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*Paul Ricoeur*

Freedom and Nature:  
The Voluntary and the  
Involuntary

*Translated, with an Introduction by*

Erazim V. Kohák

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À MONSIEUR GABRIEL MARCEL

## *Hommage Respectueux*

See the sky. Is there no constellation  
called "Rider"? For this is strangely impressed  
on us: this earthy pride. And a second,  
who drives and holds it and whom it bears.

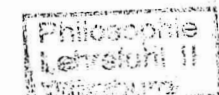
Is not the sinewy nature of our being  
just like this, spurred on and then reined in?  
Track and turning. Yet at a touch, understanding.  
New open spaces. And the two are one.

But *are* they? Or do both not mean  
the way they take together? Already  
table and pasture utterly divide them.

Even the starry union is deceptive  
But let us now be glad a while  
to believe the figure. That's enough.

—Rainer Maria Rilke \*

\* From *Sonnets to Orpheus*, trans. M. D. Herter Norton (New York, W. W. Norton, 1942), p. 37. Reprinted with permission of the publisher.



difference between producing a movement and governing it might perhaps appear as a difference of degree and not of kind. We might say, for example, that in isolation perceptive signs would infallibly produce movement the way a reflex does, and that revocable skills are only automatisms impeded by the totality of a mental state. Skill would differ from reflex only by its greater aptitude for being integrated into the actions of the total field (speaking as a Gestaltist). Primary action would be of a unique type, an undifferentiated automatism. Unfortunately this systematic view is only an initial prejudice. In principle the formal, structural elements of perception act only within a constellation of factors which are impulsions accessible to voluntary mastery. A form cannot act in isolation; it only governs action in connection with a characteristic of the object which reflects such impulsion.

The defenders of primitive automatism invoke the conclusion of pathological psychology: fatigue, distraction, psychoasthenesis, major neuroses and certain mental disorders seem to restore a fundamental automatism, as if by simplification of consciousness: the motive power seems to revert to the signs which lost it through mental complication. A disintegrated consciousness or a consciousness on the verge of breakdown seems to show the primitive character of the actions which are initiated in isolation by simple pressure of representation. But we must not forget that the degradations of consciousness do not represent a return to simple and primitive forms from which consciousness and will would have arisen by complication. Degradation of habits and of skills into quasi-reflexes is an original product, resulting in a different consciousness. We cannot hope to explain normal consciousness by a consciousness simplified by disease. We have rather to seek to understand action by starting with definite movements or performed skills available to the will which in turn can master them.

## [2] EMOTION

IT MIGHT SEEM paradoxical to place emotion among the means or organs rather than among the motives of willing. Even the kinship of the words "emotion" and "motive" would seem to suggest the latter. Yet there appear to us various decisive reasons for a different treatment of emotion.

The essence of a motive is to propose ends. Now emotion, as

we shall see, contributes no ends not already present in needs and quasi-needs. Emotion presupposes a more or less implicit motivation which precedes and sustains it. All it can do is give the ends which are already present before consciousness a certain physical prestige whose efficacy is partly of the order of nascent movement. Here emotion appears as the province of involuntary action. On the other hand emotion is so interrelated with habit that these two functions cannot be very well understood except in terms of each other. It is unquestionably habit which provides the will with convenient means it can use. But habit would be incomprehensible if we saw it solely as an extension of the initial unlearned skills: Hegel at one point views it as moderation of an explosive force, a domestication of emotion. Habit itself must be spurred into action by the ill-defined function it appropriates. This is why emotion appears to us as a source of involuntary movement more basic than habit. We propose to show 1) that in emotion there is no hiatus between thought and movement and that, consequently, the passage from thought to movement is mysteriously carried out on the level of the involuntary, this side of effort; and 2) how the involuntary aspect of emotion is comprehensible in relation to a willing which it agitates and which in turn only moves if it is moved. We shall reserve the dialectic of effort and emotion for a later analysis and a similar study of habit.<sup>30</sup> Only then shall we understand the interrelation of all involuntary powers among themselves and in relation to the *hegemonikon*: for meaning comes always from above and not from below, from the one and not from the many.

But what appears undoubtedly most paradoxical is not that we shall speak about emotion here rather than elsewhere, but that we shall speak of it as an involuntary which *sustains* voluntary action, which *serves* it in preceding and limiting it. Contemporary psychology is actually unanimous, if not in explanation, then at least in description of emotion: Larguier des Bancelles calls it a miscarried instinct,<sup>31</sup> Pierre Janet,<sup>32</sup> followed by Renée Dejean,<sup>33</sup> calls it a primitive evolutionary stage in functional liberation of rudimentary forms of conduct. Pierre Janet provides a very valuable guiding thread in contrasting the *disordering* character of

30. Cf. below, pp. 280.

31. Larguier des Bancelles, *Introduction à la psychologie*; Dumas, *op. cit.*, II, III, chap. VI, 53-57.

32. P. Janet, *De l'angoisse à l'extase* (Paris, 1928), vol. II; "Les Sentiments fondamentaux," Part III, chap. I; "Les Emotions," pp. 449-96.

33. Renée Dejean, *L'Emotion* (Paris, 1933).

emotion with the regulative character of feeling, understanding by feeling "not actions, but potentially different ways of regulating action."<sup>34</sup> M. Pradines tried to perfect this thesis by seeking affective attitudes and forms of conduct which emotion disorders apart from feelings "which are basic only in asylums."<sup>35</sup> The feelings derouted by emotion are complex affections tied to imaginative anticipations of pleasure and pain. They are not themselves pleasure or pain, but manifest them affectively, developing a thousand affective nuances which are the feelings strictly speaking. In the course of fluid situations they outline an "objective and adaptive circumstantial orientation."<sup>36</sup>

If emotion is a derangement of feeling, how can it lend itself to a *reciprocal understanding* of the involuntary and the voluntary? Would not the only understanding suited to it be one of a *disrupted order*?

Precisely here we shall attempt to uncover a form of emotion in which the derangement is in a nascent state. We have reached the conviction that there are here fundamental emotions whose functional role in voluntary life is as decisive as that of habit: they have a power of stimulating action, of moving a being, which consists in the first place not of driving it beside itself but in drawing it out of inertia by a spontaneity which always poses a threat to self-possession. While the will must always recapture itself from this spontaneity, it is nonetheless through it that it moves its body.

We owe the principle of our description to Descartes' *Treatise on Passions*. The "principal passions" (admiration, love and hate, desire, joy and sorrow) shall serve as our guiding thread. While modern psychology derives emotion from a *shock* and describes it as a *crisis*, Descartes derives it from *wonder* and describes it as an *incitation* to action in accordance with the vivid representations which engender wonder. Thus we shall postpone any examination of the emotions of shock and shall eventually show how these extend the disorder nascent in all emotions of wonder and distort its functional significance.

The objection could be made that we are here substituting feeling in P. Janet's sense for emotion, and that emotion remains essentially deranging. We hope to show that already *wonder* allows us to call the affections we are describing "emotions." There is a connection between wonder and shock which assures the

34. Janet, *op. cit.*, p. 456. Re Janet's theory of feelings, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 9-43.

35. Pradines, *Traité de psychologie générale* (Paris, 1943), I, 659-733.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 665.

unity of the realm of emotions.<sup>37</sup> Our analysis must focus precisely on showing how the emotion of shock is derived not only from misadaptation of the order of feeling, but also from the *fertile* disordering of the emotion of wonder essential to human life.

Further, the affects which contemporary psychology prefers to describe are not only too disordered, but also rather more complex than is assumed. We would find here a thousand passions which introduce their principle of bondage and of the special vertigo of the will which fits in obscurely with the passions. Yet we believe that this vertigo and this bondage, most often encountered at the roots of fear and anger which are the archetypes of emotion for modern psychology, do not fundamentally belong to emotion.

For all these reasons we shall shift our focus from emotions of shock and passion to the emotions of wonder which are in fact also non-passionate.<sup>38</sup> Thus the meaning of emotion as an involuntary would become apparent here.

#### 1. Wonder as Emotion: Basic Emotional Attitudes

WONDER OR AWE (Cartesian "admiration") is subsequently elaborated by emotive forms of *affective imagination* by which we anticipate some good or evil. It reaches its culmination in the *awakening of desire*, its peak in the emotion of *joy* and *sorrow* connected with the possession of a good or an evil.

a. *Wonder* is the simplest emotive attitude and yet it already contains all the richness of what has been called the *circular phenomenon* of thought and the body. In wonder a living being is awed by a new event to which it yields, *by an other*. This is more primitive, more basic than love and hate, than desire, joy or sorrow. "It has," says Descartes who calls it admiration, "neither good nor evil for an object but only knowledge of the thing I admire."<sup>39</sup> This awe is what colors time; through it objects touch us, through it something happens, through it there are events. What we encounter, what we see as new, might not be real: ab-

37. If we nonetheless wanted to call the emotions of wonder, which we shall describe first, "feelings," their characteristic of nascent derangement would demand at least that we call them *moving feelings*.—Pradines is not convincing when he speaks of them as enduring affective motives: if they are in fact circumstantial, do they not arise from wonder?

38. We are using the word "passion" in a sense different from Descartes', who opposed it to action. We give it a definite meaning in the General Introduction. Thus we shall bracket "passion" in the broad Cartesian sense which includes emotion and passion in our sense.

39. Descartes, *Treatise on Passions*, art. 53, pp. 70-73.

sence or fiction can meet us, touch us, astonish us in the same way. This remark already warns us against interpreting wonder as a reflex. It is at the same time an impact of knowledge and a disturbance of the body or, better, a shock of knowledge in a disturbance of the body.

Here we must pay close attention to the circular character of the emotion of wonder which we shall encounter again, more diffuse and limited, in emotions of shock. James would make emotion a trait of the human automaton, so that movement would proceed directly from this or that completely physical impression of things on the body, emotion being only the consciousness of a synthesis of reflexes.<sup>40</sup> Wonder is more complicated than a reflex. It is true that a shock emotion follows the pattern of a reflex—the tide of fear or anger, the explosion of joy or the crisis of despair producing further change—but wonder does not permit this confusion.

The new does not affect the body the way pain does: emotive shock is not a contusion, but in the first place a disorder in the course of thought; all we think, feel, and will is generally brought to a halt. The new disarranges a regular adapted course of thought and life. Consequently a lightning valuation of the new, an implicit comparative judgment, accompanies its irruption. Psychologists like to speak of upsetting of tendencies, but what would such an upset be without an implicit judgment with its emotive trait which is precisely wonder, love, hate, or desire? Only the lightning-fast character of judgment of novelty can create the illusion that wonder is an automaton's reflex in response to an external situation.

But in turn a judgment of novelty, no matter how rapid and implicit, is not the emotion of wonder. Emotion is nourished by bodily repercussions; the shock of knowledge affects the flow of disturbance and bodily inertia to thought. How are we to understand this circular process in its two directions? How can a quick judgment about novelty mean for the body of quickened pulse, a diffuse inhibition, a certain stupor which stiffens the face and inclines mobile parts of the senses to receptivity? And, in turn, why is this disposition of the body also a disposition of the mind to consider the object and to linger over it. It is doubtful that more can be done here than to circumscribe the mystery a bit more and, with each moment of emotion, seize it in detail in some respect. The basic fact of astonishment is that attention is overcome by a

40. William James, *Principles of Psychology* (New York, 1890), chap. XXIV, which takes up in greater detail his article, "What Is Emotion?" *Mind* (1884).

body and an object imposes itself on thought. Thus incarnate thought is no longer atomic or reduced to gliding vaguely over things without stopping on any. The body keeps the encounter with the new from remaining only a furtive touch. It leads consciousness to stumble and in a way settle on a representation: we can see in the case of admiration that the function of emotion is, as Descartes has it, to "strengthen and preserve an impression."<sup>41</sup> The body amplifies and magnifies the moment of thought by giving it the time of bodily impression as the substance of duration. Through wonder, thought becomes in a sense physically imposed. There are few passions which do not draw some force from it: respect and scorn, magnanimity, pride, veneration, humility, meanness, disdain. "And its force," says Descartes, "depends on two things: namely, its novelty and the fact that the movement it brings about has its full force from the start. For it is certain that such a movement has a greater effect than those which being faint at first and only growing bit by bit can easily be diverted":<sup>42</sup> willing is surprised, that is, taken unawares. Thus all voluntary attention might have to be recovered from an initial involuntary attention involving even a muscular effort. Since involuntary attention has all the visceral density and a certain muscular inertia as a resounding board, voluntary attention which brings it into action or which opposes it will also have muscular components. Even the most abstract attention is also physical.<sup>43</sup> In this sense Ribot is right: there is no attention which does not in some way involve the body and in particular the mobile organs of sensibility, but this motor aspect of attention is only an articulation of the initial judgment derived from it through the original phenomenon of frustration of control.

But this involuntary aspect of wonder is susceptible to being controlled by an effort of attention: only passions can so fascinate attention that it frequently becomes enslaved to them. There is, however, nothing in emotion which could enslave the power of judging. Involuntary attention is an appeal thrust at the receptivity which is the attention of the judging person itself. In *extreme* cases, as the emotions of shock of which we shall speak

41. Descartes, *Treatise on Passions*, arts. 53 and 70. Of course, though we are following the Cartesian description, the circular understanding we propose departs from Descartes' dualistic explication.

42. *Ibid.*, art. 72.

43. This emotional attention is an extension of reflex attention, described above, which performs only an activating function. Thus there is a hierarchy of attention: automatic, spontaneous, voluntary—all frequently included in the same act.

later, it may be true that the mind can be so distraught that judgment is entirely suspended within it. As we shall see, the mind only thinks within certain limits and by a kind of permission from the universe. The universe can press in on my body to the point of distorting my being as a man and completely turning me over to disorder. But when circumstances have submerged me to such an extent, I am as if released from myself. In a hospitable environment which is not excessively upsetting wonder should be only the first awakening of the power of judgment. This power is in principle its master. According to a suggestive coincidence of words, the one who judges is called upon to consider only when the body is distraught. But the judgment is up to him. This is why Descartes, having described passion as a physician, concludes as a moralist. He does not in the least doubt that it is within our power to "supply its defect by a special reflection and attention to which our will can always oblige our understanding if we judge that the thing is worth the trouble."<sup>44</sup>

b. *Affective anticipation as an emotion.* Astonishment, in the modern sense of the word, is in its purity only an alerting of knowledge. Emotion is rarely cerebral: it generally affects our body, social, intellectual, spiritual, and other interests. Hope, fear, worry, rage, or ambition trouble us only in terms of an anticipated or represented *good* or *evil*. Here lies the second function of emotion, that of echoing and amplifying in the body a rapid, implicit value judgment.

Under the topic of motivation we have already considered affective apprehension of good and evil, but we have left the natural dynamogenesis of this anticipation in suspension. Similarly, we have been able to reduce the will provisionally to a kind of *vision* which sometimes considers, at other times turns away. But emotion introduces into all valuation a visceral, motive element which in turn means that all decision is tinged with some bodily effort. To choose means to hold the assemblage of muscles pressing for an act at an arm's length while I consider motives.

Emotion consists not only in affective, but also in motive anticipation of goods and evils. But love and hate, in Descartes' sense, are still only a more visceral aspect rather than the motor of emotion. Descartes gives their fine, familiar definition: "Love is an emotion of the soul caused by the movement of the spirits which incites it to unite itself willingly with objects which seem desirable to it. And hate is an emotion caused by spirits which incite the soul to desire to be separated from objects which appear

44. Descartes, *Treatise on Passions*, art. 76.

noxious to it."<sup>45</sup> What is remarkable about this definition is the distinction which it introduces between this emotion and desire: it very fortunately isolates a non-militant emotion which is in some sense contemplative. This is the emotive dimension of imagination by which I foresee myself in a situation which the will, impelled by desire, is to bring about or to avoid. "Finally by the word 'will' I do not mean here to speak of desire, which is a distinct passion related to the future, but of consent, by which man considers himself in the present united with that which he loves, so that he imagines a whole of which he believes himself but a part while the beloved object is the other part. Similarly, by contrast, in hate a man considers himself a whole, completely separate from that to which he has an aversion."<sup>46</sup> Thus to understand this emotion correctly we have to grasp it this side of desire, in that unmoving evocation of an absent good and evil. This anticipation goes far beyond anticipated need related solely to nourishment or a sexual object. It covers all possible aspects of human good and evil: love of glory, of money, of reading, etc. are forms of love. It is no longer an illusion in which I take the unreal for the real, but a living representation of that which is not. But, we might say, to imagine a good or an evil with which I would like to be united or from which I consider myself separate is not the same as being moved by love or aversion. Precisely, the emotion is distinguished from simple intellectual anticipation by its host of organic concomitants. I love music or even God with all my body. While it is false that love could proceed directly from an external situation without passing through consciousness, it is still true that the body magnifies the initial judgment of suitability and seems in all respects to precede and prepare the fully developed judgment by heightened pulse, heat in the chest ("soft warmth" in the case of love, "sharp, pointed heat for hate," says Descartes).<sup>47</sup> My body is the fullness and the flesh of anticipation itself.

We have to distinguish the circular process which leaves some sort of initiative to the body from the infinitely more discrete presence of the body absorbed entirely in the matter of an imaginative intention. In what sense can we actually say that an image

45. *Ibid.*, art. 79. Love and hate, as emotions of wonder, are thus simpler than the passionate emotions of the same name: the former is an intermittent stirring of the latter. In addition, Descartes' attempt to discover love and hate beyond desire is significant because all the passionate emotions are highly complex derivatives of desire, the principle of all emotions.

46. *Ibid.*, art. 80.

47. *Ibid.*, arts. 97-98.

includes an affective moment? J.-P. Sartre has shown in *L'Imaginaire*<sup>48</sup> that every image is first of all a form of knowing: I can only imagine what I know, which is another way of saying that I learn nothing new by trying to observe an image. But an image does more than intend the absent object or value generally—it endows it with a quasi-presence. At this point there intervene muscular attitudes and movements which designate and outline what is absent and feelings which grasp its affective nuances. Feelings and movement play the role of an analogon, of a concrete equivalent of the object (what Husserl calls *Darstellung*). The absent manifests itself to me in its affective and kinesthetic presence: the affect and the movement are the matter, the *hyle*, of the image. The relation of knowledge and affect in the image remains one of form and matter.

The circular phenomenon of emotion by which a value judgment incorporates a corporeal disturbance appears to us rather more complex than the relation of knowing to an affective-motor analogon. There the corporeal disturbance acquires an importance and a type of initiative which make it difficult to treat it as flesh, as the fullness (*die Fülle* in Husserl) of the image. This organic amplification, which is more than a *hyle*, is what distinguishes emotion. This suffices to protect the originality of the emotive attitude which we are here describing with respect to the portraying, representative image. There is a continuity from the most intellectual image right up to motive representation and thence to hallucinated anticipation such as we encounter most frequently in shock emotions. The further we move from the image towards emotion strictly speaking, the more does the genuine intentionality of feeling which we have found implicit in the non-emotive image become effaced. Feeling aims at the very expression of things, it is not aberrant. With emotion this authentic feeling for the affective nuance of things retreats before the appearance of a magic world which is no more than a transformation of organic disturbances in the Cogito. The more the corporeal orchestration of emotion makes it outweigh feeling strictly speaking, the more does affective imagination become aberrant. This undoubtedly explains why imagination has occasioned such contradictory judgments. J.-P. Sartre expects much from imagination, perhaps even the secret of freedom. Alain sees in this power of intending the absent only the chief error of classical moralists, the frantic commentary of corporeal disturbance.<sup>49</sup> But Sartre

described a peaceful imagination with a faint organic resonance in which the body remains the discrete *hyle* of knowledge, Alain the troubled imagination which lies on the path of a true organic disorder. Both are right; the *spectator* imagination is in fact our freedom which “negates” the real, while the concerned imagination, ties to our goods and our evils, lies on the way of *disorganization* which leads to the quasi-hallucinatory manifestation of good and evil. In this extreme stage, the reflection connected with delay is annulled: the living being finds himself as if in contact with good and evil and prey to agitation.<sup>50</sup> Affective imagination of love and hate lies midway between a spectator-image and a hallucination-image, as wonder stands midway between a circumstantial feeling and shock. It is still a *nascent* disorder which plays a normal role in the dialectic of the voluntary and the involuntary.

How does emotional anticipation affect voluntary and involuntary motion? We have referred to the frequently painful dialectic of need and image: in acting out satisfaction, image heightens the tension of need. Now in elaborating in some sense corporeally the attractiveness of the image, emotion adds to it a specific corporeal element which specially concerns voluntary motion. In a sense love and hate stimulate a relaxation of effort. The being “united by the will” with an object or other finds the annulled distance in some sense restful. And when we “consider ourselves simply as a whole, entirely separated from the object for which we have an aversion,” we shall similarly find the distance we have created restful. For insofar as love and hate are distinguished from desire “which is a distinct passion related to the future,” they constitute the rest in which all desire is resolved and dreaming. But love and hate prepare to act in that very repose, in the “charm” of effort which anticipates its own triumph. Thus this relaxation gives rise to the specific tension of desire: as Descartes puts it, while all love invites us to extend our well-wishing to all the objects which are suitable for being loved, its most frequent effect is to give rise to desire.<sup>51</sup>

c. *Joy and sorrow*. It is difficult at first to distinguish joy and sorrow as emotional attitudes from more complex forms of conduct, exultation and despondency, which develop them in space

50. Pradines, who goes directly from regulatory feelings to purely anarchic emotion, describes this movement towards disorder through emotive effects of representation perfectly as the “mental vertigo,” the “bewilderment of the imagination,” but he passes over the basic stage of motive representation. (*Traité de psychologie générale*, pp. 713–33.)

51. Descartes, *Treatise on Passions*, arts. 119, 120.

48. Sartre, *Psychology of Imagination*, pp. 81–96.

49. Alain, *Système des beaux-arts* (Paris, 1920), chap. I, esp. pp. 15–18.

and time and which are part of the same cycle as fear and anger. Now if we do not want to miss the true function of emotion, which is to incline the will to action, we have to lay hold of joy and sorrow in the attitudes which initiate actions and not in excessively disordering forms of conduct.

Joy and sorrow are distinguished from other emotional attitudes by containing a note of sanction. Wonder expresses the irruption of the "other" into consciousness, affective anticipation having invoked his absent-presence and his charm. In joy I am with my good, in sorrow I am with the evil: I have become that good and that evil. The good or the evil have become my mode of being. I *am* sad, I *am* happy: these expressions have an absolute meaning which we do not find in expressions like "I am surprised," "I love," or "I hate." To love and to hate means less *being* than being *directed* towards something lovable or detestable which is a possible object of desire, situated in the world and at a distance. Now to be sure joy is also in a sense a way for the world to appear—joyful—but we still say that I *am* my own joy, absolutely. If I discover it outside of myself, that is in part insofar as my joy is projected on the neutral beings around me and recognized in the world in communicating with the joy which is outside of me and which in some sense is also absolutely there. My joy makes my vision sensitive and makes it capable of reading the greatness of being drawn on the physiognomy of things and persons, as if the expression of things betrayed their absolute being and as if joy and sorrow were in the world as they are in me, testifying in some way to the level of being of each thing. We could say even that my sorrow puts me specially in tune and sympathy with whatever there is most degraded, low, wrong, my joy with what there is perfect, pure, and faithful in the universe. This remarkable character of sorrow and joy reveals that these emotions are less affective intentional objects than sanctions of my being.

But the problems posed by sorrow and joy are no different from those posed by other emotions. Do sorrow and joy really include the belief that I have a good and an evil? Does the body here really always play the role of an amplifier of belief which we thought we found elsewhere?

It often seems that sorrow and joy are immediate impressions of consciousness which exclude all judgment and which furthermore seem now to come from the body alone, now to shine in the privacy of consciousness without the body seeming to share in any way. It is really not always easy to distinguish joy and

sorrow from pleasure and pain or from the vague mood which a good meal, feeling unwell, or a ray of sun insinuate into the soul. The difference between pain and sorrow is still relatively easy to establish: pain is generally a sensation, it is local; sorrow is neither sensation nor local, it is a way of being. In the same way pleasure, which stresses the moment of encounter and is always associated with the advanced parts of the body, retains something local; but the enjoyment which confirms the completion of the cycle of need, the fusion with the object is in no way localized: in spite of its local indices, it affects the living being in its indivisibility. Is it not the lowest degree of joy? Not at all. Sorrow and joy, while most closely related to pain and enjoyment, are distinguished by several aspects. In a sense enjoyment is still local, no longer in a geographic sense of the word, but in a functional sense: it is always relative to a satisfied function to which I can oppose my self as a whole: I can distinguish myself from my enjoyment, step back from it, judge it, that is, expel it, no longer into some part of the body, but as body and life. I can oppose myself as being to the living and feeling myself, while joy is inherent in the very judgment which I can bring to bear on enjoyment and pain. I can suffer morally from a pleasure for which I reproach myself, find joy in spite of the pain which I suffer in my body. Joy and sorrow affect me as being inasmuch as I am more or less perfect. Similarly the diffuse mood which time exudes like perfume is not at all the emotion of sorrow and joy.<sup>52</sup> There is something flexible and moving and even superficial about mood which distinguishes it from sorrow and from joy. Without being as apparently organic as enjoyment experienced in the mass of the body, mood, more free-floating, still bears the subtle weight of the body. Joy and sorrow affect me more fundamentally: they are the good which I have become, the evil into which I have been transformed. It is here that they re-enter the schema of emotion.

There is always a diffuse view of good and evil which I have reached in sorrow and in joy: it is even the touchstone of the emotion of joy and sorrow with respect to pain or enjoyment, gay or somber mood. The good we possess, the evil with which we are afflicted are its discrete intellectual armor. We always find a shortcut and an infinite capacity for judging in joy and sorrow.

52. Concerning mood, cf. p. 409 below. It refers back to more incoercible and more treacherous involuntary, as the influence of age, sex, personality. Here Maine de Biran recognized the most discouraging form of affectivity. His *Journal* is a touching echo of it.



The judgment, highly implicit itself, seems inexistent by virtue of the very character of its object: in effect a feeling of triumph or obstacle in the soul does not deal with a particular good. It is an over-all appreciation of a relation of suitability between myself and my situation as a whole. In joy, a being feels superior to his situation and tastes his success with respect to his own role, in sorrow he tastes his injury and weakness. But as in all emotion, judgment is only the starting point of a minor disruption of the whole body. What would joy be without that slight acceleration of pulse, that pleasant warmth in the whole body and expansion of the whole being? And sorrow, without the tightness around the heart and a general languor? James is right: take away from joy and sorrow. . . .

At the same time we have to hold that joy and sorrow would be nothing without a hidden appreciation of the level attained by a being and that they would be nothing if the whole body did not act out that unclear thought which it develops in its visceral motive depth. There are not two joys, a bodily joy and a spiritual joy:<sup>53</sup> in reality all joy is intellectual, at least in a confused way, and corporeal, at least as an attempt and as it inscribes into the body the possession of goods and evils normally foreign to any usefulness for the body. In this sense James is right in rejecting a distinction in principle between "finer" emotions and "coarse" emotions. Both have the same bodily texture. Undoubtedly finer emotions have a lived intensity out of proportion with the physical disturbance which orchestrates them, but their intensity and refinement are explained by other reasons—in the first place by the capacity which joy has of opening us to a joy spread out through the universe and drawn in the physiognomy which reveals the degree of being of each thing. Its refinement is the acuteness and power which it brings to our reading of the world. But its character as emotion is complete only in all its bodily resonance.

We still have to find a place for the emotions of joy and sorrow in the realm of the involuntary. If movement born spontaneously in thought is the outstanding trait of emotion, our whole analysis of emotion must focus on desire, the most motive of our emotions. Considered in the register of action, emotion is a disposition of

53. Descartes himself notes that there is no joy born "without the intervention of the soul" (*Treatise on Passions*, art. 93), and, on the other hand, "because the impression of the brain presents it as its own" (art. 93), the good or evil from which the soul suffers or rejoices are not any "purely intellectual joys arising in the soul solely through the action of the soul" (art. 91), as those which come from the good use of our freedom: intellectual joys never fail to evoke those which come from the body and are "like" them (art. 143).

the will to seek or flee things for which it prepares the body. But this is only true to the extent to which emotion culminates in desire. Could we say that joy and sorrow are moving towards desire? Not in the principal sense of these emotions which *sanction* action. In this respect loving, desiring, and enjoying are successive natural moments of emotion and the definition of joy naturally follows the definition of desire. But in a secondary sense, which is more important for our researches into the involuntary, this emotion is also related to desire. In man, the most restless of beings, a cycle of tension is only closed in order to be reopened, or to reopen another one. Consciousness only commemorates its sorrows and its joys in order to anticipate them anew. And thus joy and sorrow, which complete the desire, arouse it over again. In this respect they are like love and hate: to love and to hate is to anticipate the future joy and sorrow of being united with the beloved object or separated from the hated object. And to be sad or joyful is already to begin once again to anticipate a union or a separation which are yet to come. Sanction and anticipation imply each other mutually. Finally it is through the mediation of desire that love and hate, joy and sorrow "rule our ways," that is, incline our will.<sup>54</sup> Man knows no definitive repose. Desire grows in the pauses of sorrow and joy.

d. *Desire as an emotion.* Here at last we have a conquering emotion, the motor emotion par excellence, desire: desire to see, to hear, to possess, to keep, etc. Love anticipates union, desire seeks it and drives towards it; love is triumphant because desire is militant first. Now desire is born from a definite judgment, sometimes most confused, in which we represent to ourselves at the same time the thing's suitability for us and the possibility of obtaining it. Desire means representing to myself the possibility that I can already do something in the direction of the desired object.

But this complex judgment is still not an emotion: the emotion desire is at the same time a profound visceral disturbance and an acute alerting of all our senses and all motor regions. This agitation provokes judgment and makes it that original quality of the Cogito by which I am prepared and carried to a pitch nearer to action than in a simple inspection by the mind of a problem proposed for my initiative. ". . . I notice this peculiar

54. Descartes examines first of all the four passions of love and hate, of joy and sorrow, "in themselves . . . insofar as they bear on no action"—later, starting with article 143, "insofar as they excite in us the desire by means of which they rule our manners." "It is particularly desire which we need to regulate and it is in this that the principal utility of Ethics consists" (arts. 143-44).