

Towards a New Epistemology: The “Affective Turn”

The theoretical engagement with emotions and affectivity in the mid-1990s – what Patricia Clough has identified as an “affective turn” in the humanities and social sciences¹ – draws on some of the most innovative and productive theoretical and epistemological trends of the two last decades of the twentieth century: psychoanalytically informed theories of subjectivity and subjection, theories of the body and embodiment, poststructuralist feminist theory, conversation of Lacanian psychoanalytic theory with political theory and critical analysis, queer theorisation of melancholy and trauma. Threading through these fields of scholarly work, one easily attests to the high degree of interest in the ways in which discourses of the emotions emerge, circulate, are invoked, deployed and performed. It is in response to this special attention given nowadays to the cultural politics of emotions that Kathleen Woodward has aptly argued that we live in a cultural moment in which a new economy of emotions is emerging.²

Some of those theoretical trends draw on older genealogies of thought, from

Baruch Spinoza to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. Others joined important anthropological work in illustrating that emotions should not be regarded as pre-social, pre-ideological and pre-discursive psychological and individual states, but as social and cultural practices.³ Challenging the conventional oppositions between emotion and reason, and discourse and affect, these key trends of contemporary social and cultural theory have explored and reconfigured political and ethical (mis-)appropriations of emotions; the complex relation between power, subjectivity and emotion; the place of emotion, affect, sentiments and sentimentality within political and political theorising; the affective dimension of the normative; the affective as a condition of possibility for subjectivity; and the emotive and affective investment in social norms as a constitutive mode of subjectivation.

Introduction

Drawing on such fields of reflection, which converse – either implicitly or explicitly – with the pervasive emotive predicaments (mainly historical losses and traumas) of the twentieth century, the essays collected in this volume of *Historein* explore the increasing significance of emotion and affect in multiple interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary discourses, and the political, social and cultural underpinnings of this recent shift in critical theory and cultural criticism.³ The essays examine what thinking about the sociality of emotions and affectivity means in terms of multiple temporalities and historical changes in local and global power configurations, colonial and postcolonial processes, capitalist political economy, national and post-national discourses, religious narratives and recent biopolitical rearrangements. How can we examine individual and collective emotional forces and encounters in the contexts of war, decolonisation, migration and global injustice? What sites of memory, history, politics and theory are generated by such engagement with the various configurations of emotion?

Taken together, the essays bespeak a productive tension between the notions of emotion, affect and social passion; we take this conceptual suspension marking the uncertain and shifting meaning of ‘emotion’ as a crucial component of this project. For instance, in the philosophical system of Baruch Spinoza, affect remained distinct from emotions. In the Spinozian perspective, the notion of affect inhabits an unresolvable tension between mind and body, actions and passions, between the power to affect and the power to be affected. In that respect, it is through a slip of oversimplified positivity that Antonio Negri has defined affect merely as the “power to act”.⁴

The notion of affect bears the connotations of bodily intensity and dynamism that energise the forces of sociality. It cannot be thought outside the complexities, reconfigurations and interarticulations of power. The semantic multiplicity of the notion of ‘affect’ emerges as particularly suggestive here: affect as social passion, as pathos, sympathy and empathy, as political suffering and trauma affected by the other, but also as unconditional and response-able openness to be affected by others – to be shaped by the contact with others. The topos of affect as social passion is the relation to the other taking place within power relations; perhaps, more accurately, the taking place of affect is the displacement from the passion/affect/trauma of the other. In the global affect economy of our times, this relation seems to waver politically between the cynicism of apathy and the bureaucratic banality of compassion and unaffektive sentimentalisation: indeed, an aporetic situation that echoes Lauren Berlant’s acute critique of the sentimental narrative, or sentimental liberalism, and her argument that injustice cannot be reduced to pain or feeling bad.⁵

The ambivalence residing at the heart of the notion of ‘passion’ becomes all too relevant in the Greek socio-historical context, where the concept of ‘passion’ has operated as a legitimising device for gendered violence. In her important work on ‘honour crimes’ in the post-Civil War Greece of the 1950s and 1960s, Efi Avdela illustrates the normative disassociation of the “passionate” code of male honour from violence, thus raising the questions: how are the semantic and discursive boundaries of (what matters as) violence regulated, and how is the symbolic and affective legitimacy of some forms of violence recognised and affirmed?⁶ In contexts of emotive governance, the critical issue is how ideas of individual and collective obligation to respond to suffering and violence are shaped by the historical, cultural, social and political specificity of regulatory norms and authority conventions.

But how do we become 'moved' by affective discourses of pain, love, guilt or loss? How are subjectivities affected in these contexts of 'moving' towards or 'turning' away from objects and subjects, ideas and ideals, social and bodily spaces? How are specific bodies, lives and forms of life constructed as loveable, grievable and available to the normative culture of affective engagement, and how are others transformed into objects of hate and aversion? How does compassion become a way of remaining untouched by others, and thus turn into the sanitised, normative sentimentality of our humanitarian era? In such a spirit of questioning, Sara Ahmed has developed a groundbreaking theory of the cultural politics of emotion, one that interweaves emotions, language and bodies while attending to the intersections of gender, race, class, sexuality and nation. Navigating through histories of colonialism and racism, reconciliation and reparation, and debates on asylum and migration, Ahmed reflects on the significant role of emotion in feminist theory and politics, and, most importantly, theorises emotions as performative: they both generate their objects and reiterate past associations.⁷

The ambiguous performativity of emotions through the perspective of Western sensibility becomes particularly relevant in both historical and anthropological accounts of cultural and political practices involving sentimentality, compassion, humanitarian help and philanthropic rhetoric. As Alexandra Bakalaki's article in this volume exemplifies, contemporary philanthropic discourses and strategies are not merely fields wherein already constituted selves are played out, but rather become contexts within which subjectivities are socially constituted and performed; in the contemporary social drama of poverty relief, volunteerism and expertise, the authentic altruistic self is performed within discursive practices of care, support, guidance and empowerment. In the past, and here Costas Gaganakis' account of Calvinist martyrological discourses is pertinent: people created their own way to salvation and managed to deal with vulnerability through various "strategies of self-inscription", even in fiercely normative and disciplinary contexts of emotional management; poetic expression of the self as opposed to absorption into the ideological collectivity of the elect offers an alternative account of the French Wars of Religion and of the fate of the French Calvinist minority, beyond the Calvinist master narrative. Turning to a different historical context, to the complexities of contemporary European politics, Eleni Pappagouroufali shows how the politics of emotion – especially in its configuration of normative and idealised familial ties – is mobilised and performed as a crucial site of power in the context of postcolonial Europe's "educational system of the heart"; affective, passionate and joyful rituals of identification, affiliation and belonging emerge as emotional and/or sentimental training technologies of the project of European integration.

Various historical and cultural theorisations of subjecthood have emphasised the emotional underpinnings of power in multiple discursive contexts of vulnerability and injury. The historical shifts of 'the language of fear' have emerged as an important field of inquiry in various historical works.⁸ Peter Stearns theorises fear as the central mode of self-expression and of making sense of the world in contemporary American politics. He invites us to think how and when fear became the dominant modern emotion and a key tool for manipulating public opinion and enforcing major decisions. Stearns traces the origins of a new socialisation pattern, in which fear had to be avoided rather than confronted and overcome in the second decade of the twentieth century, but he argues here that the new pattern only took hold fairly recently. Offering a reading

of the *September 11 Digital Archive*, Despoina Valatsou traces a process of sentimentalisation of public life which is connected with the desire to produce and consume personalised forms of historical knowledge; this digital repository of histories enacts the emergence of a new testimonial culture that derives from a physically detached, albeit sentimentally attached, subject. This emerging testimonial culture of personalised historical narrativity posits anew vexed questions of sentimental spectacularisation. Wendy Brown has importantly shown that there has been a fetishisation of the wound in subaltern politics, a situation that tends to turn all political claims into claims of injury, thus depoliticising the histories that have produced the wound and rendering action impossible.⁹ The commodification and spectacularisation of global victimhood has also been adequately illustrated by the important scholarly work conducted by social anthropologists of collective suffering.¹⁰

Indeed, the relationship between desire, power, bodies, subjectivity, materiality, trauma and alterity structures the theoretical work on which theorists of emotion draw inspiration and epistemological tools. What is epistemologically crucial to this 'affective turn' is the transition from paradigms of crude social constructivism to psychoanalytically informed and Foucault-inspired poststructuralist reappropriations of the discursive closure, such as those conducted in the context of theories of gender performativity and postcolonial studies. In such theoretical realms, the interest in the role of affectivity in historical, cultural, and political processes of identification and subjectivity was radically renewed, often within the context of an increasing awareness of the necessity to acknowledge the limits of constructivist accounts of identity and to suspend their ontological certainties and erasures. A suggestive symptom of this turn is the move from a strictly constructivist account of the body as a material substratum of ensuing social inscription to a more refined exploration of the 'mattering' of the body, whereby agency emerges as a dynamic force – at once cognitive, psychic, affective and sensual – of performative surprise.

***Beyond the emotion/cognition dichotomy:
Historicising intimate sites of colonial and nationalist governance***

The master narrative in which an important volume of historical studies had its roots has been recently analysed and challenged.¹¹ The grand narrative was based, according to Barbara Rosenwein, on a progressive paradigm of emotional self-restraint and assumed that the history of the West is the history of increasing emotional restraint. Studies that traced the genealogy of the emergence of "a European mentality of guilt" in early modern Europe ultimately rendered the grand narrative untenable, since the "civilising process" could no longer be tied to modernity.¹² A different historical approach to emotions was introduced by historians who criticised the theoretical underpinnings of the old paradigm and took on board theories of emotions developed in anthropology and cultural theory, formulating new concepts for the study of the past.¹³ Rosenwein has introduced the term "emotional communities" and seeks to uncover the systems of feeling that governed these communities. The endeavour focuses on styles of expressions, affective bonds people recognised, practices of various forms of sociability and sensibility that characterised each community but also the differences in the expression, shape and constraint of emotions within each community.¹⁴ Examining the 'performance' of emotions becomes central

to understanding social life in history. Eleftheria Zei's contribution here subscribes to the communicative function of emotions and adds an important dimension to the historical configuration of the cultivation of emotions through the management of mourning. The focus on the transformations and interactions of emotional articulations in the communities of the Aegean at the end of the seventeenth century shows the intertwining of intimate family constellations and high politics and their underlying power relationships.

Historians, anthropologists and literary critics have analysed the ways in which the languages of class, gender and race have intersected with the politics of emotions in the social fabric of both the empire and the metropolis. More importantly, it is through this intersection that the analytical perspective on the relationship between empire and metropolis has been altered. The focus on the intimate as a strategic site of colonial governance illuminates the ways in which the relation between the public and the private has been fundamental to racialised imperial states.¹⁵ The female body symbolised the boundaries of empire within Victorian society: the myth of the savage woman was transposed to the metropolis and projected onto working-class women, shaping class and gender hierarchies in Victorian England. The bourgeois, if not of a different species, was at least a member of a superior race. Distinctions between passion and logic created a collapse of non-Europeans and women into an undifferentiated field.

The empire and the metropolis became inextricably linked and dependent on each other through the interchangeability of images. The analytical framework shifted from the perception of the domestic as closed off and immune from the empire to the examination of the national framework through the empire.¹⁶

The ideological regulation and subjugation of the language of pathos is the focus of Jina Politi's contribution. Politi examines the literary, historical and political circumstances in which the repression of the language of passions and sensibility took place in England in the late seventeenth century in the context of the rise of capitalism and colonial expansion. Passions became directly implicated in the field of politics, because at stake was the harnessing of violent passions, such as "enthusiasm", which purportedly characterised the lower orders in English society during the seventeenth century. As manifested by the gradual replacement of the term "passion" by those of "emotion", "sentiment" and "feeling", the type of passionate man characterised specifically by a sublime, figurative language was thus superseded by a new type of human sociality, moral and civilised: "the man of feeling".

As much as imperialism cannot be adequately understood without a theory of power relations organised around the political and affective dynamics of gender and sexuality, nationalism too seems to be profoundly dependent on a politics of emotions. Michel Foucault's biopolitics provides an analytic tool to understand how bodies and selves came to be a significant political concern of the state, and the ways in which people's subjectivities were shaped as they operated inside the constraints set by imperial organisation. According to Alberto Mario Banti's article, nationalism derives its power from certain "deep images", in which emotions, such as romantic love and the ethos of sacrifice, are centrally operative in organising and inculcating the nation as a system of kinship. The system of such morphological structures permits the imagining of the

nation as a community of descent and as a biological entity defined in terms of 'race' and 'blood', which renders the nation as a community that has to be defended from miscegenation; in this context, the role of women is central to preserving the biological purity and continuity of the nation itself. Indeed, biopolitics emerges as a crucial feature in the making of the modern world both in domestic politics and in the empire. The nation as a community is solidified, imaged and imagined through the normativity of emotional bonds, and it is due to the emotional power derived from particular "deep images" that it acquires its performative force to reconfigure identities in the nineteenth century.

The complex relationship between history and memory is mediated through emotions. "Memory," as Dominick LaCapra argues, "... poses questions to history in that it points to problems that are still alive or invested with emotion and value."¹⁷ In dealing with a past that has not passed away, history tests memory, while memory is important to history because of the centrality of trauma and the importance of traumatic events in the construction of identity.¹⁸ Giorgio Agamben, by referring to Auschwitz as an event that returns eternally, makes shame central to the historical transmission of the past.¹⁹ From the perspective of historiography and of making sense of the past, Jörn Rüsen, in his article, conceptualises mourning as a fundamental factor of historical consciousness. Challenging the conventional dichotomy between emotion and cognition, Rüsen points out that construing history as cognitive should not efface the role of emotions in its constitution and in making sense of the past. Furthermore, in acknowledging trauma as an element of historical experience, he argues that history and mourning share the common feature of both being procedures of memory and committed to its logic of generating meaning.

Intersections of the discursive and the psychic in social and historical processes of subjectivation

Since the 1980s, social anthropology has placed a special emphasis on cultural significations of emotions in different societies. However, until fairly recently, these studies centre on discourses of emotions and do not efficiently take into account the social/cultural construction of non-verbally represented and non-conscious emotions. This analytical focus on emotions in their configuration of discursive rendition is characteristic of certain historical studies, as Luisa Passerini explains in her contribution. This logocentric approach remains true to the Cartesian distinction between body and mind, which works to obscure the cognitive capability of the body.

Already in the early 1970s, the French anthropologist Jeanne Favret-Saada, in her groundbreaking work on witchcraft in the Bocage of western France,²⁰ began posing the question of affects not verbally represented (*affects non représentés*). As it was unravelled in her later work,²¹ the study of "affects not represented" put in question some of the methodological and theoretical assumptions of anthropology, namely, the emphasis that anthropologists tend to put on informants' voluntary and intentional narratives articulated in the course of a planned and structured interview – an attention that often underestimates non-intentional communication between the ethnographer and her/his interlocutors. As Favret-Saada points out, in the context of such non-intentional communication, it is precisely affective intensity that is conveyed, either verbally or

non-verbally. However, the study of this emotional, particularly non-verbal communication requires participation rather than the ethnographer's distanced observation. Thus, the empiricist, positivist and objectivist underpinnings of participant observation are problematised.

The work of Favret-Saada has been influential on the anthropological study of embodiment, which pays special attention to non-verbally articulated, embodied and corporeal cultural perceptions. These anthropological studies examine language itself as a corporeal, sensual experience rather than a merely instrumental vehicle of discursive expression.²² In a similar vein, in reading Wittgenstein's theory of language, Veena Das has written, "This idea touches upon the Wittgensteinian theme of language as experience (and not simply as message). He takes examples of punning, or of a feel for spelling: If you did not experience the meaning of words (as distinct from only using them), then how could you laugh at a pun? The sense is of being controlled by the words one speaks or hears or sees rather than of controlling them."²³

In her article, Luisa Passerini raises the question of non-verbal enactments of emotions in cultural history. In her study of love letters, she does not limit her research to the decodification of the "text", i.e., the words, but rather she takes into account non-verbal, material aspects of the letter; for example, letters written on mauve or lilac paper, and objects that have been inserted in the envelope. According to Passerini, these details are emblematic of the emotional flow between corresponding lovers. Therefore, we could say that this emotional flow cannot be expressed in words and the non-verbal communication itself is crucial for the construction of the emotional bond between the writers. In the same way, Favret-Saada and psychoanalyst Josée Contreras's study on "unbewitching" as psychotherapy²⁴ shows the inadequacy of the therapy of the bewitched when based exclusively on verbal representation. On the contrary, effective therapy is based on the non-represented emotions (*affects non représentés*). The indigenous psychotherapist, clairvoyant Madame Flora, empowers the bewitched, subtly driving them towards adopting violence. Madame Flora bases her therapy on the non-conscious connotations of images on the cards dealt out to her clients or on the tone of her voice. This kind of psychotherapy differs radically from the classical psychoanalytical and psychotherapeutic practice according to which repressed desires must become an object of conscious, verbal representation. But, as Passerini puts it, we can call psychoanalysis to our rescue. First of all, because psychoanalysis is the discipline which enjoys a long tradition in the study of non-represented, unconscious affects; and secondly, because there are psychoanalytical studies that unsettle the conventional logocentric psychoanalytical practice.

Apart from those of the Italian psychiatrist Giuseppe Martini mentioned by Passerini, Julia Kristeva's theories are quite relevant here. When criticising Lacanian theory, Kristeva focuses on the presymbolic, pre-Oedipal moment in the construction of subjectivity called the semiotic (*sémiotique/σημειωτικό*). Kristeva analyses this kind of language that exists prior to words and to the symbolic order. This language occurs in the primary relationship between mother and child as well as in literary texts by Céline, Proust, Artaud and Joyce. In addition, Kristeva recommends to psychoanalysts the use of the literary language in therapy. As she states in her interview to journalist and academic Marie-Christine Navarro:²⁵ "En lisant Céline ou Proust, on pourrait cueillir les mots justes pour affronter le malaise du patient et lui communiquer un sens qui

lui manque, mais que l'écrivain avait trouvé quant à lui, dans un autre temps et un autre espace." In fact, in recent decades, both in Europe and the US, there has been an attempt to renew and enrich the long-standing dialogue between social sciences and psychoanalysis, an epistemological encounter which aspires to imagine and provide ways to explore the social/cultural in terms of the psychic and the psychic in terms of the social/cultural.²⁶

Recent theoretical attention to guilt and shame provides another path for theorising identity and for cross-disciplinary dialogues between philosophy, psychoanalysis, history, anthropology and literary critique. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick stresses the identity-forming potential of shame.²⁷ A central place in this genealogy of thought occupies Giorgio Agamben's theorisation of the concentration camp as an "absolute situation" and his conceptualisation of shame as the hidden structure of all subjectivity and consciousness.²⁸ Primo Levi had already acknowledged shame as the dominant sentiment of survivors and feelings of guilt as an aspect of survivor experience.²⁹ For more than 40 years, guilt and shame have played a key role in analysing the experience of inmates in the concentration camp.

Ruth Leys compares the practices of torture and interrogation implemented by the CIA in the 1960s and those at Abu Ghraib and acknowledges the shift from a logic of torture based on guilt to a logic of torture based on shame.³⁰ Abu Ghraib reflects the shift towards shame as the current scandal was designed to publicly humiliate and shame the prisoner. This shift, according to Leys, reflects a more general theoretical turn from guilt to shame that has taken place in the last 40 years.

Leys' book traces the connections that link together philosophers such as Agamben, and literary critics such as Sedgwick as well as other theorists who have found shame to be a more useful category than guilt. Leys argues that the recent privileging of shame over guilt is related also to an age-old dispute in trauma theory since trauma was theorised in the nineteenth century. Shame, Leys argues, is related to the anti-mimetic tendency of contemporary American psychiatry which rests on a dichotomy between a purely external event and a fully constituted subject.³¹ Shame theory is antimimetic as shame involves a subject that is conscious, while guilt privileges mimesis, involving unconscious identification with the other and implicates the subject unconsciously. Yet, Leys is clear that "the oscillation between mimetic and antimimetic tendencies in trauma theory can never be fully resolved".³² Furthermore, shame is conceptualised in materialist terms; it is about self and identity and privileges issues of personal identity and difference. According to Leys, shame theory allows Sedgwick to define identification antimimetically and to recognise the active, performative dimensions of subjective shame experience. Shame produces identity but does so without giving that identity space the standing of an essence.³³ Agamben also offers, according to Leys, a materialist and anti-intentionalist analysis of shame. Agamben uses Levinas' notion of shame and relates shame to intimacy, to the incapacity to move away from oneself. Agamben adds that "In shame the subject . . . has no other content than its own desubjectification; it becomes witness to its own disorder, its own oblivion as a subject. This double movement, which is both subjectification and desubjectification, is shame."³⁴

Leys establishes the connection between shame's relation to the production of identity and experience with the deconstructive literary theory that sees in the materiality of the text and in the

subject position and experience of the reader the answers to what a text is. For Leys, guilt provides a way to move away from questions of difference and identity, and towards the most pertinent questions of the meaning of one's real or fantasised actions.

Yet, the anti-intentionalist paradigm does not preclude agency, as Agamben shows. For Agamben, shame is the fundamental sentiment of being a subject, which has the double meaning of being subjected and being sovereign, of witnessing its own desubjectification. Judith Butler's deployment of the Althusserian notion of interpellation provides an antidote to the binarism between the intentionalist paradigm of guilt and the anti-intentionalist paradigm of shame. Butler analyses Althusser's doctrine of interpellation, "a social scene in which a subject is hailed, the subject turns around, and the subject then accepts the terms by which he or she is hailed . . . Interpellation on this account is not an event but a certain way of staging the call. The call itself is also figured as a demand to align oneself with the law, a turning around (to face the law, to find a face for the law), and an entrance into the language of self-ascription – 'Here I am' – through the appropriation of guilt."³⁵

For Butler, it is guilt rather than shame that produces both subjectivation and subjection. According to her, "to become a 'subject' is to have been presumed guilty, then tried and declared innocent. Because this declaration is not a single act but a status incessantly *reproduced*, to become a 'subject' is to be continuously in the process of acquitting oneself of the accusation of guilt. It is to have become an emblem of lawfulness, a citizen in good standing."³⁶ It is the subject then that makes ideology work.

The fact that the subject turns, or rushes, towards the law suggests that the subject lives in passionate expectation of the law; yielding to subordination is a condition for maintaining some sense of "social being". Yet, the subject's complicity to the law involves the possibility of turning away from a law.³⁷ Butler argues that identity is constituted through injury when the name by which one is called is a social category and an injurious interpellation. Yet, such an identity will not necessarily remain forever rooted in its injury, but the possibilities of resignification will rework and unsettle that passionate attachment to subjection without which subject-formation – and reformation – cannot succeed.³⁸

In her own psychic theory of performativity, Butler insists on the constitutive, productive character of melancholia, arguing that loss and melancholia are preconditions for the emergence, and the gendering, of the subject. The compulsively repeated inculcation of the regulatory ideal of heteronormativity is founded upon the foreclosure and unmourned loss of prohibited same-sex attachments; it is through this melancholic incorporation of loss that the body obtains its socially and culturally intelligible sexed morphology. Butler importantly reads melancholia as one of power's technologies and operations; not merely a site of interpellative violence and forcible suffering, however, but also a potential means of strategic redeployment, catachrestic resignification, and enabling disruption. It is in this context that Butler questions the accepted presumptions of normative intelligibility and livability that determine what does and does not count as 'human'.³⁹

Gil Anidjar, by using Freud's case of the Rat Man, a case that encompasses all the elements of anti-Semitism, shows the implications for the theory of interpellation and subjectivation when

one focuses on the response of the other who is named. Anidjar argues that interpellation is conditioned by an *a priori* failure, that is, interpellation is destined to fail without the response of the other. Anidjar points out the impossibility of naming the other without the response of the other. And it is, in turn, the response of the other that constitutes the condition of identification and subjection. As Anidjar puts it, interpellation can kill (through a death sentence) but cannot produce identification without response. And what happens if the inevitability of the response is put into question, if the other does not answer? It is this inevitability of the response that has remained unquestionable in the theory of subjection and identification.

Conclusion

This wide-ranging and insightful analysis, located within the interlocking domains of history, anthropology, literary criticism and feminist theory, has helped us significantly to inquire not only into the affective limits of discourse but also the discursive limits of affect.

The deconstruction of the selfsame subject of Western modernity is interconnected with the exploration of multiple modernities, eccentric subjectivities and new modes of historical and anthropological narratives. In such work, located in the intersections of poststructuralist, Foucault-inspired, anti-essentialist and (Lacanian) psychoanalytic frameworks, the subject is theorised as opaque, intersubjective, incomplete, other to itself and performatively constituted through affective processes involving loss and melancholia. In these renditions, the subject is theorised as a melancholic agent that engages in discursive and affective processes of identification inside power structures.

In the context of this “affirmative deconstruction”, to recall Gayatri Spivak’s famous phrase,⁴⁰ the subject is passionately attached to the norms on which it depends and against which it might rebel – in an endless spiral of subjection and subjectivation, resignification and subversion, and power and pleasure. A component of special importance to critical theory’s turn to affect is the commitment to theorising the performative interpellation of the subject in ways that exceed the naïve binarism of voluntarism and determinism: the subject is both formative and forming; it both embraces and resists the norms that subject it. We need to find a way to avoid stressing one side over the other.

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NOTES

- 1 Patricia Ticineto Clough & Jean O'Malley Halley (eds), *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*, Durham: Duke UP, 2007.
- 2 Kathleen Woodward, "Anger . . . and Anger: From Freud to Feminism", in John O'Neill (ed.), *Freud and Passions*, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 1996, pp. 73–96. Also, Kathleen Woodward, "Grief-Work in Contemporary American Cultural Criticism", *Discourse* 15:2 (1992–93), pp. 94–112.
- 3 M. Z. Rosaldo, "Toward an Anthropology of Self and Feeling", in R. A. Shweder and R. A. LeVine (eds), *Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self, and Emotion*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984; C. A. Lutz and Lila Abu-Lughod, *Language and the Politics of Emotion*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990; G. M. White, "Emotions Inside Out: The Anthropology of Affect", in M. Lewis and J. M. Haviland (eds), *Handbook of Emotions*, New York: Guilford, 1993. In the Greek ethnographic context, see the work of Evthymios Papataxiarchis and C. Nadia Seremetakis.
- 4 The articles gathered in this volume were first presented as papers at the 3rd International Conference of *Historein*, entitled "On Emotions: History, Politics, Representations", which was held in Athens on 18–20 May 2007. The conference was sponsored by the National Bank of Greece, the John F. Latsis Public Benefit Foundation, the J. F. Kostopoulos Foundation, and Nefeli Publishers. The full program of the conference can be viewed at [http://www.historein.gr/Historein_emotions_program_en\[FINAL\].pdf](http://www.historein.gr/Historein_emotions_program_en[FINAL].pdf) (accessed 27 August 2008).
- 5 Antonio Negri, "Value and Affect", *Boundary 2* 26:2 (1999), pp. 77–87.
- 6 Lauren Berlant, "The Subject of True Feeling: Pain, Privacy, and Politics", in S. Ahmed, J. Kilby, C. Lury, M. McNeil and B. Skeggs (eds), *Transformations: Thinking Through Feminism*, London: Routledge, 2000.
- 7 Efi Avdela, *Δια λόγους τιμής. Βία, συναισθήματα και αξίες στη μετεμφυλιακή Ελλάδα*, Athens: Nefeli, 2002.
- 8 Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, New York: Routledge, 2004.
- 9 For a critical investigation of the historiography of emotions and, especially, of fear, see Joanna Bourke, "Fear and Anxiety: Writing about Emotion in Modern History", *History Workshop Journal* 55:1 (2003), pp. 111–33. Peter Stearns and Carol Stearns have elaborated the concept of "emotionology" as a useful category of historical analysis in "Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotionality Standards", *American Historical Review* 90:4 (1985), pp. 813–36. Bourke suggests also an analytical framework that renders the history of fear possible in *Fear: A Cultural History*, London: Virago Press, 2006.
- 10 Wendy Brown, *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*, Princeton: Princeton UP, 1995.
- 11 Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das and Margaret Lock (eds). *Social Suffering*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.
- 12 Barbara Rosenwein, "Worrying about Emotions in History", *American Historical Review* 107:3 (2002), pp. 821–45.
- 13 Jean Delumeau, *Sin and Fear: The Emergence of a Western Guilt Culture, 13th–18th Centuries*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1990 [1978]. For this argument, see Rosenwein, "Worrying about Emotions".
- 14 See Rosenwein, "Worrying about Emotions". The work of William Reddy is paradigmatic of this new historical approach to emotions. Reddy introduced the term "emotives" in order to trace the ways in which emotions are managed and formed by official as well as individual representations through their various articulations.
- 15 *Ibid.*, pp. 842–5.

- 16 Ann Stoler, "Matters of Intimacy as Matters of State: A Response", *Journal of American History* 88:3 (2001), pp. 893–7.
- 17 Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, Durham: Duke UP, 1995; idem, "Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race, and Morality in Colonial Asia", in Joan Scott (ed.), *Feminism and History*, New York: Oxford UP, 1996.
- 18 Dominick LaCapra, *History and Memory after Auschwitz*, Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 1998, p. 8.
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