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Rethinking Emotion

Interiority and Exteriority in Premodern, Modern,
and Contemporary Thought

Edited by
Rüdiger Campe and Julia Weber

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Rüdiger Campe and Julia Weber

Rethinking Emotion: Moving beyond Interiority

An Introduction

*[Literary] criticism stands under the aegis of an inside/outside metaphor
that is never being seriously questioned.*

Paul de Man¹

Nichts ist drinnen, nichts ist draußen:

Denn was innen das ist außen.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe²

Questions, perspectives, claims

The notion of interiority and its central role in our understanding of emotional life and individuality are phenomena that belong to classical Western modernity. From antiquity to early modernity, affects or passions were mostly conceived of either as external physiological forces that act on a passive subject and provoke it to engage in certain actions or as scene-like situations in which the affected person responds to an ensemble of other actors under specific circumstances. Not until the turn of the eighteenth century were emotions located within the subject as an important category that crystallized, together with other elements of psychic life, to form the core of individuality. In conjunction with sensation, feeling, and thinking, emotions began to form what in German is called *Innerlichkeit*³ – a neologism that marks a programmatic distinction of the “inner world” or “interiority” of a person from the “outside

1 De Man, Paul. “Semiology and Rhetoric.” Paul de Man. *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979. 3–19, here 5.

2 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. “Epirrhema.” Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. *Sämtliche Werke. Briefe, Tagebücher und Gespräche. Part 1: Sämtliche Werke. Vol. 2: Gedichte 1800–1832*. Ed. Karl Eibl. Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1988. 498. / “No thing’s inside, outside neither: / In is out and both are either.” (Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. “Epirrhema.” Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. *Selected Poems*. Trans. John Whaley. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1998. 127.)

3 See the entry “Innerlichkeit” by Renate von Heydebrand. *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*. Ed. Joachim Ritter and Karlfried Gründer. Basel: Schwabe, 1976. Vol. 4. 386–388. According to Heydebrand, the word *Innerlichkeit* is first used by Klopstock in 1779. Taken up

world.” This by no means implies that interiority had not long affected particular aspects of life, speech, and action or interaction. On the contrary: the Stoics had spoken of “inner meaning” and “inner freedom;” the interiority of person and soul was a crucial theme in medieval Jewish and Christian mysticism; Luther recognized an “inner word” as opposed to the “outer word;” and spiritual movements in France, England, and Germany in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries pitted the interiority of belief against the exteriority of religious institutions (the catchphrase here is the ‘invisible church’). All of these cases concerned particular religious or social, hermeneutic or ethical aspects of human existence. It was only in the course of the eighteenth century, however, that the concept of interiority became firmly related to emotionality and thus central to understanding individual existence. This historical moment is a turning point both for the semantics of interiority and for the understanding of emotion.

The connection between interiority and emotionality depends on the fact that the idea of interiority emerges from a process of *distinction*. To speak of interiority is necessarily to create an opposition between “inside” and “outside.” Emotions, for their part, have been understood, ever since the eighteenth century, essentially by means of the distinction between inner experience and outward forms of expression, with a first, important, beginning in Descartes’s *Passions of the Soul*, published in 1649. In its application to emotion, the inward/outward distinction affects an individual’s entire existence and is thus tied in with fundamental epistemological as well as social transformations.

Epistemologically, the foundational distinction is the one Descartes draws between *res cogitans* and *res extensa*. But the distinction between ‘interior’ and ‘exterior’ can also be seen as a consequence of the functional differentiation of society in modernity, which, according to sociologist Niklas Luhmann, “shifted gradually to the place previously occupied by the above/below distinction.”⁴ Both, the new philosophy of the Scientific Age and the functional reorganization of society, remained tied in a variety of ways to the Christian motif of the soul’s interiority, a motif rooted in Paulinian and Augustinian theologies and continued by the Lutheran Reformation in particular. Prior to the eighteenth century, however, such ideational, social, and religious processes of differentiation followed their own historical trajectories, each of them operating under

by a number of German authors such as Goethe, Herder, Hamann, Jean Paul, Novalis, and E. T. A. Hoffmann, it is above all Hegel who discusses the word in several of his philosophical writings with regard to questions concerning the relationship and reconciliation of the inward and the outward, as well as subjectivity and universality.

4 Luhmann, Niklas. *Theory of Society*. Trans. Rhodes Barrett. 2 vols. Stanford: University of California Press, 2013. Vol. 2. 266.

specific conditions and evolving according to different paradigms. Only with the onset of the long eighteenth century did the various aspects of the inside/outside differentiation meet and solidify for the first time, and they did so in the discursive field of passions and affects, perceptions and emotions. Thus, while their ideational, social, and religious origins were in many ways unrelated to the discourse on emotions, once the distinction between interiority and exteriority had been established in the field of emotion, it had a particular impact on the modern theorization of emotion generally. This theorization of emotion is in many ways still with us today. Even contemporary discussions of emotion still assume the dichotomy between inner and outer – or are at least still subject to its long-lasting effects.⁵

The present volume analyzes the consequences of the “inner world/outer world” reorganization for the discourse on emotions. The essays presented here address an historical as well as a systematic concern. On the one hand, they examine the development of the inner/outer dichotomy in different paradigmatic areas of knowledge and in different time periods. On the other hand, they aim to identify significant conceptual changes and specific difficulties in the theorization of mind or soul that resulted from such conceptual reorganizations and the way they were applied to emotions.

For us who are teaching and writing in various humanities disciplines, the subject of the volume is of particular significance since it also concerns our own ways of thinking and arguing. In focusing, with the studies collected in this volume, on the distinction between interior and exterior as it emerged in the eighteenth century, we also intend to review and reconsider how profoundly making and elaborating this distinction has affected the way in which literary studies and the humanities in general have conceived of their own theories and practices. The semantics of interiority and the eighteenth century discourse on emotion have in fact been taken up and served as important references in the formation of the discipline we call ‘the humanities,’ a discipline that was established in Europe in the nineteenth century. This develop-

5 As Charles Taylor puts it: “In our self-understanding the opposition inside–outside plays an important role. We think of our thoughts, ideas or feelings as being ‘within’ us, while the objects in the world which these mental states bear on are ‘without.’ [...] But strong as this partitioning of the world appears to us, as solid as this localization may seem, and anchored in the very nature of the human agent, it is in the large part a feature of our world, the world of modern, Western people. The localization is not a universal one, [...] rather it is a function of a historically limited mode of self-interpretation, one which has become dominant in the modern West and which may indeed spread thence to other parts of the globe, but which had a beginning in time and space and may have an end.” (Taylor, Charles. *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989. 111.)

ment is particularly evident in the debates conducted in literary and historical studies in German-speaking countries at the time – most importantly, perhaps, in the philosophical underpinnings of what Germans to this day call the *Geisteswissenschaften* (“human sciences,” yet literally the “sciences of mind” or “spirit”).⁶ The discourse on interiority as it emerged from Romantic concepts has probably been more widely accepted and applied as a way to explain cultural facts in this context than anywhere else. This can, for instance, be seen in the works of philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey, who famously distinguished between the *Geisteswissenschaften*, the human sciences, where “inner experience” (*Erlebnis*)⁷ is the basic definition of the *mental fact*, the fact that is elucidated by *understanding*, and the *Naturwissenschaften*, the natural sciences, which *explain the facts of the natural world* in terms of causes and effects. The notion of interiority, understood here as that which is externally expressed in the cultural documents of literature as well as in the cultural sphere of laws and institutions, was further developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Georg Simmel’s cultural sociology and in the young Georg Lukács’s form-of-life aesthetics. With the advent of new schools of thought in literary studies and the humanities in Europe and the U.S. after 1945 (New Criticism, Immanent Critique, Formalism, and Structuralism), the influence of the distinction has garnered less and less scholarly attention. What has fallen to the wayside, however, is more the manifest theorization and articulation of the assumptions that underlie the distinction between inner and outer than the language of interiority. This language and its many implications have continued to play a central role that, more often than not, has gone unnoticed.

Given a number of developments in both the humanities and the cognitive sciences in the last two decades, we believe that a special opportunity presents itself today to explore and clarify the historical and systematic basis of how interiority has been thought and might be rethought today. There are, *first*, wide-ranging developments in critical and historical studies. Work presented, mostly in the U.S., under headings such as *Affect Theory* or the *Turn to Affect* has concerned itself with issues in cultural and critical theory. It has a counterpart in American as well as European discussions on the *History of Emotions*. While both approaches are important for situating our own undertaking and while we wish to contribute indirectly to both, they both differ methodologi-

6 The concept of *Geist* as “mind” or “spirit” dates back to eighteenth-century German Idealism, especially to Hegel’s understanding of the term. Leaving aside this historical foundation, the term is today often translated as “human sciences” or “humanities” instead.

7 Dilthey, Wilhelm. *Selected Works. Vol. 1: Introduction to the Human Sciences*. Ed. Rudolf A. Makreel and Frithjof Rodi. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989. 61.

cally from ours. *Affect Theory* – the somewhat earlier development of the two – tends to presuppose that “affect” allows us to refer to embodied situations involving people and objects in space and time, beyond or even without considering the language of interiority. In this vein, Brian Massumi differentiates between affects, situational drives that direct us toward or away from persons and things in the world, and emotions, in which such situations are perceived contextually. According to Massumi, emotions are subjective contents while affects can be regarded as unqualified intensities. Both “follow different logics and pertain to different orders”⁸ and should therefore no longer be confused. Lauren Berlant, to cite another example, has used this approach to describe what she calls “cruel optimism.”⁹ Optimism in this reading means that people are driven toward certain objects that embody the promise of happiness, the goal of the good life; such optimism is cruel if these objects are, in fact, harmful. In such an analysis, the ‘affect’ (in Massumi’s sense of the term) makes it possible to identify a complex social and political situation, the interplay of forces in body and mind, not just a subject’s feeling or state of mind. We have assembled the essays in this volume in order to explore what it might take and how it would be possible to rethink emotion beyond interiority, a critical position that Massumi takes for granted with his differentiation between affect and emotion. The working through of interiority and its underlying distinction, in our view, is a constitutive element – or even antecedent – of any attempt at theorizing something like an ‘affect’ beyond interiority. The development of a *History of Emotions* is closely connected with this effort, as for instance in the work of the German historian Ute Frevert (who has also taught at Yale University) and her American colleague William M. Reddy. Elaborating on examples such as female shame or male sense of honor, Frevert demonstrates the historicity of feelings and their expression. By tracing changes in social practices – the institution of the duel in Frevert’s case and sentimentalism in the era preceding the French revolution in Reddy’s – both authors show how certain emotions emerge and disappear in history, and in the history of words, names, and meanings in particular.¹⁰ With the essays assembled in the present

8 Massumi, Brian. “The Autonomy of Affect.” *Cultural Critique* 31 (1995), special issue *The Politics of Systems and Environments II*: 83–109, here 88.

9 Berlant, Lauren. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011.

10 See Frevert, Ute. *Men of Honour: A Social and Cultural History of the Duel*. Oxford: Polity Press, 1995, and Reddy, William M. *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Other recent historical research in this vein includes: Rosenwein, Barbara H. *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2006; Newmark, Catherine. *Passion – Affekt – Gefühl. Philosophische Theorien der Emotion zwischen Aristoteles und Kant*. Hamburg: Meiner, 2008; Perler, Dominik. *Transformationen der Gefühle. Philosophische Emotionstheorien 1270–1670*.

volume, we hope to contribute to such an enterprise and to address the question of how social practices and the identification and naming of emotions relate to each other in different circumstances. The distinction of interiority and exteriority fundamentally affects the ways in which naming and experiencing emotions, speaking with and about affect, social practice, and verbal discourse or visual depiction do or do not correlate. Processes of interiorization are thus important areas to explore when we ask what we can learn from a history of emotion.

There have been, *second*, fundamental debates on perception and emotion over the last couple of decades among cognitive scientists and neuroscientists and those philosophers who draw on their approaches; and these debates often result in reformulating the structure of perception and emotion systematically.¹¹ This trend, together with a return of sorts to phenomenology among the philosophers participating in the debate, is in fact something we see as a particular expression of the attempt to move beyond the dichotomy of interior and exterior. In particular, we hope that readers of this volume will recognize how this debate is currently restructuring the familiar understanding of emotion and pushing it beyond mere interiority.

This is to say that, despite its affinity with *Affect Theory* and the *History of Emotions* in the humanities on the one hand and the cognitive science approach to emotion on the other, this volume suggests an approach of its own. In contrast both to sweeping historicizations of emotion and to its epistemic localization in the cognitive sciences, this volume proposes a third direction of inquiry. The essays collected here explore a central premise of the modern conversation about emotion: the inside/outside dichotomy. The thesis that lies at the heart of this book, a thesis all chapters reflect, is that meaningful and critical findings in the historical *and* in the cognitive study of emotion are made possible, first and foremost, by addressing the inside/outside dichotomy. This volume thus implies a combination of historical and systematic perspectives. Establishing interdisciplinary connections between literary critics and philosophers, between historians of art and media theorists as well as cognitive scientists is

Frankfurt: Fischer, 2011; Plamper, Jan. *Geschichte der Gefühle. Grundlagen der Emotionsgeschichte*. Munich: Siedler, 2012.

¹¹ See, among others, Varela, Francisco J., et al. *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991; Damasio, Antonio. *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*. New York: Harcourt, 1999; Noë, Alva. *Action in Perception*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004; Gallagher, Shaun. *How the Body Shapes the Mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005; Colombetti, Giovanna, and Evan Thompson. "The Feeling Body: Toward an Enactive Approach to Emotion." *Developmental Perspectives on Embodiment and Consciousness*. Ed. Willis F. Overton et al. New York: Erlbaum, 2008. 45–68.

essential to this undertaking. Chapters that argue from a historical and interpretive perspective and contributions from philosophers and cognitive theorists do not merely supplement one another. Our hypothesis is that these approaches must be combined if we want to move beyond interiority. We have to come to a better understanding of what interpreting emotion according to the inside/outside distinction has meant – how it has operated and what its results have been –, but in order to move beyond interiority, we also have to develop new descriptions and other theoretical tools. Instead of repeating problems that arose from the dichotomy – such as, for instance, attempting to explain how “external” stimuli affect the “interior” of the mind or how “inner” feelings are expressed “externally” in the body – this volume intends, last but not least, to encourage new ways of conceptualizing emotion that succeed in transcending the opposition between interiority and exteriority.

Two remarks on the terminological decisions that inform this introduction may be in order. Even if not every single chapter reflects these choices, they define the contributions’ shared goal. The first remark concerns “interiority,” the second “interiorization.” In this introduction, we speak of *interiority* wherever the distinction interior *versus* exterior is at issue. For example, articulating emotion by means of the distinction of interior versus exterior amounts to thinking of emotion in terms of interiority. The evident reason for this striking usage is an asymmetry of values within the distinction: where the distinction interior *versus* exterior is made, it is usually the interior that is seen as the primary, more important, essential, in a word, the more valuable side. Hence *interiority* – the one side of the distinction – can stand for the distinction between the interior and the exterior as a whole. To avoid confusion we use *exterior* and *interior* for the two sides of the distinction and, where no further specification is necessary, *interiority* for the distinction in its entirety. The term *externality* can then be used to designate not the opposite of *interior* within the distinction of interior *versus* exterior, but the absence of that distinction.

With the term *interiorization*, we refer to strategies and modes of thought used to argue for, introduce, or establish the distinction between interior and exterior. Processes of *interiorization* – that is, the introduction of the distinction as such – can occur only when the distinction is not already accepted as a given. *Interiorization* thus occurs in situations that do not take place in a world of interiority. Importantly, processes of *interiorization* are themselves marked by *externality* (as we have just defined it). In other words, as far as emotions are concerned, processes and strategies of *interiorization* are invented and elaborated in *continuous worlds* of emotional actions and reactions; worlds that are not articulated by means of the distinction of inside and outside. Such worlds of externality are worlds in which the emotional realm

consists of what might be called ‘scenes of emotions.’ Such, we assume, was the pre-modern world, the world of Aristotelian and most other ancient accounts of emotion, but also the world of medieval prayers and even of Descartes’s *Passions of the Soul* (which introduced the distinction of interior versus exterior). We also observe that many currents of post-Idealist philosophy – in particular Nietzsche, Merleau-Ponty, and Wittgenstein – view interiority (or the distinction between interior and exterior) critically and explore alternative descriptions. Most interestingly, perhaps, we find in the contemporary debate in cognitive studies and neuroscience renewed interest in Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology, which reactivates, among other things, the critique of interiority. Here lies the origin of this volume: it seems that the current debate is once more searching for an account of *continuous worlds* of emotions, a world *beyond interiority*.

This leads to two related remarks to conclude this first, general part of the introduction. The first remark is that early on in the discussions between the editors and contributors, we made a simple but striking observation. We found that in a significant manner, ancient and pre-modern accounts of emotion share a characteristic trait with the tendencies in philosophy and cognitive science in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries described a moment ago. None of them grant the distinction between interior and exterior the foundational and quasi-self-evident role it had been assigned in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (especially in the German speaking world). We might go so far as to speak of a ‘return’ to a pre-modern – or, for that matter, pre-Romantic – approach to emotion, an approach beyond interiority. This is the perspective that connects the ‘historical’ contributions on pre-modern theories and descriptions of emotions in the first part of the volume with the philosophical, media-theoretical, and cognitive science-oriented contributions in the third, which reflects current debates.

Second, we would like to point out that while it aspires to a comparative view of Western (European) developments, the present volume nonetheless has a deliberate German bias. This is due to the fact that the great dichotomy made its most significant impact in German thought and letters, an impact whose traces can be found in Pietism, Romanticism, and German Idealism and all the way to the formation of the *Geisteswissenschaften* in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is still virulent today in expressions such as *Deutsche Innerlichkeit* (“German interiority” or “German inwardness”). The literary critics who have contributed to the volume’s middle section therefore focus on aspects of this development in exemplary works (mainly, but not exclusively, German) from the long period of Romanticism. In their close readings of pre-Romantic, Romantic, or even Realist literary works, they set out to

think beyond interiority by tracing and unpacking the problems and tensions that result from the interior/exterior distinction. Their critical ways of reading paintings or texts constitute yet another, third, mode of ‘moving beyond’ in addition to the reconstruction of pre-modern practices and theories on the one hand and the redescription of emotion in contemporary cognitive science and neo-phenomenological philosophy on the other.

In our view, only the interconnection and interplay between the three modes of thinking and writing – an interconnection and interplay among the three sections of this volume but very often also among individual contributions – can attain the goal of moving beyond interiority.

Themes and contributions

This volume seeks to establish a critical distance *vis-à-vis* a trope that, according to Paul de Man, has “never been seriously questioned” and yet has been of pivotal importance for and in literature, art, and the humanities in the Western tradition to this day. To this end, we have gathered contributions from several fields that analyze the interior/exterior distinction from three complementary angles. All three combine historical, critical, and systematic motifs. The first approach studies the formation of the new dichotomy from an historical perspective and systematically assesses its implications in comparison to previous (that is, pre-modern) understandings. The second approach consists in tracing the discursive consequences the trope has had since the eighteenth century and in detailing the recurrent conceptual problems that arise from the new dichotomy. Questions regarding the relationship between interiority and exteriority are not only a core problem of Romantic and transcendental philosophy, they also have far-reaching consequences in other disciplines such as art history. The third approach is vital to a systematic criticism of the dichotomy. At least since the days of Friedrich Nietzsche, such criticism has challenged the basis of the opposition from a theoretical perspective. By exploring the genealogy and the various manifestations of the opposition “interiority/exteriority,” present-day investigations from the perspectives of phenomenology, media theory, art history, and the cognitive sciences seek to provoke a rethinking of the conditions of our own discussion of emotion.

The volume presents paradigmatic work from these three perspectives. While each contribution stakes out a unique territory in terms of history and subject, the essays are arranged so as to critically explore the basic influence the interior/exterior dichotomy has had on the conception of emotions and passions in a larger field of study. Arranged in this way, each of the explora-

tions speaks to and critiques a process that can be schematically described as the superimposition of the interior/exterior distinction onto the subject of the emotions and passions.

* * *

A first hint at a basic form of interiority is Augustine's famous distinction between the *homo exterior* and the *homo interior*, and in mystical rhetoric we find ideas of the "inner man," the "inner castle" or the "inner encounter" with God. In German usage, the "internalized" use of the word "world" first appears in the writings of Meister Eckhart who, with reference to Augustine, distinguishes between an "inner" and an "outer" world. But these conceptions of interiority are for the most part limited by a certain schematism and, in keeping with Christian doctrine, primarily aim at dismissing the external, sensual world. In contrast, the conception of interiority as a site of subjective feeling and experience is a phenomenon that developed only gradually in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and came to a climax in Romantic literature. In ancient philosophy, the distinction between interior and exterior did not play a systematic role in the formation of either psychology or ethics, not even in works that specifically addressed the passions. Something that could be called "interiority" *tout court* did not arise until the late Enlightenment and the (German) Romantic periods that took up the distinction (that is, in its Augustinian or Christian mystical form) and made it a central component of psychology and the theory of emotion.

The *first section* of this volume, *Modes of Interiorization: Emotion before the Great Dichotomy*, therefore focuses on the pre-modern tradition of non-interior conceptions, representations, and performances of affectivity. It demonstrates how, under these conditions, methods and modes of interiorization found expression in particular changes in theoretical assumptions and transformed the ways in which affects were represented. Each of the first three chapters concentrates on one central aspect of the pre-modern conception of emotion and on one related mode of possible interiorization. While Catherine Newmark explores the philosophical tradition (the theory of the soul) and Rüdiger Campe examines the rhetorical tradition (the doctrine of passion), Niklaus Largier focuses on spiritual and meditative exercises in medieval contemplative practices (the art of prayer). Newmark offers an historical account of the long and complicated process of interiorization in philosophical psychology. She describes the transition from an understanding of passions as external objects that tug at and push the soul around (Aristotle) via the idea of passions as impressions on the soul (Descartes) to the conception of pas-

sions as a basic faculty of the individual subject (Kant). According to Newmark, these three models of explaining emotion in philosophical theories of the soul trace a gradual transformation in thinking about emotion from exterior to interior. In a chapter focusing on the doctrine of the passions in the rhetorical tradition, Campe juxtaposes the different ways Aristotle and Descartes present phenomenal or anecdotal appearance of the passions. Whereas in Aristotle, he suggests, the passions appear as scenes of interaction, Descartes offers a narrative behind such scenes of emotional performance that situates their origin in the ‘primal scene’ of self-preservation. In this case, interiorization means reducing the various scenes in which affects unfurl to the one “primal scene” that now appears as the motivational force behind them. Drawing on the art of prayer in the medieval monastic and, in particular, mystical experience, Largier offers an account of interiorization as an appeal to inner senses through reading and prayer. He demonstrates that meditative practices played an important and, thus far, largely overlooked role in the development of interiority. Such monastic practices emphasized the idea that God is to be sought less in the scholastic rules of the church than in the heart of the individual, and they thereby popularized new strategies of immersing oneself in personal interiority. Prayer is seen as an art destined to evoke and form, enliven and enrich the interior. Importantly, the potential of interiority is seen to emerge in an artistic – and even artificial – process.

In her article chapter on the topology of fascination, Brigitte Weingart analyzes the transformations of the discourse on *fascinatio*, which evolves from magic ideas of vision and imagery in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to a new conception of visual enchantment in the aesthetic debates of the eighteenth century. While *fascinatio* has long been a category on the margins of any official thought or discipline, the precarious relation between exterior and interior as it is characteristic for fascination offers exemplary insights in the paradoxical construction of interiority. Weingart’s analysis shows that *fascinatio* both posits the differentiation and calls it into question. The formation of modern interior communication about and through emotion is the subject of Beate Söntgen’s study of eighteenth century French painting. Focusing on Jean Siméon Chardin, her contribution discusses the precarious nature of the interior/exterior distinction in terms of a paradigmatic “high art” solution. As Söntgen shows, the difficulties or even impossibility of representing interiority in painting prompt a rhetorical strategy of indirect communication. Chardin’s work thus creates a painterly mode of fascination that presupposes and brings into existence an experience of interiority developed in the interplay between painter, painting, and beholder. The importance of visual and media effects for understanding communication through emotion returns in *section*

three in contributions on melodrama and cinema (Kappelhoff) and on physiognomy in painting (Freedberg).

* * *

Conceiving of the dichotomy “interiority/exteriority” as a complex, interdependent relationship, the *second section*, *Interiority/Exteriority: Thinking and Writing Emotion*, examines modern conceptions of emotion after Descartes’s seminal separation of *res cogitans* and *res extensa*. Unlike most previous research, which – especially in the German tradition – often concentrates exclusively on the rise of modern (Romantic) interiority without paying attention to the underlying dichotomy, the focus here lies on the historical preconditions, the internal logic, and the possible shortcomings of the interiority discourse. This pertains in particular to the Romantic era’s modes of thought and representation, that is, to the processes of transference, mirroring, and embodiment as well as the criticism of these processes. In Romanticism, the new organization according to the interior/exterior distinction assumed a central role; the distinction’s problematic and highly paradoxical nature did nothing to diminish its popularity. The concepts of interior world and exterior world were central to the works of German writers such as Brentano, Novalis, E. T. A. Hoffmann, and especially Jean Paul, which continually rethought and distinguished the terms. Priority almost always was granted to the interior world, a tendency strikingly embodied in Novalis’s motto: “– the mysterious way leads inwards.”¹²

The predominance in this middle section of examples from German Romanticism (Weber) and its later nineteenth century continuation into Realism (Nägele) – balanced, however, by Brodsky’s essay, which leads the reader all the way from Rousseau and Diderot to Proust – is justified by the pioneering and often defining role German Romanticism has played in establishing interiority qua *Innerlichkeit* in Western thinking and culture. The reason why we reserve so much space for essays that concentrate on literature, and often even on individual works, is the place occupied by these works of art made from language in the German variant of Romanticism and in the *Geisteswissenschaften*-type of the modern study of the humanities. In the analysis that introduces the second section, Bernhard Greiner reviews the German notion of *Innerlichkeit*, a crucial phenomenon of German Romanticism that can nonetheless also be understood in the broader context of the evolution of European

¹² Novalis. “Miscellaneous Observations.” Novalis. *Philosophical Writings*. Ed. and trans. Margaret Mahony Stoljar. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997. 23–46, here 25.

literature since the late eighteenth century. The concept of the “inner man” quickly became a central metaphor that strongly appealed to contemporary thinkers and carried positive connotations such as “depth,” “truth,” and “experience.” At the same time, interiority became a primarily spatial concept, a new historic development that prompted the modern idea of “interior worlds” (*Innenwelten*). The Romantic understanding of the subject as creator of his own world expresses the triumph of the interior over the exterior. And yet interior worlds cannot be imagined without exterior worlds – there is always an ambivalence, if not a paradox that arises. Inner worlds motivate the exploration of an exterior world that had been introduced merely for the purpose of distinction. The description of interior worlds increasingly necessitates conceptions of the exterior world, and interior worlds are forced to keep renewing and repeating the distinction to preserve their own identity. This results in a complex field of historical definitions: While traditional pre-modern conceptions of affect and passion generally seem external when judged by Romantic standards, it is only through the Romantic idea of internal space that the distinction is established – and exteriority introduced. Not until Romanticism is the interior juxtaposed to an exterior, and it is only then that the interior can be described by referring to the exterior. In more pointed terms: the exteriority of the traditional conception of affect and passion cannot be identified until we reach the Romantic era. This constellation can serve as a frame of reference within which individual, even idiosyncratic, portrayals of interiority can emerge. In their exemplary analyses of ways of thinking and representing the dichotomy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Julia Weber and Rainer Nägele focus on tropes of mirroring, embodiment, or transference between interiority and exteriority in the “Romantic” writer E. T. A. Hoffmann and the “Realist” author Gottfried Keller. The critical rethinking of the interior/exterior distinction, which in the first and third sections is mostly a matter of theoretical debate, takes now place in the domain of reading and interpretation. Julia Weber reconstructs the relation between spatial descriptions and interiority in one of European Romanticism’s paradigmatic narratives about the interiority of experiencing music and love: E. T. A. Hoffmann’s *Councillor Krespel* (a source of inspiration for Offenbach’s *Tales of Hoffmann*). Hoffmann’s story mirrors the inside/out distinction on several textual levels. The dichotomy not only defines how the narrative presents its characters but also resurfaces in architecture and material objects, for example, in Krespel’s windowless house or in the violins he constructs and deconstructs. While the distinction between interior and exterior thus shapes the narrated material world, it also operates in the narrating process itself. As Weber demonstrates, Hoffmann develops a specific “psycho-narration” in which the narrative voice

presents the character's interiority. In his reading of Gottfried Keller's short narrative *The Three Righteous Combmakers*, Nägele examines Keller's satirical, or rather critical, dissection of such mirroring of psychological interiority in material objects. In Nägele's reading, Keller, whom literary history usually counts among "realist" writers, appears as drawing the ultimate consequences from the Romantic paradox that produced exteriority by prioritizing interiority. Nägele even suggests that such exteriority is allegorical in nature, and he thereby demonstrates how the exteriority of allegory resurfaces precisely as a consequence of the Romantic text. This turn in Nägele's reading of Keller's narrative indeed suggests the apparition, as it were, of a pre-modern thinking and writing of the 'real,' of the allegory, within and against the Romantic-Realist construction of 'realism.'

Both Daniel Cuonz and Claudia Brodsky discuss critical turns against the dichotomy from a philosophical and theoretical perspective, considering such turns to originate in Romanticism in the broadest sense (that is, as extending from Rousseau via Nietzsche to Proust). In his reading of Nietzsche's genealogy of the "internalized human being" in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Cuonz questions the very possibility of a history of interiority. Nietzsche's account can be understood as the blueprint for all theories that polemically turn against "Romantic" interiority, and as such, Cuonz shows, it is intimately linked to the very development of genealogy as a critical procedure. This is of particular importance because in the paradigmatic case of interiority at least, the possibility that genealogy, in any traditional sense, provides a historical account cannot be taken for granted. Brodsky, following Paul de Man's observations on figurality in the era of Romanticism, engages in a rhetorical criticism of the notion of interiority in Rousseau, Diderot, and Proust. She demonstrates that interiority in any psychological sense of the word is – at least in the Romantic tradition – necessarily bound up with language and its inherent figurativeness. What we might call the "Romantic project," its constellation of consciousness and language, in other words, already implies making the distinction between interiority and exteriority. Brodsky's rhetorical analysis of language in Rousseau, Diderot, and Proust is thus also the counterpart to Cuonz's findings on Nietzsche: for Romanticism, there is no "exterior" from which to analyze the distinction between interior and exterior. The critical dimension, as Weber and Nägele demonstrate in their close readings, in fact consists precisely in exploring the distinction by studying its "internal," often paradoxical, consequences.

As soon as the division between inside and outside becomes subject to theoretical inquiry, the question of the philosophical, aesthetic, or media-theoretical basis of such an opposition comes up. The *third section, Thinking beyond Interiority: Reconceptualizing Emotion after the Great Dichotomy*, challenges and critiques the dichotomy in a systematic way and discusses alternative descriptions and conceptions of emotion. The potentially paradoxical idea of an interiority that regards the exterior as its opposite points to a philosophical and systematic debate already reflected in Nietzsche and in various theories of consciousness and language from Rousseau to Proust. This debate, however, also refers us to the questions asked today in cognitive science. In particular, it seems that the debates of philosophical phenomenology – from Edmund Husserl via Martin Heidegger to Maurice Merleau-Ponty – have assumed an important role in some areas of cognitive science. At issue here may be less a “tradition” in the usual sense than the attempt of today’s theorists to find a new foundation for addressing the issues at stake. If it is indeed the case that contemporary media theorists and cognitive scientists often return to these authors, this may be explained by the fact that the phenomenological thinkers extended but also critically re-shaped the Romantic project. In their critical theories of consciousness and perception, language and meaning, the phenomenologists are the heirs and critics of Nietzsche and “Romantic rhetoric” from Rousseau to Proust, expanding and subverting the Romantic foundations.

In a seminal contribution, Bernhard Waldenfels discusses the role of the body from a phenomenological perspective, which allows him to develop a non-representational, relational account of emotion beyond the interiority of consciousness. Drawing on the rich tradition from Husserl and Heidegger to Merleau-Ponty, Waldenfels’s programmatic essay develops a perspective from which the interior/exterior distinction is re-interpreted, called into question, and, finally, transcended in concepts such as the lived-body (*Leib*) or the embedding of emotional encounters in complex situations. It is this strand of phenomenological critique that has informed – or, at least, retroactively helped to articulate – a critical debate in today’s cognitive science and its engagement with ‘embodied’ or ‘enactive’ theories. Of particular importance is Waldenfels’s insistence on the fact that a phenomenological account of feeling and emotion implies the relation of the self to the other. Here, the phenomenological rethinking of emotion resonates with pre-modern accounts and opens a new field for critical positions in current cognitive research. Exemplary in another, yet analogous way is Hermann Kappelhoff’s study on the development of melodrama from Romantic theater (Rousseau) to classical Hollywood cinema (with *Titanic* as, perhaps, the last emblematic example). For Kappel-

hoff, the melodramatic genre is characterized by a relationship between the audience and the theatrical or cinematic presentation. Melodrama appears as an essentially performative technique – or a technology of performance – that shapes the actor-spectator relationship through the representation on stage and on screen. The melodramatic relationship does not so much *rely* on emotion as it *is* emotion, emotion as an intersubjective event. This observation hearkens back to a line of exploration represented in this volume by Largier's essay on the art of prayer and its multi-media aspects in the first section and Weingarten and Söntgen's contributions on *fascinatio* and the development of a painterly representation of interiority in the second. While David Freedberg also focuses on emotion and visual representation in the history of art and painting, he gives the discussion a rather critical turn. By reviewing the largely pre-modern tradition of physiognomic theories that continues through Darwin's *Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* to current neuroscience, Freedberg challenges familiar attitudes toward the representation of emotion in art criticism. By insisting that the physiognomic reaction is irreducible, he questions the limits of culturalism in the contemporary understanding of emotion and interrogates the exclusively aesthetic conception of painterly representation that tends to leave no space for any pre-aesthetic elements in the beholder's response to the image. Freedberg thus seeks to make room for certain moments of pre-aesthetic – and in this sense “exterior” – forms of emotional experience in visual art and painting. Philosophers and cognitive scientists Joel Krueger and Rebekka Hufendiek, finally, discuss and develop new accounts of externalized, embodied, or enactive emotion. In different ways, both argue that despite its focus on the brain, cognitive science requires that emotion be considered in an intersubjective space and time. Krueger draws on the debate in cognitive science in the context of Freedberg's question about recognizing emotion. He, however, frames the debate in terms of the question of “other minds.” In a critical review of methods in cognitive science, Krueger insists on the manifold social and interactive ways of displaying feelings and emotions in the exterior observable world and argues for a rigorous limitation of the “unobservability principle” (the classical epistemological argument for interiority). Hufendiek develops her views on emotion within the framework of the *embodied* or *situated* approach. From this perspective, she not so much limits the interiority of emotion as she revises the underlying distinction between interior and exterior. Importantly, she transfers the results of “embodied,” “embedded,” and “enactive” theories from their primary field – perception – to our field of emotion. As she demonstrates, emotion on the one hand requires a rethinking of theories developed for understanding perception, and, on the other, emotion

underlines the need and strengthens the evidence for such integrative accounts of mental processes beyond interiority.

* * *

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**I. Modes of Interiorization:
Emotion before the Great Dichotomy**

Catherine Newmark

From Moving the Soul to Moving into the Soul

On Interiorization in the Philosophy of the Passions

What are emotions – and concurrently: where are they? – are questions that have a long tradition in the occidental history of thought and still give rise to philosophical debate. Even today there are not only intense discussions about the nature of emotions, but also a number of different philosophical understandings of where exactly the essential part of said emotions takes place: from phenomenological notions of the body as the original space of feeling to ultra-cognitivist theories of emotions as judgments and thus phenomena of the mind. Most theories would however basically agree that emotions are in some way internal to the subject that is experiencing them. Historically one cannot take this for granted – the idea of internal emotions appears rather to be the result of a process of interiorization. This is made plausible by Norbert Elias's well known thesis about the social history of early modern Europe as a *process of civilization*: In the course of an ever tightening web of civilization, initially exterior norms of conduct and modes of expressions gradually move into the inner self. This process of interiorization could be described psychoanalytically, but also in quite classical philosophical and sociological terms of habitualization.¹

A second observation that supports the assumption of a movement of the emotions toward the inside is the rather alien understanding of emotions that we find in classical philosophy and literature: depictions of strangely detached relationships to one's own emotions, which seem counterintuitive to the contemporary mind. Thus Homeric heroes seem to receive their passions from the outside, from the gods, as it were, or like a rod of lightning from the sky: fear or anger befall and move them to terrible or wonderful deeds. Similarly, love and desire tend to fall on heroes and heroines like an outward force or a strike of fate. These motives are taken up again in seventeenth century classical literature: Racine's and Corneille's plays are full of Greek heroes and heroines that are emotionally shaken by their *fatum*.² This classical notion of the pas-

¹ Elias, Norbert. *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners, and State Formation and Civilization*. Trans. Edmund Jephcott. Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1994.

² A good example is Phaidra's unhappy love for her stepson Hyppolitos as described in Racine's *Phèdre* (1677): it appears to have been thrust upon her much like a curse. Cf. Racine,

sions as an independent outward agent that shakes and mauls its helpless victims has been wonderfully parodied in Offenbach's operetta *La belle Hélène*, where a rather badly behaving Helena of Troy keeps making excuses by exclaiming: "Fatalité! Fatalité!"³ Such a fatalist notion of passions as quasi external events that fall upon us hardly corresponds of course to our current understanding of emotions as somehow belonging to a person and developing inside this person. There must therefore have been a process of interiorization somewhere along the way. (A notable exception to the contemporary understanding of emotions as internal to people can be found in the work of the German phenomenologist Hermann Schmitz. He takes emotions to be "spatial" but "unlocated" atmospheres that are liable to "seize" us.⁴ Schmitz has also brought forward a very pointed and polemical critique of modern occidental philosophy as "introjectionist," "reductionist," and "psychologistic;" it is no coincidence that he likes to contrast the so-called occidental "inner-world-dogma" with pre-socratic philosophy and its happy exteriority.⁵)

A third indication of interiorization can be found in the antagonism which emerges in the eighteenth century between artful and artificial, courtly and codified emotions, and the real and natural *inner* true feelings of the newly strong bourgeois subject. Sensibility (*Empfindsamkeit*) as well as Romantic discourses all claim interiority and authenticity of the emotions for themselves. Bourgeois modernity thus defines itself by an inward focused moral psychology, in explicit contrast to the external, superficial, and pernicious practices of the ancient regime.⁶ While history, sociology, and literary studies have described this process of interiorization extensively, the same is not true for philosophy, which has only just begun to take up the history of emotions and their conceptualizations.⁷ It is however possible to discern a conceptual development in philosophy that corresponds to the cultural-historical process

Jean. "Phaedra." Jean Racine. *Iphigenia. Phaedra. Athaliah*. Trans. John Cairncross. London: Penguin, 2004. 148–214.

3 Offenbach, Jacques. *La belle Hélène. Opéra bouffe en trois actes*. Libretto Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy. Paris: Michel Lévy, 1868. 79.

4 Schmitz, Hermann. *Der Leib, der Raum und die Gefühle*. Ostfildern: Terium, 1998. 22, 63 (my translation).

5 Schmitz, Hermann. *Leib und Gefühl. Materialien zu einer philosophischen Therapeutik*. Ed. Hermann Gausebeck and Gerhard Risch. Paderborn: Junfermann, 1992. 23–25 (my translation).

6 See Beate Söntgen in this volume. For an extensive analysis of bourgeois emotions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see also Kessel, Martina. *Langeweile. Zum Umgang mit Zeit und Gefühlen in Deutschland vom späten 18. bis zum frühen 20. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2001.

7 One of the first and still most important studies is James, Susan. *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997.

of interiorization. In this paper, I would like to sketch the main points of this development and show what conceptual changes in philosophy correspond to the historical shift in the understanding of emotions. To this end, I will try to broadly sketch how emotions are conceived prototypically, to identify, as it were, their philosophical *ideal types*. I will try to show that in classical passion theories from antiquity to the eighteenth century one can distinguish roughly between three different models for explaining the emotions that can be seen as three distinct steps in the gradual process of interiorization of the emotions: first what I call an *appetitive* model, then an *impressive* model, and finally the conception of *feeling as a faculty*.⁸

The first model derives from Aristotle but is used until the eighteenth century. I will attribute the second to Descartes, even though one can probably also find instances of it much earlier, possibly in classical Stoic philosophy, a point I will not pursue here. The third is a development of the mid-to-late eighteenth century and constitutes an entirely new point of view, one conceptualized comprehensively by Kant. It is the basis for the understanding of feelings or emotions as authentic, essential expressions of human beings and it is still dominant in our day, leading our culture to a strangely essentialist understanding of emotions. Much of this is, incidentally, quite at odds with a thriving commercial usage of emotions as well as with a wide-spread therapeutic discourse on emotion management in contemporary culture.

To sum up these models in relation to one another, the classical appetitive model sees emotions as somehow external to a somewhat less individualized and personalized soul, whereas the impressive model can be seen as an intermediate step in the process of interiorization that leads to the conceptualization of feelings as a faculty, an inner ability of each individual soul.

Passions as sensitive appetite

Aristotle coins the term *passion of the soul* (*páthos tês psychês* / *passio animae*) in his psychological and ethical works – *On the Soul* (*De anima*), the *Rhetoric*, and the *Nicomachean Ethics* – and establishes a psychological model that will be used for centuries to come. The Aristotelian model is taken up by Saint Augustine and appears in various early medieval sources, but is canonized

⁸ For this purpose, I use *emotion* as a general term, while *passion* and *affect* refer to pre-modern theories of emotion; *feeling* (*Gefühl*) is a new term and concept introduced in the eighteenth century.

by Saint Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century. Henceforth it dominates scholastic philosophy well into the seventeenth and even eighteenth century.⁹

In this model, the passions of the soul are understood to belong to the sensitive part of the *appetitus (órexis)*, the *appetitive* or *striving* faculty, one of five (or six) parts or faculties of the soul that Aristotle describes.¹⁰ In the influential and far more systematic, scholastic version of Aristotelianism that Thomas Aquinas offers, these are the following: the vegetative, sensitive, intellectual, appetitive, and motive faculty.¹¹ The Aristotelian and Thomistic soul thus has a much broader function than later conceptions which take their cue from Descartes. It is the life-principle of the body and, far from being concerned merely with thinking and willing, as Descartes would have it, it is also responsible for nutrition, growth, reproduction, motion. The lower faculties of the soul, especially the vegetative powers, cannot by any stretch of the imagination be considered *conscious* faculties and there is thus no question of the soul being in any way defined by its *consciousness*, as rationalist philosophers will later propose. Among these five faculties of the soul, the faculty of movement is a compound faculty, a combination of appetite and cognition. We use our intellectual or sensitive cognition to determine whether something is good or bad, pleasurable or painful and our appetite or striving faculty is subsequently drawn to it or repulsed by it, depending on whether we have judged it to be good or bad.¹² Aristotle thus describes animal movement as a causal chain of active and passive elements, of actions and passions: the perceived good or pleasurable thing moves the appetite and the appetite, thus moved, subsequently moves the being as a whole.¹³ This description is based on Aristotle's general theory of movement as a causal concatenation of actions and passions, developed extensively in his natural philosophy and his physical works.¹⁴ In this model, the appetite as a faculty of the soul is always active as

⁹ For this, see Newmark, Catherine. *Passion – Affekt – Gefühl. Philosophische Theorien der Emotionen zwischen Aristoteles und Kant*. Hamburg: Meiner, 2008.

¹⁰ Aristotle. "On the Soul." Aristotle. *On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*. Trans. Walter Stanley Hett. Bilingual edition. Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 1957. 8–203. II and III.

¹¹ Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa theologiae*. Ed. Thomas Gilby. Bilingual edition. 61 vols. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Vol. 11. Ia, q. 78, a. 1.

¹² Aristotle, "On the Soul," III, 9, 432 b 26–433 b 27; Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, vol. 11, Ia, q. 78, a. 1.

¹³ Aristotle, "On the Soul," III, 11, 433 b 10–19, and III, 11, 433 b 31–434 a 7.

¹⁴ Aristotle. "On Coming-To-Be and Passing-Away." Trans. Edward Seymour Forster. Aristotle. *On Sophistical Refutations. On Coming-To-Be and Passing-Away. On the Cosmos*. Bilingual edition. Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 1955. 162–329. I, 6–7; Aristotle. *The Physics. Books V–VIII*. Trans. Philip H. Wicksteed and Francis M. Cornford. Bilingual edition. Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 2006. VIII.

well as passive: first passive, when it is moved by the perceived good or evil; then active, when it passes this movement on to the body. Thomas Aquinas consequently describes the appetite as “*movens motum*,” as both moving and moved.¹⁵

Considering this theory of movement as a chain of actions and passions, it makes as much sense to call the *being moved* of the soul and its subsequent *moving* of the body *passion*¹⁶ as it does to call it *action*, the term Aristotle reserves for the will. In effect, Aristotle applies the same model to the intellectual appetite or will; the difference between passion and will, between lower and upper appetitive faculty, is that passions are triggered by sense perception and the accompanying pleasure and pain, whereas the will takes its cue from the intellectual cognition of good and evil.

Both the passions and the will, or in Thomistic terminology, the sensitive and the intellectual appetite, have the purpose of moving the body. They constitute motivational drives in reaction to perceived pleasure and pain, good and evil. The passion of fear, for example, can be accounted for in the following way: I perceive something frightening, such as a lion, and this perception is either directly painful or harmful or is judged by me to be bad or nefarious in my sensitive or intellectual judgment. I am thus moved to flee, resist or pursue any of the other options that might present themselves to me. The important point is that the passion is conceptually taken to be a motivational drive, parallel to the will. Passions or sensitive appetites are, so to say, the junior partners of the will or rational appetite, with whom they share the general task of the *facultas appetitiva* to initiate bodily movements. Without passions we would not move or act – they are thus essential to human life.

In this model, the soul is passive toward outward objects, being pulled and pushed around by good and bad things: Our response to good things is to strive toward them and we are repulsed by bad things. Consequently, the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition does not distinguish in any precise way between emotions and instincts: most of the time, a wide variety of phenomena, from instinctive reactions triggered by sudden fright, right up to extremely complex emotions such as remorse or courtly love, are subsumed under the concept of *passion*.¹⁷

15 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, vol. 11, Ia, q. 80, a. 2.

16 Or Greek *páthos tēs psychēs*, the Aristotelian term for emotions such as “desire, anger, fear, courage, envy, joy, love, hate, longing, zeal, compassion.” Cf. Aristotle. *The Nicomachean Ethics*. Trans. Harris Rackham. Bilingual edition. Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 1934. II, 4, 1105 b 21–24.

17 Or, synonymously, *affects*. There is no systematic difference between *passions* and *affects* before Spinoza. In the monumental passion theory developed in his *Ethics* he takes *passion* to be a specific type of *affect*, which he uses as the more general term. Cf. Spinoza, Baruch de. *Ethics*. Trans. George H. R. Parkinson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

What is usually not well described in this tradition, but rather implicitly taken for granted, is the fact that sense perception is always accompanied by pleasure and pain. The basic philosophical assumption seems to be that sense perception is, with a few possible exceptions such as pure surprise, always either pleasurable or painful; sense perception and pleasure/pain are co-extensive.¹⁸

If in our passions we are thought to be passive vis-à-vis an *activum*, an agent, one that causes us pleasure or pain and thus pushes and pulls around our soul, the question is, what constitutes this *activum*? Whereas medieval Christian Aristotelians such as Thomas Aquinas seem to presuppose a theological universe in which the soul is automatically drawn toward the good and repulsed by the bad, seventeenth century philosophers such as Hobbes and Spinoza, whose elaborate passion theories can still be said to share the basic concept of the passion as sensitive appetite or striving, agree that what makes the body – and the mind – react positively to pleasure and negatively to pain is the basic fact of our self-preserving (or self-agrandizing) instinct, the *conatus*. While for Spinoza the *conatus* is the metaphysically essential appetitive, motive, desiring character of the human soul, Hobbes describes the *conatus* as the spontaneous bodily reaction to the pain and pleasure that accompany sense perceptions, intended to protect the vital motion of the human body, that is, its basic functions.¹⁹ If Aristotle and his successors think of the soul as being more or less pulled and pushed around by good and evil, pleasurable and painful things, they do not however assume that the soul is supposed to remain passive throughout this process. Tragic heroes may be helplessly preyed upon by their passions, but this is not the case of philosophers. The theories make abundantly clear that our better and more rational part is of course not merely a passive victim of passions, but rather capable and called upon to take an active moral stance toward them. Both Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics* and Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa theologiae* propagate a moral of *moderation* and hold the passions to be controllable by the “higher part,” that is, the will.²⁰

This tradition is clearly not particularly concerned about the question: how do emotions *feel*. The inner and individual experience of an emotion does not here come into question. Emotions are mainly considered by way of their

¹⁸ Modern philosophy no longer holds this assumption; an interesting illustration is provided by modern medicine and the technological possibility of spinal anaesthesia, where the patient feels touch and movement, but not pain, in his or her lower body.

¹⁹ Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. Ed. Crawford B. Macpherson. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968. Ch. 6; Spinoza, *Ethics*, III, prop. 6.

²⁰ Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, vol. 11, Ia, q. 81, a. 3.

motivational, motive function and with regard to their external causes. They are mainly external rather than internal events. They move the soul and that can be naturally useful, which is why God or nature gave us passions and instincts; often, however, they tend to be harmful. But we can always find ways and means of dealing with that harmfulness and put these sensitive motive functions to good and reasonable use. Passions are thus natural occurrences which nonetheless constitute a moral challenge to the self.

Emotions as impressions on the soul

The second model of thought on the emotions, as here discussed, I would like to call the *impressive* model. What is emphasized in this model is not so much the idea of the outside object – the good and the bad – pulling and pushing the soul around by acting on its appetitive faculty, but rather the question of what happens to the soul itself, what changes occur in it, when these outward objects act upon it. It is thus more about the *impressions* that are left in the soul than about the *appetites* unleashed therein and thus constitutes an important step toward the interiorization of the emotions. This model does not necessarily have one long and continuous line of conceptualization as does the Aristotelian *appetitus*-model. Strictly speaking, it does not necessarily even imply a change in the conception of the passion, since Aristotelian and non-Aristotelian philosophies alike agree that appetite cannot be had without sense perception, without an impression on the soul. Sense perception is after all what triggers appetite, at least the sensitive appetite of the passions. In this sense, one could also argue that the shift from the appetitive to the impressive model might well be just a shift of theoretical focus rather than one of conceptualization.

The first major modern thinker who can be clearly identified with this model, Descartes, also clearly and explicitly takes his leave from Aristotelian appetitive theory. His treatise on the passions of the soul, *Les passions de l'âme*, begins by announcing the necessity of a complete philosophical renewal of passion theory:

The defectiveness of the sciences we inherit from the ancients is nowhere more apparent than in what they wrote about the Passions. [...] For this reason I shall be obliged to write here as though I were treating a topic which no one before me had ever described.²¹

²¹ Descartes, René. *The Passions of the Soul*. Trans. Stephen Voss. Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett, 1989. A. 1.

Descartes no longer shares the Aristotelian, scholastic concept of the soul. He neither sees in it the shape or form of the body, that which gives the living being its life, nor does he divide it into the parts described above. For Descartes, rather, the soul is defined by its *thought* and its *will*, and it is not responsible for the body's life. The body has a life-principle of its own, namely the heart, which Descartes describes as "a species of fire."²² Body and soul are two distinct substances and their evident relationship to each other in the living human being is philosophically difficult to explain for Descartes – a problem that occupies him considerably in his late work and particularly in his treatise on the passions.

Briefly, in Descartes's definition of the passions they are no longer conceived as appetites, that is, as a reaction to sense perception, but instead as a type of sense perception itself: a type which is felt in a particular way inside the soul and whose outside object is often not readily identified. Thus one of the most clear-cut definitions of the passions in the treatise is the following:

The perceptions that are referred to the soul alone are those *whose effects are felt as in the soul itself*, and of which *no proximate cause* to which they may be referred is *commonly known*. Such are the sensations of joy, anger, and others like them, which are sometimes excited in us by objects that move our nerves and sometimes also by other causes.²³

This definition shows the conceptual shift very clearly: Passions are a type of sense perception whose defining quality is that they leave a particular feeling or impression on the soul itself. Of course this type of sense perception ultimately has some exterior agent that causes it, but as Descartes points out, we remain mostly unaware of it. We do not know the "*proximate cause*" of the passions, the concrete object that is acting on the soul. Descartes thus firmly shifts the focus from whatever exterior thing is moving our soul to what happens inside the soul, what type of impact this has on our soul, what imprint it leaves.

Certainly Descartes's passion theory has many problems, the major one being, as already mentioned, the inexplicability of the *commercium mentis et corporis*, the interaction between anything physical and the soul as a totally separate thinking substance. Action and passion in the Aristotelian sense thus become a contradiction in terms: There is no theoretically sound way in which to describe anything physical acting on the soul – at the very best Descartes can describe the physiological process from body to brain, but not beyond that.

²² Descartes, *The Passions of the Soul*, a. 8.

²³ Descartes, *The Passions of the Soul*, a. 25 (my emphasis).

Nevertheless, Descartes begins his theory of the passions by defining the *passion* of the soul as correlating to a bodily *action*. He argues that, since action and passion are two aspects of the selfsame movement, there must always be an action belonging to the *passio animae*. And what agent could be closer to the soul than its own body?

[...] whatever is done or happens afresh is generally called by the Philosophers a Passion with respect to the subject it happens to, and an Action with respect to what makes it happen. Thus, even though the agent and the patient are often quite different, the Action and the Passion are always a single thing [...].²⁴

And one paragraph later:

Then I also take into consideration that we notice no subject that acts more immediately upon our soul than the body it is joined to, and that consequently we ought to think that what is a Passion in the former is commonly an Action in the latter.²⁵

These passages are particularly interesting, inasmuch as they explicitly refer to “the Philosophers,” which in Descartes’s time means scholastic, that is, Thomistic school-philosophy, indeed Aristotelianism. They seem moreover to be adopting classical scholastic or Aristotelian movement theory – movement is composed of an action and of a passion, the passion of the soul is the result of an external action – while actually completely reinterpreting this movement theory. While in the Aristotelian passion the soul is moved by the good, Descartes’s soul is moved *immediately* by its own body. We are no longer dealing with a *teleological* chain of causality, *pulling* the soul toward the universal good, but rather with an efficient, mechanical one, where the soul reacts directly to the body *hitting* it, as it were.

Descartes goes on to describe the passions as a type of sense perception that not only impacts the body but also causes it to react independently, leaving the soul relatively untouched. Descartes’s efforts to explain the passion of the *soul* in purely physiological terms are of course due to his dualism and his interest in depicting the soul of his rational subject as independent from outer influences. At most the soul can be said to *feel* the impressions of sense perceptions and passions, but Descartes does not want to describe the soul as being pulled and pushed around by external objects. This is of course all theoretically quite aporetic, but I will not go into the details of the Cartesian dualism. Here it must suffice to note that Descartes avoids as much as possible attributing any sense-based striving to the soul, which would imply a depend-

²⁴ Descartes, *The Passions of the Soul*, a. 1.

²⁵ Descartes, *The Passions of the Soul*, a. 2.

ence of our actions on external influences; instead, he emphasizes the fact that the soul receives impressions from the outside. The Cartesian soul thus has much more of an *inside* than the Aristotelian one does, and passions – where they are not relegated entirely to the body – are considered in view of the impressions they leave on the soul, and not in view of the movements they induce in it.

There are a number of other early modern thinkers who follow Descartes in accentuating the impressive part of the passions and conceptualizing them as sense perceptions, even though most of his contemporaries and most post-Cartesian thinkers go back to some sort of Aristotelian model and describe passions as appetites. The English philosopher John Locke, father of modern empiricism, is an interesting case: He does employ a vaguely Aristotelian appetite-model, but he also insists very strongly on the definition of passions as sense perceptions. In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, he treats passions as *modes of pleasure and pain* and as a part of his general theory of knowledge.²⁶ Passions for Locke are *simple ideas* and thus something in the cognitive realm.²⁷ Pleasure and pain incite us to actions and are thus *motive* or *appetitive* in nature – but they are themselves mainly described as impressions on the soul.

Emotion as a faculty

Finally, I would like to briefly discuss a third model of what and where emotions can be thought to be, the most completely interiorized conception, namely the idea of them being a faculty of the soul itself, a basic power and ability within us. This is what we find precisely conceptualized in Kant's work and also but less completely with many thinkers and writers from the end of the eighteenth century onward. I would also argue that it is this same model that still underlies many contemporary understandings of what feelings or emotions are.

This model is based on a new partition of the soul. Most early modern philosophers take the soul to have two principal faculties, namely cognition (intellectual and sensitive) and appetite (intellectual and sensitive, that is, will and emotions); the lower Aristotelian powers such as vegetative and motive faculty having never quite recovered from the blow Descartes dealt them. Kant

²⁶ Locke, John. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Ed. Peter H. Nidditch. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975. II, ch. 20.

²⁷ Locke, *An Essay*, II, ch. 1, §3–4.

introduces a tripartition of the soul and a new faculty, the feeling of pleasure and pain (*das Gefühl der Lust und Unlust*), as an intermediate faculty between cognition (*Erkenntnisvermögen*) and appetite (*Begehrungsvermögen*).²⁸ This new faculty marks precisely the point that was a bit fuzzy in older emotion theories: the assumption that sense perception is always accompanied by pleasure and pain. This implies that sense perception has an evaluative character. On a basic or instinctive level this evaluative character of sense perception is useful for survival; it helps human beings as well as other animals to instinctively and appropriately react to whatever befalls them, to seek pleasure and to avoid pain. It is an idea that is proffered in most classical passion theories throughout the ages and illustrated not only by the example of instincts but also by such reactive passions as fear or fright. Taken on a somewhat higher level, this can be understood not just as a survival instrument but as a sort of sensual morality, a sense-based knowledge of good and evil – an idea that underlies the whole English *moral sense* philosophy from Shaftesbury and Hutcheson to Hume.²⁹ Kant's *feeling of pleasure and pain* draws on this tradition as well as deriving from continental rationalism, where we find a gradual merging of sense perception and passion (or *appetite*) from the seventeenth century onwards. Spinoza conceptualizes both sense perceptions and passions as *ideae confusae*;³⁰ Leibniz and Wolff distinguish between *perceptio* and *passio* (or rather its underlying faculty *appetitus* or *conatus*), but link them inseparably together by considering the *appetitus* as inherent in every *perception*: “In each present perception there is present a drive/appetite/striving to change the perception.”³¹ Wolff and his follower Baumgarten, on whose works Kant draws extensively, call passions or affects “marked *degrees* of pleasure or pain.”³²

Kant's *feeling of pleasure and pain* has quite recognizable affinities with these conceptions and in some ways still corresponds to an *impressive* model, with the passions as sense perceptions of pleasure and pain. But for Kant,

28 Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. Ed. Paul Guyer. Trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. “Introduction,” 59–83.

29 Oksenberg Rorty, Amélie. “From Passions to Emotions and Sentiments.” *Philosophy. The Journal of the Royal Institute of Philosophy* 57.220 (1982): 159–172; Schrader, Wolfgang H. *Ethik und Anthropologie in der englischen Aufklärung. Der Wandel der moral-sense-Theorie von Shaftesbury bis Hume*. Hamburg: Meiner, 1984.

30 Spinoza, *Ethics*, III, “General Definition of the Emotions.”

31 Wolff, Christian. *Psychologia rationalis*. Ed. Jean École. Hildesheim: Olms, 1994. § 480 (my translation).

32 Baumgarten, Alexander Gottlieb. *Reflections on Poetry. / Mediationes philosophicae de non-nullis ad poema pertinentibus*. Trans. Karl Aschenbrenner and William B. Holther. Bilingual edition. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1954. § 25 (my emphasis).

unlike his rationalist predecessors, pleasure and pain are not ideas but rather *feelings* – a new term coined to describe this third thing that is neither exactly an impression or sense perception nor an appetite.

Now obviously Kant's *feeling of pleasure and pain* and the *faculty of judgment* (*Urteilkraft*) that is attached to it are larger theoretical entities and not exclusively concerned with emotions in the narrow sense; they are, however, *also* the basic concept for emotions. Kant is of course not exactly a passionate passion theorist, and emotions as such are hardly a major concern in his transcendental philosophy that defines itself precisely by *not* dealing with empirical phenomena. Kant does however treat empirical psychology at least in his minor works, such as the *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*. In this work, Kant actually gives an account not only of the faculty of *feeling* in an empirical sense, but also elaborates an emotion theory. He distinguishes between *affects*, belonging to the faculty of feeling, and *passions*, belonging to the appetitive faculty (*Begehrungsvermögen*).³³ The latter are morally problematic inclinations, engrained in the subject and resisting reason. Kant names love, hate, desire for vengeance, ambition, thirst for domination, and sexual desire, among others.³⁴ He considers them highly problematic because they usurp the place of the rational will – just like the classical passions, the lower appetitive faculty that is always in danger of usurping the place of the higher, the will.

However, all other emotions are counted as affects and thus as instances of feeling, of the basic sensual evaluative faculty of the soul. Now for Kant, just as for his rationalist predecessors, intellectual things are better than sensual things, but a major point of his philosophy is the acceptance of both the sensual and the intellectual as equally necessary. Joy, sadness, hope, fear, and many other emotions which Kant considers to be affects thus become expressions of a basic sensitive ability, the ability to feel.³⁵ Moreover, with *feeling* as a *faculty* of the soul, affects or emotions do not only exist as sporadic occurrences, but are omnipresent. Kant's new third power of the soul encompasses not only the *actual* feeling of emotions, but also the *potential* to feel things.

33 Kant, Immanuel. "Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View." Trans. Robert B. Loudon. Immanuel Kant. *Anthropology, History, and Education*. Ed. Günter Zöllner and Robert B. Loudon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 227–429, here 251 (§73); Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 272 (§29); Kant, Immanuel. *The Metaphysics of Morals*. Ed. and trans. Mary Gregor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. "Introduction to the Doctrine of Virtue," XVI.

34 Kant, "Anthropology," 266–274 (§§80–85).

35 Kant, "Anthropology," 254–261 (§§76–79).

Emotions or feelings understood this way become a much more essential part of a person's inner life. They are no longer mainly considered in view of the outward active agent producing them and in light of their motivational function and consequent moral dangerousness, nor are they merely the by-product of sense perception that leaves an impression in us with hopefully no further consequences for the morality of our rational soul. Rather, they become one of the fundamentals of how we encounter the world – movements such as the *sensibility* (*Empfindsamkeit*) of the latter eighteenth century rely exactly on this sort of basic emotionality of the human being. The shift in emotion theory toward inwardness implies a shift from a concern for action theory and morals to an interest in *what things feel like*. Post-Kantian theories of feeling, where feeling is a subjective faculty, tend to take emotions as authentic expressions of the self and not as moral problems. Kant himself only sees a small class of emotions – the *passions* or *Leidenschaften* – as morally condemnable; similarly, contemporary thinking on emotions takes them by and large to be expressions of personality, and only a small number of them, such as aggression or uncontrolled anger, are considered morally problematic.

* * *

In conclusion, the schematic picture of the conceptual developments toward interiorization in emotion theory that I have drawn here is certainly open to criticism. One could argue that between the three models that I have analytically distinguished – from external objects pulling and pushing the soul around to the idea of passions as impressions on the soul to, finally, a model of feelings as a basic subjective faculty of the soul – there are, at the most, differences of focus, since the phenomenon described – emotion – remains the same. Aristotle's *appetite* also presupposes impressions on the soul; Descartes's *impressions* also are related to reactions and thus to motivational drives, and Kant's *faculty of feeling* includes both appetitive and impressive elements. While I would not deny that this is the case, in my rough sketch of these three models I take the shifts in the focus of emotion theory to be relevant to the understanding of what emotions are. The different ways of accounting for the relationship between elements external and internal to the soul can be seen as different ways of dealing with the age old puzzle of how emotions are always felt to be very intimate, personal, and inner states and at the same time are quite obviously dependent on things external to and independent from us. The question that this raises, namely, how to deal with the interface between self and world, has occupied philosophers for millennia and remains today as much as ever a moral problem in the classical sense of the word: a problem of self-care or ethics of the self.