

# Corporeality

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## 1. Introduction

Heroes are corporeal beings, and they are often admired for the physical achievements that they have performed and/or that are attributed to them.<sup>[1]</sup> The corporeality of [heroic figures](#) is therefore an important point of reference for [heroizations](#) and at the centre of numerous hero (re)presentations and narratives. In essential terms, a differentiation must be made between the *body* of a hero in the narrower sense and the broader, more dynamic term of *corporeality*, which in addition to physical constitution also encompasses physiognomy, gesture, body language, movement and other related aspects. Certain objects and attributes, such as clothing, jewellery, regalia, armaments and prostheses, can also contribute to the creation of corporeality as extensions of the body. Heroic qualities are ‘embodied’ through them and staged in habitus. This broad understanding underlies the following considerations on heroic corporeality.<sup>[2]</sup>

The bodies of heroic figures have a considerable cultural presence. On the one hand, this is due to the fact that they are associated with notions of strength, beauty, capability and the capacity to feel pain. Often, youthfulness and masculinity are also linked to heroic bodies. The corporeality of heroic figures functions as a prototype and a projection surface for culturally specific ideals and norms, some of which go far beyond the realm of the heroic. On the other hand, the power of heroic corporeality is due to the numerous artistic representations and media manifestations through which hero figures become visible in public spaces and inscribe themselves into collective memory – primarily in images, films and sculptures. Such visual (re)presentations of heroes exhibit a particularly strong affinity towards heroic corporeality and contribute greatly to both its transmission through time and its attractive power.

In following recent approaches from the field of cultural studies, this article does not describe corporeality simply as a biological-material fact, but as a product of social and performative practices, particularly of artistic representation and staging. Thus, the corporeality of heroic figures is not understood as any inherent property, but as a phenomenon that is established in the process of heroization and (re)presentation of the hero.

## 2. Systematic aspects

### 2.1. The physical constitution of the heroic deed – the hero as a corporeal subject and object

Although there are heroic figures that are not admired for corporeal heroic deeds – for instance the *grand homme*<sup>[3]</sup>, the intellectual hero and the culture hero<sup>[4]</sup> – the compound terms needed to describe them reveal that they are exceptions to the rule. Generally, physical achievements constitute an important requirement and often also a reason for heroization processes. Considering the large number of warriors, martyrs, saviours and athletes who have been and are admired as heroes, it is evident that heroic deeds are most commonly performed with and through the body or that they at least have a fundamental corporeal component.

In encyclopaedias from as early as the Enlightenment, the hero is defined on the basis of his exceptional corporeal features and capabilities. Zedler's *Universal-Lexicon* of 1735 describes the hero as someone “who has been gifted by nature with an impressive figure and exquisite bodily strength; has achieved fame through brave deeds and has risen above the common state of man”.<sup>[5]</sup> Johann Christoph Adelung also states that ‘hero’ had originally meant a person “gifted with excellent bodily strength” and whose “bravery was mainly rooted in this strength”. Later, however, there was also the expectation that the hero had a “duty to use his strength for the benefit of many”.<sup>[6]</sup> In such pre-modern conceptions of the heroic, the close link between the hero's corporeal condition and courageous character is evident.<sup>[7]</sup> The physical strength of the hero appears to be a requirement for his brave actions; by virtue of his corporeal constitution, the hero is able to prove himself in dangerous situations.

A different understanding of heroic corporeality arose in the time of the First World War, however. As even the most physically trained soldier had little to counter the fire from the modern war machines, physical and psychological strength was instead measured by the ability to persevere and to endure

violence. Those who exposed themselves to the danger of injury, mutilation or death acted heroically. It was an identifying feature of soldiers returning home “to have visibly become victims forced to pay for their participation in the war with an injured body or a damaged psyche”.<sup>[8]</sup> Those who came home and were declared war heroes had become the object of a violence that inscribed itself deeply into their bodies.

The two historical examples mark quite different points on a spectrum of possible relations between corporeality and heroism. They show that at least two types of corporeal achievements can be distinguished that have a particular heroization potential:

1) *The hero as a superior subject*: the hero distinguishes himself through the exceptional control and the effective use of his body. Thus, primarily figures are heroized who emerge victorious from an agonal situation thanks to their power, endurance and skill and often by exercising violence. This holds true all the more when the heroized figure achieves its success from a position of inferiority or from a seemingly desperate situation. In the performance of his deed, the hero is constituted as a subject both acting and capable of acting corporeally.

2) *The hero as a suffering object*: the heroic deed of the suffering hero is making his own body the object of extrinsic violence, enduring pain and in some cases death. Hence, soldiers, martyrs, saviours and others are admired for risking life and limb and sacrificing themselves. The hero's willingness to endure suffering and place his own corporeal integrity on the line is an element of numerous heroic narratives. Visual (re)presentations of hero figures often focus on injuries, scars and other corporeal marks that indicate the hero's agonal struggle and evidence his suffering to the community of admirers.<sup>[9]</sup>

This differentiation is of course to be understood as ideal-typical. In real heroization processes, both variants of corporeal-heroic achievement frequently overlap one another, for example in the case of the sport hero who bears the strain and pain in order to emerge the triumphant victor from a competition. Precisely the transition from suffering object to superior subject (or vice versa) may trigger a particular fascination and lend itself to heroization.

## 2.2. Idealisation and formation

Bodies are bearers and constituents of social identity.<sup>[10]</sup> Personal characteristics such as gender, age, fitness, ethnicity, class and group affiliation manifest themselves – albeit not exclusively – corporeally or are engendered through acts of corporeal performance. Julia Reuter's hypothesis that human bodies therefore function as “central seismographs of social order and deviation” is particularly applicable to the *hero's* body<sup>[11]</sup>: the identity markers regarded as ideal in a society and the social norms and hierarchies built thereon become discernible on the bodies of heroic figures. In addition to other indicators, the physical constitution and physiognomy of a community's hero figures render visible and comprehensible what beauty, youthfulness, grace, athleticism or strength mean for that community. In many instances, hero figures downright ‘embody’ these ideals, i.e. they provide them an iconic form and a potent exemplar. The ‘extra-ordinariness’ attributed to heroic figures therefore encompasses not only their thoughts and actions, but also their bodies: the heroic body

represents a positively connoted, exemplary deviation from the norm. However, the notions of heroic bodies vary according to culture. Hence, very different types of heroes can be identified that are defined fundamentally by way of their corporeal constitution, such as the athletic-masculine warrior, the persevering sport hero or the youthful-beautiful, immaculate martyr.

Beyond its role as a 'seismograph' of social order, the hero's body also constitutes a regulating ideal.<sup>[12]</sup> If, following Niklas Luhmann, heroic deeds can be described as "morally regulated deviation" that calls for imitation, then this description can be extended to the bodies of heroes.<sup>[13]</sup> With their outer appearance, heroic figures mould notions of corporeal ideality and set social norms. Through their medial presence and "visibility" (E. Goffman<sup>[14]</sup>), hero figures establish an ideal that the members of the community can approximate through techniques of (self-)discipline<sup>[15]</sup> and formation (M. Foucault<sup>[16]</sup>) as well as through habitus strategies (P. Bourdieu, N. Elias<sup>[17]</sup>) and self-dramatisations (e.g. in the form of an *imitatio heroica*). Physical exercise and military training, diets and asceticism; prostheses and body enhancements; make-up, clothing and jewellery and the performance of gender and status are some practices of formation and self-presentation that also enable non-heroes to align their corporeal appearance with a heroic prototype.

The body ideals conveyed through hero figures are thus part of a self-stabilising and self-reproducing social order that also determines who can advance to the position of hero in future. The recognisability of the heroic phenotype has decisive influence thereon: although a corporeal appearance that fulfils the ideal notions (e.g. with regard to masculinity or attractiveness) to a high degree is not a necessary prerequisite for the successful heroization of a person, it does increase the chances tremendously. Conversely, the less a figure fulfils the cultural expectations relating to heroic corporeality, the more that figure's heroization requires a particular legitimation and explanation.

Exceptions prove this rule, and figures whose outer appearance deviates clearly from conventional notions of heroic corporeality can have a strong aesthetic allure. This effect can be observed for example in Early Modern representations of classic heroines whose femininity is emphasised and contrasted against the masculine bodies of their adversaries – as in Caravaggio's rendering of Judith (cf. fig. 1), which accentuates the femininity of the figure unlike other Early Modern representations (cf. fig. 2).

The discourses of the heroic and idealisations of the body therefore reciprocally relate to one another. They inform and affirm one another. This also invariably includes specific configurations of gender, race, age, fitness and class that are inscribed into heroes' bodies or debated on them. The hero's corporeal constitution reveals him as an intersectional figure who simultaneously functions as regulator, model and projection surface for social norms and hierarchies.

Fig. 1 – 2: Female hero bodies – the example of Judith



Fig. 1:

**Caravaggio: Judith and Holofernes**

1598–1599, oil on canvas, 145 cm × 195 cm, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome.

Source: [User:Latif86 / Wikimedia Commons](#)

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Explanation: Caravaggio contrasts Judith's feminine, youthful and almost charming appearance with Holofernes' muscular body and the aged maid. However, Caravaggio's Judith is an atypical heroine not just in respect of her body. Surprised and nauseated by her own (heroic) deed, Judith draws away and distances herself from the spray of Holofernes' blood. Thus the heroizing representation of Judith appears broken in the painting on several levels.



Fig. 2:

**Johann Liss: Judith in the Tent of Holofernes**

1st third of the 17th century, oil on canvas, 126 cm × 102 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Gemäldegalerie, Inv.No. 2324.

Source: [Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien](#)

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Explanation: In his painting, Johann Liss exposes Judith's muscular shoulders, a rendering that corresponds much more with the classic ideal of the athletic-masculine hero's body. Thus Judith not only appears Holofernes' equal in physical strength, she also performs her deed in calm detachment and does not shy away from Holofernes' decapitated body.

### 2.3. Body and mind

The attribution of an exceptional corporeal constitution or capability alone is often not a sufficient condition for a successful heroization. Mental aspects – for instance the intentions attributed to the agent as well as cognitive and character properties – influence the success of a heroization. The significance of mental qualities over corporeal constitution for defining the heroic is historically variable, as can be seen clearly in the definitions of hero found in the encyclopaedias from the Enlightenment cited above.

In addition, any such weighing up of body-related and mental heroization criteria must be understood against the backdrop of a broader discourse that asks the ontological question as to the nature of the body and mind. How notions of heroic corporeality correspond with various answers to the body-mind problem cannot be determined here in detail. However, it is apparent that merely weighing up corporeal and mental characteristics of the heroic generally implies a form of dualism, i.e. the understanding of body and mind as separate entities, whether it be in respect of their ontological substance or their properties.[18]

The ontological question as to the relation between body and mind also proliferates in discourses on the heroic.[19] In their concepts of heroes, different societies relate body and mind to each other differently. Nevertheless, three basic models can be identified:

*Privileging of the mind:* intellectual achievements and virtue are perceived to be at least as worthy of heroization as corporeal-military deeds. This position is concentrated for instance in concepts from the Enlightenment: the genius cult, the intellectual hero or the *grand homme*. [20]

*Interdependence/interaction:* a trained body and an educated mind are perceived to be equally important for heroic characters. Both are closely interrelated. Hence, the “bourgeois hero’s body” for instance was considered a “medium of expression of inner moral qualities” at the end of the 18th century, which was why the free and uninhibited training of the body and of the mind were to go hand in hand. [21]

*Privileging of the body:* corporeal capability and willingness to make sacrifices are deemed the definitive characteristics of heroic figures. This position experienced a renaissance in modern, military-oriented societies in which priority was given to training the body at the expense of educating the mind – going as far as the “mind-disdaining and mindless fetishism of the body” under National Socialism. [22]

Since the 20th century at the latest, it is difficult to identify a dominant discourse on heroic minds vs. bodies. Instead, different understandings of heroic qualities and bodies coexist in fully differentiated social systems and contexts. While a heroic cult of the body was practiced, and to an extent still is practiced, in the military and politics, psychologists were interested primarily in the characterological requirements of heroic action and are still endeavouring today to define the hero as a personality type. [23] In the natural sciences, the body is again becoming the focus, but with a very different intent: neurobiological studies on altruistic behaviour in life-threatening situations are attempting to describe the ‘hero’s brain’, thus overcoming the dualistic separation of body and mind. [24]

### 3. Representation and mediality

In many cases, physical actions are easier to visualise than mental processes, and this may be one of the reasons that the corporeality of heroic figures is often central in their medial representations: the hero appears as an agent with a particular corporeal constitution and physical agency and his heroic deed primarily as a corporeal achievement. Particularly in the visual arts, films and computer games, but also in literature, the corporeality of hero figures is displayed and dramatised in this way. Depending on the (re)presentation context, there may be several reasons for this, including the affective impact that body (re)presentations have; the possible ways of projecting the heroic character onto the outer appearance; the communication of bodily experiences; and the high visibility and culture-defining effect of heroes' bodies. These functions of the representation and dramatisation of heroic corporeality are discussed below.

#### 3.1. The affective impact of heroic corporeality

When (re)presentations of heroes emphasise the physical aspect or focus entirely on the body of the hero, this can have a strongly affective impact that magnifies the effect of the heroization. This is because the particular qualities of a heroic deed, especially its exceptionality, agonality and transgressivity, manifest materially in the hero's body and become visually comprehensible and experienceable for the beholders.

**Fig. 3: Modern portrait of the imam 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib**



#### **Modern portrait of the imam 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib**

Isfahan, mausoleum of the Imāmzāde Šāh-i Zaid.

Source: published in Newid, Mehr Ali: Der schiitische Islam in Bildern. Rituale und Heilige. München 2006: Avicenna, 184.

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Explanation: The first imam, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, was stabbed to death in Kufa in 661 and is still revered in Shi'a Islam today. The rendering focuses on his face, which appears ageless with wrinkleless skin and a grey beard. The upraised eyes and the aureole emphasise his heroic status. His sword Dhū l-faqār is depicted underneath him. The caption reads: 'No sword is like Dhū l-faqār, no man is like 'Alī'. (Thank you to Olmo Gölz for bringing this rendering of 'Alī to my attention.)

Some of the artistic and aesthetic means for impressively displaying heroic corporeality are heroic gestures, poses and pathos formulae. They allow a heroization's complex levels of meaning to solidify in the specific, corporeal appearance of the hero. In Western cultures, there is a large repertoire of such highly conventionalised and affective formulas of representation, the spectrum of which includes triumphant victor poses, dynamic fight choreography and the (re)presentation of the collapsing, fatally wounded hero. The hero's (naked) physical constitution need not always be focal. Other markers of corporeality such as gesture and body language can equally evoke heroic semantics. Islamic cultures provide instructive examples of this: if at all, these visual traditions permit only concealed bodies to be shown, but attach great significance to the (re)presentation of physiognomy and facial expressions (cf. fig. 3).

In particular, ostentatiously showing the physical marks that the agonal struggle and the heroic sacrifice leave in the body of heroes achieves a considerable affective impact. Popular motifs in heroizing (re)presentations are for example the exhaustion, the injuries and the scars that heroes sustain from their struggle or martyrdom (cf. fig. 4).<sup>[25]</sup> As a symbol for their sacrifice, the corpses of dead heroes can become the focus of visual representations. Such 'body marks' do not only point out the heroic actions and suffering, they also reveal the hero to be a vulnerable, mortal human being and thereby induce the recipients to empathic closeness and identification.

**Fig. 4: The injured Theodor Körner**



#### Heroizing representation of the injured Theodor Körner

field service postcard from 1913. Translation of the caption: "Körner's Farewell to Life. The wound burns / The wan lips quake."

Monogrammed in the image: O. H. Verso: company emblem: PFB [Paul Fink, Kunstanstalt, Berlin]. 1915 postmark. Censored field service postcard. – O. H. is likely Otto Heichert (1868-1946).

Source: [Goethezeitportal](#)

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### 3.2. Projecting the heroic character onto the corporeal appearance

In artistic (re)presentations, heroic figures are generally given a corporeal appearance that is to reflect their inner qualities. Physical and physiognomic characteristics such as an athletic physique, an upright gait and radiant eyes indicate the heroic character of the individual. By embellishing the body with attributes like clothing, regalia, laurel wreaths, crests, moles, stigmas or tattoos, a figure's

ancestry, power or history is affirmed symbolically. For the beholder, a figure's heroic status is recognisable in the corporeal display because of such – culture-specific – representation techniques. Nevertheless, in addition to conventionalised symbols and codings, emphasising strength and beauty can quite generally mark the hero as an exceptional figure who distinguishes himself through particular qualities of character such as courage, bravery, moral steadfastness or virtue.

### 3.3. The communication of bodily experiences

The (re)presentation of heroic bodies is to not only allow beholders to make inferences about the character of the figure being shown, but also to provoke their participation in the hero's 'bodily experiences'. The phenomenological term 'bodily awareness' means the subjective experience of one's own body in the here and now.[26] A hero's ecstasy, strain, pain or suffering are thus all bodily experiences that are not directly visible, but can be represented indirectly using outer body signs – whether it be through the hero's abstracted gaze, his heavy breathing or his painfully contorted gestures. Such corporeal manifestations of bodily experiences have an important communicative effect: they enable the beholders to comprehend the (re)presented events from the hero's inner perspective. One function of this 'communicated bodily awareness' can be to create a proximity to the hero: the audience and the admirers empathise with the hero; recognise him as a feeling and hurting human being; and identify with him.

However, the (re)presentation of pain, suffering or injury can also produce ambivalent effects: in some cases, they underpin the legitimacy of a heroization by making the hero's sacrifice visual and comprehensible; in other cases, however, they lead to the figure's deheroization. The expression of suffering can be perceived as whiny, 'unmanly' or 'unheroic' for example. Similarly, certain injuries can produce a deheroizing effect, such as in Ernst Toller's First World War drama *Hinkemann* (1923), in which the protagonist is ironically castrated by a 'hero's shot' ("Heldenschuß") that robs the former soldier of his manhood not just anatomically, but symbolically as well.[27] Evidently, the framing – i.e. the specific way in which certain body signs and bodily experiences are represented and displayed – has decisive influence on the (de)heroizing effect. The tipping point of a damaged body that can result in either heroization or deheroization depending on the perception can be approached theoretically using Erving Goffman's concepts of 'stigma' and 'visibility', which are described below.

### 3.4. Stigmatisation and visibility

In (re)presentations of heroes, hidden elements (identity, character, bodily experiences) are made corporeally perceptible. Simultaneously, heroes' bodies in many cultures have a great public presence and are therefore highly visible. Due to this dual potential, the corporeality of the heroic presents itself in a unique way for social norms and values to be negotiated on it.[28]

The sociological terms Erving Goffman has coined with regard to deviance, namely "stigma" and "visibility", offer one approach for explaining this interrelation between heroic corporeality and cultural idealisations.[29] Goffman argues that inherent to human bodies is a potential for agency as well as a communicative autonomy.[30] Due to their visibility and presence alone, bodies function as autonomous agents in social interaction according to Goffman. Goffman also explains that bodies

communicate information on the individual's identity, e.g. not just on his/her social status and health, but also on his/her thoughts and political opinions. Goffman concludes that the individuals interacting with bodies react either consciously or involuntarily to these corporeal signals. In this context, Goffman is interested primarily in corporeal 'stigma', i.e. the deviations from the expected norm that are deemed to be *negative* and lead to the discreditation and social marginalisation of individuals – for example disabilities, illnesses, sexual orientations or ethnic affiliations. In order to avoid social isolation, stigmatised individuals develop techniques for purposefully concealing their stigmas (known as stigma management).[31]

Building on Goffman, one might argue that the representation of heroic corporeality can constitute a *positive equivalent* to stigmatisation: where the bodies of heroes are displayed as exceptionally beautiful, masculine or athletic for instance, this can mark a desired and desirable deviation from the norm. In the case of heroic figures, stigmatising wounds and injuries that would result in the ostracisation of any other individual can be interpreted as symbols of a willingness to make sacrifices that do not fail to have an effect on the community of admirers. In a similar sense, Wolfgang Ipp remarks that processes that lead to the formation of charismatic qualities are originally rooted in stigmatisation and only from there can they then turn into a specific extreme. According to Ipp, Charisma presupposes stigmatisation.[32]

Therefore, unlike in the case of stigmatisations, communities are not looking to conceal heroic bodies, but to make them visible. (Re)presentations of heroes play a major part in this by incorporating heroic figures into all spheres of the social space and of cultural memory and by providing them tremendous visibility. Through the representation, however, a hero's body is not just multiplied in media and made visible everywhere, the body also disconnects from its original, real instance. This allows the (re)presenters to control the body's effect on the audience, for instance by emphasising its positive characteristics, suppressing the negative characteristics or adding entirely new properties. Heroic bodies thus become the surface on which to project cultural ideals and themselves contribute to the idealisation of certain body images through their extensive visibility.

#### 4. Perspectives for future research

In recent cultural studies and sociological scholarship, the body has been devoted increased attention.[33] However, there is a lack of studies that examine the connection between corporeality and the heroic systematically. For instance, no study has yet been made on the role that specific, visible and experienceable human bodies have in heroization processes. Conversely, it remains to be seen what significance heroic figures and their (re)presentation have for the establishment and transmission of body ideals in a particular culture. In this respect, medium-specific differences, for instance between visual arts, literature and film, must also be investigated. The role of the spatiality and materiality of (re)presentations of heroes in social interaction, with regard to physical contact, physical distancing and positioning oneself in a space for instance, also remains widely unexplored.

There are a few studies on the historical developments of heroic-ideal body images, but they remain focused on narrowly defined periods of time and cultural spaces. For the European 18th to 20th centuries, George Mosse has offered his influential study *The Image of Man* (1996), in which he traces

the genesis of the modern Western masculinity ideal to prototypes from Greek Antiquity.[34] According to Mosse, it was primarily the popularisation of sculptures of Greek heroes by Johann Joachim Winckelmann and his contemporaries in the 18th century that inspired a renaissance of the well-proportioned, athletic-muscular, greatly typified body. Mosse explains that the regained visibility of Greek sculptures such as the Apollo Belvedere and the Laocoon Group constituted one principal reason for the entanglement of the heroic, corporeality and masculinity that has persisted since the Enlightenment.[35] Mosse describes how this ideal flourished in German gymnastics clubs that arose around 1800: gymnastics was a new bodily practice with which ideal athletic bodies could be produced in the first place. The standardisation and formation of the body begun in gymnastics continued in 19th-century military training practices, in which the exercises developed by the fathers of German gymnastics like Johann C. F. GutsMuths and Friedrich Ludwig Jahn were quickly embraced and refined. Mosse argues that the new type of the trained, masculine body therefore gained a heroic-patriotic potential in the wars of the 19th and 20th centuries: it became the soldiers' task to prepare their bodies for the struggle for the nation and ultimately to risk or sacrifice life and limb on the battlefield.[36]

In a similar direction as Mosse, using the example of significant military hero figures, René Schilling has traced how the relation between body and mind increasingly shifted towards the body starting in the early 19th century to finally result in an outright fetishism of the body under National Socialism.[37] With the growing military cult of the body, the desired phenotype also changed in Germany. Bare masculinity was no longer a sufficient marker of the heroic. The body's health and ethnic affiliation became decisive. This is evident in the (re)presentations of heroes from the first half of the 20th century in which Nordic types began to dominate and national heroes such as Theodor Körner and Friedrich Friesen were shown with blonde hair and blue eyes contrary to historical fact.[38]

## 5. References

- 1 This article is due in large part to the discussions and stimulating conversations that took place at the Sonderforschungsbereich 948 'Heroes – Heroizations – Heroisms', particularly in the working group 'syntheses'.
- 2 This understanding is in line with the broad concept of 'corporeality' on which the *Handbuch Körpersoziologie* is based; cf. Gugutzer, Robert / Klein, Gabriele / Meuser, Michael (Eds.): *Handbuch Körpersoziologie*. 2 Vols. Wiesbaden 2017: Springer.
- 3 Marquart, Benjamin: "Grand homme". In: *Compendium heroicum*. Ed. by Ronald G. Asch, Achim Aurnhammer, Georg Feitscher and Anna Schreurs-Morét, published by the Sonderforschungsbereich 948 "Helden – Heroisierungen – Heroismen" of the Universität Freiburg, Freiburg 01.01.2018. DOI: [10.6094/heroicum/grand-homme](https://doi.org/10.6094/heroicum/grand-homme).
- 4 Cf. Andronikashvili, Zaal / Maisuradze, Giorgi / Schwartz, Matthias / Thun-Hohenstein, Franziska (Eds.): *Kulturheros. Genealogien. Konstellationen. Praktiken*. Berlin 2017: Kadmos.
- 5 Anonymus: "Held". In: *Zedlers Universal-Lexicon*. Vol. 12. Leipzig 1735, cols. 1214-1215. Online at: <https://www.zedler-lexikon.de/index.html?c=blaettern&id=121403&bandnummer=12&seitenzahl=0630&supplement=0&dateiformat=1%27> (accessed on 07.03.2019). Translation by Daniel Hefflebower. In the original: "[...] der von der Natur mit einer ansehnlichen Gestalt und

ausnehmender Leibesstärke begabet, durch tapffere Thaten Ruhm erlanget, und sich über den gemeinen Stand derer Menschen erhoben.”

- 6 Adelung, Johann Christoph: Grammatisch-kritisches Wörterbuch der Hochdeutschen Mundart mit beständiger Vergleichung der übrigen Mundarten, besonders aber der oberdeutschen. Zweyte, vermehrte und verbesserte Ausgabe. Vol. 2. Leipzig 1793–1801, cols. 1094-1095, 1094. Online at: <https://lexika.digitale-sammlungen.de/adelung/gehezuseite/bsb00009132?page=1094> (accessed on 07.03.2019). Translation by Daniel Hefflebower. In the original: “eine mit vorzüglicher Leibesstärke begabte Person, [... deren] Tapferkeit noch größten Theils in der Leibesstärke bestand [... und die davon] einen pflichtmäßigen und für viele vorteilhaften Gebrauch [macht]”.
- 7 Cf. on this subject and with regard to the foregoing quotations from lexis from the Enlightenment Albrecht, Andrea: “Helden der Wissenschaft’. Formen und Funktionen der Heroisierung des Gelehrten”. In: Andronikashvili, Zaal / Maisuradze, Giorgi / Schwartz, Matthias / Thun-Hohenstein, Franziska (Eds.): Kulturheros. Genealogien. Konstellationen. Praktiken. Berlin 2017: Kadmos, 110-135, 112-113.
- 8 Leonhard, Jörn: “Helden als Opfer, Opfer als Helden. Eine Armprothese aus dem Ersten Weltkrieg”. In: Aurnhammer, Achim / Bröckling, Ulrich (Eds.): Vom Weihegefäß zur Drohne. Kulturen des Heroischen und ihre Objekte. Würzburg 2016: Ergon, 239-252, 239. Translation by Daniel Hefflebower. In the original: “[...] sichtbar Opfer geworden zu sein, die Teilnahme am Krieg mit einem verletzten Körper oder einer beschädigten Psyche bezahlen zu müssen”.
- 9 Cf. section 3.1. ‘The affective impact of heroic corporeality’.
- 10 Cf. Liebsch, Katharina: “Identität”. In: Gugutzer, Robert / Klein, Gabriele / Meuser, Michael (Eds.): Handbuch Körpersoziologie. Vol. 1: Grundbegriffe und theoretische Perspektiven. Wiesbaden 2017: Springer VS, 39-43.
- 11 Reuter, Julia: “Der Körper als Seismograph gesellschaftlicher (Un-)Ordnung”. In: Julia Reuter: Geschlecht und Körper. Studien zur Materialität und Inszenierung gesellschaftlicher Wirklichkeit. Bielefeld 2011: Transcript, 65-83, 65. Translation by Daniel Hefflebower. In the original: “zentrale Seismographen gesellschaftlicher Ordnung wie Abweichung”.
- 12 Reuter: “Der Körper als Seismograph gesellschaftlicher (Un-)Ordnung”, 2011, 68, footnote 3.
- 13 Luhmann, Niklas: “Die Autopoiesis des Bewußtseins”. In: Luhmann, Niklas: Soziologische Aufklärung 6. Die Soziologie und der Mensch. 3rd edition. Wiesbaden 2008: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 55-108, 86. Translation by Daniel Hefflebower. In the original: “moralisch reguliertes Abweichen”. On this subject, also cf. the article ‘Anti-heroes’ in the *Compendium heroicum*.
- 14 Regarding the term visibility, cf. Goffman, Erving: Stigma. Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity. New York 1991 [1963]: Simon & Schuster, 48-51; also cf. Reuter: “Der Körper als Seismograph gesellschaftlicher (Un-)Ordnung”, 2011, 76.
- 15 Cf. Sobiech, Gabriele: “Disziplin”. In: Gugutzer, Robert / Klein, Gabriele / Meuser, Michael (Eds.): Handbuch Körpersoziologie. Vol. 1: Grundbegriffe und theoretische Perspektiven. Wiesbaden 2017: Springer VS, 15-20.
- 16 Cf. e.g. Foucault, Michel: Surveiller et punir. Naissance de la prison. Paris 1975: Gallimard; also cf. Reuter: “Der Körper als Seismograph gesellschaftlicher (Un-)Ordnung”, 2011, 73.
- 17 Bourdieu, Pierre: La distinction. Critique social du jugement. 1979: Les Éditions de Minuit; Elias, Norbert: Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation. Entwurf zu einer Theorie der Zivilisation. Frankfurt a. M.

- 2010: Suhrkamp. Also cf. Gebauer, Gunter: "Habitus". In: Gugutzer, Robert / Klein, Gabriele / Meuser, Michael (Eds.): Handbuch Körpersoziologie. Vol. 1: Grundbegriffe und theoretische Perspektiven. Wiesbaden 2017: Springer VS, 27-32.
- 18 The literature on the body-mind problem and specific attempts at solving it, such as substance dualism and property dualism, is extensive. See, e.g., the overview given by Lowe, E. J.: "Dualism". In: Beckermann, Ansgar / McLaughlin, Brian P. / Walter, Sven (Eds.): The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Mind. Oxford 2011: Clarendon, 66-84. DOI: [10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199262618.003.0004](https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199262618.003.0004); Robinson, Howard: "Dualism". In: Zalta, Edward N. (Ed.): Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. (Edition: Fall 2017.) Online at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/dualism/> (accessed on 07.03.2019).
- 19 Regarding the relation between corporeality, mind and heroism, cf. Schilling, René: "Der Körper des 'Helden'. Deutschland 1813–1945". In: Bielefelder Graduiertenkolleg Sozialgeschichte (Ed.): Körper macht Geschichte – Geschichte macht Körper. Körpergeschichte als Sozialgeschichte. Bielefeld 1999: Verlag für Regionalgeschichte, 119-140.
- 20 Cf. Marquart: "Grand homme", 2018.
- 21 Schilling: "Der Körper des 'Helden'", 1999, 122 and 126. Translation by Daniel Hefflebower. In the original: "bürgerliche Heldenkörper"; "Ausdrucksmedium innerer moralischer Qualitäten"; "freie und ungehemmte Bildung des Körpers und des Geistes".
- 22 Schilling: "Der Körper des 'Helden'", 1999, 120. Translation by Daniel Hefflebower. In the original: "geistesverachtenden"; "stumpfsinnigen Körperfetischismus".
- 23 Cf. for instance the beginnings of the psychological perspectivation of the hero in Rank, Otto: Der Mythos von der Geburt des Helden. Versuch einer psychologischen Mythendeutung. Leipzig 1909: Deuticke; and more recently Midlarsky Elizabeth / Fagin Jones, Stephanie / Corley, Robin P.: „Personality Correlates of Heroic Rescue During the Holocaust“. In: Journal of Personality 73.4 (2005), 907-934. DOI: [10.1111/j.1467-6494.2005.00333.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.2005.00333.x); Allison, Scott T. / Goethals, George R.: "Hero Worship. The Elevation of the Human Spirit". In: Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour 46.2 2016, 187-210. DOI: [10.1111/jtsb.12094](https://doi.org/10.1111/jtsb.12094).
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- 25 Cf. Kerth, Sonja: "Versehrte Körper – vernarbte Seelen. Konstruktionen kriegerischer Männlichkeit in der späten Heldendichtung". In: Zeitschrift für Germanistik 12.2 (2002), 262-274; and Leonhard: "Helden als Opfer, Opfer als Helden", 2016.
- 26 Cf. Lindemann, Gesa: "Leiblichkeit". In: Gugutzer, Robert / Klein, Gabriele / Meuser, Michael (Eds.): Handbuch Körpersoziologie. Vol. 1: Grundbegriffe und theoretische Perspektiven. Wiesbaden 2017: Springer VS, 57-66.
- 27 Toller, Ernst: "Hinkemann. Eine Tragödie in drei Akten. Geschrieben 1921/1922 im Festungsgefängnis Niederschönenfeld". In: Toller, Ernst: Ausgewählte Schriften. Ed. by the Deutsche Akademie der Künste zu Berlin. Berlin 1959: Volk und Welt, 167-219, 173. Thank you to Isabell Oberle for this reference.
- 28 (Re)presentations of heroes, as explained above, can thus mould cultural ideals and simultaneously become the projection surface for these ideals. Cf. section 2.2. 'Idealisation and formation'.
- 29 Goffman: Stigma, 1991 [1963], especially 1-9 and 48-51; cf. on this subject Lipp, Wolfgang: Stigma

- und Charisma. Über soziales Grenzverhalten. Würzburg 2010: Ergon, 60-67.
- 30 Reuter: "Der Körper als Seismograph gesellschaftlicher (Un-)Ordnung 2011", 79. Translation by Daniel Hefflebower. In the original: "kommunikative Selbsttätigkeit".
- 31 Goffman: Stigma, 1991 [1963], 91–104; also cf. Reuter: "Der Körper als Seismograph gesellschaftlicher (Un-)Ordnung 2011", 77-78.
- 32 Lipp: Stigma und Charisma, 2010, 66. Translation by Daniel Hefflebower. In the original: "Prozesse, die zur Ausbildung charismatischer Qualitäten führen, [wurzeln] ursprünglich in Stigmatisierung [...] und [können] erst von hier aus in die eigene, spezifische Extremform umschlagen [...]. Charisma [...] setzt Stigmatisierung voraus."
- 33 Cf. for example the works cited above: Foucault: *Surveiller et punir*, 1975; Bourdieu: *La distinction*, 1979; Goffman: *Stigma*, 1991 [1963]; Butler, Judith: *Bodies That Matter. On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*. London 1993: Routledge; but also Gugutzer et al: *Handbuch Körpersoziologie*, 2017.
- 34 Mosse, George L.: *The Image of Man. The Creation of Modern Masculinity*. New York 1996: Oxford University Press. For criticism of Mosse's theses, cf. Frevert, Ute: "Das maskuline Stereotyp. George L. Mosse entwirft ein allzu statisches Bild des Mannes". In: *DIE ZEIT* 26/1997 (20th June 1997). Online at: [https://www.zeit.de/1997/26/Das\\_maskuline\\_Stereotyp](https://www.zeit.de/1997/26/Das_maskuline_Stereotyp) (accessed on 23.07.2019).
- 35 Mosse: *The Image of Man* 1996, 29-39.
- 36 Mosse: *The Image of Man*, 1996, 51-53, 107-132.
- 37 Schilling: "Der Körper des 'Helden'", 1999.
- 38 Cf. Schilling: "Der Körper des 'Helden'", 1999, 134-136.

## 6. Selected literature

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- Foucault, Michel: *Surveiller et punir. Naissance de la prison*. Paris 1975: Gallimard.
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## 7. List of images

- 1 Caravaggio: Judith and Holofernes, 1598–1599, oil on canvas, 145 cm × 195 cm, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome.  
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- 2 Johann Liss: Judith in the Tent of Holofernes, 1st third of the 17th century, oil on canvas, 126 cm × 102 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Gemäldegalerie, Inv.No. 2324.  
Source: [Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien](#)  
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- 3 Modern portrait of the imam 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, Isfahan, mausoleum of the Imāmzāde Šāh-i Zaid.  
Source: published in Newid, Mehr Ali: Der schiitische Islam in Bildern. Rituale und Heilige. München 2006: Avicenna, 184.  
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- 4 Heroizing representation of the injured Theodor Körner, field service postcard from 1913.  
Translation of the caption: "Körner's Farewell to Life. The wound burns / The wan lips quake."  
Monogrammed in the image: O. H. Verso: company emblem: PFB [Paul Fink, Kunstanstalt, Berlin].  
1915 postmark. Censured field service postcard. – O. H. is likely Otto Heichert (1868-1946).  
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