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Louise Couëffé

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Author name

Louise **Couëffé**

Author affiliation

Avignon Université

Author email

coueffe.louise@gmail.com

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Le corps qui pense is a short, inspiring book, published in the series 'Heuristiques'. It aims to capture the multiple dimensions of the practices of scholars when they formulate hypotheses, organize their reasoning and sketch their arguments. It focuses on the body, that is on the cognitive, physical and emotional dimensions implied in the production of knowledge, by studying the material traces of scholars' practices and gestures. In this way, the author proposes an analysis of knowledge that 'moves from the concrete to the abstract' (p. 8), in Marcel Mauss's words. Bert asks readers to consider the embodiment of scientific knowledge, especially in practices of experimentation, classification, learning, reading and writing. The author also considers the postures induced by instruments and reflects on how contexts of knowledge-making have consequences on bodies, elevating the importance of the smallest daily actions, routines and ways of life as practices integrated into knowledge-making.

The book is divided into two parts. In the first one, Bert reflects on Mauss's 1934 conference, 'Techniques of the Body'. He begins with an introduction to previous analyses of the embodied components of knowledge. Since the philosophical reflections of Friedrich Nietzsche, Ludwig Wittgenstein and John Dewey, anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists and historians have analyzed the embodiment of knowledge. This follows various steps of scholars' lives, from childhood and the disciplining of the body in schools while learning, reading and writing, to the control of scholars' gestures in studying, observing or experimenting on scientific objects.

In his summary of Mauss's 1934 conference, Bert explains that this thinking on the 'techniques of the body' began in 1926, during Mauss's hospitalization in New York. While

anthropologists studied ways of distinguishing societies in the early twentieth century, Mauss proposed to address this question through the study of the variability of the techniques of the body according to the culture and the history of each society. For Mauss, it was possible to understand the 'kaleidoscope' of social phenomena by looking at bodies, gestures and technical skills. Bert stresses three essential contributions of Mauss's work. To begin with, the body is the first 'object' through which humans organize their relations with their environments, through a wide range of practices. Then, gestures and techniques represent the societies that validate and transmit those practices. Finally, individual practices result from the incorporation of the social, which transforms physiological and psychological habits and routines (without, however, erasing the individual). If the author discusses some of those statements, mentioning the work of some of Mauss's disciples (such as Marcel Jousse, who focused on spontaneous gestures and routines, and André-Georges Haudricourt) among more recent studies (Kornelia Engert, Nicolas Adell, Christian Jacob and others), he insists on Mauss's contributions, enhanced by a comparative analysis of various situations in the elaboration and circulation of knowledge, that Bert proposes to categorize according to different historical contexts by focusing on scholars' bodies. This implies that historians ought to pay equal attention to systemic skills, acquired through socialization, as they do to 'singular gestures', due to individuals.

Finally, Bert proposes a review of Mauss's classification of the techniques of the body, oriented toward an anthropological history of scholars' bodies. In 1934, Mauss suggested two categories, the first labelled 'principals of classification of techniques of the body', according to sex, age, efficiency and transmission, and the second enumerating those techniques according to a biographical order, from birth through adulthood. In revising those categories of analysis and adapting them to scholars' bodies, Bert proposes several modifications. Mauss's second category

is at the beginning of the classification and deployed in many items. It is followed by the ‘techniques of the body according to the efficiency’ (p. 43) which is an expansion of an item of Mauss’s first category. Bert complements this classification with two categories, one about scholars’ soft skills, the other dedicated to ‘other techniques’ of scholars’ bodies, including their limits (disease, madness, death), and their representations.

The second part of the book is written in an original form, as Bert explains each category and item of this classification in a long list made of heterogenous elements. Some items are developed with keywords explaining their signification. Others are illustrated with examples of various regions or times. Some of them are detailed with questions that highlight their interest and the way they can be studied. The author indicates sources to study to understand some practices, postures, gestures and organizations of scholars. Several illustrations (such as paintings and engravings) supplement this list. They raise questions about the embodiment of knowledge and suggest ways and sources to study it. The format of the list does not allow much explanation or analysis, and readers should be wary to place each social category (such as age and profession) in its historical context, as Bert suggests for the scholars (p. 45). However, this heuristic tool opens up a broad range of interpretations and invites the reader to look at various aspects of the history of knowledge and science, focusing on the body and the practical, material, social and individual dimensions of the embodiment of knowledge.

This critical synthesis and revision of Mauss’s contributions, oriented toward the study of scholars’ bodies and knowledge, is clear and well-illustrated. It invites the reader to look at the history of knowledge in its multiple dimensions, taking into account a broad range of factors impacting knowledge and involving the body. This book deserves to be read by students and

historians who wish to analyse knowledge in a different way, taking seriously the embodiment of knowledge as a crucial element in its making, its circulation and the way it affects bodies.

Louise Couëffé

Avignon Université