Overlaps and Intersections in New Scholarship on Empires, Beliefs, and Emotions

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Feminist standpoint theory and post-modernism have both taught us that our position matters, so I would like to establish mine. I am not a historian of the emotions, though perhaps better said I have never defined myself as such, and I am writing this in August of 2016 in the United States. Earlier this summer voters in Britain voted to leave the European Union, and Republicans in the United States chose as their presidential candidate a man who has never held political office and has little familiarity with the world other than its golf courses, casinos, and hotels. Both those who supported and those who were appalled by these decisions saw emotions as voters’ key motivations, and, somewhat surprisingly, were not that different in describing these emotions: anger, fear, resentment, nostalgia. If I am to understand today’s politics, perhaps I should become a historian of the emotions.

There are less frightening reasons to do so. Across the humanities over the last decade or so there has been an ‘affective’ or ‘emotional’ turn, building on scholarship that began in the 1980s. This has brought with it the key institutional structures required for an academic field to thrive. Research centers and clusters for the study of emotions have been established across the world, including the Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, based at the University of Western Australia; the Centre for the History of Emotions at Queen Mary, University of London; the Languages of Emotion Cluster of Excellence, Freie Universität Berlin; and the Center for the History of Emotions at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, also in Berlin. Several publishers have book series in the history of the emotions, including Palgrave, Oxford University Press, and the University of Illinois Press, although the series at New York University Press is no longer being published. An interdisciplinary journal devoted to the topic, Emotion Review, began publication in 2009, and another, Emotions: History Culture Society (EHCS), sponsored by the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, is scheduled to begin publication in 2017. The ARC Centre is also sponsoring a new scholarly society, The Society for the History of the Emotions, designed, as its flyer notes, ‘to establish the history of emotions as a widely used framework for understanding past societies and cultures’ and ‘to understand the changing meanings and consequences of emotional concepts, expressions and

1 For an early comment on this, see SCOTT MCLEEMEE, “Getting emotional”, Chronicle of Higher Education (2003); the on-line version does not provide page numbers.
regulation over time and space.’ There is an H-Net group, H-Emotions, several scholarly blogs, and many publications in a variety of fields. Thus I would have perfectly normal academic reasons for my own emotional turn.

New scholarly fields develop at the time they do for a reason (or more often reasons), and scholars who are historians of the emotions have several explanations for why the field took off when it did, some of which reflect their own personal trajectories through (and out of) the linguistic turn, gender history, cultural history, body history, and so on. More than one has pointed to an event outside the realm of academe, however, and, in fact, closely related to the politics of 2016: the attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001. Jan Plamper has noted that although scholars were already studying affect, feelings, and the emotions, this event ‘catalytically sped up several interrelated processes that were already underway,’ and helped create ‘the conditions that made the ‘emotions moment’ possible in various disciplines and fields.’ One may not agree with Plamper about the extent of the impact of 9/11 on the field as a whole, but his comments also point to the particular relevance of the conjunction of topics that is the theme of this special issue: Empires, Beliefs, Emotions. Whatever else 9/11 was, it was an event that brought these three together. Both its causes and its consequences have been cross-cultural and connected, the new course Cromohs has taken as a journal.

2 An excellent bibliography of works in several fields published in English up to 2013, compiled by Jan Plamper, can be found on H-Emotions. Accessed 1 August 2016.


A survey of scholarship that is about all three of these, and is also cross-cultural, would be quite short, as one of the key points made by those reflecting on the field is the predominance of the West. When asked in 2010 about future directions the history of the emotions should take, Peter Stearns, one of its pioneers, commented ‘most obviously, to me, more courageous comparative work.’

And in 2012 both Eugenia Lean and Julie Livingston warned about the tendency to use European emotional genealogies as the norm, viewing this, in part, as a result of the abundance of scholarship on the West. Thus I would like to approach this as a Venn diagram, thinking of empires, beliefs, emotions as three overlapping circles. I will examine scholarship that connects at least two of these for the period 1400-1900, and end with some works that focus on all three, the central triangle in the Venn diagram. This of course is not exhaustive, as it could not be in an article of this length, but suggestive of what is available in English. Much of the recent scholarship on the emotions in this and other historical periods draws on many disciplines, including neuroscience, anthropology, art history, history, and literature, and some of it is collaborative, especially that sponsored by research centers. Thus many of the works I mention analyze a wide range of textual, visual, and material sources, and use theories and methodologies in a multi-disciplinary way.

First beliefs and emotions. On this Peter and Carol Stearns and Barbara Rosenwein have been leaders, both in theorizing and close analysis of sources. In what became a path-breaking article in 1985, Peter and Carol Stearns encouraged historians to consider the history of the emotions, and particularly to examine what they termed ‘emotionology,’ the rules, norms, and standards that a society or a group within society maintained toward emotions and their appropriate expression. They stressed this not, as Peter Stearns later explained, because this was the only thing they

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5 Quoted in PLAMPER, *The history of the emotions*, 264. Because Stearns has long regarded the emotions as a significant topic of research, the *Journal of Social History*, which he edits, has published a number of articles on emotions, feeling, and affect, though most of these are about the West.

6 Comments by LEAN and LIVINGSTON in “AHR conversation: the historical study of emotions”, 1517-1521.


were interested in, but because ‘we should admit when we’re dealing with culture and not pretend it describes actual experience. And we should admit that culture is a lot more accessible. It is important in its own right, because it affects public policies and behaviors, including the law; and it normally affects actual emotional evaluations including self-evaluations and actual experience as well, though not always with full correlation.’

The Stearns followed this article with a series of works on various emotions, including anger, sadness, jealousy, and desire in which they focused primarily on culture, but also examined actual behavior.

In a 2002 article and then in several books, Barbara Rosenwein developed and expanded the idea of ‘emotional communities,’ which she defines as ‘social groups that adhere to the same valuations of emotions and how they should be expressed.’ Her most recent book, *Generations of Feeling*, provides a comprehensive history of emotions in Western Europe across more than a millennium, assessing the ways in which emotional norms and modes of expression respond to, and in turn create, their social, religious, ideological, and cultural environments. In all her work, she points out the words used to describe what we would term ‘emotions’ in general, and the words used for individual feelings, noting the different valances of these and how they changed.

Although Rosenwein’s work is about more than religion, the fact that she began as a historian of monastic life and monasteries are always included as one of the ‘emotional communities’ she explores means that the emotional resonances of Christianity are central to her work. She explicitly and pointedly rejects Johan Huizinga’s idea that medieval emotional life was childlike and simple, as well as Norbert Elias’s theory of the ‘civilizing process,’ which viewed the medieval period as unrestrained, coarse, and impulsive and the modern period as restrained and self-controlled. Instead she sees shifts over time in the valorization of specific emotions and the words used to express these as far more complex.

Other historians of the emotions also emphasize semantic change, building on the work of conceptual historians such as Reinhard Kosseleck and Otto Brunner to

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9 Quoted in PLAMPER, *The history of emotions*, 263.


discuss shifts in the words used to describe passions, feelings, emotions, and affect, and thus in the way people were taught to conceptualize emotion. *Emotional Lexicons*, for example, jointly authored by nine scholars associated with the Max Planck Institute, examines terms of emotion found in German, French, and English language encyclopaedias from the late seventeenth century through the late twentieth century, using these as evidence not only of changing language use but also of broader cultural and social shifts.\(^{12}\) Several of the essays in the book compare sources across countries, noting national differences, and in some cases highlighting terms for which it is difficult to find a one-to-one translation because they carry many valences. This is somewhat ironic in a book that itself was largely translated from German, and reflects a problem that is both linguistic and conceptual. If we accept that words used to describe emotions change over time and are different from place to place—now a commonplace in scholarship on the emotions—how do we know what they mean in our sources? Might there be words that are untranslatable because the emotions themselves are untranslatable, as Orhan Pamuk has suggested for *hüzün* in Turkish\(^{13}\), and has sometimes been argued for *Gemüt* in German and *aware* in Japanese? And, thinking of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis as well as Stearns’ notion of ‘emotionology,’ does the existence of words create or at least influence the emotions in the first place? Some neuroscientists suggest that the way out of the dilemma created by language is to map emotions in the brain through neuroimaging the way they have begun to with numbers and consciousness, but this is obviously impossible for historical or literary subjects, and, judging by the books and articles written by those neuroscientists, brain scans do not speak for themselves, but must be analyzed and discussed in language. In addition, as Jan Plamper has stressed, the neuroscience of the emotions has yet to ‘acquire the degree of robustness that we depend on in a humanities discipline like history,’ and it has its own epistemology, ‘which includes reductionist experimental designs, iron distinctions between true/false, and universal claims to truth.’\(^{14}\) So we are left with words, but these questions remind us that translation and cross-linguistic or cross-cultural comparison must always be done carefully and self-consciously, and with attention to ambiguity.

One study that does this, and that also takes up Rosenwein’s idea of ‘emotional communities’ and the Stearnses’ focus on ‘emotionology’ (though does not use that term) is Susan Karant-Nunn’s *The Reformation of Feeling*. This builds on her own work on changes in ritual in the Protestant Reformation to examine the emotional tenor in the programs that revived Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism developed for


\(^{13}\) ORHAN PAMUK, *Istanbul: Memories and the City* (New York: Knopf, 2005).

\(^{14}\) PLAMPER in “AHR conversation: the historical study of emotions”, 1512.
As she notes, preaching clergy explicitly and implicitly encouraged their parishioners to make an emotional investment in the faith, though they differed in the particular kinds of sentiment they sought to cultivate and thus in the emotional communities they sought to build. Like Rosenwein, she notes the continuing power of Elias’s paradigm, discovering as she does so that ‘he added remarks on the emotions to the English translation of one of his works that evidently do not appear in the German original.’ (p. 4) Thus those who have read him in English have a slightly different view of that paradigm than those who read him in German, and this is not simply the result of translation. To her study of sermons and consideration of the decorative liturgical, musical, and disciplinary changes made by authorities attempting to inculcate what they saw as proper feelings, Karant-Nunn adds an analysis of the much smaller body of surviving sources from laity that speak to their reception of these instructions and admonitions.

As one would expect given the centrality of religion to the history of Europe during the early modern period, religion figures prominently in collections of essays that focus on the interplay between emotion and other aspects of society in this era. A recent collection of essays on emotion and childhood, for example, examines Puritan children, Jewish children, and the inculcation and practices of piety among Protestant children in several parts of Europe, and has one of the relatively few essays that considers religion and emotion in a situation of cross-cultural contact. Another that examines the roles that gender ideologies and lived, structured, and desired emotional states played in producing stability and instability considers convents and religious schools as emotional communities, and examines the gendered nature of Protestant religious revivals.


Across the Atlantic, John Corrigan also focuses on the emotional communities created by religion, including those that resulted from the ‘Businessmen’s Revival,’ a religious revival that unfolded after the 1857 market crash among white, middle-class Protestants in New England, in which they increasingly saw emotion as a commodity governed by contract. Corrigan edited the first collection on religion and emotion that reached across religious traditions to consider the ways in which emotionality and performances of religious feeling express, reinforce, are shaped by, and challenge social and moral orders in many traditions, and has also edited a major handbook on religion and emotion, which looks at various religious traditions separately and also at the ways in which key components of religious life — ritual, music, gender, sexuality, and material culture — represent and shape emotional performance.

Scholarship on Christianity explicitly defines itself as part of the history of emotions, but that on other religious traditions in this era certainly examines emotions as well, particularly within more individualized and mystical forms of piety. Within Judaism, this includes studies of the development and spread of the Kabbalah, that group of texts that offer a mystical path to oneness with God. Lawrence Fine, for example, analyzes the teachings of the Kabbalist rabbi Isaac Luria, who in the sixteenth century developed new systems of spiritual practices, mystical ceremonies, and guides to behavior based on the Kabbalah from the village of Safed in Palestine. Groups studying and practicing Lurianic Kabbalah were organized in many Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire and in Europe, devoted to prayer, moral behavior, and interior individual piety, thus forming intense ‘emotional communities’ with a distinct ‘emotionology’ within early modern Judaism.

The emotions are also central to Sufi piety within Islam, as Sufi poets and scholars such as Rumi thought that music and dancing could help people achieve a state of ecstasy that would lead to greater spiritual awareness and bring them closer to God. Exuberant Sufi ceremonies generally became more popular than the more formal and reserved services in mosques, and Sufi brotherhoods became not only devotional groups, but also important social, political, and economic institutions, including the ruling houses of two empires, the Safavid and the Ottoman. Nile Greene’s recent overview of the history of Sufism explores all of this, and Kathryn Babayan examines the way desire for the divine and hope for a spiritual utopia shaped culture and society at the beginning of the Safavid

Empire. Dror Ze-Evi includes Sufi literature as well as a range of other medical, religious, legal, literary, and travel texts in his analysis of the ways in which desire for humans as well as for the divine were expressed and shaped in the Ottoman Empire, and Walter Andrews and Mehmet Kalpakli provide one of the few cross-cultural studies of a particular emotion—love—that directly compares Muslim and Christian works, with a chapter on love and religion. The study of the emotions within Islam is clearly a growth area of research; for example, the newly-established Pakistan Journal of Historical Studies, sponsored by the Khaldania Centre for Historical research in Lahore and published by Indiana University Press, set the emotions as the topics for both issues of its first volume in 2016, the first on ‘emotions and marginal communities’ and the second on ‘emotions, humans and animals.’

Traditions of personalized affective piety—generally known as *bhakti*—in early modern India, such as Vaishnavism of the spiritual teachers Chaitanya and Vallabha that advocated loving devotion to an avatar of Vishnu (often Krishna), have also been examined from the perspective of the emotions, or with a focus on related topics such as the heart or the imagination. In the Hindu context, religious love is conceptualized within theories of *rasa* and *bhava* that were initially developed for—and still inform—secular aesthetics and performing arts. Though *rasa* and *bhava* are among the words that are often regarded as untranslatable, *bhava* may be thought of to some degree as emotion or emotional state, and *rasa* as the dominant interior state or aesthetic reaction experienced by the audience watching performers portray various *bhava*. In the sixteenth century, rasa theory was applied to *bhakti* devotion, in which Krishna’s divine acts were understood to evoke intense love and spiritual delight, a *rasa* that surpassed all other *rasa* and all other experiences.

25 For a brief introduction to Rasa theory in relation to religion, with references to longer works, see David Buchta and Graham M. Schweig, “Rasa theory,” in *Brill’s Encyclopedia of Hinduism*,
Because Kabbalah, Sufism and devotion to Krishna are living religious traditions practiced by many, there are also countless books designed to guide meditation in the here and now to produce certain emotional states. They include texts from the past, but tend to frame these as ‘timeless wisdom’ rather than as reflecting the cultures that produced them. The same is true of Buddhism: only rarely do historical studies explicitly frame themselves as part of the history of the emotions, although one could argue that because of the centrality of mindfulness and the lessening of desire, all analysis of the teachings and practice of Buddhism is about the emotions.

Although both beliefs and emotions are sometimes opposed to thought, scholars of the emotions instead see them as intimately connected to thought, and not simply thought in its Buddhist sense of mindfulness, but also thought in the sense of rationality. An influential voice on this has been William Reddy, who has coined several concepts that along with Rosenwein’s idea of ‘emotional communities’ and the Stearnses’ emphasis on culture have been taken up by other historians to investigate a variety of times and places. One of these is ‘emotives,’ which Reddy defines as ‘an attempt to call up the emotion that is expressed; it is an attempt to feel what one says one feels.’26 This calling up is most often verbal, such as telling someone ‘I love you,’ or saying about oneself ‘I feel frightened,’ but it can also be somatic, such as smiling or crying. Putting feelings into words or choosing other ways to outwardly express them serves as a way to both manage and explore them, Reddy asserts. Thus saying ‘I feel frightened’ is both a way to manage fear and explore whether one is really afraid, which then can have an impact on just how afraid one feels.27 Reddy uses the findings of cognitive and affective neuroscience to support his ideas on this feedback loop of self-evaluation between conscious and unconscious or subconscious processes.28 One might object that focusing on externally-expressed ‘emotives’ moves away from what people really feel, but even historians who do not use Reddy’s concept of emotives note that we have no other choice. The only way we can know about the emotions of the past—and actually the present, for any emotions other than our own—is when these are expressed through words, gestures,

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or actions, and these are shaped by the historical subject's cognitions, values, and culture.29

Reddy's concept of ‘emotives’ does not deny that feelings really exist, but he also notes that ‘emotives’ can be prescribed by society as well as the individual, through ideals, norms, rituals, prayers, oaths, and so on, what the Stearnses called ‘emotionology.’ Societies create what Reddy terms ‘emotional regimes’—another important concept taken up by other scholars—which he defines as ‘the set of normative emotions and the official rituals, practices, and «emotives» that express and inculcate them’ and notes that this is ‘a necessary underpinning of any stable political regime.’30 ‘Emotional regimes’ are thus similar to Rosenwein’s ‘emotional communities,’ but have a more Foucauldian valance, as Foucault emphasized the centrality of institutional control mechanisms and the technologies of power in his studies of the creation of modern Western patterns of feelings.31

As the Stearnses noted in the 1980s, many of the sources for examining the creation and enforcement of emotional regimes are normative and prescriptive, and for ancient and medieval history are often the most common evidence available on the emotions (as well as on many other topics). Thus emotional regimes have been widely studied. Karant-Nunn’s The Reformation of Feeling is really about emotional regimes in Reformation Europe, though she does not use that term, and other scholars as well have studied the ways political and intellectual authorities have prescribed new standards for culturally-sanctioned emotions. In Parenting in England, 1760-1830, for example, Joanne Bailey traces ideas about parenthood in a Christian society that was responding to new cultural trends of sensibility, romanticism and domesticity, along with Enlightenment ideas about childhood and self.32 She uses some descriptive sources such as memoirs, letters, and court records, but also a wide range of prescriptive sources such as laws, sermons, and advice literature that created the ‘emotional regime’ of late Georgian England. She argues that the emotional experience of parenthood, and not simply its genealogical necessity, was central to ideas about individual mental and physical well-being, public reputation, familial standing, and even national identity, thus clearly, in Reddy’s terms, a ‘necessary underpinning’ of that particular political regime.

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29 This point is made strongly by EIKO IKEGAMI, “Emotions”, in A Concise Companion to History, ed. by ULINKA RUBLACK (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 333-353 and MONIQUE SCHEER, “Are emotions a kind of practice (and is that what makes them have a history)? A Bourdieuan approach to understanding emotion”, History and Theory 51, 2 (2012): 193-220.
As Bailey’s book and many others highlight, ‘beliefs’ are not all religious, but may be philosophical, social, political, or even economic. In Passion Is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution, for example, Nicole Eustace argues that a broadening of the idea of who had virtuous sociable feelings during the eighteenth century played a pivotal role in reshaping power relations and reordering society in the decades leading up to the American Revolution. In 1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism, she extends this analysis to the role that emotions played in the early nineteenth century, when the militarily disastrous War of 1812 gained so much popular support that it ushered in what is known as the ‘era of good feelings’ and played on romanticized notions of familial love to strengthen national identity and patriotism. In his many works on emotions, Peter Stearns examines the ways that social and economic changes led to emotional shifts, noting, for example, By the late 1840s people began to realize that the same industrial world that required the family as an emotional haven also required new emotional motivations for competitive work… The resultant response explains why Victorianism introduced its most distinctive emotional emphases in arguing for channeled anger and courageous encounters with fear. William Reddy examines lines of causation that went in the opposite direction, when the social constraints on emotions at the French court of Louis XVI were so restrictive and the outlets for emotional expression provided by alternatives such as salons, Masonic lodges, theatres, and coffeehouses so freeing that emotional needs led to a political revolution. Recent article collections have explored the influence of print culture on the way the emotions were conceived, performed and authenticated, the intense emotional dynamics and trauma created by dramatic events like massacres, floods, fires, earthquakes and plagues, changes in emotional cultures of the early modern battlefield, and the emotional norms, values, and practices surrounding the death of children

Links between the emotions and political, social, and economic beliefs and ideas have also been examined in East Asia for the early modern period. In The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China, for example, Timothy Brooke examines changing attitudes to the inter-relationship of commerce and culture during the expansion of the market economy from the fourteenth century to

35 Stearns, American Cool.
seventeenth. Educated elites feared the end of their influence and looked nostalgically back on an imagined golden past, but instead of losing influence the scholarly gentry became interwoven with the nouveau riche merchant classes. He concludes: ‘However thoroughly commerce had replaced paternalism and deference with a wage relationship, or however well some individuals managed to step over social barriers and move up the social ladder, or however deeply the successful were troubled as standards and distinctions seemed to dissolve beneath them, the class system of overlordship and deference that held the Chinese world together at the beginning of the Ming was still there at the end.’

Thus emotions can be an important factor in social and political continuities as well as changes. Paolo Santangelo uses the huge database of Ming and Qing sources that he has developed to examine how emotions and states of mind were expressed, thus examining ‘emotives,’ though he does not use that term. As Reddy did in ancien régime France, he finds contradictions between official values with rigid ethical codes that promoted ‘virtuous sentiments’ and personal desires for wealth and pleasure, and he also analyzes the way that social control influenced the cognitive elements of emotions.

Dorothy Ko examines the huge range of emotions associated with footbinding over its thousand-year history—desire, suffering, love, pride, family loyalty, revulsion—and the ways these were interwoven with issues of gender, class, sexuality, education, medicine, religion, philosophy, and politics. She also highlights the way that one type of emotion—the revulsion and horror with which nineteenth and early twentieth century reformers and missionaries regarded footbinding—has shaped our own responses as contemporary academic readers, thus making it very difficult for us to understand other types of feelings about the practice.

Turning to Japan, Eiko Ikegami examines the historical development of the samurai ethos in premodern Japan, what she terms ‘honorific individualism’ obsessed with personal dignity and military reputation, and the way this was transformed into an ethos of ‘honorable collaboration’ as the samurai themselves were transformed into a hereditary class of vassal-bureaucrats in the emergent Tokugawa state. This interplay between the individual and the collective, she argues, helps explain the distinctive Japanese path toward modernity, though she also cautions that this is not a teleological story with a major turning point a la Elias’s ‘civilizing process’ thesis, but

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instead one of gradual transformation in the ways emotions were valorized, navigated, taught, and learned.\textsuperscript{41} She also emphasizes the political impact of the emotions, noting “since emotions are critically related to human bonds and conflicts, power politics naturally enters the dynamics of navigating sentiments.”\textsuperscript{42}

The emotions have been an ongoing theme in the anthropological literature that discusses Africa, but most of this is ethnographic and has focused on the twentieth and now twenty-first centuries.\textsuperscript{43} Some explores earlier periods, however, such as the work of David Schoenbrun on how experiences of loss in early modern Bunyoro shaped beliefs about political legitimacy or of Rhiannon Stephenson on the cultural and social meaning of motherhood in Uganda.\textsuperscript{44}

Examining scholarship on Africa that links beliefs and emotions leads into the second section of the Venn diagram I wish to discuss, that in which the circles on empire and emotions overlap.\textsuperscript{45} Although one could argue that because empires become empires only through military conquest every study of empires should be about emotions—greed, desire for power, fear, and so on—traditional studies of empire have only rarely been conceptualized as such (Biographies of conquerors, by contrast, generally do pay attention to their subjects’ feelings and how these motivated their actions, often claiming an understanding of this that would make many historians of emotions wince. Popular biographies do this to make the story more exciting, ‘Driven by resentment, he angrily strode into the room…’ but scholarly biographies do so as well.) Topics that are now sometimes conceptualized as the history of emotions began as studies of imperialism/colonialism and sexuality, on which there is a huge literature and which continues as its own field of inquiry.\textsuperscript{46}


\textsuperscript{42} IKEGAMI, Emotions, 336.

\textsuperscript{43} For representative studies of the twentieth century by both anthropologists and historians, see Love in Africa, ed. by JENNIFER COLE and LYNN M. THOMAS (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).


\textsuperscript{45} For an excellent survey on the “new imperial history” in general, see DURBA GHOSH, “Another set of imperial turns?”, American Historical Review 117, 3 (2012): 772-794. Scholarship that defies itself as “imperial” tends to focus on Western European empires, especially the British, though some cross-cultural (and cross-temporal) studies are emerging, such as JANE BURBANK and FREDRICK COOPER, Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

\textsuperscript{46} See, for just some examples: WARD STAVIQ, “Living in offense of our lord: indigenous sexual values and marital life in the colonial crucible”, Hispanic American Historical Review 75 (1995): 597-622; ANNE MCCLINTOCK, Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest (London: Routledge, 1995); ANN STOLER, Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s
Many recent works demonstrate that imperial power is explicitly and implicitly linked with sexuality, and that images of colonial peoples were gendered and sexualized. Research on sexuality in the context of imperialism has also emphasized links between colonized areas and the metropole, arguing that the process of colonization shaped ideologies and practices everywhere.  

Sexual desire figures large as an emotion in newer studies of the political and cultural history of empires, but increasingly other types of intimacy and affect have begun to be examined as well. In her essays collected in Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule, Ann Stoler links matters of intimacy to matters of state policy in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Indonesia, and especially examines the role of affective attachments in creating colonial categories. Sexual desire is one of the emotions she examines, but so are the attachments between parent and child, servants and the families they served. The authors in Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History, also edited by Stoler, examine the critical role of ‘domains of the intimate’ in the consolidation of colonial power, noting how these created and reinforced categories of difference underlying colonialism. Whether in the bedroom, classroom, or medical examining room, the emotions are a major part of this categorization. The essays in Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton’s Moving Subjects: Gender, Mobility, and Intimacy in an Age of Global Empire assess ways in which distance and movement shaped intimacy.


47 At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World, ed. by Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
and in which intimacy, or the prospect of intimacy, or the desire for intimacy, influenced the formation of imperial power. The intimate served ‘not merely as a domain of power but as one of the technologies available to colonizer and colonized alike in the struggle over colonial territory, imperial goods, and the meanings of global aspirations.’ In *Intimate Strangers: Friendship, Exchange and Pacific Encounters*, Vanessa Smith explores the meaning of friendship in the Pacific in the late eighteenth century, when a whole series of European explorers believed the first word they heard from the various peoples they encountered was the word for friend. She puts this within the context of European thinking about intimacy and emotional commerce, and unpacks the political and emotional significance of ideas about friendship in explorations of Oceania. With their focus on intimacy in imperial interactions, all of these studies examine what happens when different emotional communities come into contact with one another, and set this squarely within a political context of unequal power relations, thus analyzing both emotional and other sorts of regimes. The same is true of studies that focus or include discussion on the emotions of the slave trade, including terror and anger.

In *The Inner Life of Empires*, Emma Rothschild examines another type of intimacy, that among family members, as she surveys the ideas, sentiments, and values of a large Scottish family, the Johnstones, the male members of which lived around the globe in the eighteenth century, and all of whom wrote often to one another ‘continually evaluating their own and other people’s inner sentiments in the light of their outer circumstances.’ Rothschild sets this microhistory within the context of the larger story of empire and Enlightenment, but pays great attention to what the brothers and sisters were thinking and feeling, noting that ‘the distinction between the inner and the outer life, or between an interior, private existence of the mind and an exterior universe of events and circumstances, is very difficult to identify in the lives of the Johnstones (as it is in our own lives).’ Like Rosenwein, she pays attention to the words used to describe both what we would term ‘emotions’ in general, which included ‘sentiments’ ‘passions’ ‘sensibility’ ‘sympathy’ and ‘imagination’ as well as ‘emotion,’ and the words used for individual emotions.

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In the early twenty-first century, scholarship on colonialism and imperialism began to cast itself explicitly as examining the emotions, particularly in the essay collections that often grow out of conferences and mark the introduction of a new framework. The essays in *Emotions and Daily Life in Colonial Mexico* examine daily life through the study of love, lust, jealousy, piety, and anger, exploring how individuals experienced emotions on a personal level and how institutions such as civic and church rituals guided and channeled the expression of emotions in the colonial emotional regime.54 The essays in *Civilizing Emotions* argue that the emotions were at the core of the practices linked to the creation of the new hierarchized global order in the nineteenth century, exploring why and how emotions were controlled, managed, and ascribed to different societies and social groups in ventures that were understood as ‘civilizing’ them.55 Other studies as well examine the emotional investments in empires, both personal and institutional, and the ways these were performed in colony and metropole.56 Several scholars have combined the ‘emotional turn’ with an interest in memory, exploring, for example, the emotional dimension of myths about the conquest and colonization of the Americas in fin de siècle Iberian literature or the way twentieth-century Latin American magical realist narratives reimagine the colonial sense of wonder as a structure of feeling.57

Turning to the third overlap in my Venn diagram, scholarship that is about both empire and religion means moving to a space that could easily swell to hide the rest of the diagram, so I will mention just a handful of the many studies available. Even fairly traditional studies of empires in this period—European and non-European—that focus primarily on the political and economic now generally pay some attention to culture and religion, and to a lesser extent, social history.58 Every study of Spanish colonialism includes an analysis of the role of Catholicism in this,

and some historians have begun to argue for a ‘Catholic Atlantic.’

Studies of British North American colonialism have always paid attention (or indeed over-emphasized) the role of religion as a motivating force for migration, but religion is now being integrated more fully into discussions of political developments. Carla Pestana’s *Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World*, for example, employs the themes of circulation, transplantation, and negotiation to place British expansion into the Atlantic world in a religious context. Broad surveys of Christianity in this era remain predominantly European, but now usually include some discussion of regions beyond Europe.

The most interesting analyses of religion within the context of colonialism and the increasing interactions that characterized the early modern era, in my opinion, are studies that focus on processes of conversion. They are also those that are the most likely to have significant consideration of emotions, and thus be in the center triangle of my Venn diagram. I am not alone in thinking this. Although the new *Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion* oddly does not have a chapter that discusses emotions and conversion (though it does link conversion to nearly everything else, including legal issues, cognitive neuroscience, dreaming, semiotics, geography, demographics, sociology, and psychology), the *Journal of Religious History* just published a special issue on emotions and conversion. This issue, edited by Jacqueline van Gent and Spencer Young, grew out of a 2013 workshop sponsored by the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, and includes the role of the emotions in conversion to Christianity by indigenous peoples in several parts of Canada and in Greenland, in debates over conversions to Christianity in South and Southeast Asia, and in conversions back and forth between Islam and Christianity in the Mediterranean. Similarly, another very recent collection, *Emotions and Christian...*
Missions: Historical Perspectives explores the ways in which emotions were conceptualised and practised in Christian mission contexts from the 17th to the 20th centuries. The authors show how emotional practices such as prayer, tears, and Methodist ‘shouting,’ and feelings such as pity, joy and frustration, shaped relationships between missionaries and prospective converts.64

Conversion in colonial settings used to be understood largely as ‘spiritual conquest,’ but recent studies in what has come to be called the ‘New Mission History’ have replaced this view with one that emphasizes cultural blending, indigenization, hybridity, creolization, and syncretism.65 The New Mission History situates this process of transcultural exchange, negotiation, and mestizaje within the context of colonial conquest and enormous power differences, so it is not overly celebratory, but it recognizes European, African, indigenous, and mixed-race people as actors.66

Just as are the emotions, conversion is regarded as an inner process, but with externally visible changes in behavior and demeanor. In a comparative study of conversion in the seventeenth century and today, for example, Craig Harline explores the effects of religious conversion on the inner life of the individuals involved and also on family relationships and dynamics. In my *Christianity and Sexuality in the Early Modern World: Regulating Desire, Reforming Practice*, I survey the ways in which Christian ideas and institutions shaped sexual norms and conduct around the world from the time of Luther and Columbus to that of Thomas Jefferson. I look at marriage and divorce, fornication and illegitimacy, clerical sexuality, same-sex relations, witchcraft and love magic, moral crimes, and inter-racial relationships. Neither Harline nor I frame our books as studies of the emotions, but we do discuss a wide variety of them, including sexual desire, love, envy, fondness, hate, jealousy, and a range of others, as do many of the studies of conversion referenced above. There are also articles examining one particular emotion within the context of religious conversion, such as lust, guilt, fear, or suspicion; those published in the last decade sometimes use the theoretical insights of Stearns, Rosenwein, and Reddy.

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It is clear, as Jacqueline van Gent and Spencer Young note in their introduction to the special issue on conversion and emotions, that every cross-cultural religious encounter, whether for the purposes of conversion or not, involved emotions, for ‘emotion is deeply imbricated within the many varieties of religious experience.’70 Certain religious groups emphasized feelings and emotions more than others, however, making this an aspect of their piety impossible to ignore. On this the Moravians are becoming the best studied from a global perspective. The Moravians established missions across Europe from Ireland to Silesia, and then beyond to the islands of the Caribbean, Surinam, West and South Africa, and the British colonies of North America from Labrador to Georgia.71 They developed a distinctive theology centered on the blood and wounds of Christ, expressed in sensual language about blood flowing from the side wound and believers crawling inside this to bathe or be baptized in the blood.72 This was powerful to indigenous peoples in many parts of the world, for whom blood and wounds also had deep meaning. Missionaries’ letters and reports from Pennsylvania, for example, speak of Native American women and men who were ‘hungry after the Savior’s blood,’ and saw this blood as both a spiritual and physical healing agent.73 Their dreams and visions, told as part of the life stories about spiritual longing and crisis that were related after baptism, were written down, distributed, and read by Moravians and others in Pennsylvania and beyond. Thus as Native Americans accommodated their spiritual language and emotional register somewhat to Moravian idioms to join this new spiritual and emotional community—or the missionaries recorded them as doing so—German and English audiences read about vision quests, hunting magic, and miraculous healings, which fit well with their own world view in which prophecies, apparitions, and portents were regularly reported, interpreted, and responded to in emotional terms. Within the context of colonialism, European


71 Pious Pursuits: German Moravians in the Atlantic World, ed. by MICHELE GILLESPIE and ROBERT BEACHY (New York: Berghahn, 2007).


emotional regimes —using Reddy’s term— would become the more powerful, but there was also some interweaving of emotional communities.

The Moravians were not the only Christian group in a colonial context for whom the emotions were important; so were evangelical Protestants of other types, as Karen Vallgårda has emphasized in her new book, *Imperial Childhoods and Christian Mission: Education and Emotions in South India and Denmark*. Feelings were essential in Catholic conversion as well, and of course in other world religions, including Islam, which was becoming a global religion as it spread across Africa and South and Southeast Asia in this era. Thus we can look forward to more studies of these in the future.

Judging by some of the work scheduled to appear in the near future, we can look forward not only to more studies of conversion informed by the rich theoretical work on the emotions, but more analyses that bring empire, beliefs, and emotions together in a variety of ways. Despite the fact that it is called ‘an introduction,’ Susan Broomhall’s *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction*, due out later this year, is really a comprehensive survey of the field, and will include essays on religion, on colonialism, and on religion *and* colonialism, along with other topics, including modern theories and models of emotions, sources and methodologies for studying the emotions, early modern terms, concepts and practices of emotions, and a number of specialized political, intellectual, social, and cultural subjects. Its more than fifty essays are primarily about Europe, but seven of them do go beyond Europe to consider European missions, trading networks and colonies. This will be the place to start in 2017 and beyond.

Like all handbooks, companions, and other such overviews, Broomhall’s forthcoming collection provides a snapshot of the field as it actually is now, not as we wish it might be. Scholarship on the history of the emotions is overwhelmingly European, so much so that the blurb describing *Early Modern Emotions* does not mention this, making Europe an unmarked category. Thus Peter Stearns’ comment about the need for comparative work and Eugenia Lean’s and Julie Livingston’s call for more connectivity that I mentioned at the beginning of this article are well taken. Lean is absolutely right that ‘throughout history, emotions not solely develop over time, but move and traverse over space, small-scale and large, and in messy, unexpected ways that do not conform to civilizational, regional, national, or local

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75 To my knowledge, none of the studies of the expansion of Islam frames this within the history of the emotions, although Omar H. Ali, *Islam in the Indian Ocean World: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford, 2016), contains many documents that refer to emotions and their impact, and Ali’s introduction mentions various emotions. This small book also contains an excellent select bibliography to both print and web materials on the expansion of Islam.

boundaries’ and Livingstone that ‘if we understand emotions as necessarily social processes, then we must contemplate them within socially complex and dynamic historical worlds. These worlds are linked and at times densely connected through movements of people, goods, ideas.’ Because so much of the theorizing about the emotions to date has been based on Western evidence and Western models of feeling, such comparative or connected studies will need to engage with the theoretical formulations regarding affect, moods, cognition, mind, heart, and other concepts (including those for which there are no easy English translations) from other cultures, such as the theories of *rasa* and *bhava* that have informed Indian aesthetics and religion, to allow what world and global historians call ‘reciprocal comparison,’ in which each case is viewed from the vantage point of the others.

More comparative, connected and cross-cultural studies are particularly appropriate for the period from 1400 to 1900 because increasing movements of people, goods, and ideas are what defines the period. The description of *The Journal of Early Modern History*, launched at the University of Minnesota in 1997, states: ‘The early modern period of world history (ca. 1300-1800) was marked by a rapidly increasing level of global interaction. Between the aftermath of Mongol conquest in the East and the onset of industrialization in the West, a framework was established for new kinds of contacts and collective self-definition across an unprecedented range of human and physical geographies.’ Sanjay Subrahmanym comments that the period ‘defines a new sense of the limits of the inhabited world, in good measure because it is in a fundamental way an age of travel and discovery, of geographical redefinition.’ He sees the effects of these interactions in ‘complex changes in political theology’ and ‘new and intensified forms of hierarchy, domination, and separation.’ Evelyn Rawski agrees, noting that ‘elites, ideas, and religions moved across regions with greater frequency than ever before, significantly influencing intellectual and cultural life.’ And Ayesha Ramachandran argues that this expansion in networks of circulation was not simply something we can see looking backwards,

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77 Comments by LEAN and LIVINGSTON in *AHR conversation*, 1518, 1520.
81 SUBRAHMANYAM, *Connected histories*, 739.
but that many people living at the time recognized it as well: ‘As both a potent idea and image, «the world» occupies a crucial position in early modern culture.’

This spatial expansion will involve new research, but it will also involve recasting existing research and analyses in terms of the emotions, a direction William Reddy called for in 2010: ‘The history of the emotions is a way of doing political, social, and cultural history, not something to be added to existing fields.’ Thus the emotions can be a lens as well as a subject, just as gender has become over the last several decades, a parallel that Jan Plamper has highlighted as well in his suggestion to ‘envision the history of the emotions not as a specialized field but as a means of integrating the category of emotions into social, cultural, and political history, emulating the rise of gender as an analytical category since its early beginning as ‘women’s history’ in the 1970s.’ Scholarship on the emotions, by the way, almost always uses gender as category of analysis.

In thinking about my own publications, which now stretch back more than thirty years, I realized that, armed with theories and examples from the rich body of scholarship surveyed here, I could without too much effort recast many of these within the history of the emotions. I started as a historian of early modern working women, and when I reread my first articles and my first book, I now see words relating to feelings, emotions, and affect leaping out at me on nearly every page, both in my translations of sources and in my analysis: fear, anger, shame, concern, jealousy, pride, love, envy, caring, friendship. So apparently I’ve been a historian of the emotions all along, just not knowing it. This may not be enough to get me through the coming political season, however, which will challenge my emotions the


84 **REDDY** in **PLAMPER**, *History of emotions*, 249.

85 **PLAMPER**, *History of emotions*, 37.

way few in the past have done. For that, I will have to translate my emotions into action, as I have in political seasons in the past, to make sure my emotions on November 9 are relief and happiness rather than terror and dread.

[A post-election postscript on November 20: Well, anger, fear, resentment, and nostalgia triumphed in the U.S. just as they did in England, or better said, anger, fear, resentment, and nostalgia in certain parts of the country trumped the will of the majority. (As of today, Hillary Clinton is leading in the popular vote by over 1.5 million.) In a sad irony for those of us who study the early modern period but hoped for a different outcome of this election, emotions of the eighteenth century—especially the fear of immigrants, cities, and northerners on the part of southern white male slaveholders and of large states by small states—had particular power in this election, as they were some of the reasons behind the creation of the Electoral College system. I wish they were not quite so relevant. (The notion of voters choosing a woman to be president was literally unthinkable to those men of the Enlightenment, of course, who could only imagine with horror—quoting Jefferson here—the “depravation of morals and ambiguity of issue” that would happen if women “mixed promiscuously in the public meetings of men.”) Predictions of what is coming range from apocalyptic to merely awful, so with many others I will dust off my protest shoes—which never really get dusty in the United States—and join my students in using our own anger and fear in a way that leads forward, not back.]