

The History of Emotions

An Introduction

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History and Emotions

An Introduction

Hardly more than a dark, oval shadow, about the size of a raisin, merging into other brain matter of a lighter colour—the amygdala. I immediately thought: perhaps you cannot even separate it out. It is not an organ like the liver or the kidney. These you can remove from a plastic model of the human torso, and then simply put them back. I was shown the amygdala in a sectioned brain that looked just like someone had sliced up a cauliflower. A student had checked a number of buckets filled with formaldehyde until she found a brain sectioned so that the amygdala was visible, carefully separating the slices to show me.

This was early one December morning in 2009, in the Rudolphi Room of the Anatomical Institute of the Berlin Charité, Europe's largest university clinic. I had emailed them to say that I was working on a history of fear among First World War Russian soldiers and would like to see a human amygdala, since it governed the human response of fearfulness and I had kept on coming across references to it in neuroscientific writings. The response was quick: I could attend the anatomy course for medical students the coming Monday, and I would be shown an amygdala. Arriving before the lecturer, I told the others about my interest—they were all fourth semester students, wearing white coats. While they fished out one brain after another from the plastic buckets in search of one that was suitable—brains dripping with formaldehyde—I glanced at the neighbouring table. Two female students were just heaving a body bag onto the table. They removed the blue plastic covering, then the gauze bandages covering the head, turned the skinned, prepared corpse onto its front, propped the head up with a wooden block, removed the sawn top of the skull, and began fishing around deep inside the cavity with pincers and a scalpel. It suddenly occurred to me that the path these two students were taking into these regions below the cortex which governed cognition was just like that of my own historical studies. These students would at some point come across the amygdala, the inner sanctum of fear, the most basal point of the most fundamental of all feelings.

The amygdala was so named in 1819 by its discoverer, the German anatomist Karl Friedrich Burdach (1776–1847), because of its almond-shaped form, as in the Greek *αμύγδαλο* ('almond').¹ By the 1930s, animal experiments and studies of

¹ David Sander, 'Amygdala', in Sander and Klaus R. Scherer (eds), *The Oxford Companion to Emotion and the Affective Sciences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 28–32, here 28.

human patients had shown that this was the area of the brain where all neuronal processes caused by and responding to threats took place (for example, the threat represented by a venomous snake), processes which activated the nervous system out of its state of relaxation (enhancing muscle tone, accelerating the pulse, in short, everything needed to flee from the snake), and which were generally categorized as 'fear' or 'anxiety'. From the 1980s on, new imaging procedures associated with computer tomography reinforced this view. I asked the students working at the anatomy table under a harsh neon light what they considered to be the prevailing view about the function of the amygdala, and they agreed: 'negative emotions, especially fear'.

Popular knowledge of the amygdala's significance may be attributed to a best-seller written by a New York neuroscientist, Joseph LeDoux's *The Emotional Brain: The Mysterious Underpinnings of Emotional Life* (1996), a book which has been translated into many languages. LeDoux, who plays 'Heavy Mental' electric guitar with other members of his lab in a band called *The Amygdaloids*, talks of two roads to fear: a fast one via the amygdala, and a somewhat slower one via the cerebral cortex.² According to LeDoux, when a threat (the snake) is registered, this information takes 12 milliseconds to reach the amygdala, which then prepares the nervous system for a fight-or-flight reaction rooted in evolutionary biology. This quick response can decide upon life or death, and the body is prepared to run from the threat, or to stand and fight. In twice that length of time the same information is conveyed to the cortex, which calculates: is that really a snake, or perhaps a piece of wood that looks like a snake? If it really is a snake, is it alive or dead? If it is alive, is it a venomous snake, or instead one that is quite harmless? If there is no actual danger, the cortex signals to the amygdala, and the nervous system calms down.³ The suggestive power of the illustration in LeDoux's book depicting this process is considerable. Since 1996 it has been used more often than any others in works devoted to fear (Fig. 1).⁴

Since then, the amygdala has become so well known that I can hardly mention my historical work on fear among soldiers without being asked about it. There are very few emotions to which an anthropological constant—today dressed up in neurobiological terminology—is applied in such an automatic way as happens with the fear felt by soldiers. Underlying this is the idea that there is a solid neurobiological (almond) kernel at the centre of the fear felt by all animals across time and culture, from the laboratory mouse to *Homo sapiens*. And this has been one pole in the study of emotion since the nineteenth century: solid, unchanging, culturally universal, inclusive of all species, transcending time, biological, physiological, essential, basic, hard-wired. The placement of the amygdala deep in the brain's core—a site which the students at the next table were setting out to explore—says it all.

But what is the amygdala? It is a mass of nerve cells activated in particular operations of the brain, emotion being one of these operations—at least most

² See <<http://www.amygdaloids.com>> accessed 25 February 2014.

³ Joseph E. LeDoux, *The Emotional Brain: The Mysterious Underpinnings of Emotional Life* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), ch. 6, esp. 163–8.

⁴ The illustration is also included in LeDoux, *The Emotional Brain*, 166.

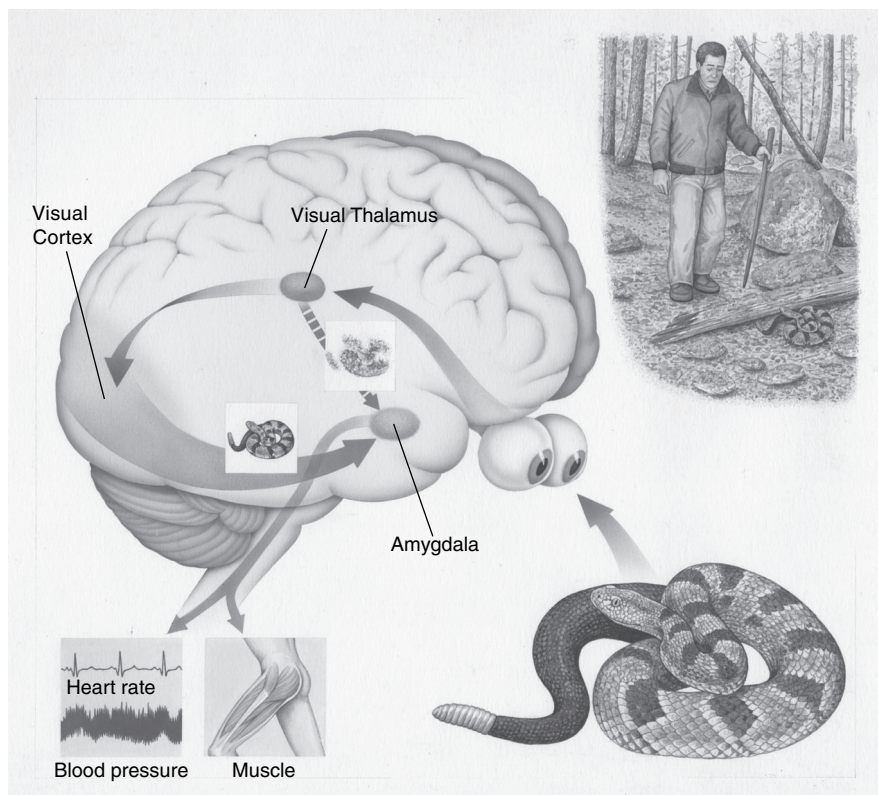


Fig. 1 Joseph LeDoux and The Two Roads to Fear

Source: Joseph E. LeDoux, 'Emotion, Memory and the Brain', *Scientific American*, 270/6 (1994), 50–6, here 38, illustration by Robert Osti.

researchers do still agree on this. But argument begins as soon as one asks: which nerve cells belong to the amygdala? For the neighbouring regions are also composed of nerve cells, some of which are thought to be relevant to emotion.⁵ The gradual transition between the dark spot in the brain section and the less-dark area

⁵ A survey article claims that 'The amygdala consists of functionally distinct nuclei (i.e. 13 main nuclei, each having further subdivisions), which have extensive internuclear and intranuclear connections'; Tim Dalgleish, Barnaby D. Dunn, and Dean Mobbs, 'Affective Neuroscience: Past, Present, and Future', *Emotion Review*, 1/4 (2009), 355–68, here 358. Another paper disputes that there is a unitary structure of nerve cells called the amygdala, and refers instead to a 'structurally and functionally heterogeneous region of the cerebral hemispheres'; Larry W. Swanson and Gorica D. Petrovich, 'What is the Amygdala?', *Trends in Neurosciences*, 21/8 (1998), 323–31, here 330. Yet others argue that nerve cells from other parts of the brain belong to an 'extended Amygdala', among which is the *substantia innominata* of the basal forebrain; John P. Aggleton (ed.), *The Amygdala: A Functional Analysis* (2nd edn, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 8–9; M. Davis and P. J. Whalen, 'The Amygdala: Vigilance and Emotion', *Molecular Psychiatry*, 6/1 (2001), 13–34.

surrounding it—something which struck me the first time I ever saw the amygdala—itself represents the difficulty in clearly demarcating it. And there is also disagreement about the function of the amygdala. The idea that it is responsible only for negative emotions is now generally regarded as obsolete. Today the amygdala is considered among other things to be responsible for the sense of smell, for visual perception, and for the capacity of jazz musicians to distinguish between music played from a score and improvisation.⁶ In addition to this, the organization and connection of nerve cells in the amygdala differ between rodents, upon which most of the experiments are carried out, and humans, for whom conclusions are then drawn.⁷ And finally, strictly speaking, talking about ‘the’ amygdala is misleading, since there is one in each half of the brain. How they are connected, whether they perform distinct tasks, and if so, which, is currently the subject of intense discussion among neurobiologists.⁸

This all ran through my mind as I left the institute and found myself once more in Berlin’s weak winter sun. I had run across quite different things when reading anthropological studies of fear. Anthropology had not been seeking a general and unique mechanism of fear that had a specific neuroanatomical site, but had noticed differences in the treatment of fear at different times in different cultures. This was even true of soldierly fear, as was evident in one example: that of the Maori tribes native to New Zealand, who until they were conquered by the British in the mid-nineteenth century were often at war with each other. If a Maori warrior showed physical signs of fear before a battle, such as trembling, it was said that he was possessed by *atua*, a kind of spirit that had been angered by an infringement of *tapu*, a canon of social rules. There was a ritual for ridding oneself of this possessed state: the warrior had to crawl between the legs of a standing Maori woman of superior social status. The sexual organs of the woman, especially the vagina, had special powers which could free the warrior of *atua*. If the warrior crawled between the woman’s legs without shaking then he was freed of *atua*, and went off to battle liberated from fear. But if he still shook, the ritual cleansing was judged a failure, and the warrior could stay at home unpunished. Apparently no one thought it possible for someone to be afflicted with *atua* during a battle; and so we can assume that Maori warriors just did not feel fear. Hence the model of soldierly fear for the Maori warrior is one that locates it outside the body. Fear originates not in his

⁶ For the sense of smell see Geoffrey Schoenbaum, Andrea A. Chiba, and Michela Gallagher, ‘Neural Encoding in Orbitofrontal Cortex and Basolateral Amygdala during Olfactory Discrimination Learning’, *Journal of Neuroscience*, 19/5 (1999), 1876–84; for visual perception see Ralph Adolphs, Daniel Tranel, Hanna Damasio, and Antonio R. Damasio, ‘Fear and the Human Amygdala’, *Journal of Neuroscience*, 15/9 (1995), 5879–91; for the distinction by jazz musicians between improvised and scored music, see Annerose Engel and Peter E. Keller, ‘The Perception of Musical Spontaneity in Improvised and Imitated Jazz Performances’, *Frontiers in Auditory Cognitive Neuroscience*, 2/83 (2011), 1–13.

⁷ See Richard J. Davidson, ‘Seven Sins in the Study of Emotion: Correctives from Affective Neuroscience’, *Brain and Cognition*, 52/1 (2003), 129–32, here 130.

⁸ Daan Baas, André Aleman, and René S. Kahn, ‘Lateralization of Amygdala Activation: A Systematic Review of Functional Neuroimaging Studies’, *Brain Research Reviews*, 45/2 (2004), 96–103.

‘soul’, or his ‘psyche’, or his ‘brain’, but instead in a transcendent sphere of *tapu* norms and higher beings.⁹

This example quite significantly modifies any idea of the universality of a soldier’s fear. And here we come to the second polarity for all research on feelings: soft, anti-essentialist, anti-determinist, social constructivist, culturally relative, culturally specific, culturally contingent. Since the mid-nineteenth century at the very latest, academic discussion of emotion has revolved around these two polarities: hard and soft, essentialist and anti-essentialist, determinist and anti-determinist, universal and culturally conditioned. The concepts grouped at either end of this spectrum are not complementary. What their relation to each other is; how, when, and where they emerged; what distinguishes them; how they might be precisely mapped—none of this is clear. Research is only in its earliest phases. Anyone who during the first decade of the third millennium has taken part in multidisciplinary conferences involving neuroscientists and specialists in the humanities—there is little point here in talking of *interdisciplinarity*—will know just how sensitive these polarities are, and how quickly camps form around them that become bitter foes. The polarization between universalism and social constructivism has often been noted: Barbara H. Rosenwein has written that ‘some scholars view emotions as innate whereas others consider them to be “social constructions”.’¹⁰ For Ingrid Kasten the question is ‘where and how boundaries are to be drawn between universals and variables’.¹¹ Peter and Carol Stearns talk of the challenge of sorting ‘the durable (animal) from the transient (culturally caused)’.¹² According to Rüdiger Schnell, ‘today’s historical research into emotions involves two basic and contrary positions: according to the one, human feelings have remained the same for millennia (only the means of expressing them having changed); and according to the other, each emotion has its own history determined by general historical changes’. Schnell also considers that ‘universalists and evolutionary theorists’ are in one camp, ‘constructivists in the other’.¹³ Armin Günther asks whether ‘emotions have a history at all, or are they anthropological constants?’¹⁴ And finally, Catherine Lutz and Geoffrey White conclude that ‘A number of classic theoretical or epistemological tensions are found in the emotion literature. These include . . .

⁹ Jean Smith, ‘Self and Experience in Maori Culture’, in Paul Heelas and Andrew Lock (eds), *Indigenous Psychologies: The Anthropology of the Self* (London: Academic Press, 1981), 145–59, here 149.

¹⁰ Barbara H. Rosenwein, ‘Introduction’ in Rosenwein (ed.), *Anger’s Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 2.

¹¹ Ingrid Kasten, ‘Einleitung’, in C. Stephen Jaeger and Ingrid Kasten (eds), *Codierungen von Emotionen im Mittelalter: Emotions and Sensibilities in the Middle Ages* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2003), xiii–xxviii, here xiv.

¹² Peter N. Stearns and Carol Z. Stearns, ‘Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards’, *American Historical Review*, 90/4 (1985), 813–36, here 824.

¹³ Rüdiger Schnell, ‘Historische Emotionsforschung: Eine mediävistische Standortbestimmung’, *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 38 (2005), 173–276, here 180, 213.

¹⁴ Armin Günther, ‘Sprache und Geschichte: Überlegungen zur Gegenstandsangemessenheit einer historischen Psychologie’, in Michael Sonntag and Gerd Jüttemann (eds), *Individuum und Geschichte: Beiträge zur Diskussion um eine ‘Historische Psychologie’* (Heidelberg: Asanger, 1993), 34–48, here 35.

universalism and relativism.¹⁵ Even where the binary opposition of social constructivism and universalism does not arise, it is usually considered necessary to mention explicitly that this opposition is not being employed, as for instance when a collection relating to medical ethnology notes that ‘The papers do *not* focus on debates about the universality or cultural specificity of particular emotions’.¹⁶

It has likewise been noted that this division between universalism and social constructivism has done little to help develop our ideas.¹⁷ Even a quick glance at writings from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries shows that this distinction is far from God-given, but instead made by humans. It comes from another dichotomy: that of nature versus culture. For much of the seventeenth century ‘nature’ was for European thinkers still an open category: often the subject of allegory (as the goddess Diana) and widely worshipped (in temples to Nature), it was capable of transformation and moved flexibly to a goal, instead of simply existing, solid and immutable. Nature was ‘an intention never fully realized in actuality’; it was ‘still understood as a pliable set of potentialities, not as a reality inexorably, unalterably fixed’.¹⁸ Nature was something that could be modelled, something mutable.

This all changed with the Enlightenment. In the course of the early eighteenth century the contrast of nature to culture crystallized. Henceforth, nature was no longer changeable, and it assumed new properties. First of all, the ‘state of nature’ became for political theorists such as Thomas Hobbes the period before the existence of any state, and for John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau the period before the existence of society. Secondly, nature became defined as ‘primitive’, a developmental description for alien, non-European peoples. Thirdly, Enlightenment thinkers began to equate nature with the human body, especially with its internal and less mutable aspects, among which were the instincts (for example in the work of Julien Offray de La Mettrie and other ‘mechanical’ philosophers). Fourthly and lastly, the semantics of nature fused with the environment in general, so that flora and fauna became ‘nature’.¹⁹ These last two meanings—nature as the body and nature as the environment—first of all became a pre-religious form of legitimation; and then, following a process that we can for the sake of simplicity,

¹⁵ Catherine Lutz and Geoffrey M. White, ‘The Anthropology of Emotions’, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 15 (1986), 405–36, here 406. See also Helena Flam, for whom there are ‘constructivist and positivist approaches’: Helena Flam, *Soziologie der Emotionen: Eine Einführung* (Konstanz: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft, 2002), 118. According to Owen Lynch ‘the Western hierarchical distinction of reason over emotion implies the further hierarchical distinctions of human over animal and culture over nature’: Owen M. Lynch, ‘The Social Construction of Emotion in India’, in Lynch (ed.), *Divine Passions: The Social Construction of Emotion in India* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), 3–34, here 10.

¹⁶ Mary-Jo Delvecchio Good, Byron J. Good, and Michael M. J. Fischer, ‘Introduction: Discourse and the Study of Emotion, Illness and Healing’, *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, 12/1 (1988), 1–7, here 2, emphasis in original.

¹⁷ See Lutz and White, ‘Anthropology of Emotions’, 406, 429–30.

¹⁸ Lorraine Daston and Gianna Pomata, ‘The Faces of Nature: Visibility and Authority’, in Daston and Pomata (eds), *The Faces of Nature in Enlightenment Europe* (Berlin: BWV, 2003), 1–16, here 14.

¹⁹ Maurice Bloch and Jean H. Bloch, ‘Women and the Dialectics of Nature in Eighteenth-Century French Thought’, in Carol P. MacCormack and Marilyn Strathern (eds), *Nature, Culture and Gender* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 25–41, here 27.

but with no small amount of reservation, call ‘secularization’, they became a unique and absolute legitimating instance. Nature was poured and cast as a solid *fundamentum absolutum*, and became the new ultimate certainty. During the nineteenth century this process was associated with the diffusion of Francis Galton’s ideas and their vulgarization as ‘eugenics’, as well as with the professionalization and institutionalization of the modern natural sciences.²⁰ The contrast of nature to culture was also inscribed in discussion about scientific methods. In 1894 for example, in his inaugural lecture as rector of the University of Strasbourg, the neo-Kantian philosopher Wilhelm Windelband made a distinction between nomothetic and idiographic study that remains in use to this day: the nomothetic natural sciences seek generally valid laws and favour the method of reductionist experiment, while by contrast idiographic human sciences seek not the universal, but the specific and unique in their objects of study.²¹

The historian of science, Lorraine Daston, considers that the contrasting of nature to culture, of universalism to social constructivism, is so deeply rooted that any attempt to move beyond such polarities would involve group therapy for all scientific disciplines. Only on the psychiatrist’s couch, as it were, might the ideological heritage of the nineteenth century be ‘worked through’.²² In this book I have time and again sought to get up off the couch, throw open the window and reveal a new perspective, a post-therapeutic study of emotion, the study of emotion beyond the dichotomy of universalism and social constructivism.

I have two objectives in this book. First of all, it is an introduction to the history of emotions, and so a synthesis of the current state of knowledge on the subject. An introduction of this kind is not easy to write, for at present the history of emotions is taking off in all directions. Metaphorically, it is rather like tracking photographically each instant of the acceleration of a rocket from its launching pad. I think that this is still feasible for the history of emotions, while it is now too late for the psychology, ethnology, and philosophy of emotions. What has been published so far in the history of emotions can still be pulled together, even if we will eventually come to a point of no return, where knowledge reaches a critical mass beyond which no single person will have the capacity to absorb it. In conformity with this work of review, this book will summarize and order, myths regarding recent studies will be cleared away, and there will be a great deal of direct quotation, so that readers writing their own histories have a sound basis for developing their own work

²⁰ For Galton’s contribution to the nature–culture dyad, see Donald A. MacKenzie, *Statistics in Britain: 1865–1930: The Social Construction of Scientific Knowledge* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981).

²¹ Wilhelm Windelband, *Geschichte und Naturwissenschaft: Rede zum Antritt des Rectorats der Kaiser-Wilhelm-Universität Strassburg, gehalten am 1. Mai 1894* (3rd edn, Strasbourg, 1904). See also the ethnologist John Leavitt, who argues that the study of emotion has been hindered by an unproductive division between a nature investigated by nomothetic sciences and a culture for which ‘ideolectic’ sciences are responsible; John Leavitt, ‘Meaning and Feeling in the Anthropology of Emotions’, *American Ethnologist*, 23/3 (1996), 514–39, here 515.

²² Lorraine Daston in conversation with the author (25 June 2009). See also Jan Plamper and Benjamin Lazier, ‘Introduction: The Phobic Regimes of Modernity’, *Representations*, 110/1 (2010), 58–65, here 59.

on the history of feeling. As in any survey of this kind, the bird's-eye view is just a bird's-eye view, and all readers are encouraged to follow up the literature to which I refer so that they might, instead of a coarse-grained overview, gain a sense of detail.

Nonetheless, this book is not just an overview; it is also an intervention in a rapidly developing research field. This will be plain in each chapter: I have sought to maintain neutrality in summarizing the material, while at the same time making my own opinion as transparent as possible. This is especially true for my critical assessment of the way in which some of the human and social sciences—primarily relating to the study of literature and images, but also political science—make casual use of the neurosciences, which are today so much in vogue. These borrowings often look like a binge that will be closely followed by the most dreadful hangover—I am quite certain of that. And I would place emphasis here upon *casual* borrowings, since in principle borrowings of this kind can lead to important innovations. One needs a degree of literacy in the neurosciences to understand what one is borrowing from, when one borrows. And this book seeks to promote such literacy—in Chapter Three both objectives, overview and intervention, are inseparable. Other works have shown me how it might be possible to bridge the gap between a balanced assessment of a field as a whole and wholehearted involvement in this field; that this might even be done with elegance is something that they have shown me, and without such exemplars I might never have begun this book.²³

The book is divided into four chapters. Chapter One presents a chronology of historical studies of emotion from the start of the history of emotions in the late nineteenth century. This developmental process is placed in the context of social and political events, together with that of other scientific disciplines that had an influence upon the history of emotions. I show in this way that even the history of emotions has a history. Chapter Two turns to the social constructivist end of the spectrum in the debate over emotion, dealing with the discipline that has contributed more than any other to our understanding that feelings are dealt with differently in different cultures: anthropology. Chapter Three switches attention to the other, essentialist, end of the spectrum, and provides an overview of the study of emotion in experimental psychology from the end of the nineteenth century, focusing especially on recent research in the neurosciences. Here I must make a clarification: I use the term 'life sciences' for psychology, physiology, medicine, neurosciences, and related disciplines. This term first emerged in the 1980s as an extension of the more restricted sense of 'biology', introducing areas such as cognitive psychology, brain research, or computer-based neurological research that dealt with living organisms. 'Life sciences' represents the fluidity existing between these separate disciplines. Chapter Four then opens up a perspective upon those areas in the historical study of emotions that might have a future. The dedication of Chapter Two to social constructivism and Chapter Three to universalism does retain the dyadic structure that has prevailed. This contrast has

²³ Terry Eagleton's *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983) served as my most important model.

had too much influence upon everything that has been written about feeling and emotion, and a book which seeks at least in part to be a synthesis cannot do entirely without it. But if *The History of Emotions: An Introduction* can raise questions about this dyad, and ultimately assist in reconciling the two camps, that would be something of an achievement.

This Introduction, however, is devoted to the most fundamental questions raised by the history of emotions: What is emotion? Who has emotion? Do emotions have a history? Assuming that they do have a history, how does the discipline of history deal with this history? Any approach to answering these questions demands exploration of many scientific domains, above all, two and a half millennia of philosophy. This is firstly because philosophical investigations were especially influential and so form a necessary framework for this book; secondly, because in the following chapters they are overshadowed by work in anthropology and the life sciences; and thirdly, because they were often preoccupied with themes and dichotomies other than the opposition of universalism to social constructivism, and thus demonstrate the real prospect of moving beyond this distinction dominating recent work on the study of emotion.²⁴

1 WHAT IS EMOTION?

‘What Is an Emotion?’ is the title of a famous essay by the American psychologist William James (1842–1910) that appeared in 1884.²⁵ James did answer his own question—we will come to that—but it is significant that both question and answer come from a psychologist. This leads us to the prior question of who defines what emotions are. For the discourse on emotion is not always dominated by the same discipline; successive disciplines have addressed the issue, and some of these, like William James’s own discipline of psychology, had not existed in previous centuries. Very roughly, it can be said that in the West, from antiquity until about 1860, it was primarily philosophy and theology that defined thinking about emotions, together with rhetoric, medicine, and literature, and while after 1860 experimental

²⁴ We can thank the ethnologist Catherine A. Lutz for what is probably the most concise account of the history of emotions, in just two sentences: ‘The extensive discussions of the concept of the emotions that have occurred in the West for at least the past 2,000 years have generally proceeded with either philosophical, religious, moral, or, more recently, scientific-psychological purposes in mind. This discourse includes Plato’s concern with the relation between pleasure and the good; the Stoic doctrine that the passions are naturally evil; early Christian attempts to distinguish the emotions of human frailty from the emotions of God; Hobbes’s view that the passions are the primary source of action, naturally prompting both war and peace; the argument of Rousseau that natural feelings are of great value and ought to be separated from the “factitious” or sham feelings produced by civilization; the nineteenth-century psychologists’ move to view emotions as psychophysiological in nature, with consciousness seen less and less as an important component of the emotions’; Catherine A. Lutz, *Unnatural Emotions: Everyday Sentiments on a Micronesian Atoll & Their Challenge to Western Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 53.

²⁵ William James, ‘What Is an Emotion?’, *Mind*, 9/34 (1884), 188–205. This title has been alluded to many times since, as for instance by the psychologist Jerome Kagan in his *What Is Emotion? History, Measures, and Meanings* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

psychology became dominant, this dominance shifted to neuroscience in the late twentieth century.²⁶

A statement as general as this needs to be qualified. To start with, we can introduce what could be called a meta-history of emotions, dealing with who could speak with authority about emotions, where and when they might speak, how these speakers related to each other over time. A history of this kind has been initiated and written for particular periods, but we only have more or less reliable evidence for ancient Greece, eighteenth-century colonial North America, and nineteenth-century Great Britain.²⁷ This book cannot provide an *histoire totale* of emotion, nor even a complete meta-history of emotions, piecing the islands of knowledge that we have into an archipelago and then filling in the ocean that separates it. All that can be done here is to provide some suggestions regarding what we might need if we were to construct such a meta-history. In any case, the idea that more than two and a half millennia of Western theological and philosophical thought about emotion has simply been displaced by one hundred and fifty years of research into the psychology of emotion is deeply problematic, for we also need to take account of thinking about feelings in non-Western parts of the world, where it has also played an important role. Besides, transfers from West to East and vice versa were so diverse and multidirectional even before the rise of psychology that it no longer makes any sense to talk in terms of ‘Western’ and ‘non-Western’ categories.²⁸

There is another prior question that we cannot avoid. Are we really talking about the same object when we refer to ‘emotion’ as understood by Joseph LeDoux in the neurosciences of 1996 and ‘emotion’ as used by Klaus Scherer for experimental developmental psychology in 1979? Or Barbara Rosenwein’s use of the term for historical studies in 2002 and ‘emotion’ for Jaak Panksepp’s neuroscience in 1998? Or the use of the term ‘emotions’ by Charles Darwin in 1872, and the entry for

²⁶ Philip Fisher provides a description of the fields that dealt with emotion, although he gives no chronology: ‘What we know or how we think about the passions was, from the beginning, a complex product of overlapping and sometimes mutually encumbering work in philosophy, in literature—especially epic and tragedy—in medicine, in ethics, in rhetoric, in aesthetics, in legal and political thought. In our own time, new work in evolutionary biology, psychology, anthropology, and most recently in the neurobiology of the brain, along with work in game theory and economics, and, above all, in philosophy, continues the interwoven texture of shared, interdependent, sometimes interfering, even damaging, and sometimes enhancing collaborative thought’; Philip Fisher, *The Vehement Passions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 7.

²⁷ For Greece, see David Konstan, *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks: Studies in Aristotle and Classical Literature* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2006); for colonial North America, see Nicole Eustace, *Passion Is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 481–6; for Great Britain in the 19th century, see Thomas Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

²⁸ For this process of transfer, see the example of the emotional dimension of ‘hysteria’ in the Greek-Persian-Arabic-Indian triangle: Guy N. A. Attewell, *Refiguring Unani Tibb: Plural Healing in Late Colonial India* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2007), 225–37; for emotion itself, and its localization in the body in the Greek-Persian-Arabic-Indian-British relationship, see Margrit Pernau, ‘The Indian Body and Unani Medicine: Body History as Entangled History’, in Axel Michaels and Christoph Wulf (eds), *Images of the Body in India* (London: Routledge, 2011), 97–108, esp. 104–6.

'affection' in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* of 1910/11 which states that affection 'does not involve anxiety or excitement, that it is comparatively inert and compatible with the entire absence of the sensuous element'? Is there anything in common between *les affects* as understood by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in 1980, the Indonesian *perasaan hati* in the mid-1980s, 'affect' as used in English by the philosopher Brian Massumi in 2002, and the *emozioni* as described by Cesare Lombroso in 1876?²⁹ In brief: is there a unity of meaning sufficient to permit us to deal with these very different terms originating in very different fields, times, and cultures as 'emotion'?

At first glance it certainly does not look like it. Even in such a limited field as English-language experimental psychology, ninety-two different definitions of emotion have been counted between 1872 and 1980.³⁰ The sheer difficulty of defining emotion is often treated as its leading characteristic, for instance when in 1931 an American cardiologist described emotion as a 'fluid and fleeting thing that like the wind comes and goes, one does not know how'; or when two psychologists half a century later argued that 'everyone knows what an emotion is, until asked to give a definition'.³¹

There are, however, three reasons to bring all these definitions together under 'emotion'. First of all, many concepts of emotion are etymologically connected. If you trace back the German terms *Emotion* and *Gemüthsbewegung* ('stirring of one's soul'), for example, then you find that they both relate to the Latin *movere*. Showing and tracing all these connections in a large number of languages would be a major project for conceptual history (*Begriffsgeschichte*), one that could only be pursued on a collaborative basis. Besides this, even cultures whose languages having nothing like a concept of emotion often import the word. The Tibetan language does this, where non-Tibetans were so frequently asked why there was no word for emotion that a neologism—*tshor myong*—was invented to cover the term.³² Secondly,

²⁹ See LeDoux, *Emotional Brain*; Klaus R. Scherer, 'Nonlinguistic Vocal Indicators of Emotion and Psychopathology', in Carroll E. Izard (ed.), *Emotions in Personality and Psychopathology* (New York: Plenum Press, 1979), 495–529; Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions in History', *American Historical Review*, 107/3 (2002), 821–45; Jaak Panksepp, *Affective Neuroscience: The Foundations of Human and Animal Emotions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Charles Darwin, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (London: John Murray, 1872); 'affection', in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica: A Dictionary of Arts, Literature, and General Information*, i. *A to Androphagi* (11th edn, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 299–300, here 300; Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Mille plateaux* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1980), 314; Karl G. Heider, *Landscapes of Emotion: Mapping Three Cultures of Emotion in Indonesia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 41; Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002); Cesare Lombroso, *L'uomo delinquente in rapporto all'antropologia, alla giurisprudenza ed alle discipline carcerarie* (Turin: Bocca, 1876), 651.

³⁰ Paul R. Kleinginna Jun. and Anne M. Kleinginna, 'A Categorized List of Emotion Definitions, with Suggestions for a Consensual Definition', *Motivation and Emotion*, 5/4 (1981), 345–79.

³¹ Stewart R. Roberts, 'Nervous and Mental Influences in Angina Pectoris', *American Heart Journal*, 7/1 (1931), 21–35, here 23; Beverley Fehr and James A. Russell, 'Concept of Emotion Viewed from a Prototype Perspective', *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 113/3 (1984), 464–86, here 464.

³² Georges Dreyfus, 'Is Compassion an Emotion? A Cross-Cultural Exploration of Mental Typologies', in Richard J. Davidson and Anne Harrington (eds), *Visions of Compassion: Western*

comparison and draft translations throw up similarities, and also of course differences. In fact, draft translations are extremely productive, and make up the majority of definitional science. Thirdly, and lastly, scholarship without meta-concepts—a nominalist human science—would relapse into a radically random enterprise. In itself, there would be nothing against that. But since there is a market for anti-nominalist scholarship, and currently also for a history of emotions, this scholarship will be produced.

I have decided to use ‘emotion’ as a meta-concept. As a synonym I will also use ‘feeling’. At the same time I will not shy away from the necessary labours of historicization: I will therefore address myself to the clarification of specific terminological usage when and wherever it occurs. I will deal with the word ‘affect’ in a different manner. Influenced by the neurosciences, the notion has in recent years increasingly assumed the sense of purely physical, prelinguistic, unconscious emotion. For this reason, it will not be deployed as a meta-concept in this book. If I had used ‘affect’ as a meta-concept I would have had to use up a lot of space in rowing against the currently dominant usage, introducing considerations of evaluation, language, and consciousness.

But back to my original question: what is emotion? Today, much of the public and transdisciplinary scholarly discourse concerning emotion is dominated by a psychology which is heavily coloured by the neurosciences. A general collective amnesia prevails concerning the history of psychological, not to mention philosophical, ideas regarding emotion—even if there are today voices raised in the neurosciences suggesting that the entire history of philosophy represents an anticipation of the modern natural sciences.³³ Only a rough outline of two and a half thousand years of philosophical thinking about emotion can be given here. A constant feature of this history is the reception process, including the psychology of today, and here the ‘unspoken’ reception is important, in which the actual philosophical connections are no longer recognized. If at the conclusion of this account some elements of the wealth and complexity of the philosophy of emotion are recognizable, then the following pages will have served their purpose.

One of the earliest recorded definitions, also one of the most enduring and influential, comes from Aristotle (384–322 BC).³⁴ He described the Greek term *pathos* (*pathē* in the plural) as follows:

The emotions are all those affections which cause men to change their opinion in regard to their judgements, and are accompanied by pleasure and pain; such are anger, pity, fear, and all similar emotions and their contraries.³⁵

Scientists and Tibetan Buddhists Examine Human Nature (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 31–45, here 31.

³³ Antonio R. Damasio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain* (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2003), 15.

³⁴ The most concise introduction to thinking on emotion from Plato to Augustine can be found in Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), ch. 1.

³⁵ Aristotle, *The ‘Art’ of Rhetoric*, trans. John Henry Freese (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959), 173. More generally, see Michael Krewet, *Die Theorie der Gefühle bei Aristoteles* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2011).

This quotation comes from his *'Art' of Rhetoric*, in a passage that deals with the way that emotion fogs judicial powers of judgement. The target group of the text were those whose work in politics or in the courts of law involved the use of eloquence to exert emotional influence. Aristotle gave them a kind of instruction manual. In this first of many catalogues of affects, Aristotle does not simply distinguish between positive and negative emotions, as is usual today, but treats each emotion as itself having a negative and a positive sense, and as being capable of producing pleasure or pain.

Interpretations of this passage diverge greatly: some think it untypical of Aristotle and thus as being limited to the pragmatic context of rhetoric; others regard it as quite typical of Aristotle's conception of emotions, and more generally that of the city states of Classical Greece (c.500–336/323 BC), where emotions were understood to be reactions, reactions not to events but to actions or situations that resulted from actions, the consequences of which affect one's relative status, or the relative status of others.³⁶ For some, Aristotle's list reminds them of the basic emotions which Paul Ekman identified in the later twentieth century; others on the other hand believe that Aristotle's conception of emotion, and his emphasis upon the element of judgement, is a forerunner of the experimental psychology of cognitive appraisal that is opposed to Ekman but which belongs to the same period; yet others point to contemporary social psychology with its emphasis upon the intersubjective and communicative function of emotion.³⁷ It is quite apparent that even very old ideas about emotion are eagerly projected upon the key cleavages in recent research.

But let us stick with Aristotle and one particular emotion, that of anger (*orgē*). We can read the following in Aristotle's *The 'Art' of Rhetoric*:

Let us then define anger as a longing, accompanied by pain, for a real or apparent revenge for a real or apparent slight, affecting a man himself or one of his friends, when such a slight is undeserved. If this definition is correct, the angry man must always be angry with a particular individual (for instance, with Cleon, but not with men generally), and because this individual has done, or was on the point of doing, something against him or one of his friends; and lastly, anger is always accompanied by a certain pleasure, due to the hope of revenge to come. For it is pleasant to think that one will obtain what one aims at; now, no one aims at what is obviously

³⁶ William W. Fortenbaugh, *Aristotle on Emotion: A Contribution to Philosophical Psychology, Rhetoric Poetics, Politics and Ethics* (2nd edn, London: Duckworth, 2002), 114 treats the passage as untypical, and limited to rhetoric; while the contrasting position can be represented by Konstan, *Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*, 40.

³⁷ For Aristotle as a precursor of Ekman, see Carol Tavis, 'A Polite Smile or the Real McCoy?', review of Paul Ekman, *Emotions Revealed: Recognizing Faces and Feelings to Improve Communication and Emotional Life* (New York: Times Books, 2003), in *Scientific American*, 288/6 (2003), 87–8. For Aristotle as the forerunner of the appraisal approach of cognitive psychology: Randolph R. Cornelius, *The Science of Emotion: Research and Tradition in the Psychology of Emotion* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996), 115; Kagan, *What Is Emotion?*, 11–12; Richard Lazarus, 'Relational Meaning and Discrete Emotions', in Klaus R. Scherer, Angela Schorr, and Tom Johnstone (eds), *Appraisal Processes in Emotion: Theory, Methods, Research* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 37–67, here 40. For Aristotle as forerunner of social psychology, Konstan, *Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*, 31, citing the social psychologist Agneta Fischer.

impossible of attainment by him, and the angry man aims at what is possible for himself. Wherefore it has been well said of anger, that 'Far sweeter than dripping honey down the throat it spreads in men's hearts' for it is accompanied by a certain pleasure, for this reason first, and also because men dwell upon the thought of revenge, and the vision that rises before us produces the same pleasure as one seen in dreams.³⁸

Hence anger is neither an exclusively positive nor an exclusively negative emotion. Anger is of course painful, but also involves the expectation of 'sweet' revenge. In addition, Aristotle's conception of anger had a temporal dimension: anger had an endpoint, whereas hatred had no end and was temporally unlimited. The power of imagination is also an element of anger: revenge is sweet, and the sweetness of revenge is something imagined; here, expectation blossoms in the domain of imagination.

Aristotle generally associated *pathē* with the world of imagination, providing the basis for further reflection upon aesthetics and feelings: is there any difference between the sympathy I feel for someone whom I rush to assist after he falls off his bike, and that which I feel for Oliver Twist, the hero of a novel? And if so, in what way? Can emotional reactions to 'real' events that affect me directly be compared or even equated with emotional reactions to cultural products such as novels, films, or computer games? And what has that got to do with my fear of spiders, keeping me captive in a windowless room? Aristotle considers that feelings devoid of any connection with reality—the pure products of *phantasia*—have a lesser force than feelings which are related in some way with the real world.³⁹

In fact, *pathē* was used first by Plato (424/3–348/7 BC) and his pupil Aristotle to refer to circumstances that originated of themselves. This had not always been so. 'Homer's literary figures saw themselves as more or less helpless in the face of the power of feelings', and the pre-Socratic philosophers also defined emotions as something that was external, and not something produced within men themselves—the parallel here with the Maori warriors who attributed their fear to *atua*, noted above, is quite clear.⁴⁰ Perhaps it is because of the long shadow cast by Classical Greek theories of emotion that many of the metaphors we today use to express our feelings correspond to the idea that emotion is something external: we are 'overcome with rage', 'seized by pleasure', and 'love-struck'.⁴¹ But this does not

³⁸ Aristotle, 'Art' of *Rhetoric*, 173–5.

³⁹ Simo Knuutila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 37, 40.

⁴⁰ Christoph Demmerling and Hilge Landweer, *Philosophie der Gefühle: Von Achtung bis Zorn* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2007), 2. See also Bruno Snell, *The Discovery of the Mind: The Greek Origins of European Thought*, trans. T. G. Rosenmayer (New York: Harper & Row, 1960) [Ger. orig., *Die Entdeckung des Geistes: Studien zur Entstehung des europäischen Denkens bei den Griechen*, 1946].

⁴¹ 'We talk about being "paralyzed" by fear, "smitten" by love, "struck" by jealousy, "overwhelmed" by sadness, and being "made mad" with rage'; Robert C. Solomon, *True to Our Feelings: What Our Emotions Are Really Telling Us* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 190. See, for a discussion of the philosophy of emotion in antiquity, Rüdiger Zill, *Meßkünstler und Rossebändiger: Zur Funktion von Metaphern und Modellen in philosophischen Affekttheorien*, PhD diss., Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, 1994.

mean that Greek philosophers thought in terms of a unidirectional schema of stimulus and response that left no room for considerations of judgement and calculation. On the contrary: Aristotle defined fear as ‘a painful or troubled feeling caused by the impression of an imminent evil that causes destruction or pain’ and did not conceive this as an automatic (also physical) reaction to imagined future adversity, but instead as something which admitted the power of conviction, opinion, and belief to interrupt the course of emotion.⁴² Aristotle would have traced my fear of the snake I saw in the woods to the imagined harm I suffered from the threat of its bite, but ascribed to me the capacity of suppressing any preprogrammed emotion before it started because I had, as a 6-year-old visiting the terrarium in the Boston Zoo, developed a real love of snakes, or stopping it because as a 40-year-old I had engaged in behavioural therapy that kept my phobia in check.

Besides that, because of their inherent element of judgement Aristotelian emotions can be altered not only in oneself, but in others as well, especially the young. In Aristotle’s eyes the young needed to develop their feelings so that proper judgement became second nature.⁴³ Those philosophers associated with Stoicism agreed with Aristotle until it came to the element of judgement in his definition of emotion.⁴⁴ They went their own way once it came to the education of young people: their pantheism led them to emphasize the bigger picture and the irrelevance of emotion. The aim was to achieve an emotionless or calm state of apathy (*apatheia*), followed by ataraxia.⁴⁵ Love and marriage were to be avoided because of their relative lack of significance in their general pantheistic perspective. This form of control over emotion echoed long afterwards—the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius (121–180) wrote about the ataraxic ideal in his *Meditations* and above all recommended that politicians be calm, while the American philosopher Martha Nussbaum, who sees herself as a ‘neo-Stoic’, consequently has an understanding of emotion that lays emphasis upon one’s own well-being—hence the Stoic emphasis on peace of mind—but she still views emotion as ‘appraisal’.⁴⁶

⁴² Aristotle, *Art’ of Rhetoric*, 201. See also Knuutila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, 35, 37.

⁴³ A. W. Price, ‘Emotions in Plato and Aristotle’, in Peter Goldie (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 121–42, here 137–8.

⁴⁴ The Stoics who were most interested in emotion were Zeno of Kition (c.333/2–262/1 BC), Chrysippos (281/276–208/204 BC), Poseidonios (135–51 BC), Seneca (c.1–65), and Epiktetos (c.50–c.125). See e.g. on the Stoics and their attitude to emotion Richard Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation: The Gifford Lectures* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Margaret R. Graver, *Stoicism and Emotion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Barbara Guckes (ed.), *Zur Ethik der älteren Stoa* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004); but also the older text by Maximilian Forschner, *Die stoische Ethik: Über den Zusammenhang von Natur-, Sprach- und Moralphilosophie im altstoischen System* (2nd edn, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1995).

⁴⁵ On ataraxia and apathy see Joachim Ritter (ed.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, i (Basel: Schwabe, 1971), 429–33, 593.

⁴⁶ Martha Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 4–5, ch. 1. Nussbaum goes beyond the Stoics in detail, admitting to animals the capacity of emotion. She generally distinguishes between a descriptive and a normative Stoic programme, embracing the former and rejecting the latter. See Jules Evans, ‘An Interview with Martha

	Hot	Cold
	Strong Will	Weak Will
Dry	Yellow Gall	Black Gall
Strong Feelings	Choleric: irritable	Melancholic: sad and reflective
Wet	Blood	Passive
Weak Feelings	Sanguine: lively and active	Phlegmatic: passive and difficult

Fig. 2 Galen's Doctrine of the Four Fluids and The Related Emotional Types

In the course of the second century AD a Greek physician emerged who had been influenced by Plato and whose ideas of emotion influenced generations of Arabic and European physicians, right up to the Italian Renaissance. Galen (c.130–c.200) put forward a doctrine of human temperament which ascribed particular properties to blood, phlegm, yellow gall, and black gall.⁴⁷ Galen thought that an excess of one of these fluids caused one's humour to belong to one particular sphere (see Fig. 2).

Galen did not see any therapeutic potential in chemical or physical media, but instead in moral education and moderation. His doctrine of the four fluids, and especially the related pathology of humours (choleric, sanguine, melancholic, and phlegmatic)—hence the characteristics of external, excess emotions—can still be found, albeit in modified form, in the writings of Immanuel Kant and also those of some psychologists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁴⁸

Fundamental to most thought about emotion since Plato has been the idea of a tripartite soul. Plato considered that the soul was formed by rational (*logistikon*), spirited (*thymoeides*), and appetitive (*epithymetikon*) elements. This idea was modified by Aristotle and the Stoics, but most lastingly by Augustine (354–430), who was influenced by early Christian writings on emotion.⁴⁹ Augustine created a hierarchical, staged model of souls, where the lowest stage was purely vegetative and physical, and the highest stage, the seventh, was beatitude or divine epiphany.⁵⁰ The top two stages were reserved for men. Augustine also replaced the Aristotelian and Stoic division of the emotional process—which conceives of it as a more physical initial movement (*primus motus*) and a second, cognitive and moral

Nussbaum', *Philosophy for Life* (5 February 2009) <<http://philosophyforlife.org/an-interview-with-martha-nussbaum/>> accessed 21 February 2014.

⁴⁷ For an introduction to Galen's doctrine of the four fluids see Jutta Kollesch and Diethard Nickel (eds), *Antike Heilkunst: Ausgewählte Texte aus den medizinischen Schriften der Griechen und Römer* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1994), 25–7.

⁴⁸ Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*, 41; Knuutila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, 93–8; Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind*, 253–60.

⁴⁹ See on these early Christian monks, the so-called Desert Fathers, and their ideas about emotion: Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*, 46–50.

⁵⁰ Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions*, 34.

evaluation—with a unitary category of the emotions (*motus*) subordinated to the will:

What is important here is the quality of a man's will. For if the will is perverse, the emotions will be perverse; but if it is righteous, the emotions will be not only blameless, but praiseworthy. The will is engaged in all of them; indeed, they are all no more than acts of the will. For what is desire and joy but an act of will in agreement with what we wish for? And what is fear and grief but an act of will in disagreement with what we do not wish for?⁵¹

However, because of original sin, man's will generally guides him in the wrong direction. Only he who had accepted God's mercy and oriented his will to the fixed point of God could render his feelings positive. In this Augustine's ideas fundamentally conflicted with those of Classical Greek philosophers. For unlike the Stoics, whose pantheistic conceptions led them to discover the divine in earth and nature, Augustine located divinity in an unreachable, transcendent sphere. For him, emotions were thus oriented towards life after death. Everything temporal, including the human body, was defiled and transitory.⁵² This was quite different to Aristotle, for whose thought the emotional and the cognitive were inseparable. Augustine had thus already anticipated the duality of emotion and reason for which Descartes is usually blamed.⁵³ And as a further contrast with the Stoics, whose ideal for life was emotional serenity, Augustine welcomed emotionality in life, so long as it was subordinated to the will and aimed at divinity.⁵⁴

Emotional thinking during the Middle Ages is not so well researched as that in antiquity, and furthermore had little influence on subsequent centuries; the Scholastics, and in particular Thomas Aquinas (1225–74), are usually treated as an appendix to Aristotle and Augustine.⁵⁵ It is always said that René Descartes (1596–1650) was the real innovator. He is not only regarded as the most influential philosopher of modernity, but as the founder of dualism, above all of mind–body

⁵¹ Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, ed. and trans. R. W. Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) [Lat. orig., *De civitate dei*, 426], 590.

⁵² Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*, 50–1.

⁵³ Robert C. Solomon, *The Passions: Emotions and the Meaning of Life* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993). According to Thomas Dixon, Robert Solomon is wrong to hold Christian thinkers like Augustine and Thomas Aquinas responsible for the separation of emotion and reason. In fact, they dealt in terms of passion and reason, in which reason, just like passion, could be 'moved' (*motus*), although this was only as a positive movement such as love; Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions*, 53–4.

⁵⁴ Augustine dealt with volutaristic control of emotion autobiographically in his *Confessions*, which for the most part concerns his efforts to repress his own lust (*libido*); Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions*, 51–2.

⁵⁵ An introduction to medieval emotional thinking can be found in Peter King, 'Emotions in Medieval Thought', in Goldie (ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*, 167–87; Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, chs. 3–4; Piroška Nagy and Damien Boquet (eds), *Le Sujet des émotions au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Beauchesne, 2009), esp. pt. I. On Thomas Aquinas see Nicholas E. Lombardo, *The Logic of Desire: Aquinas on Emotion* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2011). On the medieval and early modern periods, from Thomas Aquinas to Descartes and Spinoza, see Dominik Perler, *Transformationen der Gefühle: Philosophische Emotionstheorien 1270–1670* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2011).

dualism, which also involved a contrast between emotion and reason.⁵⁶ His 'I think, therefore I am' is often understood in this way, as, for example, in this statement from the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio, who summarizes *Descartes' Error* (the title of his best-seller) in this way:

Taken literally, the statement illustrates precisely the opposite of what I believe to be true about the origins of mind and about the relation between mind and body. It suggests that thinking, and awareness of thinking, are the real substrates of being. And since we know that Descartes imagined thinking as an activity quite separate from the body, it does celebrate the separation of mind, the 'thinking thing' (*res cogitans*), from the nonthinking body, that which has extension and mechanical parts (*res extensa*). . . . This is Descartes' error: the abyssal separation between body and mind, between the sizable, dimensioned, mechanically operated, infinitely divisible body stuff, on the one hand, and the unsizable, undimensioned, unpush-pullable, nondivisible mind stuff; the suggestion that reasoning, and moral judgment, and the suffering that comes from physical pain or emotional upheaval might exist separately from the body. Specifically: the separation of the most refined operations of mind from the structure and operation of a biological organism.⁵⁷

Recently it has been argued against this position that Descartes, by rationalizing God, by making Him the epitome of reason—clearly differentiating himself from Christian philosophers such as Augustine and Thomas Aquinas—likewise loaded reason with emotion. For example, he treated fear as an element of will, treating the control of fear not as the suppression of passion, but as the victory of one passion over another: 'useful thoughts designed to generate one passion (e.g. courage) to counteract another (e.g. fear)'.⁵⁸ All the same, such revisionism should not distract from the sheer novelty of Descartes, as when he announces in *The Passions of the Soul* his intention of investigating emotions as 'a physician' and separating them from the soul, so that they might be studied as mechanisms, like all living organisms

⁵⁶ Nicolas Malebranche (1638–1715) radicalized the mind–body dualism. For his theory of emotion see Tad Schmaltz, 'Malebranche: Neigungen und Leidenschaften', in Hilge Landweer and Ursula Renz (eds), *Klassische Emotionstheorien: Von Platon bis Wittgenstein* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 331–49.

⁵⁷ Antonio R. Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: Putnam, 1994), 248–9. Various critics have noted that Damasio has used Descartes as a straw man, without taking account of studies of Descartes's work: see Henrik Lagerlund, 'Introduction: The Mind/Body Problem and Late Medieval Conceptions of the Soul', in Lagerlund (ed.), *Forming the Mind: Essays on the Internal Senses and the Mind/Body Problem from Avicenna to the Medical Enlightenment* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), 1–15; Timo Kaitaro, 'Emotional Pathologies and Reason in French Medical Enlightenment', in Lagerlund (ed.), *Forming the Mind*, 311–25.

⁵⁸ Deborah Brown, 'The Rationality of Cartesian Passions', in Henrik Lagerlund and Mikko Yrjönsuuri (eds), *Emotions and Choice from Boethius to Descartes* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), 259–78, here 270. On Descartes's contribution, important but less original than usually assumed, see Anthony Levi, *French Moralists: The Theory of the Passions, 1585 to 1649* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964). On the prehistory of the upgrading of emotions in early modernity see Wilhelm Dilthey, 'Die Funktion der Anthropologie in der Kultur des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts', in *Gesammelte Schriften*, ii. *Weltanschauung und Analyse des Menschen seit Renaissance und Reformation* (6th edn Stuttgart: Teubner, 1960), 416–92.

(with the exception of the human soul).⁵⁹ He used the example of the finger of another person which is getting close to one's eye; even if our mind knows that this finger belongs to a friend, our body responds with the mechanisms of fear and self-protection, and we blink. In such a circumstance our mind proves useless, since 'the machine of our body is so formed that the movement of this hand towards our eyes excites another movement in our brain, which conducts the animal spirits into the muscles which cause the eyelids to close'.⁶⁰

The court artist to Louis XIV, Charles Le Brun, also made use of Descartes's theory of emotion in his anatomical sketches of emotion, inaugurating a connection between emotion and medially represented (sketched, photographed, computer-generated) faces (and brains) that would prove enormously influential.⁶¹ Le Brun created a sketched taxonomy of facial expression showing particular emotions that remained in use until the nineteenth century. But even in his lifetime critics argued that the ideal-typical faces were too static: they both lacked the processual character of emotion, and appeared simultaneously, rather than in clear succession. This objection, that emotion might not be treated in its pure forms, reappeared in the later twentieth century as a regular criticism of the theory of basic emotions.⁶²

Baruch de Spinoza (1632–77) is often treated as the opposite of Descartes if the latter is understood as a dualist, and has in the last few years experienced a breathtaking renaissance in the study of embodiment in the social sciences, literary studies, and the study of images (see Chapter Three). This boom can be read out of the titles of Damasio's popular books, which run from the critical *Descartes' Error* to the affirmative *Looking for Spinoza*. It could be said that the alacrity with which the modern neurosciences have adopted Spinoza can be blamed upon the ambiguity and disorderliness of his thinking. One might also trace the Spinoza renaissance to his rejection of dualism—he is often called a monist because of his belief in a single divine substance—a rejection which leads him to see feeling and soul as two sides of the same reality. The connection in his main work, *Ethica: Ordine geometrico demonstrata* (1677; Eng. *Ethics*), of natural scientific, geometric reflection with emotional thinking is also a bonus that only adds to his attraction for literary

⁵⁹ René Descartes, 'Préface to "Passions de l'âme": Letter of Descartes to the editor, 14 August 1649', in Roger Ariew (ed.), *Descartes in Seventeenth-Century England*, ii. *Descartes' Works in Translation* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 2002), B3.

⁶⁰ Descartes, 'Préface to "Passions de l'âme"', 37. The example is cited in Daniel M. Gross, *The Secret History of Emotion: From Aristotle's Rhetoric to Modern Brain Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 23.

⁶¹ [Charles] Le Brun, *A Method to Learn to Design the Passions: Proposed in a Conference on the General and Particular Expression: Written in English, and Illustrated with a Great Many Figures Excellently Designed by M. Le Brun, Chief Painter to the French King, Chancellor and Director of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture: Translated and all the Designs Engraved on Copper by, John Williams* (London: n.p., 1734) [1st Fr. edn 1698].

⁶² Anne Schmidt, 'Showing Emotions, Reading Emotions', in Ute Frevert et al., *Emotional Lexicons: Continuity and Change in the Vocabulary of Feeling 1700–2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 62–90. The mixed character of emotions is today emphasized by, amongst others, Kagan, *What Is Emotion?*

scholars interested in the neurosciences and for neuroscientists interested in literature.⁶³

Spinoza considered that the mind, and hence also feelings, were part of nature; as such, they obeyed generally valid laws:

I shall, then, treat of the nature and strength of the emotions, and the mind's power over them, by the same method I have used in treating of God and the mind, and I shall consider human actions and appetites just as if it were an investigation into lines, planes, or bodies.⁶⁴

He also divided feelings into actions and passions, such that actions have their origin in us, while passions have an external origin. Self and the external are not however categorically distinct, since both are part of nature. At the same time he assumed there to be only three basic feelings: joy, sadness, and the higher feeling of cupidity/desire (*cupiditas*). These building blocks in his treatment of feeling (as elsewhere) were combined in a complicated manner into laws expressed as axiomatic aphorisms, such as

Proposition 38: If anyone has begun to hate the object of his love to the extent that his love is completely extinguished, he will, other things being equal, bear greater hatred toward it, than if he had never loved it, and his hatred will be proportionate to the strength of his former love.⁶⁵

The physical and law-like nature of these propositions gained the attention of physiologists during the nineteenth century, and later the admiration of experimental psychologists.⁶⁶ The current fashion for Spinoza focuses in particular on his monism. Writers in the social sciences and literary studies invoke him so that they might valorize matter, whether these be everyday objects, trees, or Arctic ice. Matter has feeling and ultimately agency just like the human being; hence matter is also within range of our empathy and deserving of protection, even requiring protection, something which makes these ideas attractive to ecological projects and other post-Marxist political endeavours.⁶⁷ Social scientists and

⁶³ Baruch de Spinoza, 'Ethics', in *Spinoza: Complete Works*, ed. Michael L. Morgan, trans. Samuel Shirley (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002), 213–382.

⁶⁴ Spinoza, 'Ethics', 278. On Spinoza in general see what remains the most complete compendium of thought on emotion in one volume, even if it is organized according to the perspective of 1930s experimental psychology (two of the authors were psychologists): H. M. [sic Harry Norman] Gardiner, Ruth Clark Metcalf, and John G. Beebe-Center, *Feeling and Emotion: A History of Theories* (New York: American Book Company, 1937), 192–205. See also Steven Nadler, 'Baruch Spinoza', in Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2011 Edition)* <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/spinoza>> accessed 22 February 2014.

⁶⁵ Spinoza, 'Ethics', 298.

⁶⁶ See e.g. the physiologist Johannes Müller, *Handbuch der Physiologie des Menschen: Für Vorlesungen*, ii (Koblenz: Hölscher, 1840), 543–52.

⁶⁷ See Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), x–xi: 'I try to bear witness to the vital materialities that flow through and around us. Though the movements and effectivity of stem cells, electricity, food, trash, and metals are crucial to political life (and human life per se), almost as soon as they appear in public (often at first by disrupting human projects or expectations), these activities and powers are represented as human mood, action, meaning, agenda, or ideology. This quick substitution sustains the fantasy that "we" really are in charge

literary scholars are also attracted to monism because it makes possible the embodiment of thought processes.⁶⁸

Neuroscientists also took an interest in Spinoza's monism since they saw in it an anticipation of their own work, for example, in the idea 'That mind and body are parallel and mutually correlated processes, mimicking each other at every crossroad, as two faces of the same thing', and 'That deep inside these parallel phenomena there is a mechanism for representing body events in the mind'.⁶⁹ Spinoza can also be assimilated to evolutionary theory and the idea of homeostasis—that living beings seek to maintain themselves in existence—and neuroscience has also endorsed his theory of virtue: it can be said that 'We have to work hard at formulating and perfecting the human decree but to some extent our brains are wired to cooperate with others in the process of making the decree possible'.⁷⁰ In a word: Spinoza was 'the protobiologist'.⁷¹

Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) never wrote a separate text on the emotions, but he constantly referred to emotions in his writing, from his early *Elements of Law, Natural and Politic* through *Leviathan* to *De Homine*: 'No writer of the period attributes to them such significance for the whole life of man as he.'⁷² Hobbes described the state of nature as a terrible living-out of passions: 'no Arts; no Letters; no Society; and which is worst of all, continuall feare, and danger of violent death;

of all those "its"—its that, according to the tradition of (nonmechanistic, nonteleological) materialism I draw on, reveal themselves to be potentially forceful agents. Spinoza stands as a touchstone for me in this book, even though he himself was not quite a materialist. I invoke his idea of conative bodies that strive to enhance their power of activity by forming alliances with other bodies, and I share his faith that everything is made of the same substance. . . . This same-stuff claim, this insinuation that deep down everything is connected and irreducible to a simple substrate, resonates with an *ecological sensibility*, and that too is important to me.' Emphasis in original.

⁶⁸ See William E. Connolly, *Neuropolitics: Thinking, Culture, Speed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 7–8: 'Humans, as embodied, thinking beings, form two irreducible perspectives on themselves. Spinoza introduced this view, treating thought and extension as two aspects of the same substance rather than two kinds of stuff from which the universe is composed. I adopt a modified version of Spinoza's "parallelism" . . . In my judgment, neither that thesis nor those contending against it have been proved. But a modified Spinozism can marshal points in its favor. First, it expresses the understanding of those who contend that human life evolved from lower forms without divine intervention, and it does so without reducing human experience to third-person accounts of it. Second, it encourages cultural theorists to explore accumulating evidence of significant correlations between the observation of body/brain processes and the lived experience of thinking. Third, it encourages us to come to terms actively with a variety of *techniques*—many of which already operate in everyday life—that can stimulate changes in thinking without adopting a reductionist image of thought in doing so. Fourth, it allows us to explore how thinking itself can sometimes modify the microcomposition of body/brain processes, as a new pattern of thinking becomes infused into body/brain processes. For, as Gerald Edelman and Giulio Tonino, two leading neuroscientists, put the point pithily, "Neurons that fire together wire together." The version of parallelism adopted here encourages exploration of opaque, ubiquitous relations between technique and thinking without reducing the experience of thinking itself to a series of observational states. It appreciates the complexity of thinking while encouraging us to deploy technique to become more thoughtful. Technique is part of culture, and thinking is neurocultural.' Emphasis in original.

⁶⁹ Damasio, *Looking for Spinoza*, 217. Other life scientists who invoke Spinoza are listed in the same work, 300 n. 7.

⁷⁰ Damasio, *Looking for Spinoza*, 173–4.

⁷¹ Damasio, *Looking for Spinoza*, 14.

⁷² Gardiner, Metcalf, and Beebe-Center, *Feeling and Emotion*, 184.

and the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short'.⁷³ But this condition involved a hope: that for a short while this living-out of passions and fear balanced each other, and made rational decisions possible. This equilibrium, Hobbes argued, came from the social contract, which was the only means for humankind to escape the state of nature.

For Hobbes all feelings were bodily manifestations, connected to the will and directed at external objects. There were only two directions for such movements: towards an object, appetite; or away from an object, aversion. If we neither desire nor are averse to an object we despise it and keep our body (our heart) in between the two movements. The two directions create a short catalogue of 'simple' emotions, such as love, sorrow, and joy, and, when combined with other factors, an endless catalogue of further emotions.⁷⁴ With Hobbes, we need to bear in mind that 'His main interest . . . is not psychological analysis, but the development of a conception of human nature which would explain men's actions and afford an intelligible basis for civil institutions and political government'.⁷⁵

The eighteenth-century Scottish moral philosophers reacted to Hobbes and his adversary John Locke (1632–1704) in elaborating a system of moral sentiments, introducing a conception of empathy that remains much discussed today. Anthony Ashley-Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713), closely connected to the Scottish moral philosophers, inquired into the utility of emotions, and treated them in a far more relational manner than Hobbes. For Hobbes, one part of the emotions, natural affections, was directed mainly to one's fellow beings, whereas unnatural affections were antisocial, involving only one's own advantage.⁷⁶ In contrast to Hobbes, Shaftesbury also saw that in human nature 'virtue and interest may be found at last to agree'.⁷⁷ Emotions were valuable a priori, and the pursuit of happiness has to be understood in accordance with this. The different feelings men had related to one another like the 'strings of a musical instrument', which strived for natural harmony.⁷⁸

Francis Hutcheson (1694–1746) went one step further. Also a moral philosopher, he considered that emotions were 'by Nature ballanced against each other,

⁷³ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (rev. edn, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 89.

⁷⁴ Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. 6. Generally, Hobbes's treatment of emotion is scattered through a number of texts: chs. 7, 9, and 12 of *The Elements of Law, Naturals and Politic* (1640/50); *De Cive* (1642); chs. 6 and 13 of *Leviathan* (1651); ch. 25.12–13 of *De Corpore* (1655); ch. 11 of *De Homine* (1658).

⁷⁵ Gardiner, Metcalf, and Beebe-Center, *Feeling and Emotion*, 187–8.

⁷⁶ In addition, Shaftesbury 'for the first time discovered feeling as a unique and independent capacity or sentiment. He considered feelings—contrary to his teacher John Locke—not as something deriving from sensations and reflections, but as a mental phenomenon *sui generis*'; Angelica Baum and Ursula Renz, 'Shaftesbury: Emotionen im Spiegel reflexiver Neigung', in Landweer and Renz (eds), *Klassische Emotionstheorien*, 351–69, here 353.

⁷⁷ Anthony Ashley-Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, ed. Lawrence E. Klein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 167.

⁷⁸ Gardiner, Metcalf and Beebe-Center, *Feeling and Emotion*, 212.

like the *Antagonistic Muscles of the Body*.⁷⁹ David Hume, who described himself as a ‘pagan’ philosopher, made the passions into something that controlled reason: ‘reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them’.⁸⁰ For Hume, reason had in itself no particular ‘evaluative and representational content’, so that even a murder can be thoroughly rational.⁸¹ A murder only became immoral once our passions were engaged. Hume himself emphasized that

Tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger. Tis not contrary to reason for me to chuse my total ruin, to prevent the least uneasiness of an Indian or person wholly unknown to me. Tis as little contrary to reason to prefer even my own acknowledg’d lesser good to my greater, and have a more ardent affection for the former than the latter.⁸²

Besides the passions as an instance that controlled reason there was another strand of Hume’s thinking on emotion, one that has recently gained an increasing amount of attention: that of sympathy. According to Hume, sympathy works as a process whose complexity is only imperfectly grasped by the medical metaphor of ‘contagion’: if we observe external signs of emotion in our fellow men (tears, for example, when someone is sorrowful), we construct a mental image of the feelings experienced by this person which can enter into association with one’s own feelings and so in turn give rise to feelings that can determine our own action (for example, giving the person a hug to comfort them).⁸³ This area of Hume’s thinking about emotion, together with that of Adam Smith (1723–90), today casts a lengthy shadow extending from philosopher Max Scheler’s idea of ‘emotional contagion’, to the conception of emotional intelligence advanced by John Mayer and Peter Salovey and popularized by Daniel Goleman, as well as to contemporary Theory of Mind and neuroscientific research on mirror neurons.⁸⁴

With the arrival of the Enlightenment the emotional scenery was shifted once more. The canonization of reason demanded sacrifices, and the strict separation of reason and feeling was one such sacrifice. Consequently emotion was defined as

⁷⁹ Francis Hutcheson, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections: With Illustrations on the Moral Sense*, ed. Aaron Garrett (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2002), 119, emphasis in original.

⁸⁰ David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature: Being an Attempt to Introduce the Experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects*, ii. *Of the Passions* (London: John Noon/Thomas Longman, 1739), 248 (pt. 3, sect. 3).

⁸¹ Sabine A. Döring, ‘Allgemeine Einleitung: Philosophie der Gefühle heute’, in Döring (ed.), *Philosophie der Gefühle* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2009), 12–65, here 16. For Hume as a ‘self-styled “pagan” philosopher’ see Solomon, *True to our Feelings*, 100.

⁸² Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, ii. 249–50 (pt. 3, sect. 3).

⁸³ Rachel Cohon, ‘Hume’s Moral Philosophy’, in Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2010 Edition)* <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2010/entries/hume-moral/>> accessed 22 February 2014.

⁸⁴ Max Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy*, trans. Peter Heath (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2008), 14–17; Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer, ‘Emotional Intelligence’, *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, 9/3 (1989–90), 185–211; Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995). On Theory of Mind and mirror neurons see Chapter Three.

unreason, celebrated as such by some, damned as such by others. The former camp held sway during the Age of Sentimentalism (c.1720–1800), during which Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78) became the pathfinder for a cult of emotional authenticity. He took the view that men in the ideal state were naturally equal and unsullied by the lamentable influence of culture. As he wrote in his novel *Émile*, ‘The man who has lived the most is not he who has counted the most years but he who has most felt life.’⁸⁵ The formation of feeling thus signified the reintroduction of man to his original state, leading him away from the influences of culture. It was therefore no wonder that Rousseau agitated against the expression of feeling in the theatre, which was simulated and therefore inauthentic. In addition, the feelings represented by actors addressed those of the audience in a dangerous manner. Since ‘all the passions are sisters and one alone suffices for arousing a thousand’, the social body was threatened with overstimulation and, ultimately, loss of self-control.⁸⁶

This Enlightenment separation of reason and feeling was most clearly expressed in the work of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804)—and, unlike with Rousseau, in a strongly negative fashion. Kant never developed a coherent theory of feeling, but he did talk a great deal about emotion and, towards the end of his life, ascribed it a significant place as the Other of reason. His first thoughts about moral sentiments were linked to Hume, but from the 1790s on he adopted a distinctly anti-emotional standpoint, expressing *emotio* and *ratio* as a binary opposition that has survived to this day. In his 1798 *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht* (Eng., *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, 1974) he subdivided emotion into affects and passions, defining emotion as beyond the control of reason, thus uncoupling it from any kind of ethics. For Kant, affect was something sudden, ‘the feeling of a pleasure or displeasure in the subject’s present state that does not let him rise to *reflection* (the representation by means of reason as to whether he should give himself up to it or refuse it)’.⁸⁷ Whereas affects could become a ‘temporary surrogate of reason’, passions lay far beyond the range of an ethics governed by reason: an ‘Inclination that can be conquered only with difficulty or not at all by the subject’s reason is *passion*’.⁸⁸ This meant for Kant that being ‘subject to affects and passions is probably always an *illness of the mind*, because both affect and passion shut out the sovereignty of reason’.⁸⁹ Inner freedom was founded upon self-control,

⁸⁵ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile, or, On Education (Includes Emile and Sophie, or, The Solitaries)*, trans. and ed. Christopher Kelly and Allan Bloom (Lebanon, NH: Dartmouth College Press, 2010) [Fr. orig., *Émile, ou de l'éducation*, 1762], 167.

⁸⁶ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, ‘J. J. Rousseau, Citizen of Geneva, to M. d’Alembert: Letter to d’Alembert on the Theater’, in *Letter to d’Alembert and Writings for the Theater*, trans. and ed. Allan Bloom, Charles Butterworth, and Christopher Kelly (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2004), 251–352, here 265. See also Sidonia Blättler, ‘Rousseau: Die Transformation der Leidenschaften in soziale Gefühle’, in Landweer and Renz (eds), *Klassische Emotionstheorien*, 435–56, esp. 440–1.

⁸⁷ Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, trans. and ed. Robert B. Loudon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 149, emphasis in original.

⁸⁸ Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, 152, 149, emphasis in original.

⁸⁹ Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, 149, emphasis in original.

and nothing was such a threat to this as feelings.⁹⁰ In a word: ‘no human being wishes to have passion. For who wants to have himself put in chains when he can be free?’⁹¹

What is emotion? This outline of responses by important writers to this question must break off here. From about 1800 on there was a steadily expanding pool of writing concerning emotion in different disciplines, which will be examined in the following chapters: history (Chapter One), anthropology (Chapter Two), and experimental psychology (Chapter Three), the latter two being newly founded around the turn of the nineteenth century. Since then, philosophy has retained its interest in emotions: Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), Søren Kierkegaard (1813–55), Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), and Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–80), to name but a few, were joined in the past two decades by a rapidly developing analytic philosophy of emotion, all of which have contributed to an understanding of feelings in a way that permeates the following chapters. It should also be said that this is no more than a sketch, and that there is every reason for work to develop quickly in this or that area if theories of emotion from the past are examined with a greater degree of intensity. Quite apart from this, a sketch of this kind provides very little indication of the relevance of emotion to everyday thinking in their contemporary cultures and periods. For example, ancient history has only just begun to move the study of Greek emotional culture beyond the work of Plato and Aristotle, using hitherto unused stone, clay, and papyrus sources.⁹²

2 WHO HAS EMOTION?

This review of philosophical thought on emotion demonstrates that not all persons are thought capable of feeling to the same extent, and in the same way; as with Aristotle, for example, who made youths the object of the deliberate inculcation of feeling, having to practise proper judgement until it became second nature. No attention was paid to the question of whether animals might or might not be capable of feelings.⁹³ Today it is usual to treat feelings as something common to all humans, inherent and intimate, the inner sanctum of autonomy, the site in which human subjectivity crystallizes in its purest form. The generation and stabilization

⁹⁰ ‘But two things are required for inner freedom: being one’s own master in a given case (*animus sui compos*), and ruling oneself (*imperium in semetipsum*), that is, subduing one’s affects and governing one’s passions’; Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. and ed. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) [Ger. orig., *Metaphysik der Sitten*, 1797], 166.

⁹¹ Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, 151.

⁹² Since 2009 a research group in Oxford, originally formed around the ancient historian Angelos Chaniotis (now Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton), has studied these: *The Social and Cultural Construction of Emotions: The Greek Paradigm*. For a first volume from this group see Angelos Chaniotis (ed.), *Sources and Methods for the Study of Emotions in the Greek World* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2012).

⁹³ See, in regard to Aristotle, Amélie Oksenberg Rorty, ‘Structuring Rhetoric’, in Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle’s Rhetoric* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 1–33, here 18–19; Konstan, *Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*, 22.

of such unique qualities requires marking off, distinctions, differences—in short, the production of an Other. The production of this Other has left textual traces whose variety and extent is owed to the fact that the process of production is never completed—it remains unfinished, unstable, seeking to create ever new differences. Anyone who seeks an answer to the question ‘who feels?’ would do well to consider the textual traces of this production of the Other. Here we will consider two: first of all, the distinction between human and animal, and then the differentiation between humans and humanoid machines.

There is a long tradition of associating animals with the body and emotion, and humans with mind and reason. Using as a source German-language dictionaries, the historian Pascal Eitler has shown how increasingly difficult it became, from the late eighteenth century on, to sustain this tradition unbroken. In 1745, for example, *Zedler*, the most important of eighteenth-century dictionaries, made a distinction between ‘sensations’ (*Empfindungen*) on the one hand, and ‘feelings’ (*Gefühle*) and ‘affect’ (*Affekte*) on the other. Animals were thought to be capable of perceiving sensations, but feelings and affect were reserved for human beings alone: ‘beasts are free of all of these [feelings]. They can sense present things; but they lack reflection and consideration, which is why they cannot be much moved by affect.’⁹⁴ Eitler argues that fifty years later, at the zenith of Sentimentalism, the concept of ‘sensation’ underwent a process of revaluation such that this boundary between human feeling/affect and animal sensation became porous.⁹⁵

During the second half of the nineteenth century there were two new developments that destabilized the distinction of human from animal in respect to feelings. First of all, the theory of evolution placed in question the existence of any distinction between man and animal. Charles Darwin’s *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* of 1872 drew parallels in the expression of feeling between visitors to his house and his own pets. Secondly, the rising science of physiology, including the physiology of emotion, conducted laboratory experiments on animals and from this developed far-reaching theories of emotion related to the brains and organs of animals, as some reactions that were observed came very close to those of humans. This led to a great debate over vivisection—surgical interventions on living animals—a debate which turned on the question of whether this practice harmed animal feelings. This also involved human feelings with respect to animals, in particular sympathy and empathy.⁹⁶ The line that distinguished human beings as feeling beings, and which separated them from animals, had to be repeatedly redrawn.

A similar process has taken place with humanoid machines—automata, robots, androids—as represented in cultural products such as novels and films. This also followed an uncertain path, and so has left useful textual traces in the form of a long tradition depicting humans who develop feelings for machines, and machines that

⁹⁴ Pascal Eitler, ‘The “Origin” of Emotions—Sensitive Humans, Sensitive Animals’, in Frevert et al., *Emotional Lexicons*, 91–117, here 95.

⁹⁵ Eitler, ‘The “Origin” of Emotions’, 98.

⁹⁶ Eitler, ‘The “Origin” of Emotions’, 99–105, 109.

develop their own emotional lives. As a literary tradition this goes back to E. T. A. Hoffmann's story *Der Sandmann* (1816; Eng. *The Sand-Man*), in which a young man loses his heart to a mechanical doll, continuing on to Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), in which the monster created by a scientific experiment, an artificial human being, develops feelings. Humanoid machines are endemic in the history of film, for example in *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (1987–94), where Android Data's lack of emotion continually leads to strange decisions, or in Steven Spielberg's *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence* (2001), which deals with a deceptively human 11-year old robot in the twenty-second century who feels emotion, and who is loved by his human family, a love which is sustained until their own human son, who had been in a coma, wakes up.⁹⁷ This suggests that anyone who does not have some sort of feelings with regard to humanoid machines is somehow emotionally deficient, or not entirely human. Experimental psychologists have studied the capacity for empathy on experimental subjects, testing their sympathy for avatars by giving them painful electric shocks in a Milgram-type experimental situation:

in spite of the fact that all participants knew for sure that neither the stranger nor the shocks were real, the participants who saw and heard her tended to respond to the situation at the subjective, behavioural and physiological levels as if it were real.⁹⁸

Experiments of this kind often presume a conception of a mirror image, whereby I can only have sympathy if I can imagine that my other is similar to myself, a conception which in turn presupposes that I have an idea of my self. Since the mid-1990s neuroscientific research into mirror neurons has lent support to the rapid diffusion of this conception (see Chapter Three, Section 3). Ergo, my capacity for sympathy with other human beings, and also with inanimate humanoid objects, becomes the measure of my humanity per se.

There is an interesting side effect of this empathy with humanoid machines that has been observed: if the machine is too much like a human being, all empathy vanishes and is replaced by disgust. How one might go about designing a machine that maximizes sympathy without going too far and provoking disgust is therefore an entirely practical question—not only for engineers designing robots for daily use in household and personal care in ageing societies like Japan and Germany, but also for the makers of computer-animated films. The production team for the film *Shrek* (2001), for example, felt themselves constrained to render Princess Fiona less anthropomorphic 'because "she was beginning to look too real, and the effect

⁹⁷ Catrin Misselhorn, 'Empathy and Dyspathy with Androids: Philosophical, Fictional and (Neuro-)Psychological Perspectives', *Konturen*, 2 (2009), 101–23, here 101–2. See also Thomas Thiel, 'Fühlt die Maschine? Die Androidenrobotik an der Grenze zur Utopie', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (7 July 2010), N4; Wolfgang Gessner, Gesine Lenore Schiewer, and Alex Ringenbach, 'Why Androids Will Have Emotions: Constructing Human-Like Actors and Communicators Based on Exact Sciences of the Mind', in Denis Lalanne and Jürg Kohlas (eds), *Human Machine Interaction: Research Results of the MMI Program* (Heidelberg: Springer, 2009), 133–63.

⁹⁸ Mel Slater et al., 'A Virtual Reprise of the Stanley Milgram Obedience Experiments', *PLoS ONE*, 1/1 (2006), e39, here 1.

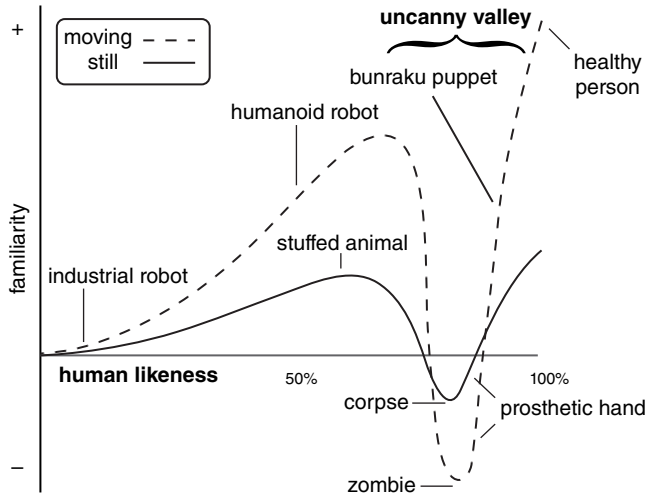


Fig. 3 Masahiro Mori and ‘The Uncanny Valley’

Source: Simplified version of Mori’s original graph in Karl F. MacDorman, ‘Mortality Saliense and the Uncanny Valley’, *IEEE-RAS International Conference on Humanoid Robots*, Tsukuba, Japan (5–7 December 2005) [conference paper], 399–405 here 399.

was getting distinctly unpleasant”.⁹⁹ The robot specialist Masahiro Mori identified this effect in 1970 and dubbed it ‘uncanny valley’, which is best presented as a graph (Fig. 3).¹⁰⁰

The philosopher Catrin Misselhorn explains this phenomenon in analogy with faulty visual perception. The greater the degree to which man and machine share typical and apparent characteristics, the greater the identification of object and idea of the object. At the same time, habitual emotional dispositions with respect to this object are activated. Knowledge of the lack of authenticity also plays a role, something that switches off empathy. According to Misselhorn, this involves ‘a kind of very fast oscillation between four situations’: first, an object is perceived and the process of identification with an idea appropriate to the object triggered; then one enters the threshold where object and idea coincide; this coincidence misfires; the identification of object and idea is broken off, but is then initiated once more, because the object is still perceived. ‘This reminds a bit of a radio receiver trying to tune into a transmitter in bad conditions when the reception of one station is always interfered with by another one and sheer noise.’¹⁰¹ This interference is expressed emotionally as disgust.

⁹⁹ Cited in Misselhorn, ‘Empathy and Dyspathy with Androids’, 103.

¹⁰⁰ Masahiro Mori, ‘The Uncanny Valley’, trans. Karl F. MacDorman and Norri Kageki, *IEEE Robotics & Automation Magazine*, 19/2 (2012), 98–100 [Jap. orig., ‘Bukimi no tani’, 1970].

¹⁰¹ Catrin Misselhorn, ‘Empathy with Inanimate Objects and the Uncanny Valley’, *Mind and Machines*, 19/3 (2009), 349–59, here 357.

So who has emotion? It should be clear that there is no definitive answer to this fundamental question. People in different times and different places have given varying responses to it, and to a great extent these answers allow us to make inferences about the ideas and feelings of these people—this is evident in the case of the distinction between the human and the animal, and in that of anthropomorphic machines. Answers to this question depend for the most part on the major asymmetries in human history—social differences, gender differences, ethnic differences. The indigenous peoples of European colonial empires, together with women and members of the lower social strata in Europe itself, were all in nineteenth-century Britain, Germany, and France assumed a priori to have different kinds of feeling. Instead of taking the question ‘who feels?’ as a point of departure, seeking apodictic clarification, we should make the historically changing responses to this question themselves the object of our investigation.

3 WHERE IS EMOTION?

The question of where emotions are localized is not trivial. If they are located outside humans, in spirits or gods, then men and women can become the playthings of transcendental forces, suddenly overwhelmed and just as suddenly freed from them. An idea of this kind is often associated with the sense that men and women have very little influence over feelings. So, for example, the volatile temperament of a North Cheyenne Native American Indian would be explained by her tribe by saying that she once looked out of her window at night, which is taboo among the North Cheyenne. The woman felt herself assailed by an alien force, and quickly fainted. When she came to, she was a different person.¹⁰² If on the other hand emotions are located within the human body, these locations and the properties ascribed to them (for instance, those of an organ) have an effect upon the resulting theory of emotion. We have already seen this with Galen’s pathology of humours, and the associated emotional prototypes—choleric, sanguine, melancholic, and phlegmatic.

This location of emotion in the body often has practical consequences. Since the Egyptians thought that the brain was responsible for the blood supply, and the heart for feelings, they thought nothing of introducing a hook into the brain through the nose during the mummification of a corpse, cutting the brain into pieces and then removing them through the nostrils with a spatula. The heart, on the other hand, was left in the body.¹⁰³ As opposed to the Egyptians, the neuroscientist Joseph LeDoux was the child of a time and place in which the brain is seen as being the centre of emotion, mind, and much more. As a small boy in Louisiana

¹⁰² Anne S. Straus, ‘Northern Cheyenne Ethnopsychology’, *Ethos*, 5/3 (1977), 326–57, here 341–2.

¹⁰³ This practice was most widespread during the time of the New Kingdom, c.1569–1076 BC. See Ann Rosalie David, ‘Mummification’, in Donald B. Redford (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, ii (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 439–44, here 440–1.

he faltered when his father, a butcher, asked him to search by hand through the brain matter of a slaughtered cow for the bullet that had killed it. His father's customers 'were not fond of chomping down on lead while enjoying their sweet-breads'. Joseph found it very hard to run his 'fingers through a brain. You have to put aside any idea that the cow's brain was the home of the cow's mind, and just treat it as a piece of meat.'¹⁰⁴

The location of emotion in the body also has consequences for its linguistic articulation, above all with respect to imagery and metaphor. As in many cultures, the Australian Pintupi aboriginals associate childhood with a presocial stage characterized by unchecked emotion, a limited ability to control oneself, a difficulty in foreseeing the consequences of one's own action, and a marked individualism instead of a consciousness of the self as part of a social network. Children are described as 'lacking knowledge', 'unselfconscious', also interestingly as 'deaf' (*patjarru, ramarama*). Why 'deaf'? Because for the Pintupi, thought is the key to maturation, a way out of wild emotionality; because 'thinking', 'understanding', and 'hearing' are for them all associated with one verb, *kulininpa*, which literally means 'to hear'; and because for them the sanctum of thought lies in the ear, whereas that of feeling is to be found in the stomach.¹⁰⁵

We can also learn something from comparing ideas of the eye and its significance for emotion. In many languages, among them English and German, light serves as a metonym for happiness and contentment, and so a happy person is described as someone with 'bright' or 'shining' eyes. By contrast, the Chinese talk of 'stretched' or 'broadened eyebrows' (*yang-shou shen-mei*).¹⁰⁶ The precise way in which the Chinese describe eyebrows is found in very few other languages. To give only one example: *chou-mei bu-zhan* means 'brows contracted without relaxation' or 'knitting one's brows in anxiety'; *chou-mei ku-lian* means 'wear a worried look'; *yang-mei tu-qi* means 'feel elated after unburdening oneself of resentment'; *mei-fei se-wu* means 'with dancing eyebrows and radiant face—enraptured'.¹⁰⁷ In China eyebrows are the 'most obvious indicators of internal feelings', hence windows into the soul.¹⁰⁸

At the same time there is no fixed relationship between the conception of emotion, including its localization, and its oral, written, aural, and imagistic representation; the relation is highly variable. So for instance, even where facial expression did play a great role in conceptions of the body, we find in the court painting of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century North Indian Islam no indication of the face as the site of emotion. Here the decisive means for the expression of feeling

¹⁰⁴ Joseph LeDoux, 'Brains Through the Back Door', in John Brockman (ed.), *Curious Minds: How a Child Becomes a Scientist* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2004), 142.

¹⁰⁵ Fred R. Myers, *Pintupi Country, Pintupi Self: Sentiment, Place, and Politics among Western Desert Aborigines* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1986), 107.

¹⁰⁶ Ning Yu, 'Body and Emotion: Body Parts in Chinese Expression of Emotion', *Pragmatics and Cognition*, 10/1 (2002), 341–67, here 343.

¹⁰⁷ Yu, 'Body and Emotion', 345.

¹⁰⁸ Ning Yu, 'Metaphorical Expressions of Anger and Happiness in English and Chinese', *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity*, 10/2 (1995), 59–92, here 79. See also Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion: Language, Culture, and Body in Human Feeling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 172.

was bodily movement, colour, brush-strokes, and pictorial composition.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, the semantics of the bodily expression of emotion is rarely universal, but is instead ambiguous: while a smile in many cultures means pleasure and contentment, it can also signify shame, a polite invitation for the initiation of contact, even a reaction to death or loss.¹¹⁰

And another thing: one should not treat that which is non-European as timeless. None of the examples introduced so far are set in stone. In his fieldwork in Tahiti during the 1960s, the anthropologist Robert Levy found that the majority of his interviewees supposed the origin of feelings to be in their abdomen, although a few talked of the heart, something which Levy attributed to Christian missionaries and Bible study.¹¹¹ The shift of emotion from one place to another in the body is always a question of historical knowledge. It would be quite wrong to think of the body as something timeless and pancultural. If one seeks to form a more exact sense of the construction of the body, the first issue is whether emotion is located outside the body (in spirits or gods for instance) or within it: is the body really just the plaything of transcendental influences, or are spirits within the body? With what kind of cosmology is the body bound up?

One does not even have to leave Europe to get an idea of the instability with which feelings are localized in the body. We need only go back to Descartes, who wrote in 1649 'that the last and most proximate cause of the passions of the soul is nothing other than the agitation with which the spirits move the little gland in the middle of the brain', meaning the pineal gland or the epiphysis.¹¹² David Hartley (1705–57), the founder of associationist psychology who sought to make a connection with John Locke and Isaac Newton (1642–1727), was positive that emotions were formed by external stimuli. He thought that they caused the medullary substance of the nerves to vibrate, a vibration that was then conveyed to the brain via 'ether', where the increasingly faint oscillations were felt as 'vibratiuncles'. Emotions were therefore 'vibratiuncles'.¹¹³ And so it is evident that, even in the canonical Western culture, shifts in the localization of emotions in the human body can be very major. Following on from this, we could consider the reciprocal effects between the way emotions are localized and bodily movements, and in particular, those that are considered to be quite fundamental movements such as the heartbeat, the pulse, and gastric juices. Is it possible for

¹⁰⁹ Monica Juneja, 'Visualising Emotional States in Indian Court Painting of the Early Modern Period', Lecture at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin (8 June 2009); Monica Juneja, 'Translating the Body into Image: The Body Politic and Visual Practice at the Mughal Court during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in Michaels and Wulf (eds), *Images of the Body in India*, 235–60, here 239, 243.

¹¹⁰ William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 101.

¹¹¹ Robert Levy, *Tahitians: Mind and Experience in the Society Islands* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 271.

¹¹² René Descartes, *The Passions of the Soul*, trans. Stehen M. Voss (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1989) [Fr. orig., *Les Passions de l'âme*, 1649], 50.

¹¹³ Gardiner, Metcalf, and Beebe-Center, *Feeling and Emotion*, 222.

local conceptions of emotion to affect these bodily movements? If I come from a culture in which an accelerated pulse is treated as a sign of anger, does my pulse beat faster than it would if I had been socialized in a culture in which this was not the case? For the time being we shall leave this important question open, but we will return to it repeatedly.

4 DO EMOTIONS HAVE A HISTORY?

As we have seen with philosophical thinking about emotion, responses to the question of what emotions are have changed significantly over time. It could be objected that each response is only an answer to different conceptions and characterizations of something that has nonetheless remained constant in all eras. If this were true, emotions would have no history, only the conception of emotion would alter historically. Many theories at the universalistic end of the scale do claim exactly this: they do not dispute that emotions are conceptualized in different ways, but maintain that emotions possess a constant, transhistorical, and culturally generalized foundation. Fear in the face of the enemy would therefore be common to the Roman legionary, the medieval halberdiers, the private soldier on the Verdun battlefield, or the Congolese child soldier, and accompanied by the same physical signs: raised pulse, dilated pupils, thumping heart, cold sweat. The example of the Maori warrior who is freed of *atua* and goes fearlessly into battle does not contradict this, since the body's programmed response of fear is simply shifted to the period before battle, but is in itself no different to that experienced in all cultures and eras.

This might well be true. But it is also true that conceptions of emotion have an impact upon the way emotion is experienced in the self-perception of the feeling subject—the qualia, as it is called in psychology. In the instance of the Maori warrior the impact of the conception of emotion was so marked that he quite possibly did react fearlessly to stimuli assumed to be of a generally threatening character—the opponent facing him seeking to take his life. It is evidence of the power of a cultural framework to neutralize an inborn, automatically-triggered emotional response. Moreover, we have just heard of the key question regarding the reaction of local conceptions of emotion upon basic physical processes such as the pulse. Anticipating arguments to be introduced in Chapter Four of this book, we can here introduce a preliminary answer supplied by recent research in the neurological sciences and cognitive psychology, which has drawn attention to a feedback effect between the articulation of an 'emotional word' and the sensation of emotion. If I say 'I am happy', a mechanism of self-examination can be set in motion to determine whether I do really feel happy at this moment. This is an open-ended mechanism: this self-exploratory process of self-examination can conclude that I do not feel happy and so conflict with the expressed feeling; or I might come to the opposite conclusion and overwrite other emotions felt at the same time. The current vogue in popular psychology for Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is to a large extent based upon this latter postulate, as is counselling that

finds everything upon the transformative power of verbalized feelings.¹¹⁴ William Ian Miller, a legal theorist and a specialist in the emotions of Icelandic sagas, comments ‘that once we name an emotion it takes on a life of its own’.¹¹⁵

Let us assume that the body presents us with real and insurmountable boundaries in the expression of emotion, that, for example, the fear of an opponent felt by a warrior in battle (or in the case of the Maori, before battle) can never be associated with a slowing pulse. What does this amount to? Since the human sciences are interested in cultural variability, the universal is often uninteresting, involving ‘trivially true’ universals.¹¹⁶ Besides, what is universal amounts to a molehill when compared to the mountain of data on cultural difference. One characteristic of historical studies is that they emphasize this variety of emotional conceptions and cultural patterns. For the time being this will have to serve as an answer to the question of whether emotions have a history. This is the central question, and this book provides both a compendium of answers given by others, as well as an attempt to formulate its own.

5 WHAT SOURCES MIGHT WE USE IN WRITING THE HISTORY OF EMOTIONS?

At first sight it might seem that the history of emotions can only be written using sources in which people talk about their emotions. And since feelings have belonged to the domain of the inward and intimate since the Romantic era at the latest, these sources were not originally intended for publication. They have a marked relation to the self, and take the form of diaries, autobiographies, and memoirs. This can be extended to include private communication as a source, as in (love) letters, emails, text messages, or telephone conversations that (for instance) security services listen in to. This approach would render impossible the history of emotions across the centuries and cultures in which these sources did not exist, quite apart from the greater part of humanity that did not write. Fortunately we are not constrained in this way, since the history of emotions today uses almost all the sources available to historical study; and if there are limits, these limits are little different to those encountered in other historical subdisciplines.

This starts with archaeology, which is able to rely on very few written sources. Despite this, in recent years archaeologists have sought to establish how the emotions of historical actors in prehistoric and ancient epochs might be reconstructed; or more precisely, how we might describe the framework within which historical actors could have had emotions. Attempts are then made, for example, to

¹¹⁴ See for this feedback mechanism Jan Plamper, ‘The History of Emotions: An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara H. Rosenwein, and Peter Stearns’, *History and Theory*, 49/2 (2010), 237–65, esp. 242.

¹¹⁵ William Ian Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 31.

¹¹⁶ Gross, *Secret History of Emotion*, 34.

reconstruct the spatial organization of a burial site, then speculating upon the manner in which the spatial qualities of this site might have affected the feelings of those actors present at the rituals relating to the deceased.¹¹⁷ Of course, such a procedure is built upon many presuppositions: first of all, it is assumed that Celts, Romans, or Mongolians did have feelings; second, that the spatial organization of the burial site did in some way influence Celts, Romans, and Mongolians. But archaeology is no stranger to such difficult issues, so that there is no basic objection to these new questions from the history of emotions.

The same is true from the sources of diplomatic history, which no longer defines itself as the history of the external affairs of a particular nation state. During the 1960s and 1970s social history had supposedly more or less killed off diplomatic history. But it survived, and has in the past couple of decades been reborn as the 'cultural history of diplomacy', a history that directs attention to the symbolic and ritual dimensions of diplomacy, and as international history, which researches the historical interweaving of persons and institutions of different countries.¹¹⁸ If one looks closely then one cannot help but be struck by how prominent emotions are in the testimony of high international politics, meetings between kings and kaisers, between generals and general secretaries, between presidents and party leaders. For example, after Queen Victoria gave birth to an heir in 1841, her husband, Prince Albert, named Friedrich Wilhelm IV godparent. Friedrich Wilhelm consented, prompting protest from both Victoria's and Albert's families, who by age and relationship had precedence over the Prussian king, and who had been overlooked. Duke Ernst von Coburg, the German father of Victoria's husband Albert, wrote a letter in which he told his son that he did not understand

why the King of Prussia has been granted this honour which, excuse me if I state it plainly, I find quite inappropriate; . . . Prussia [is] the *arch enemy of our House* . . . and, having swallowed half of all our hereditary possessions, constantly threatens to take the remainder. Moreover, the present king has shown himself most *disobliging, most arrogant*, and unjust in respect of our present demands . . . If it is therefore possible, I would there ask you to withdraw this matter, which must leave the most unpleasant impression in Germany, especially in the whole of Saxony. I must observe with deepest

¹¹⁷ Sarah Tarlow, 'Emotion in Archaeology', *Current Anthropology*, 41/5 (2000), 713–46.

¹¹⁸ See e.g. Akira Iriye, 'Culture and International History', in Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (eds), *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* (2nd edn, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 241–56; Ursula Lehmkuhl, 'Diplomatiegeschichte als internationale Kulturgeschichte: Theoretische Ansätze und empirische Forschung zwischen Historischer Kulturwissenschaft und Soziologischem Institutionalismus', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 27/3 (2001), 394–423, referring explicitly to emotion on p. 414; Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht and Frank Schumacher (eds), *Culture and International History* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003); Markus Mösslang and Torsten Riotte (eds), *The Diplomats' World: A Cultural History of Diplomacy, 1815–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). In 2010 a conference on diplomacy was held in London which focused on emotion: see Heidi Mehrkens, Review of 'Persönliche Beziehungen zwischen Staatsmännern als Kategorie der Geschichte des Politischen (1815-1914)', H-Soz-u-Kult, H-Net Reviews (November 2010) <<http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=31864>> accessed 23 February 2014.

sorrow how little regard you have shown for the *honour* and the *interests* of the House to which you belonged, and *still belong*.¹¹⁹

‘Most arrogant’ and ‘unjust’, ‘sorrow’ and ‘honour’: this is emotionally charged language in the correspondence of the European nobility, whose dynastic ties determined in so many ways the politics of the mid-nineteenth century. From the point of view of the history of emotions it would be worth examining the use of an emotional vocabulary in various types of official documents—in letters from one head of state to another, letters from a head of state to aristocratic relatives, diplomatic bags, ceremonial protocol, announcements to the press. Here we might not only consider the rhetorical use of sorrow or of honour, but also their locally specific constructions. Diplomatic sources, often written in a lingua franca such as French or English, but switching constantly into other languages, allow for a microscopic examination of the differences and disjunctions, ambiguities and misunderstandings between distinct cultures of emotion.¹²⁰

Diplomatic rituals often involve honour, respect, and face-saving. In 1898 the president of France, Felix Fauré, paid a visit to Queen Victoria while she was staying near Nice. By that time she was nearly 80, and not in the best of health. For both parties the ceremonial greeting went badly, and the way this happened says a great deal about the emotional encoding of the conflict between two distinct forms of state—monarchy and republic. Instead of meeting President Fauré on the front steps of her villa, as protocol required, Victoria sent her son, the Prince of Wales. She noted in her diary:

At 1/2 p[ast] 3, Mr. Faure, the President of the Republic, who has been spending some days at the Riviera Palace came to see me. Bertie received him below, & brought him up & the 3 Princesses with the Ladies were at the top of the stairs. I stood at the door of the Drawing Room & asked him to sit down. He was very courteous & amiable, with a charming manner, so ‘grand seigneur’ & not at all ‘parvenu’. He avoided all politics, but said most kindly how I was ‘aimé par la population’,—that he hoped I was comfortably lodged.¹²¹

After her death, Victoria’s diary was transcribed and cleaned up, the original being destroyed. Another source suggests that in fact the British queen thought the French president to be quite the parvenu, that she expressed this belief through

¹¹⁹ Letter from Ernst I to Albert of 28 November 1841, cited in Johannes Paulmann, *Pomp und Politik: Monarchenbegegnungen in Europa zwischen Ancien Régime und Erstem Weltkrieg* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2000), 277–8, emphasis in original.

¹²⁰ On the misunderstandings arising from emotionally charged diplomacy see Susanne Schattenberg, ‘The Diplomat as “an Actor on a Great Stage before all the People”? A Cultural History of Diplomacy and the Portsmouth Peace Negotiations of 1905’, in Mösslang and Riette (eds), *Diplomats’ World*, 167–94; Susanne Schattenberg, ‘Die Sprache der Diplomatie oder Das Wunder von Portsmouth: Überlegungen zu einer Kulturgeschichte der Außenpolitik’, *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas, Neue Folge*, 56/1 (2008), 3–26; Susanne Schattenberg, ‘Die Angst vor Erniedrigung: Die U-2-Krise und das Ende der Entspannung’, in Bernd Greiner, Christian Th. Müller, and Dierk Walter (eds), *Angst im Kalten Krieg* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2009), 220–51.

¹²¹ Paulmann, *Pomp und Politik*, 229.

her neglecting to greet him personally at the steps, and that furthermore Fauré certainly got the message. In memoirs published posthumously in 1952 the assistant private secretary to the queen described the arrival of the president in the hall as follows:

he looked around to see who was there to meet him, and seeing neither the Queen nor the Prince of Wales, kept his hat on to imply that the visit had not properly begun. He shook hands with the three ladies still with his hat on, and of course did the same with the men. Such a proceeding was hardly dictated by the Protocol, and it surprised us all. When Paris heard of this afterwards I was told that everyone said it was outrageous and very bad manners. The President was then conducted upstairs, and the Prince of Wales came hurrying down as if he were late. It was then and only then that the President took his hat off.¹²²

In the course of the twentieth century the public realm and the media gained in influence, even in the case of communication between actors of quite different levels.¹²³ In 1957 for example the British prime minister Anthony Eden probably lost his office because of a public display of strong feelings, or rather, because of a display of feeling that happened behind closed doors but which then became public. His successor, Harold Macmillan, appeared to demonstrate self-control and was thus the contrary of Eden, hence better representing the contemporary manly ‘culture of restraint’.¹²⁴

The next example shows the diversity of the target audience for emotional diplomacy in the era of mass media. In January 2007 the Russian president Vladimir Putin met the German chancellor Angela Merkel for bilateral talks at his government dacha at Sochi on the Black Sea. It can be supposed that Putin knew that Merkel had been bitten by a dog when a child, and had a fear of dogs. At the first meeting he had given her a stuffed toy dog.¹²⁵ From the very first minute of the state visit in Sochi Putin’s very large Labrador Koni kept close to him, and of course Merkel. Even during their negotiations she was lying under the oval table, which was in itself an infringement of diplomatic manners. But there was more: Putin remarked maliciously, ‘I hope the dog does not frighten you.’¹²⁶ The success of Putin’s deliberate attempt to unsettle the chancellor is clear from her body language (Fig. 4).

¹²² Paulmann, *Pomp und Politik*, 230.

¹²³ At the same time it has become increasingly common to deposit intimate documents such as diaries and personal memoirs in private and state archives. See for the emotional history of the Cold War Frank Costigliola’s study, based on this kind of source: ‘“Unceasing Pressure for Penetration”: Gender, Pathology, and Emotion in George Kennan’s Formation of the Cold War’, *Journal of American History*, 83/4 (1997), 1309–39; Frank Costigliola, ‘“I Had Come as a Friend”: Emotion, Culture, and Ambiguity in the Formation of the Cold War, 1943–1945’, *Cold War History*, 1/1 (2000), 103–28.

¹²⁴ Martin Francis, ‘Tears, Tantrums, and Bared Teeth: The Emotional Economy of Three Conservative Prime Ministers, 1951–1963’, *Journal of British Studies*, 41/3 (2002), 354–87, here 357.

¹²⁵ Christoph Schwennicke, ‘Die Herrin von Schloss Ungefähr’, *Der Spiegel*, 49 (2007), 34–42, here 40–1.

¹²⁶ ‘Merkel verlangt von Putin “bessere Kommunikation”’, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (22 January 2007), 1.



Fig. 4 Angela Merkel, Vladimir Putin, and Koni in Sochi, 21 January 2007

Sources: image above © DMITRY ASTAKHOV/AFP/Getty Images; image below © Picture-Alliance/dpa-Report/
Guido Bergmann.

For his own TV audience Putin presents himself as the familiar animal-loving president receiving a visitor in the kind of relaxed atmosphere that Camp David represents. The message for Angela Merkel is one coded in the threatening manner of the former 'Big Brother' of the Soviet Union: 'Here I am, and I know your country like the back of my hand, since I spent five years in the KGB in Dresden. For me you are part of the underground Christian, dissident-loving clique of the GDR, and I will show you who is boss here. And I can behave quite differently.' This second message seems to have been received and understood. It is said that Putin is one of the few international politicians whom she regards as an equal, and who represents an unequalled challenge to her spirit of resistance.¹²⁷

What 'really' happens between actors in diplomatic meetings, what influence sense perceptions might have in personal encounters—historians find all of this hard to reconstruct. But this should not prevent them at least considering interpersonal communication when analysing the political consequences of encounters, seeking to disentangle their causes. The emotional history of diplomacy in no respect completes the list of potential fields with untapped sources for the study of emotion in history. There is no shortage of sources for the history of emotions.

So what conclusions might we draw from all of this for those who seek a historical mapping of *Homo sentiens*?¹²⁸ One thing is already clear, and here we can shift from synthesis to intervention, anticipating Chapter Four: it is not enough to define emotion according to the manner in which historical actors define it. Historical study is naturally diachronic, and, giving away another of the book's conclusions in advance, the periods that studies addressing the history of emotions deal with are often far more extended than in other branches of history. In order to determine its object of study, historical investigation has need of a transtemporal category, which presupposes that much is shared in common. If there is very little shared in common between the feelings that Napoleon expressed as *sentiments* in his French love letters to Josephine around 1800, and what in English was considered 'emotional' in the letter that Barack Obama sent to his daughters, then a relapse into pure contingency can hardly be avoided.¹²⁹ The writing of history is only possible if a meta-category exists—even if this meta-category clashes from time to time with the concepts employed in the source language. This represents my renunciation of any radical social constructivism.

Historians of emotion therefore need a working definition of emotion. There would be no point in formulating one here; the entire book is intended as a navigational aid in the search for such a working definition. We do not need a

¹²⁷ Schwennicke, 'Die Herrin von Schloss Ungefähr'; Christoph Schwennicke, 'Die schwarze Witwe', *Spiegel Online* (20 October 2009) <http://www.wiso-net.de/webcgi?START=A60&DOKV_DB=SPON&DOKV_NO=SPON20091020-656141&DOKV_HS=0&PP=1> accessed 23 February 2014.

¹²⁸ Flam, *Soziologie der Emotionen*, 173.

¹²⁹ *Lettres de Napoléon à Joséphine pendant la première campagne d'Italie, le Consulat et l'Empire et lettres de Joséphine à Napoléon et à sa fille*, ii (Paris: Didot Frères, 1833), 33, 73, 106, 124; Ed Pilkington, 'Obama Writes Emotional Letter to Daughters Malia and Sasha', *The Guardian* (15 January 2009). <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jan/15/obama-letter-children-malia-sasha>> accessed 23 February 2014.

definition analogous to those in the natural sciences, a definition that only relates to certain very restricted fields in order to be all the more exact. It would also be a good idea to begin, sooner rather than later, to come to terms with particular central aspects that have been a preoccupation for philosophers and other thinkers since antiquity.

First of all, we need to form an idea of whether emotions do involve a kind of automatic response, as in the framework of stimulus-response, where stable responses follow from external stimuli, or whether imagination might play a role. As a rule, the history of emotions attributes a greater role to the imaginary sphere than is usual in the life sciences and other disciplines.

Secondly, we need to be clear about the relation of the body to emotion. Here it is important to begin by examining local and historical ideas about feeling and physicality in the context of our object of investigation. The physical can only be defined once we have turned our attention to the description of non-verbal bodily practices (like *shokeling*, the way in which Orthodox Jews rock when praying), or to embodied verbal behaviour (like the writing of letters between fathers and sons living in the same household, characteristic of the early modern French aristocracy in which feelings and inclinations that had been written down were thought more significant than those expressed verbally).¹³⁰

Thirdly, it is worthwhile to consider the emotional components of judgement or evaluation. The amount of agency afforded to actors in the past, whether they were more reacting than acting, whether they distinguished between the objects of their emotion according to culture, membership of particular groups, or their individual formation—these are all important questions for the histories of emotion.

Finally, it makes sense to develop a position upon the relation of emotion to morality. If historical actors give ethical reasons for their actions, expressing in this way the interconnection of feeling and morality, this lends their emotions a meaning distinct from that in societies where emotion and morality are treated as unrelated. If we can clarify these four points we will have made an important step forward in developing a working definition of emotion; the foundation will have been laid, and we can set about furnishing the space of emotional history.

¹³⁰ Orest Ranum, 'The Refuges of Intimacy', in Philippe Ariès and Roger Chartier (eds), *A History of Private Life*, iii. *Passions of the Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1989), 207–63, here 259–61.