

For Levinas, sensitivity is "the subject's subjectivity...its subjection to everything, its vulnerability" (OB 14). Sensitivity is our primary mode of openness to the world—a transmodal *receptivity* by which we feelingly welcome and receive the world and other subjects. In the preface to *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas describes the book "as a defense of [embodied] subjectivity," and continues, "This book will present subjectivity as welcoming the Other, as hospitality; in it the idea of infinity is consummated" (TI 26, 27). The lived body is in this way "vulnerable" to the impact of otherness (OB 49). The vulnerability of our bodily subjectivity is secured by the way that, prior to reflective or linguistically mediated thought, we are affectively gripped by the world and by others. "Sensitivity" in Levinas is therefore a pre-reflective or transcendental condition of experience: "Before thinking or perceiving objects, the subject is steeped in it [i.e., the world of otherness]" (124). In other words, before reasoned thinking, calculation, or inference, we feel ourselves affectively bound up with the material reality of otherness—including the ethical demands this primitive relation to human otherness places on us. All conceptual or

linguistic objectifications of otherness thus arise from within a more primitive manifold of bodily affectivity, a “pre-logical subjection” to the Other (*CPP* 135). And the feeling body is in this way the “locus and null site” of our experiential encounter with otherness in all its variegated forms—including the face of the human other, which palpably strikes our “sensibility on the surface of the skin, at the edge of the nerves” (*OB* 14, 15). We very literally feel the encounter with otherness within the depths of our bodily subjectivity.

The notion of “proximity” is offered as the companion concept to sensibility. Proximity is Levinas’s attempt to give phenomenological articulation to how our bodily encounter with the face of the other (i.e., within the structures of “sensibility”) is transfigured from an *affective resonance* into a robust *ethical relationality*. In spelling out the relation between proximity and sensibility, Levinas says, “Humanity, to which proximity properly so called refers, must then not be first understood as consciousness, that is, as the identity of an ego endowed with knowledge” standing over against other self-contained egos (*OB* 83). Rather, to be an embodied human subject is to always already exist within a felt matrix of connectedness to others. But like sensibility, proximity for Levinas is not a cognitive phenomenon (i.e., the construction of an ego endowed with knowledge). It is related to our prereflective sensibility, and rooted in the origins of our bodily subjectivity. Levinas therefore insists, somewhat opaquely, “Proximity, which should be the signification of the sensible, does not belong to the movement of cognition” (63). Again, what this seems to mean is that the original basis of human ethical relationships is a felt, interpersonal resonance at the level of the body. More articulated forms of ethical reasoning (e.g., formulating general principles) emerge from this fundamental bodily connection.

Levinas continues by insisting that proximity is not “reducible to the spatial sense” of the term (*OB* 82). Here, Levinas moves very close to Watsuji’s characterization of the space of social betweenness when he insists that human proximity is not equivalent to static geometrical space but that it is, rather, *lived* space: the dynamic, affect-laden phenomenal space that specifies the unique quality of face-to-face engagement. For it is within this betweenness that the face of others becomes a concrete expression of the simultaneous manifestation and

withdrawal of their subjectivity. Within this space I encounter them in their embodied *alterity*, as both vividly present and as partially absent. Proximity, as a bodily relationality, is thus “a being caught up in fraternity”—and this “fraternity which proximity is we call signifyingness” (83). According to Levinas, then, proximity specifies the experiential character of interpersonal space. In other words, it specifies the primitive awareness that we have of ourselves as participatory members of a human community, as creatures enmeshed with and reliant upon other creatures to whom we have an obligation and for whom we are responsible. Therefore, if sensibility, according to Levinas, is a transmodal, world-directed openness at the deepest levels of our bodily encounter with the world, proximity is the blossoming of this bodily subjectivity into a robust *intersubjectivity*. Proximity is the uniquely human quality of Levinasian sensibility: “Proximity is communication, agreement, understanding, or peace” (166). According to Levinas, the fact of our embodiment and social situatedness are not neutral features of human reality, but instead, are affectively and ethically charged structures that knit us into living communities alongside other bodily subjects. We embody ethical relations from the very start.

This review of Levinas’s thought provides several suggestive connections with Watsuji’s model of embodied intersubjectivity. First, as should be clear, both Watsuji and Levinas stress that sociality is fundamentally a bodily phenomenon. This view, as we see in the next section, challenges several basic presuppositions of the Theory of Mind paradigm in current social cognition research in important ways; it also receives support from several lines of empirical research.

Second, like Watsuji, Levinas seems to be urging that, whatever else subjectivity is, it is not exclusively an inner thing, property, or process. He argues that the conventional tendency to conflate human subjectivity with interiority—and then to further assume that these terms both refer to some hidden inner realm of experience or cognitive principle of identity—is a mistake. This is because human subjectivity—which first emerges from our world-directed “sensibility,” for Levinas—is always cogiven with reference to exteriority. Phenomenologically speaking, interiority always arises with exteriority as one of its enabling conditions. This is so with bodily subjectivity,

for “I discover my body—mouth and hands, eyes and legs, brain and heart—devoted to service.”⁵³ Research on infant mimesis, for instance, seems to confirm this idea.⁵⁴ From the moment they are born, infants discover their bodily subjectivity within their exploratory “service” to the world itself—the world first apprehended by the neonate as an arena for situated action. By experimenting with bodily movement and feeling—what Andrew Meltzoff and Keith Moore term “bodily babbling”—the neonate simultaneously apprehends its nature as both an embodied and situated subjectivity woven into a shared world with other bodily subjects. Additionally, neonates emerge from the womb ready to perceive and respond to the expressive movements of other human agents by engaging with and mimicking facial expressions. Moreover, infants almost immediately recognize and respond to communicative intentions. They recognize faces as emotionally salient in a way other objects are not, and they exhibit an interpersonally sensitive “embodied attending” by initiating various preparatory movements intended to solicit social interaction with caregivers.⁵⁵ These engagements teach the infant about different aspects of its bodily subjectivity, the body considered as a social vehicle. Additionally, they affirm the unique experiential and expressive status of the face of the other. Therefore, infants immediately feel the affective pull—involving possibilities for service and response—within their first encounters with the exteriority of the face.⁵⁶ Developmentally speaking, interiority is cogiven with exteriority; and the body, as both subject and object, mediates this dialectical process.

Yet Levinas also, at least at times, seems to have a more radical form of externalism in mind, one which aligns him even more closely with Watsuji. This is apparent in his discussion of embodied expression. Recall that, for Watsuji, the physiological body, in virtue of its hybrid nature as a bodily subjectivity, is always saturated with expressive significance. This is because the expressive body externalizes (some) aspects of subjectivity, thrusting them out into the shared spaces of interpersonal betweenness. The physiological body thus exhibits a “subjective extendedness,” according to Watsuji; its expressive dynamics serve as material scaffolding, externalizing aspects of another’s subjectivity into the common space of the face-to-face

encounter. Levinas likewise offers several remarks—characteristically cryptic—that, coupled with his insistence on the cogiveness of interiority and exteriority, seemingly indicate a parallel view. For instance, he writes, “Exteriority defines the existent as existent, and the signification of the face is due to an essential coinciding of the existent and the signifier. . . . In the face the existent par excellence presents itself. *And the whole body—a hand or a curve of the shoulder—can express as the face*” (TI 262; emphasis added). Elsewhere he insists on the “expressivity of the person’s whole sensible being, even in the hand one shakes.”⁵⁷ So, the subjectivity of the other is, according to Levinas, concretely present—and thus available for immediate perception and engagement—within the body’s expressiveness. (Though again, the alterity of others ensures that their subjectivity is not *exhaustively* present for me to access; their transcendence is preserved.) What I suggest, then, is that Watsuji and Levinas are in this way aligned in their rejection of the solipsistic picture according to which subjectivity is, necessarily, confined to the head of the individual subject. Both thinkers offer an externalist model of subjectivity, that is, one which stresses the *constitutive* role that bodily expression plays in driving certain processes of thinking and feeling, and in externalizing these processes within social space. Subjectivity is not confined exclusively to the head. Additionally, both reject the epistemic consequence of the solipsistic, intracranial view of subjectivity: namely, that the only mind I ever have immediate experiential access to is my own and therefore that the minds of others forever remain mysterious and wholly inaccessible. Rather, they will insist on the second-person *availability* of subjectivity as externalized by the materiality of the body’s expressive form. I now situate these shared views of Watsuji and Levinas in the current of contemporary social cognition debates and show why both thinkers offer resources for challenging, in philosophically significant ways, some of the core pre-suppositions informing the currently dominant view.

IV. WATSUJI AND LEVINAS ON EXPRESSION AND THE DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL SPACE

Taken together, Watsuji and Levinas provide a balanced corrective to some of the core Cartesian assumptions motivating much

current social cognition research. Additionally, their respective views counterbalance some of the philosophical excesses of the other. As should now be clear, both thinkers argue that our basic sociality is established at the level of a felt, bodily connectedness. Moreover, the process of social interaction unfolds not within the individual heads of subjects separated by an unbridgeable epistemic gulf but rather within the expressive dynamics of face-to-face betweenness. Sociality is thus fundamentally a bodily, and not an intellectual, phenomenon, enacted within the second-person betweenness of concrete human relationships.

To see why this is relevant to current debates, consider the Theory of Mind paradigm, touched on previously. Again, this framework for thinking about the basis of social cognition rests on the core assumption of the “Myth of the Hidden.” For instance, Alan Leslie writes, “One of the most important powers of the human mind is to conceive of and think about itself and other minds. Because the mental states of others (and indeed ourselves) are completely hidden from the senses, they can only ever be inferred.”⁵⁸ Given this presupposition, Theory of Mind casts interpersonal understanding in predominantly mentalistic terms; social cognition is thought to be, fundamentally, a project of developing the requisite mechanisms to overcome (or at least lessen) the epistemic distance between one’s own mind and the minds of others. These mechanisms allow one subject to *represent* what is happening in the mind of another, a process of mental state attribution by which we are subsequently able to predict and explain his or her behavior.

Within current social cognition literature, one finds two proposed mechanisms for overcoming this epistemic gulf: the theories proposed by Theory Theory (TT) and the simulations advocated by Simulation Theory (ST). According to TT, on the one hand, interpreting and predicting behavior is the product of innate or acquired theories about how minds work, how mental states interrelate, and how mental states causally motivate behavior.⁵⁹ These theories allow us to make inferences about others’ mental lives and to anticipate and interpret their behavior based on these inferences. ST, on the other hand, urges that this sort of inferential theory-making is unnecessary in virtue of the immediate access we have to our own cognitive and emotional

resources. According to ST, we exploit the rich inner resources of our own mental life to imaginatively model the mental states of others *as if* we were in their situation, yielding a practical understanding of another's motives and intentions.⁶⁰ The particulars of the Theory of Mind debate are much more subtle than this. However, this quick gloss conveys that social understanding is thought to consist in the deployment of a theory or simulative model, which is required, once more, since minds are localized in the head and given with an exclusive first-person privilege.

It is precisely at this point that both Watsuji and Levinas offer their challenge. Again, recall that both insist on the irreducibly *hybrid* nature of the embodied mind. Watsuji, for instance, speaks of the “dual structure” of our bodily subjectivity.⁶¹ We are, both thinkers agree, individual and social, private and public—and we embody these poles simultaneously from the moment we are born. This emphasis on our subject-object hybridity, and particularly the way this hybridity is manifest in our expressive encounters with others, is particularly relevant since both men furthermore argue that we *do* have immediate perceptual access to another's subjectivity in and through the material expression of the body. Moreover, both implicitly critique knowledge-based models of sociality (e.g., TT and ST) by insisting that, as Levinas puts it, “Sociality cannot have the same structure as knowledge” (*EI* 60).

What does this mean, exactly? I here want to turn to several lines of empirical research to clarify this claim and to support both Watsuji and Levinas on this point. First, consider the claim that sociality cannot have the same structure as knowledge but that it rests, rather, on a more basic form of bodily expressivity and felt intimacy. As the neonate mimesis research discussed earlier seemingly indicates, even newborn infants—prior to the development of language, other-directed theories, or the imaginative capacities required for simulative routines—are drawn to the expressive qualities of the human form, particularly the face. Moreover, they are motivated to explore their own bodies and expressive capacities when they enter into the affective ethos of face-to-face imitative encounters. And the types of response they exhibit indicate a genuine *sociality* to these episodes, that is, a context-sensitive interpersonal *relevance* that goes beyond

mere mimicking. As psychologist Vasudevi Reddy observes, “When interacting with people, newborn infants don’t just imitate, they respond. They respond with interest or disinterest, with attention or avoidance, and at least within weeks, with reciprocal rather than imitative actions.”⁶²

In other words, there is a genuine back-and-forth to these encounters—a “dialectical” structure, to use Watsuji’s favored term—that teaches the infant early lessons about his or her hybrid (i.e., private and public) self, as well as the emotionally and communicatively significant character of face-to-face encounters. For instance, both infants and caregivers seem to derive pleasure from these interactions. Increased smiles are observed before, during, and after imitative exchanges.⁶³ Additionally, infants exhibit a greater increase in heart rate (suggesting heightened attentiveness and anticipation) when attempting to *provoke* interactions with adults than they do when simply *responding to* those interactions. This and other evidence indicates that the face-to-face betweenness of these early encounters is already “swimming in emotion,” mediated by the dynamics of bodily expressivity. These intimate encounters are “orchestrated via a corporal choir of visual, auditory, tactile, and kinetic modalities.”⁶⁴ Additionally, psychologist Jaqueline Nadel strikes a suggestively Levinasian chord when she observes that imitation acknowledges the alterity of the other, that is, by saying to the other being imitated that “I take you as you are.”⁶⁵

This line of research strongly suggests that there is something experientially significant about even the earliest preverbal encounters with the face of another person within imitative episodes.⁶⁶ Within mimesis, the encounter with the face of the other specifies the unique phenomenal character of interpersonal space, the bodily betweenness that Watsuji and Levinas both see as fundamental to understanding the basis of human relationships. This is a crucial addition to current discussions. The interpersonal mechanisms (e.g., theories, simulations, etc.) posited by the Theory of Mind paradigm offer “how” explanations:⁶⁷ they purport to explain *how* different sorts of imitation occur (via the formulation of theories or simulative models), even though, as we have seen, their “how” story requires that a more primitive preverbal level of felt connectedness already be in place. Such “how” stories do not explain *why* imitation occurs, that is, the

meaning of this phenomenon. This latter issue is a question about motivation: what first motivates this primitive affect-laden response to the experienced face of the other?

I suggest that Watsuji's and Levinas's phenomenological description can be of assistance here. First, the face is not experienced as utterly alien, as an epistemically mysterious object that requires deliberate sorting out (*contra* the Theory of Mind paradigm). Rather, the face, in expression, is immediately manifest as a *revelation* of an alter subjectivity, that is, as the simultaneous presence and withdrawal of alterity—a phenomenal revelation which subsequently gives interpersonal space its unique felt character (unlike our spatial encounter with physical objects). On the one hand, the face is immediately experienced as a concrete presentation of another's subjectivity. For within imitation, "the other's dynamic personal presence, emotions, and motivation are directly felt in presentational immediacy."⁶⁸ The immediacy and enthusiasm with which neonates enter into imitative episodes, as well as the context-sensitive nature of their responses, seem to indicate this. On the other hand, others are not *wholly* present in the sense that aspects of their subjectivity remain transcendent. As Reddy argues at length, the attentive gaze of another person discloses the infant to him or herself as an *object*, namely, an object for another's subjectivity, which partially eludes the infant.⁶⁹ This primitive experience of being an object for another subject forms the basis for more articulate, and later developing, forms of self-consciousness.

Self-consciousness is thus mediated by the bodily encounter with the face of another—interiority co-arises with exteriority, as both Watsuji and Levinas insist. Moreover, the face is the primary point of contact within imitation. And imitative episodes, oriented toward the expressive dynamics of the face, are therefore "an inherently intersubjective phenomenon, in which both infant and adult are actively engaging in an emotionally endowed, communicative exchange," all before the onset of theoretical or simulative capabilities.⁷⁰ Configured thusly, interpersonal space becomes the phenomenal space of felt *intimacy*.

Watsuji and Levinas also challenge the Theory of Mind paradigm in a second, and perhaps, more direct way. Again, as we have seen, both argue that the expressive dynamics of the body serve as material

vehicles externalizing some aspects of subjectivity, thus making the mind of another (partially) available for perceptual engagement. This is a strong claim, one which requires a more careful defense than is here possible. But we can unpack this idea somewhat by first noting some of the ways that various bodily and body-related expressive traits (postural adjustments, touch, hand movements, facial expressions, whole body movements, interpersonal coordination, and so forth) play an essential role in driving some forms of thinking and feeling.

As already discussed, neonates come into the world seemingly aware of how imitation and expressive movements enable the negotiation of interpersonal space and thus serve as communicative vehicles for creating sympathetic attunement and interpersonal intimacy. Of course, our gestures become more florid and ubiquitous as we age. And they arguably take on an even greater causal role when they become part of the material process of thought itself. For example, in some instances, it appears that gestures do not merely express fully formed thoughts or intentions. Rather, they appear to help us think; they play an active, causal role in driving thinking and, at times, feeling.⁷¹ Susan Goldin-Meadow has conducted many studies and surveyed other research indicating that gestures occur nearly everywhere, including within some surprising contexts. For example, we gesture when talking on the phone, to ourselves, and in the dark; our gestures co-vary with task difficulty; gestures increase when speakers must choose between increased options; and we gesture more when reasoning about a problem as opposed to describing the problem or a known solution.⁷² This fact alone suggests that gestures have more than simply a communicative or supplementary function.

Additionally, Goldin-Meadow and colleagues have designed a number of experiments to test the hypothesis that, beyond merely serving a communicative function, gesture may play an active causal role in learning—for instance, by lightening the speaker's cognitive load (i.e., informational offloading) and freeing up additional cognitive resources for, among other things, memory and recall.⁷³ One study found that children and adults asked to explain their strategy for solving a math problem while simultaneously remembering a list of words or letters did better on the recall portion of the test (reciting

the list) when they were allowed to gesture while explaining their problem-solving strategy.⁷⁴ Gesturing can also promote learning. Children who mimic an instructor's gestures representing a successful strategy for solving mathematical equivalence problems are more likely to learn the strategy.⁷⁵ Gesturing during the learning of a new mathematical concept, instead of just speaking about it, appears to assist concept retention.⁷⁶ Early (prior to 14 months) and prodigious gesturing, such as pointing, appears to play a central role in later vocabulary development.⁷⁷ Another study found that gestures play a central role in the development of scientific theories of molecular models in biochemistry labs. They do this by providing external, relatively stable visuo-spatial dynamics allowing for representational formats not sufficiently available in other modalities (e.g., speech, imaginative simulation, etc.). This enables the content of the theory to be externally reformulated and made more explicit—and thus open to further intersubjective scrutiny and collaboration.⁷⁸ Finally, it seems that even the physicality of doodling can play an active cognitive role in the doodler's ability to focus attention and process, parse, and recall information.⁷⁹

What about emotional and affective processes? Consider Moebius Syndrome, a rare nonprogressive congenital condition that usually results in complete bilateral facial paralysis. A persistent feature of the narratives of individuals with Moebius Syndrome—sensitively chronicled in the work of neurophysiologist Jonathan Cole—is that, due to their expressive deficit, the phenomenal character of some emotions and moods is constricted or diminished. This leads some Moebius subjects to report that they have the impression of assuming a spectatorial stance in their emotional experiences and social interactions. For instance, James, a priest in his fifties, says that

I have a notion which has stayed with me over much of my life—that it is possible to live in your head, entirely in your head. . . . I do think I get trapped in my mind or my head. I sort of think happy or I think sad, not really saying, or recognizing, actually feeling happy or feeling sad. Perhaps I have had a difficulty in recognizing that which I'm putting a name to is not a thought at all but it is a feeling, maybe I have to intellectualize mood.⁸⁰

This spectatorial stance even defined James's initial experience of falling in love with his wife: "I was probably thinking [about being in

love] initially. It was some time later when I realized that I really felt in love.”⁸¹

The idea of a reciprocal, causal link between bodily expression and the phenomenal character of emotional experience receives robust support in a number of empirical studies. James Laird has chronicled hundreds of studies investigating the link between feeling and action. Laird defends the Jamesian view that “our feelings are the consequences of our actions” and not the other way around.⁸² The largest and most consistent body of evidence in support of this theory concerns facial expressions.⁸³ An overwhelming majority of studies seems to indicate that manipulation of expressive behavior produces corresponding changes in feelings. For example, multiple studies have found that when subjects are induced to adopt a particular emotion-specific facial expression (for example, grimacing or frowning), they report experiencing the corresponding emotion (disgust or anger).⁸⁴ Beyond this, Paula Niedenthal surveys further research affirming that adopting emotion-specific facial expressions and postures influences preferences and attitudes; further, inhibition of bodily expression (i.e., motor movements) leads to diminished emotional experience (i.e., reduction in the experience’s phenomenal intensity), as well as interference in processing emotional information.⁸⁵ The body’s expressive dynamics, therefore, seem to play (at least at times) an active role in driving both thinking and feeling.

How does this relate to social cognition? Simply put, the visuo-spatial dynamics of gesture and bodily expressivity provide real-time perceptual access to thinking and feeling in action. In this way, an epistemically demanding cognitive-inferential process (e.g., the theory-building and simulative projection advocated by the Theory of Mind paradigm) is transformed into a less demanding process of direct perception and interactional engagement. The embodied presence of others reveals aspects of their subjectivity as manifest in their concrete presence. And the core internalist supposition informing the Theory of Mind paradigm (as well as the philosophical “Problem of Other Minds” framework standing behind it) is in this way drawn into question. For, while I may not have full epistemic certainty about what other people are thinking and feeling at a given moment, I nevertheless have phenomenal access to aspects of their subjectivity as they are manifest within the interpersonal betweenness that defines our

face-to-face interaction. Therefore, “in this way our everyday experience of others reaches the other subjectivities themselves, without divesting them of their alterity.”⁸⁶ Both Watsuji and Levinas affirm that we ought to give explanatory prioritization to the extended human form—and not simply the brain—when investigating the basis of social understanding. The expressive body as a whole, in relation to other expressive bodies, is thus the locus of our sociality. In their own ways, both implicitly challenge the philosophically prejudiced picture of the “embrained” (as opposed to embodied and embedded) mind framing much current discussion.

Finally, Watsuji’s emphasis on the dynamic and interactional nature of embodied encounter serves as a corrective to Levinas’s more static appraisal of this phenomenon, which is often characterized in terms of radical passivity. Conversely, Levinas’s insistence that the transcendence of the other is continually preserved within our encounter with the face—no matter how revelatory another’s presence-in-expression might be—is a useful corrective to Watsuji’s tendency to over-emphasize the extent to which *everything* having to do with subjectivity is socially manifest, accessible to the social other. Taken together, then, their careful phenomenological descriptions of our embodied encounter with the other remain highly relevant to ongoing discussions in philosophy and cognitive science.⁸⁷

V. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Watsuji and Levinas have much to contribute to current social cognition debates. They make for productive philosophical partners, as they both share several common interests and orientations that come together in mutually illuminating ways, which might offer a fresh critical perspective to the dominant Theory of Mind paradigm informing many social cognition discussions. To truly find a place for Watsuji and Levinas in this discussion, much more work clearly needs to be done. For, despite his prominence within continental philosophical circles—and despite the rapidly growing interest in phenomenology from those working outside the tradition (e.g., analytical philosophers and empirical researches within the various cognitive sciences)—Levinas is rarely mentioned. Part of this surely stems

from his difficult style and, at times, almost stubborn obscurity. And Watsuji is certainly even less well known, even to those within the phenomenological tradition. But both offer rich theoretical resources, which make them well suited to participate in ongoing debates. The humble aspirations of this essay will therefore have been realized if this discussion serves to bring more attention to their potential contributions.

© 2013 Duquesne University Press

© 2013 Duquesne University Press

24. *Ibid.*, 281. Some recent scholarship rejects any firm distinction between Confucianists and legalists. See Martin Kern, *The Stele Inscriptions*, who remarks: “Only from the later perspective of the Chinese tradition is it permissible to speak of early imperial ‘Confucians’ and ‘legalists’; these categories . . . are almost meaningless in the context of Qin and Han times proper” (183). For Kern, Qin imperial ideology was more traditional than has been assumed, and its demonization says more about the political aims of the demonizers than of the realities of Qin rule.

25. See Kesner, “Likeness of No One,” 123–25.

26. Shankman, *Kindred Verses*, 11–12; see also “Soldiers,” 551–52. On Confucius’s objections to the burial of lifelike statues of men, see *Mencius* I.I.IV.6.

Notes to Chapter 4 / Krueger

1. See Angle, “Minimal Definition,” for a discussion of the interpretive versus the constructive, or developmental, dimensions of comparative philosophy.

2. In 1927—shortly after his appointment as assistant professor at Kyoto Imperial University—Watsuji was sent to study for three years in Germany. Although he returned to Japan after only 14 months due to his father’s death, Watsuji’s time in Europe had a considerable impact on his philosophical development. During this period he encountered Heidegger’s *Sein und Zeit*. Although he was later critical of what he took to be Heidegger’s neglect of sociality and spatiality, Watsuji was nevertheless deeply influenced by Heidegger’s phenomenological analysis of temporality and historicity, which helps to explain why Watsuji’s phenomenological language squares so well with Levinas’s work.

3. Maraldo, “Review: Watsuji Tetsuro’s *Rinrigaku*,” 560.

4. In a quote Watsuji would surely endorse, Levinas says that “[c]oncreteness is the ensemble of what is lived, of intentionality, which is not entirely heuristic; it includes the axiological and the affective” (see Mortley, *French Philosophers*, 14).

5. Watsuji, *Rinrigaku*, 9.

6. Yuasa, *The Body*, 48.

7. Watsuji, *Rinrigaku*, 10.

8. *Ibid.*, 10. Watsuji argues further that most Western European ethics originate from an individualistic and rationalistic metaphysics stressing the primacy of the former (i.e., “the consciousness of the isolated individual”) while neglecting the foundational status of the latter (i.e., the relational “in-betweenness of person and person”). See Mayeda, *Time, Space and Ethics*, for further analysis.

9. Readers already familiar with Watsuji’s work will notice that I say little in what follows of the Buddhist background of his thinking—and in particular, the relation between *aidagara* and “emptiness.” A full appreciation of Watsuji, including his ethics, requires an awareness of the Buddhist context in which many of his core ideas are developed—a discussion beyond present concerns. For analysis

of Watsuji and his relation to Buddhism, see LaFleur, “Buddhist Emptiness,” and Shields, “Art of *Aidagara*.” See also Kalmanson, “Levinas in Japan” for an insightful treatment of Watsuji, Levinas, and the Buddhist notion of “no-self.”

10. Watsuji, *Rinrigaku*, 59.

11. Nishida Kitarō, the founder and arguably most important figure of the Kyōto School of twentieth-century Japanese philosophy, speaks similarly of the animate body as the “union point” in which embodied self and world copen-
 etrate. According to Nishida, the body cannot be reduced to a mere assemblage of biological parts of behavioral capacities. This is because such a characteriza-
 tion fails to acknowledge the deep way that the body is functionally interwoven into its biological, cultural, and historical contexts via the things that it does and has done to it. See Kopf, *Beyond Personal Identity*, and Krueger, “Nishida, Agency.”

12. Watsuji, *Rinrigaku*, 61.

13. *Ibid.*, 19.

14. This observation about the body’s double modality leads Nishida to refer to the body as having an “ambiguous” or “self-contradictory” nature (see Krueger, “Varieties of Pure Experience” and “Nishida, Agency”). Likewise, Watsuji will insist that the body, as both subject and object as well as personal and public, exhibits a “contradictory” relation with itself and with the world (Watsuji, *Rinrigaku*, 58).

15. The body can, of course, become an explicit object (i.e., content) for consciousness. For example, I can look with disdain at my flabby midsection, attend to a pain in my back, or become aware of someone staring at a blemish on my face. But these are derived modes of self-consciousness grounded in a more experientially primitive *pre-reflexive* bodily self-consciousness. See Legrand, “Pre-reflective Self-as-Subject.”

16. Watsuji, *Rinrigaku*, 65.

17. *Ibid.*, 60.

18. *Ibid.*, 64.

19. For example, Gallagher, “Intersubjectivity in Perception”; Hobson, *The Cradle of Thought*; Reddy, *How Infants Know Minds*.

20. Zahavi, “Simulation, Projection and Empathy,” 517.

21. Watsuji, *Rinrigaku*, 61.

22. Scheler also endorses a perceptual-based view of empathy and even refers to his own model as a “Perceptual theory of other minds,” which he says captures how we normally encounter one another within everyday “communal” life (Scheler, *Nature of Sympathy*, 220). Despite a resurgence of interest in phenomenology, particularly in the context of current philosophy of mind and cognitive science, Scheler’s work on the phenomenology of emotions and social relations remains unjustifiably neglected. For discussion of Scheler’s contemporary relevance, see Zahavi, “Simulation, Projection and Empathy.”

23. Watsuji, *Rinrigaku*, 65.

24. *Ibid.*, 59–65.

25. *Ibid.*, 60.

26. See Premack and Woodruff, “Chimpanzee Have a Theory of Mind?”

27. Again, these mechanisms are “mediating” mechanisms because they allow agents to bridge the epistemic and experiential gulf between one’s own mind and that of another. See Gallagher and Zahavi, *Phenomenological Mind*, 171–96, for various phenomenologically motivated criticisms of the Theory of Mind framework, as well as Leudar and Costall, *Against Theory of Mind*, for other critical perspectives.

28. For the “Myth of the Hidden,” see Torrance, “Contesting the Concept of Consciousness.” For discussion of how the argument from analogy informs the Theory of Mind framework and straddles both TT and ST, see Zahavi, “Expression and Empathy.”

29. Scheler, *Nature of Sympathy*, 239–40.

30. *Ibid.*, 240.

31. *Ibid.*, 240.

32. *Ibid.*, 240.

33. Watsuji, *Rinrigaku*, 61.

34. *Ibid.*, 64.

35. *Ibid.*, 65.

36. Scheler, *Nature of Sympathy*, 261–64.

37. *Ibid.*, 260.

38. Watsuji, *Rinrigaku*, 157.

39. *Ibid.*, 155.

40. *Ibid.*, 157.

41. *Ibid.*, 160.

42. *Ibid.*, 165.

43. *Ibid.*, 14.

44. *Ibid.*, 9–27; see also Shields, “The Art of *Aidagara*,” 267, and Odin, “The Social Self in Japanese Philosophy and American Pragmatism,” 480.

45. Watsuji, *Rinrigaku*, 21.

46. *Ibid.*, 21.

47. *Ibid.*, 174–75.

48. *Ibid.*, 156.

49. *Ibid.*, 175.

50. *Ibid.*, 166.

51. *Ibid.*, 62.

52. I have elsewhere tried to bring some conceptual clarity to Levinas’s conception of the body and the bodily basis of his ethics. See Krueger, “Levinasian Reflections on Somaticity.”

53. Peperzak, *Beyond*, 175.

54. See, for example, Meltzoff and Moore, “Imitation of Facial and Manual Gestures” and “Explaining Facial Imitation”; Nadel and Butterworth, “Immediate Imitation Rehabilitated”; Kugiumutzakis et al., “Emotions in Early Mimesis.”

55. Downing, “Emotion Theory Reconsidered,” 256. See also Trevarthen, “Self Born in Intersubjectivity.”

56. See also Hobson, “Understanding Persons” and *The Cradle of Thought*; Reddy, “On Being the Object of Attention” and *How Infants Know Minds*; Reddy and Trevarthen, “What We Can Learn about Babies.”

57. Levinas, “Intersubjectivity,” 59.
58. Leslie, “Children’s Understanding,” 164.
59. See Premack and Woodruff, “Chimpanzee Have a Theory of Mind?”; Baron-Cohen and Frith, “Autistic Child have a Theory of Mind?”; Carruthers, “Simulation and Self-Knowledge.”
60. Heal, *Replication and Functionalism*; Gordon, “‘Radical’ Simulationism”; Dovic and Proust, *Simulation and Knowledge*; Goldman, *Simulating Minds*.
61. Watsuji, *Rinrigaku*, 19.
62. Reddy, *How Infants Know Minds*, 59.
63. See Kugiumutzakis et al., “Emotions in Early Mimesis”; Nagy and Molnar, “Homo Imitans.”
64. Zeedyk, “From Intersubjectivity to Subjectivity,” 322.
65. Quoted in Reddy, *How Infants Know Minds*, 64.
66. See also Beebe et al., “Inter-Personal Timing”; Papousek, “Communication in Early Infancy”; Stern, *Interpersonal World of the Infant*; Trevarthen, “Communication and Cooperation.”
67. Reddy, *How Infants Know Minds*, 59.
68. Kugiumutzakis, “Genesis and Development of Early Infant,” 79.
69. Reddy, “On Being the Object of Attention” and *How Infants Know Minds*.
70. Zeedyk, “From Intersubjectivity to Subjectivity,” 332.
71. See Goldwin-Meadow, *Hearing Gesture*; McNeill, *Gesture and Thought*; Laird, *Feelings*.
72. Goldin-Meadow, *Hearing Gesture*, 136–49.
73. See Goldin-Meadow, “Role of Gesture”; “Beyond Words”; *Hearing Gesture*; and Goldin-Meadow and Wagner, *How Our Hands Help Us Learn*.
74. See Goldin-Meadow et al., “Explaining Math.”
75. See Cook and Goldin-Meadow, “Role of Gesture in Learning.”
76. Cook, Mitchell, and Goldin-Meadow, “Gesturing Makes Learning Last.”
77. Rowe et al., “Learning Words by Hand.”
78. See Becvar et al., “Representational Gestures”; cf. Kirsh, “Thinking with External Representations.”
79. See “Andrade, “What Does Doodling Do?”
80. Cole, “On ‘Being Faceless,’” 308.
81. Cole, *About Face*, 122.
82. Laird, *Feelings*, 4.
83. *Ibid.*, 23.
84. See Laird and Bresler, “Process of Emotional Experience”; Niedenthal, “Embodying Emotion”; and Niedenthal and Maringer, “Embodied Emotion Considered.”
85. See Niedenthal, “Embodying Emotion” and “Embodiment in the Acquisition.”
86. Overgaard, *Wittgenstein and Other Minds*, 140.
87. One reviewer suggests that my interpretation of the connection between Watsuji and Levinas—in particular, its emphasis on the dynamic relation between

activity and passivity that I claim is at the heart of their respective conceptions of the embodied self—faces potential difficulties when accounting for the later Levinas’s turn to a radically passive and asymmetrical account of the I-Other relation. In *Otherwise than Being*, for example, Levinas speaks of the subject as situated in “a passivity more passive than all passivity” (OB 15, 50, 55, 115) or “more passive still than the passivity of matter” (180; cf. 114). This is an important point; nevertheless, squaring the early and the later Levinas with Watsuji is an exegetical endeavor that is beyond the scope of this essay. But a more comprehensive comparative study of these two thinkers surely would need to account for this significant shift in Levinas’s thinking.

Notes to Chapter 5 / Chakrabarti

1. My colleague Ken Kipnis pointed this out to me, after listening to my hesitant speculation that owing and owning may be closely connected.

2. Levinas describes the debt owed to others as “an indebtedness before any loan” (OB 111), in a clear attempt to disrupt any straightforward economy of exchange. One might argue that Vedic hospitality *does* operate within an economy of exchange, but as I discuss throughout this essay, that would be a mistaken, or at least a narrow, interpretation. The fact that Vedic debt is definitionally nondischargeable means that what we owe can never be measured in terms of exchange economics.

3. *R̥gveda*, 10.117. The text reads: “*kevalādī bhavati kevalāḡhab.*” See Panikkar, *Vedic Experience*, 851.

4. Panikkar, *Vedic Experience*, 97–103.

5. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, remark 457.

6. Kant, *Anthropology*, 1.1.2.

7. See Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 244–71.

8. Cf. Chakrabarti, “‘Glory’ and ‘Impenetrability’”; Śābara, “Mimamsa Sutra,” 1.1.5.

9. As K. C. Bhattacharya points out in *Subject as Freedom*, the word *I* is as much a general term as the word *unique*.

10. Putnam, *Ethics without Ontology*, 27.

11. Translation from the author. See Śāntideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, 128, 129.

12. Dharmakīrti, *Pramanavartika*, Pramanasiddhi chapter, v. 221.

13. With full sensitivity to their divergences, William Edelglass has noted the deep resonances between Śāntideva’s Mahayana Buddhist universal compassion argument and Levinas’s prerational ontology-independent ethics of infinite responsibility for the other (See Edelglass, “Ethics and the Subversion”). But, for the reasons shown above, even those resonances should either be ignored or noted with much caution.

14. Vrinda Dalmiya explores the environmental implications of this Vedic concept of congenital debt in Dalmiya, “Cows and Others.” I am grateful to her for numerous discussions of this idea and for her comments on initial drafts of this paper.