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Review Essay

LESEL DAWSON AND ERIC LANGLEY

Affective Inheritances

Ronda Arab, Michelle M. Dowd, and Adam Zucker (eds). *Historical Affects and the Early Modern Theater*. Routledge Advances in Theatre and Performance Studies. New York and London: Routledge, 2015. Pp x, 260.

Richard Meek and Erin Sullivan (eds). *The Renaissance of Emotion: Understanding Affect in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015. Pp xi, 276. <https://doi.org/10.7228/manchester/9780719090783.001.0001>.

R.S. White, Mark Houlahan, and Katrina O'Loughlin (eds). *Shakespeare and Emotions: Inheritances, Enactments, Legacies*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. Pp xii, 270. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137464750>.

Steven Mullaney. *The Reformation of Emotions in the Age of Shakespeare*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2015. Pp x, 231. <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226117096.001.0001>.

Paster, Gail Kern 3–4, 12, 26, 36, 65–6, 184, 221–2

Paster, Gail Kern, and Skiles Howard 112

Paster, Gail Kern, Katherine Rowe and Mary-Floyd Wilson 4, 17–18, 25, 26, 111–12, 133, 163, 221–2 (Meek and Sullivan, 275)

The publication of these four books attests to a continued interest in early modern studies in discussing the circulations of affect, the exchange of emotions,

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and the embedded nature of an emotionally embodied subject within a landscape networked by passionate influence. Unavoidably and rightly, Gail Kern Paster's landmark works — *Humoring the Body*, *The Body Embarrassed*, and the edited collection *Reading the Early Modern Passions* — cast a long shadow over these discussions, and her influence continues to permeate all contemporary critical thinking about the affectively involved subject of Renaissance writing.¹ And yet, in all four of these books, there seems to be an attempt to move discussion along, in some cases by acknowledging Paster's pervasive presence only parenthetically, almost taking it as read, and in other cases by emphasizing the perceived shortcomings of her work. For example, in Arab, Dowd, and Zucker's collection, Paster predominantly appears only in the footnotes, as befits a collection where the signification of 'affect' encompasses much more than simply 'humoral emotion'; whereas in Meek and Sullivan's collection, Paster remains — as is clear from the index entry above — by some margin the most cited critic, and yet in the majority of cases is cited in order to correct, contradict, or consign her work to a previous critical 'turn'. Now, it seems, serving our sharp-toothed critical turn on scholarship that fed us, we turn and turn again, at times a little too hungrily. In Meek and Sullivan's excellent collection — where every well-crafted essay has something genuinely original to offer and which is indeed taking discussion forward (along trajectories which, to these reviewers' minds, are already latent in Paster and in most respects in line with, or parallel to, her intentions) — some essays have got the memo, but many others continue to harbour Paster-ized tendencies. Arab et al. are explicitly presenting work in honour of Jean Howard, advancing her work and extending her thought; and, comparably, the essays in Meek and Sullivan's collection advance and extend the thought of Paster and need not, we suggest, be read as correctives but as continuations. The strength of these four books is, in significant ways, due to the strength of their scholarly affective inheritance.

In their introduction, Meek and Sullivan position their collection as offering a revision of previous medical-historical approaches, which, they suggest, are too keen to interpret early modern emotion exclusively or excessively in relation to humoral theory and the body:

Academic interest in emotion has largely been informed by the cultural history of medical thought, resulting in a picture of early modern emotion that stresses the centrality of the material, humoral body. Scholars in the field have tended to focus on the physiological determinism of emotion in early modern texts, arguing that feeling was something that happened to the body of the passive, receptive subject,

who either gave way to these material impulses or attempted to resist them through stoical self-control. (3)

Meek and Sullivan see these approaches as having ‘obscured the way in which other intellectual and creative frameworks, such as religious and philosophical belief, political performance, or rhetorical and dramaturgical style also shaped cultural beliefs about emotional experience’, frameworks that ‘point to more active and wilful experiences of emotion in the period’ (5). The collection thus aims to ‘reread the early modern passions’ in new contexts: the first section focuses on religious and philosophical approaches to the emotions, the second on the linguistic and conceptual meanings of three emotional states, and the third focuses on the performative aspect of emotion in relation to political expression and theatrical representation. Meek and Sullivan see the collection’s sections, taken together, as redressing a view of the early modern subject as overwhelmingly passive, in which passions are something that happen to you in a mechanistic and determinist fashion.

Sara Coodin seems to be on board with Meek and Sullivan’s sub-agenda and therefore couches a strong and perceptive essay as further corrective to those notional ‘scholars of early modern emotion’ who ‘reduc[e] passions, moods and emotions so deterministically to material forms’ (66). This essay argues that ‘it was through the discourse of humoral psychology that [certain Renaissance] texts initiated practical discussions about the well-lived life’ (which is almost exactly what actual-Paster would presumably find interesting, even if pejorative-‘Paster’ would, we are told, refute it). ‘Current materialist preoccupation with emotion’, we hear, ‘fails to address the larger issues of agency and self-management’ (which will be news to Michael Schoenfeldt, and maybe even news to Michel Foucault), so Coodin focuses on self-help discourses of the period — guides to health — showing how ‘self-cultivation ... was profoundly concerned with the exercise of moral agency’, meaning that ‘human subjects were understood not as passive vessels’ but as effectively affective agents, cultivating their own happiness (67). Indeed, ceding that ‘as Michael Schoenfeldt has argued, the care of the body formed an important part of the self-fashioning in the period, and the self at the centre of these practices was undoubtedly conceived ... as a physiologically constituted one’, the essay adds an indeed-productive coda (again, surely one with which Schoenfeldt would agree) that ‘the self at the centre of these self-help practices was also a moral self, ... subject to refashioning through human agency’ (70); Coodin reads *The Merchant of Venice* illuminatingly via these practices whereby thriftiness is conceived of as vital to the good life. The essay is fascinating, and would clearly have

sat just as comfortably in Paster's *Reading the Early Modern Passions*. Admittedly, many of these excellent essays, such as Nigel Wood's minutely detailed anatomy of Shakespearean 'spleen', do indeed demonstrate, for example, that this inherently excessive, plural, and hence often inarticulate emotion presents a 'challenge to norms of linguistic range and unitary meaning [as well as] a strictly humoral explanation of human behaviour' (125); but even the most myopic humouralist scholar would concede that there was more to life than their Galenic taxonomies. These genuinely useful essays, in an important and engaging collection, add to an *ongoing* discussion, but are perhaps at their most ingenious when being packaged as interventions.

A sense that scholarship needs to take more account of theological influences on early modern affective life informs a number of pieces in *The Renaissance of Emotion*. In a uniquely theologically inflected description of that 'touchstone for literary [medical-humanities] scholars', Thomas Wright's *The Passions of the Minde in Generall* (1604), Erin Sullivan situates this much-quoted text within Wright's broader intellectual framework, demonstrating 'how his understanding of affective experience was part of a larger intellectual project addressing the complex relationship between the physical and the spiritual, the body and the soul' (25–6). David Baghi asks 'whether, and to what extent, we can say that the *Book of Common Prayer* ... provide[s] a "script" ... by which English men and women could express their religious emotions, and by which those religious emotions could be mediated, moderated and controlled' (46). As Baghi demonstrates, this text — 'drummed into the hearts and minds of churchgoers week by week' — made a 'deep and lasting' impression on the emotional register of its recipients, providing not just a rhetoric of religious joy or passion, but a vocabulary of peace and tranquillity, 'rest and quietness' (49, 52). Ultimately, Baghi compellingly suggests, the text becomes not simply 'a framing device for [conveying] biblical emotions [but also] a mechanism of control' (58). The tight focus has larger rewards, especially in the convincing conclusion that 'one might suggest that it was the Prayer Book, rather than the Bible, which helped to form the emotional culture of the English' (59). Although addressing an author 'little given to emotional transports', Mary Ann Lund throws new light on Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* by addressing — in relation to a carefully discerned range of sources — his descriptions of religious experience and the 'affective route towards union with God' whereby emotional response draws the believer towards the divine (101, 88): these become moments in which the text moves 'beyond the framework of the medical textbook' and therefore 'provides the emotional counterweight to the earthly melancholy which fills the rest of the book' (101). Evocatively, the essay

crescendos with this *Melancholy* author giving ‘instead a vision of the immortal happiness of heaven’ (102).

Resisting a critical tendency to diagnose the intensity or nature of audience sympathies felt towards the piteous Richard II, Richard Meek focuses his acute analysis on ‘the various instances of sympathetic engagement and emotional correspondence within the text’, while assessing more widely the imaginative processes of sympathetic participation in the period, again resisting an all-encompassing humoral explanation in favour of a nuanced description of the changing conceptions of, and political motivations concealed within, compassionate response. As elsewhere in this collection, this essay emphasizes the active role of the subject in the generation and employment of affect, as Meek persuasively insists on the reciprocity inherent to affective interaction, concluding with a properly tough ambivalence: ‘to feel compassion for others is a key aspect of humanity, and yet the play warns us of the dangers of such feelings, and reminds us that our capacity for feeling pity for pity’s sake ... can leave us open to manipulation’ (148). Engagingly, the following essay, ‘What’s happiness in *Hamlet*?’ by Richard Chamberlain, turns the tables to present an original account of how ‘the emotions are not simply a matter for literature: critics have them too’ (153). What starts as a meta-critical piece — exploring miserabilist critical attitudes to emotion — shifts into fascinatingly tight focus on the resonant language of ‘hap and happiness’, again showing how what may be thought of as a private emotion ‘is also deeply *political*’, being ‘a state which cannot occur in a society based upon mutual antagonism and economic competition’ (163). Unhappy Hamlet doesn’t have a chance, but neither do the politic schemers, undermined by happenstance and madcap spontaneity; hopefully Chamberlain’s current project will extend this analytically exciting account to *King Lear*, Shakespeare’s hap-iest unhappy play.

Both Meek and Sullivan’s *The Renaissance of Emotion* and Arab, Dowd, and Zucker’s *Historical Affects* share, then, this strong intention to not simply consider the subject under the painful or disruptive influence of a world of lively affect and forces, but also to allow for ‘affect’s productive force’ (Arab et al., 1), its formative and its positive power in the political sphere or on the level of private ontology, both informing and empowering the self (‘what is at stake here is freedom’ [266], as Peter Holbrook’s lively and provocative ‘Afterword’ to Meek and Sullivan’s collection boldly claims). Affect does not just *happen to* the subject, but is produced and directed, suffered, and inflicted by the embedded subject. Or as Michael Hardt put it in 2007, analysis of affect would ‘illuminate ... both our power to affect the world around us and our power to be affected by it.’² It is worth remembering that the kind of ecologically-minded criticism that Renaissance studies has

been pursuing in the last decades — brilliantly represented by, say, Bruce Smith's *The Key of Green* — has always attempted to account for this nuanced model of reciprocity: when Garrett A. Sullivan Jr and Mary Floyd-Wilson, in the introduction to their *Environment and Embodiment*, described how 'the passions could suffuse an environment ... forming an affective landscape', they insisted that therefore 'bodies, subjects, and environment are relational and interdependent' and consequently offered an ethical and ecological perspective on how 'in such a landscape, not only is subjectivity distributed across bodies and environment, but the environment itself can also be seen as exercising the kind of agency usually limited to the subject'.³ Andy Kesson's dynamic, vertiginous, and fun essay (in Meek and Sullivan) on the labyrinthine dynamics of John Lyly's provocatively wayward style — which challenges readers to locate a hermeneutic through-line while waylaying them with diversions and alternatives — charts a brilliantly mazy path both through this kinetic emotional, moving environment and through Lyly's involute rhetorical complex: it is, to appropriate Kesson's inevitable wordplay, an a-mazing piece which sends us to 'the most famous and best-selling writer' of his time for more of these deviant pleasures, driving us back for further involvement in Lyly's happy quandaries (183). Kesson's is an essay-sized set-piece version of what Patricia Parker did for Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, and similarly energizing.⁴

Exemplifying the rewards of this coherent critical through line (in which Paster's place remains assured), the cumulative excellence of Arab et al.'s final section perhaps best represents this on-going affect-oriented discussion. This section offers a taut series of essays by Mario DiGangi, Henry S. Turner, Ronda Arab, and Ian Smith, each of which implicitly or explicitly develops the concerns of the others. Together, these essays extend the scope of the 'affective' to include consideration of social dynamics, national and international exchanges, the circulations of currency, the practices of trade guilds and corporations, the movements of social and racial bodies and of symbolic economies, and so on. In these pieces, as elsewhere in each of the three collections, the transmission of affect becomes an emotionally inflected shorthand for describing the myriad forces which bind subject to subject, subject to institution, institution to collective, collective to world. When attentive to affect, we hear 'emotionally charged [drama] that situates domestic sentiments in broader political, economic, and theological frameworks' (DiGangi, 177), becoming alert to how 'collective associations of all kinds are formed through the circulation of affect among persons, objects, and ideas ... both real and fictional' (Turner, 182). Consequently, the historian Phil Withington's analysis of early modern corporations and urban identity is more evidently influential in this sequence of essays than the 'Affect Theory' of those more usual

interlocutors, Silvan Tomkins, Brian Massumi, or Teresa Brennan.⁵ Consequently, these historically attuned moments become extremely effective, sometimes affective, always ethically alert, and feel increasingly politically imperative. As Phyllis Rackin's sharp 'Afterword' to *Historical Affects* has it: 'the current focus on affect can be seen as an attempt to speak for and to the human subject, to which [our current political climate appears] totally indifferent' (223).

Attempting what Rackin here describes as 'the difficult work of teasing out the workings of affect in a historically specific setting' in order to 'open the way for political analysis' (221–2), Arab et al.'s collection is, at heart, a formidable *festschrift* in honour of Jean E. Howard, comprised of pieces by her former students, her colleagues, and friends. The collection is divided into four parts, each of which corresponds to a dominant theme of Howard's work — the stage, gender, nationhood, and city life, respectively — and which cumulatively seek to approach affect in socio-political terms, understanding the subject to be emplaced at the heart of cultural and economic exchange. The essays therefore share with Howard a sense of what may be missing if — again in Rackin's words — 'we reduce ... the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries to the grim mechanisms of repression that previous new historicist criticism had trained us to discover' (220; again, the reader may feel that is unfairly reductive to imply that Dollimore and company only ever considered 'economic structures' to the detriment of 'emotions and what we call instincts', and assume that this is further evidence of a critical paper-tiger tendency). To replace the infamous monolithic circulations of all-encompassing, all-containing 'social energy' with a more energetic circulatory economy of interpersonal affect, however, does offer one way of thinking not just about subjection, but about the extent of subjective agency, both limited and liberated. So, for example, Mario DiGangi describes 'markets, streets, neighbourhoods, and taverns' as 'the public places in which women crucially exercised agency', demonstrating how Doll Williamson of *Sir Thomas More* 'affectively link[s] the household to the wider urban community [thereby providing] a remarkable illustration of the political power of civic affect' that does not simply act *upon* the individual, but *within* which, and even *with* which the subject can act (170); we remember that Howard, in her seminal 1986 essay on 'The New Historicism in Renaissance Studies', insisted on this more inter-effective notion of cultural affect, demanding that 'one must take ... seriously ... the role of literature in changing human consciousness and so, eventually, in affecting other material practices — not merely being affected by them'.⁶ Affective thought, here, allows influence to cut both ways.

Adding further productive nuance, Henry S. Turner brilliantly describes the ‘collective affective experience’ generated by the city guild or the institution of the corporation, charting communal relations and conflicts in Dekker’s *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* that occur ‘among groups and not among “subjects” or individuals’, while ‘recompos[ing] an idea of national belonging from the legal and affective structures of corporate forms that the play’s central scenes represent to us’ (183). Subsequently, Arab’s essay on the figure of the younger son in *Eastward Ho* continues to complicate and add nuance to this developing sense of an incorporate and in-corporated city subject. Considering the ‘status and group identity of the gentleman-apprentice’, Arab agrees with DiGangi and Turner that ‘identities were often formed around collectivities involving specific communal values, ethics, and affects’, shared social influences felt with particular resonance in London’s theatres which put on plays dramatizing ‘upward and downward economic or “class” mobility’ (Arab’s discussion of the downward mobility amongst the country gentry is particularly eye-opening) (199). Importantly, in Arab’s discussion, ‘affect’ actually becomes an irritant, as she depicts the ‘troublesome affective identity of the younger son turned apprentice whose social and cultural disposition’ mitigated against his easy social incorporation. Here, the individual’s recalcitrant over-affective performance precludes their easy absorption into a corporate class.

In this terrific final section of *Historical Affects*, each author avoids repudiation of their historicist scholarly inheritance in favour of building on the fundamental cultural-materialist truth that the individual’s ‘political agency [is inextricable from] more local dynamics of urban consolidation’ (DiGangi, 169); in turn, each of these essays comes to a conclusion that insists on how individual dramas can illuminate the circulation of ‘civic affect that binds the individual ... with the larger urban community in ... [an] economics of mutual obligation ... [that informs] an ideology of citizenship in early modern England’ (170; DiGangi says this, although Dollimore would not be startled to hear it). The crucial element of each of these essays, however, is the understanding that affect forges connections at some cost: DiGangi describes how ‘Doll continues to view the [play’s] strangers with “scorn” [and finds] them unworthy of her empathy because they have placed individual interests over communal freedoms and privileges’ (179); Turner appreciates how guild-based corporate identities helped ‘forg[e] a new national imaginary that can either integrate or exclude the foreign worker’, mapping ‘lines of exclusion and differentiation ... between those who were members of incorporated bodies and those who were not’; and Ian Smith, in his succinct but resonant essay on the presence of Africans — actual or imitated — in the Lord Mayors’

Show pageants, shows how these initially disturbing foreign bodies were instrumentally assimilated into the public's cultural imagination as 'metonyms for prized imports', 'economic enterprise', and global trade, 'dramatiz[ing] the Moor's accommodation to London's commercial estate' (211, 213). At these moments, in the understanding that assertions of affective affinity involve both avowals of kind like-kindness and less like-able disavowals of those who are deemed unlike, these scholarly pieces offer their most pertinent and incisive contributions to the critical 'affective turn': affect brings us together, of course, but consequently also excludes, or includes at the cost of what Smith calls 'the violence of human commodification' (214). These sociologically minded essays show how affect studies can offer a genuine correlative to and development of a politically implicated study of socially embedded subjectivity: in a study that avowedly 'argu[es] for a historicist, cultural-materialist affect studies' (Arab et al., 5), these final pieces are, individually and en masse, exemplary.

In *Historical Affects*' initial section on theatre practice and how 'drama emplaces personal passions into matrices defined not only by historical conflict and continuities but also by theatricality itself' (Arab et al., 2), Patricia Cahill introduces the collection in deliberate slow motion; her discussion of the affective dynamics of Ford's *Broken Heart* puts the brakes on what we may assume to be the breakneck pace of revenge tragedy by paying attention to the mechanized kinaesthetics of the chair-trap scene, noting the laboured automated movements which characterize the characters' speech and actions, while charting a mechanics of 'narrative causality that ... entirely short-circuit[s] ... the inwardness that we moderns identify with strong feeling': characters are caught up in the slow and inexorable movements of revenge, dragged along by leaden affects, seemingly with no power to resist the creeping but charged narrative engine of incremental violence. This example offers a terrific snap-shot of how theatrical affect need not be extravagantly 'dramatic' to have powerful dynamism, and a strong set piece of affect-receptive reading with which to open the collection. Things heat up, becoming charged and vibrant, in Benedict Robinson's engaging discussion of theatrical magnetism, which embeds the actors among the draws and impulses of a vividly energetic and animated world, describing a theatre as an 'experimental space where the passionate [magnetized] relations that constitute human society can be evoked, explored, and altered' (30).

As befits a collection indebted to Howard's work, affect is often considered as a theatrical effect. Tiffany Werth's essay 'Wondering in *Henry VIII* or *All is True*' — one of the many highlights of the collection — considers the impact of, and politic appropriation and exploitation of, spectacle in the play. Werth

describes how shifting Reformation attitudes to ‘the efficacy of the wonderful spectacle’ — from spectacular events such as the Field of Cloth of Gold to private miraculous visions — were characterized by an ambivalence symptomatic of ‘the hybrid religious identity of the English nation in 1613’ which meant that ‘wonders’ were ‘often controversial events, as likely to be a false means of inducing belief as true signs of providential favor’ (111–12); the romance genre’s recourse to the semi-spiritual miraculous moment both ‘fascinated and repelled writers from across the Protestant spectrum’ who felt the movings of Catholic energies at play in these moments (113). *Henry VIII*, Werth compellingly concludes, ‘exploits these anxieties to tell a story about the recent English past; it stages the efficacy of “wonders” to convince, and seduce, its hearers’ by drawing upon ‘a peculiarly English supernatural that hybridizes Catholic and Protestant imagery’ and ‘recognizing the irredeemably double legacy of the Henrician reform as the bedrock to English identity’ (114, 116–17). These are claims with resonant implications, deftly illustrated by attentive local analysis of this hybrid play; this essay offers a good example of how short-form scholarship can be suggestive precisely because it is succinct.

Many of these essays widen the ‘affect’ focus, often to consider relations that may be thought to be nearer simply ‘affectionate’ than particularly ‘affective’ in Brennan’s terms. Pamela Allen Brown’s rather surprising, and indeed ultimately affecting, discussion of the often notably intimate relations between royal women — from Catherine de Medici to Elizabeth I — and the dwarves that made up part of their retinues, is one such essay. In no way suffering from a widening of the terminological remit, this essay shows how both queen and dwarf alike ‘possess valuable bodies that function ... in courtly networks of exchange’ (137) and how their luridly observed, theatricalized, and hyper-scrutinized bodies are similarly subject to ‘forced objectification and confinement’ (139). Brown describes the unique intimacy of these cross-status relations where ‘shared affection’ underpinned the ‘intertwined identities of this anomalous pair’ (147): here, affect’s propensity to efface distinctions and heighten relational intensities promotes the constitution of what Nancy Selleck influentially terms an ‘inter-personal idiom’, or as Brown describes, a model of ‘relational autonomy, [in this instance] created as a feminist critique of individualistic, rationalistic, and masculinist accounts of autonomy’ (147).⁷ By describing, for example, the longstanding and seemingly close bond between Elizabeth and Madame Thomasin de Paris — who frequently dressed in cut-down versions of her monarch’s iconic costumes — Brown presents a genuinely moving local example of how ‘all persons are socially embedded “second persons”, and [how] autonomy (even that of queens) exists only in

relation to the social, to others who create the conditions for and sustain the self' (147): the emphasis here, without emotion but still powerful, is on affective mutual support.

Other essays in this collection understand the affective as one aspect of a wider mode of ipseic, ontological, medical, ethical, or political thought that would welcome the vulnerability of bodies or the openness of the subject: to admit affect, the thinking goes, is to admit receptivity and to allow influence. Lianne Habinek's engaging account of confused sensory hierarchies in that medical-humanities favourite, Thomas Tomkis's *Lingua*, understands affect as part of the propulsive energetics of the corporeal and sensory communication network; Ian Frederick Moulton considers the parent-child bond in similarly embodied terms, asking to what extent these affectionate bonds were considered physical, rational, or spiritual, and wondering '[is] there more to love than this' (78)? Elsewhere, in national and cultural terms, Bianca Finzi-Contini Calabresi's essay on Juliet's nurse argues that this stock figure is born of two traditions — being a hybrid of the English wet-nurse and the Italianate *nutrice* or libidinally loquacious *serva* — 'emerg[ing] as a figure of slippage rather than national fixity' and thereby 'challeng[ing] stable national affiliations' (124). Here, critical 'affective thought' would manifest itself in the desire to discern productive transnational interaction, and the description of 'a notion of English selfhood that incorporated the foreign', offering 'English audiences not a containment of alien elements but an expansion of affective possibilities, somatic and pedagogical, between two women' (125, 129). Likewise, Jane Hwang Degenhardt — responding to Howard's work on Heywood's play, *The Fair Maid of the West* — examines how 'the play constructs English national identity in relation to Spain and Morocco', exploring its sense of 'how nations are interrelated within a larger global web of relations' (154). Hwang Degenhardt's is an excellent localized analysis — charting the movements of world-travelling Bess, the morally impeccable barmaid, whose 'transmission of affect relies on her continuous circulation as a virgin whose sexual integrity' guarantees her high exchange rate — with wider interests in the dramatic workings-out of England's aspirations to empire and its place in global mercantile and colonial circulations (158).

The wide-ranging collection of twenty-three essays included in White, Houlihan, and O'Loughlin's *Shakespeare and Emotions* offers a further engaging sample of current approaches to the field with some excellent individual chapters. Unlike the previous two collections, each of which could be said to have some shared pre-occupations and methodologies, the emphasis here is on diversity and eclecticism, with some chapters advancing opposing arguments about the nature of the self

and the construction of emotions in the early modern world. Contributors offer very different accounts, for example, regarding the extent to which the early modern self is held to be predetermined and fixed or evolving and plastic; about the relationship of the emotions to cognition; and about the extent to which intense emotions benefit or endanger the individual and society. *Contra* Meek and Sullivan's suggestion that the field is dominated by humoral approaches, White argues (taking the range of essays in the collection as evidence) that there is currently 'no single "grand narrative" that dominates the study of emotions in drama and literature' (12). The book divides into three subsections: the first focuses on Shakespeare's sources and cultural influences, the second on depictions of emotion in the plays themselves, and the final on the reconfiguration of his texts in later cultural artefacts, adaptations, and performances. While methodologies vary, many of the essays offer intertextual readings, either exploring Shakespeare's engagement with his literary and cultural precursors or examining how later periods have reinterpreted his works and recalibrated their affects through performance, in music, in exhibitions, or in adaptations.

In his valuable introductory essay, 'Reclaiming Heartlands', R.S. White takes a long view on the relationship between literature and emotion, outlining the major debates on the subject from Plato to the twenty-first century and providing a broad context for many of the discussions that follow. Tracing the diverse ways that philosophers, psychologists, and literary critics have understood literature's affective power — and the ethical meanings and psychological consequences attributed to its capacity to move — White demonstrates that the current 'affective turn' has a long and rich history. Emphasizing points of continuity in the debates about literature over time, he suggests that 'With the emergence of literary studies as a professional discipline in the early twentieth century, the coordinates underlying debate remained the same, opposing reason and emotion, judgement and empathy, Plato and Aristotle, just as Shakespeare continued to be regarded paradoxically as exemplar of both camps' (5).

Part 1, 'Emotional Inheritances', is this collection's most focused and coherent section, offering a compelling picture of how earlier literary and philosophical traditions shaped Shakespeare's treatment of emotion. In a moving and politically resonant reading of *Measure for Measure*, for example, Andrew Lynch argues that traditional virgin martyr narratives offer a framework for understanding Isabella's psychology, revealing how her virginity and aspirations are 'othered' within the play, so that she 'eventually meets the common fate of emotional minorities — to become abnormal and unnatural, not only "unlike", but "impossible"' (56–7). Ciara Rawnsley offers fresh insights on *Cymbeline's* folktale roots, arguing that

Posthumus's 'rash, foolish, and far-fetched' behaviour with regard to his wager over Innogen's chastity is motivated by sexual insecurity: an implicit aspect of the play's fairy tale sources which Shakespeare makes explicit (44); and Mary-Rose McLaren explores *3 Henry VI* in relation to the chronicle in MS Egerton 1995 (1470), commonly known as Gregory's Chronicle, focusing in particular on the way that Shakespeare's representation of Margaret of Anjou may be responding to her ambiguous representation found in this source. Elsewhere, Danijela Kambaskovic argues that the representation of love in *The Sonnets* draws on Plato's idea of love as a divine madness, maintaining that the speaker does not aim for sexual consummation with the two beloveds, but rather desires a 'spiritual joining ... more elusive and valuable' with each of them. Contentiously, Kambaskovic claims that this 'revolutionary strategy within the parameters of the sonnet sequence genre' ultimately 'renders the gender of the beloveds irrelevant to its purpose, bringing the two sections of *The Sonnets* to an equivalent philosophical footing' (18).

One of the strongest essays in this section is Bríd Phillips's exploration of the *locus amoenus*, or 'pleasant place', in *Titus Andronicus*, which builds on Jonathan Bate's sense of Shakespeare as 'an extremely intelligent and sympathetic reader of Ovid' who shares with him 'an interest above all else in human psychology, particularly the psychology of desire'.⁸ Phillips argues that Shakespeare's 'sinister revision' of this trope derives from Ovid, who 'inject[s] the pleasant place with tension, heightened emotionality and brutality' in order to 'explore the extremes of human experience and emotion' (29, 30). Phillips demonstrates how the transformation of the *locus amoenus* is first enacted by Tamora, who reimagines the tranquil, shady space in which she meets her lover, Aaron, as a 'barren detested vale' perfect for rapes and murders (34). Ultimately, however, it is Marcus's disturbing description of Lavinia's bleeding body in horticultural terms that renders her 'a grotesque defiled *locus amoenus*' (35). Phillips's fascinating reading draws attention to the power and limitation of words: while Tamora's reconfiguration of the shady grove is successful in reconfiguring the blank dramatic space, Marcus's words are unable to metamorphose Lavinia's body or ameliorate her suffering. The 'affective irony' that Steven Mullaney finds in this scene (see below) can thus also be attributable to complex intertextual relations, in which Shakespeare is showing off his erudite literary sources while testing out their theatrical function.

Part 2, which 'presents essays that analyse a range of emotional states and questions raised in the plays themselves' (White, 12), offers the widest range of methodological approaches. Anthony Guy Patricia's illuminating queer reading of *The Merchant of Venice* draws on David Schalkwyk's contention that 'love is

not an emotion' but rather 'a form of behaviour or disposition over time' to re-examine Antonio's devotion to (and manipulation of) Bassanio, and Bassanio's love for him.⁹ Heather Kerr sensitively explores mimetic sympathy in *The Tempest* via its representation of 'sociable' tears, which reveal both 'the inter-connectedness of embodied passions and rational thought' and the limitations of such mimetic contagion. As she argues: 'If sympathy and compassion effect that play's "turn" from revenge to forgiveness, such inter-subjective transactions are not offered as inevitable, nor are they unequivocally successful: Antonio's silence is sympathy's obvious limit case' (168). Ronald Bedford and Alison V. Scott offer very different, but equally compelling, accounts of changeability in *Troilus and Cressida*. Whereas Bedford draws on humoralism to suggest that the tension in the play between the characters' 'intrinsic natures and desires and the extrinsic nature of circumstance' highlights 'the treacherous incontinence of [the characters'] own emotional natures', Scott sees Troilus's self-proclaimed feeling of giddiness as a 'self-aware exploration of the dynamic interaction of emotion and cognition in understanding', depicting 'a process of emotion, which is shown to be subtly compatible rather than obstructive to cognitive rationality' (141, 143; 130, 132). Ruth Lunney, like Mullaney, sees Shakespeare's history plays as experimental, but unlike Mullaney charts a linear shift in Shakespeare's craft from Talbot, who represents an ideal military hero, to Richard II who 'gives the impression of an individual, non-representative consciousness that responds to the events of the play as moment-by-moment experience rather than by offering examples of some moral or historical lesson' (103). Jennifer Hamilton, following Stanley Cavell, Michael Neill, and William Zac, sees shame as central to *King Lear*, arguing persuasively that Lear's encounter with the storm allows him to move from 'shame to shameless self-revelation' (156).

The final section addresses ways that Shakespeare's works have been reinterpreted, adapted, and redeployed. A highlight of this section is Susan Broomhall's fascinating analysis of the British Museum's 2012 exhibition *Shakespeare: Staging the World*. Excellent too is Simon Haines's philosophical exploration of recognition scenes in *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*. For Haines, the incomplete and often gendered nature of these scenes provides a critique of Hegel's optimistic account of recognition, in which a 'fully conscious inter-subjective selfhood' is possible (228). Unlike the 'romantic idealist' Hegel, Shakespeare is thus a 'realist' who emphasizes the partial, one-sided, and at times narcissistic aspect of these exchanges, an argument that recalls Kerr's description of sympathy which can also become a 'closed circuit' that does not 'open onto a fully intersubjective exchange' (228; Kerr, 168). Where Hegel advances an ideal of recognition

that reveals two individuals in a mutually beneficial and illuminating manner, Shakespeare dramatizes recognition's formative and partial aspect, in which the beholder creates, as well as reflects, an image of the other. Shakespearean recognitions are in this way also 'recognitive re-makings of the self', which advance a conception of the subject which is 'always plastic' (228). Although it is not possible to discuss all the essays presented in *Shakespeare and Emotions*, even this brief sample should suggest the ways in which this pluralistic collection is designed to provoke as many questions as it answers, presenting 'not a panopticon but a kaleidoscope of suggestive approaches to the potentially endless subject of Shakespeare and emotions' (White, 13).

Steven Mullaney's *The Reformation of Emotions in the Age of Shakespeare* offers a compelling portrayal of the affective life of post-Reformation England, answering the need expressed in *The Renaissance of Emotion* for literary studies to take a fuller account of the ways in which early modern emotions were shaped by theology. Through a series of evocative readings, Mullaney argues that early modern drama provided an 'affective technology' that 'helped the Elizabethan present to understand its own shifting or ruptured relationship with the distant and immediate past'; in particular it allowed Elizabethans an opportunity to understand, in cognitive and emotional terms, the trauma of the Reformation (23, 4). Theatrical experience, for Mullaney, is a 'dynamic and experimental form of distributed affect and cognition' which is communal and intersubjective (180). Within this context, performance should not only be recognized as a form of 'publication' in its own right, but also as a vital part of the public sphere, which allowed Elizabethans to 'think and feel and experience themselves and their worlds' and 'participate in their own lived and felt history' (147).

Reformation of Emotions opens with the emptying of the great ossuary of St Paul's in 1549, when cartloads of bones were removed and dumped in a marsh at Finsbury Fields. Treated like unwanted trash and drained of significance, the dead in post-Reformation England were further cut off from the living by the loss of the rituals of remembrance and forms of intercession (such as prayers for the dead). Mullaney sees this moment as emblematic of the wider way that the Reformation sought to alienate the living from the dead, bringing into being 'a new generation that was affectively dis-affected in its relation to previous generations' (105). Uncovering the 'cultural vertigo' induced by such dizzying changes, the book aims to recover 'what it felt like to be an Elizabethan' (9, 50). Arguing that drama provided a means through which writers and audiences could probe the affective upheavals and cognitive gaps that resulted from such cultural reprogramming, he attempts to map early modern 'structures of feeling' (a concept

derived from Raymond Williams), which he describes as ‘modes of thinking as well as feeling that are inseparable from lived experience’ (41). Drawing on thing theory and actor-network theory, Mullaney’s social, interpersonal approach to emotion is evident in his reading of Wright’s *The Passions of The Minde in Generall*, a text he sees — as does Sullivan (above) — as ‘more social and less humoral than has been assumed in recent years’, but whose mimetic model of the emotions (in which one cries, for instance, at the sight of another’s tears) is inadequate for the affective complexities of the early modern stage (48).

Instead, Mullaney turns to revenge tragedy as a way of exploring what he sees as theatre’s most powerful mode: ‘affective irony’, when ‘the audience’s affective reactions are ... alienated from the emotions expressed or represented on stage’ (49). Following Michael Neill, who argues in *Issues of Death* that the genre is ‘less about the ethics of vendetta than it is about murderous legacies of the past and the terrible power of memory’, Mullaney focuses on the inconsistencies and complex forms of alienation and sympathy within *The Spanish Tragedy* to expose the period’s ideological and affective tensions.¹⁰ His detailed, original readings offer new ways of thinking about familiar theatrical moments. For example, noting that the play offers two incompatible visions of the afterlife (the Virgilian, pagan one found in the induction and the Christian one described by Hieronimo and others), he argues that this discrepancy provides an analogue to the post-Reformation’s fragmented theology and competing views of salvation, allowing an Elizabethan audience to re-experience and think through (emotionally as well as intellectually) such cultural changes. Revenge and the Ghost of Andrea, who sit outside the play commenting from the sidelines, are similarly disorienting in that they provide a counterpoint to Hieronimo’s reactions, complicating audience sympathy. Indeed, Mullaney argues that Revenge’s control over the action of the play makes Hieronimo resemble a Calvinist subject whose ‘delusions of agency’ are ironized by the play and whose emotional agony is ‘beside the point’ (68). Turning next to Shakespeare’s *Titus Andronicus*, Mullaney re-examines the well-known moment when the raped and mutilated Lavinia appears on stage and her uncle Marcus describes her body in queasily ornate, poetic language. Rather than attributing the jarring awkwardness of this scene to Shakespeare’s inexperience as a playwright, Mullaney sees it as an example of the play’s ‘antimimetic semiotics’, in which ‘Marcus’s Ovidian, narcissistic grief [...] is an object of irony for the audience rather than a model for its own sympathies’ (49, 74).

In the second chapter, Mullaney moves from revenge tragedy to the history play and Shakespeare’s first tetralogy. Drawing on trauma theorists such as Cathy Caruth, but taking a different approach, he suggests that the collective trauma

of the Reformation manifests itself not as a painful and unassimilated memory which is compulsively relived, but rather as an excised memory whose absence is experienced as a haunting presence. Like a mark on the earth where a monument has been razed, the loss of collective memories leaves scars on the landscape and on consciousness, an experience which Mullaney compares to that of an amputee whose phantom limb exerts a painful, lingering presence. This thought-provoking account of trauma opens up new ways of interpreting the plays. Mullaney looks to moments of anachronism, incongruity, and absence in Shakespeare's first tetralogy to suggest the way that these plays 'explore the complex relations between historical memory and historical forgetting', and reveal the 'affective and cognitive gaps that haunted many dimensions of day-to-day life in Shakespeare's world' (49). He reads Talbot, for example, as 'an aporia, a *problématique* that brings the future and the anachronistic together. He is there (and not there) in order to help us think about a present whose ties to the past were at best under suspicion and at worst subject to dissolution, through various efforts to enforce a kind of affective amnesia in the Reformation' (123–4).

Continuing what appears to be becoming a theme, Mullaney also sets his study up in opposition to those produced by medical historians, in particular Gail Kern Paster, whom he sees as advancing an overly literal, materialist vision of early modern emotions which (while relevant to intellectual history) has little to say about the phenomenology of Elizabethan emotions. Drawing on Michelle Rosaldo's claim that 'Feelings are not substances to be discovered in our blood but social practices organized by stories that we both enact and tell', he argues that it is 'the social logic of the emotions in the period, as opposed to their physiological or etiological explanations' that is crucial, distinguishing his approach to emotions from that advanced by medical historians:

It is important to note the difference between narrative representations of emotional states — whether descriptions, depictions, or enactments — and the narrative process and phenomenology. ... In the one, the reader or viewer is presented with an example, or model, of an illustration of an affective state. In the other, the reader or viewer is being modelled or shaped or reconfigured as much by his or her own reading and viewing as by a represented state of being, capable of imitation. ... It was through the telling — the affective, experiential process itself — that the inner lives of people were formed and reformed in a manner that could never be uniform or fully scripted. (55, 48, 24–5)¹¹

Although Mullaney's distinction is important, it does not acknowledge the extent to which humoral constructions of subjectivity are also discursive and have been treated by medical historians as such. To put it another way, humoral models provide a repository of stories about the self through which subjectivity could be 'formed and reformed'. They were a vital discourse through which the self could be narrated, both on stage and off, that competed with other models of selfhood (such as that found in neoplatonism) and informed social practices. In this respect, Hamlet's melancholy is a discursive practice as well as a humoral state, and in both cases is profoundly social and interpersonal. Indeed, part of the reason that humoral models offer such a compelling discourse for selfhood is that they provide a view of emotions as being both 'substances to be discovered in our blood' and 'social practices organized by stories that we both enact and tell'.

The wider argument Mullaney advances in relating early modern drama to the post-Reformation period is ambitious and compelling, supported by, at times, dazzling literary readings which are as profound as they are precise. Because the links he draws ultimately rely on 'fuzzy logic' (a phrase he himself uses), however, it may leave some unpersuaded (43). Revenge tragedy, after all, flourished in periods and places outside post-Reformation England, and many of the theatrical inconsistencies and gaps he so beautifully describes can be found elsewhere. Seneca's *The Trojan Women* (53 CE), for example, also contains two mutually incompatible views of the afterlife, and a great number of revenge plays outside Elizabethan England feature divine beings who control the plot in a manner which both complicates the audience's sympathies and undermines the revenger's agency. Nonetheless, the emotional and intellectual picture that Mullaney draws of post-Reformation England is a captivating one full of creative readings of well-known theatrical moments and his account of affective irony offers an important new way of approaching early modern theatrical experience.

As is clear from this summary of just four recent publications in this vibrant and stimulating critical field, the 'affective turn' has developed away from its medical humanities roots, even at times away from the body, to provide scholars with a theoretical context in which to consider geopolitical concerns, widening symbolic ripples of other types of circulation, flow, influence, and exchange. While these studies predate recent significant European and global events, their concerns clearly anticipate an increasingly acute sense that modern scholarship must engage with early modern attitudes towards isolationism and nationalism, while reminding the modern subject that, in the words of forerunner Theresa Brennan's call to arms, 'there are — or have been — different, more permeable ways of being'.¹² It is our duty to keep saying such things, and while being

attentive to the cost of such openness, it is one of the jobs of this kind of critical work to imagine vulnerability's rewards. In these terms, these studies serve us many good turns.

Notes

- 1 Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (New York, 1993); *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage* (Chicago, 2004), <https://dx.doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226648484.001.0001>; Paster, Katherine Rowe, and Mary Floyd-Wilson (eds), *Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion* (Philadelphia, 2004).
- 2 Michael Hardt, 'Foreword: What Affects Are Good For', Patricia Ticineto Clough and Jean Halley (eds), *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social* (Durham, 2007), ix, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1215/9780822389606>.
- 3 Bruce R. Smith, *The Key of Green: Passion and Perception in Renaissance Culture* (Chicago, 2009), <https://dx.doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226763811.001.0001>; Mary Floyd-Wilson and Garrett A. Sullivan Jr, 'Introduction: Inhabiting the Body, Inhabiting the World', Floyd-Wilson and Sullivan, Jr (eds), *Environment and Embodiment in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 2007), 1–13, 6, https://dx.doi.org/10.1057/9780230593022_1.
- 4 Patricia Parker, *Inescapable Romance: Studies in the Poetics of a Mode* (Princeton, 1979), <https://dx.doi.org/10.1515/9781400870646>.
- 5 Phil Withington, *The Politics of Commonwealth: Citizens and Freemen in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2005), <https://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511560903>.
- 6 Jean E. Howard, 'The New Historicism in Renaissance Studies', *ELH* 16.1 (1986), 28, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6757.1986.tb00896.x>.
- 7 Nancy Selleck, *The Interpersonal Idiom in Shakespeare, Donne, and Early Modern Culture* (Basingstoke, 2008), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/9780230582132>.
- 8 Jonathan Bate, *Shakespeare and Ovid* (Oxford, 1994), 3, 14, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198183242.001.0001>.
- 9 Schalkwyk's argument about love draws on the work of psychologist Paul Ekman. David Schalkwyk, 'Is Love an Emotion? Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and *Antony and Cleopatra*', *Symplokē* 18.1 (2010), 102–3.
- 10 Michael Neill, *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance* (Oxford, 1996), 244, <http://dx/doi/org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198183860.001.0001>.



- 11 Michelle Rosaldo, 'Towards an Anthropology of Self and Feeling', Richard Shweder and Robert Levine (eds), *Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self, and Emotion* (Cambridge, 1984), 143.
- 12 Teresa Brennan, *The Transmission of Affect* (Ithaca, 2004), 11.

