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EMOTIONS IN HISTORY

THE HISTORY OF EMOTIONS

An Introduction

JAN PLAMPER

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The History of Emotions

An Introduction

JAN PLAMPER

Translated by
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By Jan Plamper

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To the Berlin Feel Tank

Acknowledgements

Rather than me coming to this book, it is as if this book came to me. I was working on another study about the history of fear among soldiers when conceptual problems began piling up so fast that I found myself forced to call a halt, so that I might have some time to think them through. This happened during the academic year 2007/8, when I was a Junior Fellow at the Historisches Kolleg in Munich. Lothar Gall, the board's chairperson at the time, was accommodating when I told him about my diversion. For a productive year at this unique institute for advanced study, I owe a debt of gratitude to him, Karl-Ulrich Gelberg, Elisabeth Hüls, and Elisabeth Müller-Luckner, as well as my co-fellows Albrecht Cordes, Jörg Fisch, Georg Schmidt, and Martin Wrede. I am also grateful to Michael Hochgeschwender, Benjamin Schenk, and Martin Schulze Wessel for good conversation and much more during my year in Munich.

The book was written under conditions that were similarly idyllic while I was on a multi-year Dilthey Fellowship, funded by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, at Ute Frevert's Centre for the History of Emotions at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin—my 'feel tank'. My colleagues there provided stimulating discussion, critical readings of my texts, and afforded glimpses of their own work-in-progress. Without all this the final book would have been much worse, perhaps it would have never become a book. I am extraordinarily grateful to Jose Antony, Christian Bailey, Christina Becher, Magdalena Beljan, Gaby Bendmann, Anja Berkes, Clare Bielby, Rob Boddice, Philippe Bongrand, Juliane Brauer, Daniel Brückenhaus, Moritz Buchner, Kate Davison, Sabine Donauer, Christiane Eifert, Pascal Eitler, Dagmar Ellerbrock, Merih Erol, Monika Freier, Ute Frevert, Benno Gammerl, Alice Goff, Joachim Häberlen, Christa Hämmerle, Bettina Hitzer, Philipp von Hugo, Uffa Jensen, Christine Kanz, Ursula von Keitz, Mana Kia, Anja Laukötter, Susanne Michl, Salil Misra, Sven Oliver Müller, Sophie Oliver, Stephanie Olsen, Tine van Osselaer, Margrit Pernau, Josef Prestel, Till van Rahden, Imke Rajamani, Karola Rockmann, Shweta Sachdeva, Mohammad Sajjad, Daniela Saxer, Monique Scheer, Maritta Schleyer, Anne Schmidt, Mark Seymour, Nadeem Shah, Kerstin Singer, Franziska Timm, Karen Vallgarda, Nina Verheyen, Gian Marco Vidor, Claudia Wassmann, and Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly. Working in a new field that was booming, and was in fact being seriously hyped, was exhilarating: the general atmosphere in which we worked, the rapid development of concepts and terminology, the rapid publication and then citation of research work was a singular experience. The chances that any of us will ever repeat this experience in our academic careers are slim.

The presence of experimental psychologists at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development was a major advantage for a humanities person like myself. Ulman Lindenberger made time for a thorough and constructive critique of my life science chapter, Isabel Dziobek and Hauke Heekeren gave me important leads.

I was also able to benefit from discussions with and comments made by Ray Dolan, Klaus Fiedler, and Tania Singer during multidisciplinary conferences at the Institute. Among those more loosely connected with the Institute I should like to highlight Ruth Leys. My intellectual debt to her work is enormous, she engaged me in critical argument on various occasions, and she kept me from giving up at a critical juncture. Rüdiger Zill read the Introduction's philosophical excursus with the sharp eye of a specialist in the philosophy of emotions. To all of them I am most grateful.

Margrit Pernau invited me to co-teach a summer school of the Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes, and I ended up learning so much from the students in our group, especially those from the life sciences. The life scientists at the September 2010 'History of Emotions' summer school in Görlitz were Aram Kehyayan und Marco Schmidt. Marco read and criticized my third chapter, as did another participant at our summer school, Philipp Gerlach. Philipp was also my intern in early 2011, and he did indispensable preliminary work for the philosophical part of the introduction. Many thanks!

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in History' series at Oxford University Press, where Rowena Anketell meticulously copy-edited and Emily Brand, Robert Faber, Emma Slaughter, Cathryn Steele, and Christopher Wheeler expertly shepherded the manuscript through production. My friend Ilya Vinkovetsky kindly checked the first proofs.

This book starts with my visit to an anatomy course. It was Johannes Vogel of the Anatomical Institute at the Charité Hospital who generously invited me to his anatomy course on 7 December 2009 at the Rudolphi Room. Irina Kremenetskaia worked just 100 metres away in the Charité neurosurgical laboratory. Our marriage proves that the bridging of the gap between the humanities and the life sciences, between social constructionism and universalism, is possible—at least on a personal level. To be sure, things are easier when one is blessed with two daughters of exceptional emotional intelligence, Olga and Lisa Plamper. To my family go not only my thanks, but also my love.

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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 *αμύγδλο* ('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.

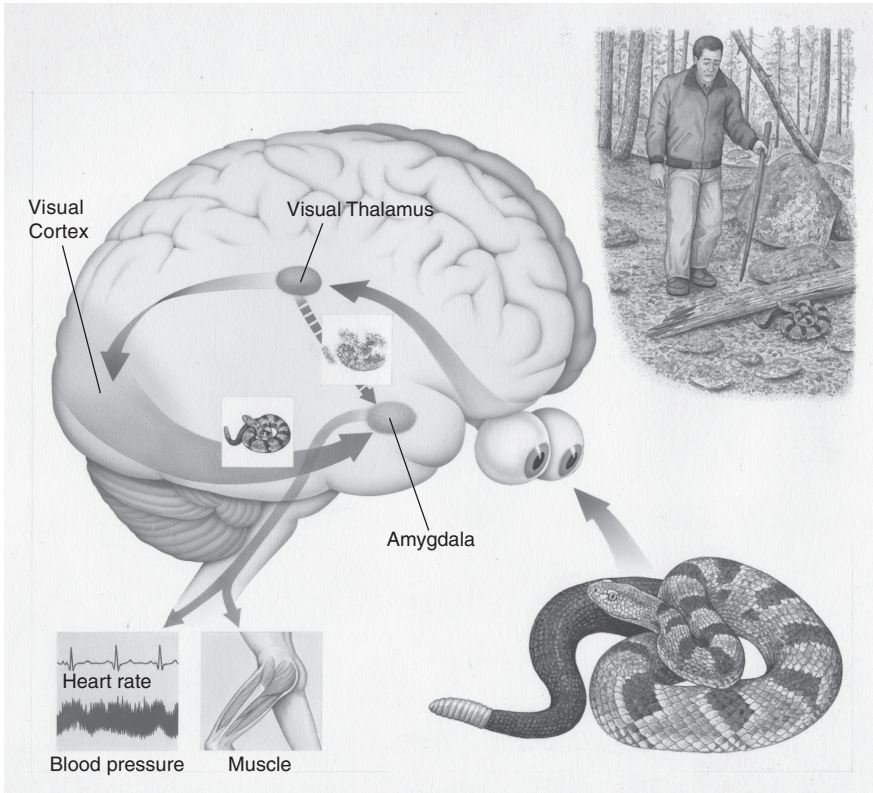

Fig. 1 Joseph LeDoux and The Two Roads to Fear

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 *inter*disciplinarity—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 Encyclopædia 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 Tavris, '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 Knuuttila, *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 Knuuttila, *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 Strong Will	Cold Weak Will
Dry Strong Feelings	Yellow Gall Choleric: irritable	Black Gall Melancholic: sad and reflective
Wet Weak Feelings	Blood Sanguine: lively and active	Passive 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; Knuuttila, *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 voluntaristic 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; Piroska 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's 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