

1 Introduction

Affect in relation

Jan Slaby and Birgitt Röttger-Rössler

The promise of affect

Since the mid-1990s, the study of affect has emerged as a key area of transdisciplinary research and scholarship across the humanities, the social sciences and cultural studies. Early on in this movement, much was made of imports from neuroscience, psychological research, evolutionary anthropology and other behavioral disciplines, so that some critics even conflated the entire movement of the “turn to affect” with an attempted biologization of the humanities and cultural studies (Papoulias and Callard 2010; Leys 2011). However, in recent years the excitement about bio-scientific leanings has noticeably waned within cultural inquiry. Today, affect studies are known more for their careful probing into subtle layers of human experience, for their work on modes of belonging and forms of attachment, or on the dynamics of everyday practices and on the affective workings of old and new media. Likewise, scholars of affect investigate novel forms of governance, developments in politics such as the recent surge of right-wing populism and the maintenance of oppressive structures through the workings of apparatuses, arrangements or institutional settings. As a generic domain of inquiry, the field of affect studies has turned out to be more complex, more dynamic and more ambivalent than its early critics had assumed. No definition or articulation has exhausted the range of affective phenomena covered by the turn to affect. No single discipline or cluster of disciplines – for instance, the psy-complex or the social sciences – can lay claim to monopolizing the affective realm.

There is one particular strand of inquiry – predominantly in cultural studies, media theory and anthropology – that does rally around what we call here the “promise” of affect. This is the conviction that affect epitomizes a dimension of meaning in human affairs that is not a matter of established discourse, of stable identities, institutions, codified cultural norms or categories, but is rather something that is lived, from moment to moment, at a level of sensuous bodily reality beyond codification, consolidation or “capture”. Affect, from this perspective, incessantly transgresses individual perspectives and frames of reference (notably the perspective

2 Jan Slaby and Birgitt Röttger-Rössler

of the “autonomous subject” of the liberalist tradition). Affect is what unfolds “in-between” – in between interacting agents, in between actors and elements in communal everyday practices, within processes of transmission, be they medial, symbolic or aural, and in the involvement, absorption or immersion when the boundaries of the self become porous (or when they have not even been properly drawn to begin with). While it is impossible to grasp this sensuous immediacy directly, proponents of affect studies undertake it to cultivate a sensitivity for these fleeting moments, these shimmers, these stirrings of the nascent, the not-yet formed, the pre-reflective, the nuanced presences prior to reflection and articulation (cf. Gregg and Seigworth 2010). Such a sensitivity deviates from established methodological canons and, occasionally, from the strictures of theory. Practitioners of this strand of affect studies are accordingly inclined to explore poetic and personal styles, toy with allegiances to the arts, experiment with unusual modes of articulation and presentation (e.g., Stewart 2007; Cvetkovitch 2012). This has led some critics to question the intellectual potency and scholarly credentials of affect studies (Brinkema 2014; Leys 2011; Lutz 2017; Martin 2013; Wetherell 2012) and its political feasibility (Hemmings 2005). Others, however, see in it a much-needed response to the current conjuncture and a timely continuation, under different historical and political conditions, of earlier critical projects of cultural articulation (such as those of Walter Benjamin, Roland Barthes, Henri Lefebvre, Raymond Williams, Stewart Hall among others; cf. Gregg 2006).¹ Moreover, powerful approaches to affect within feminism and critical race theory (e.g., Ahmed 2010; Berlant 2012; Berg and Ramos-Zayas 2015; Butler 2009; Ngai 2005) aptly illustrate the political potency and critical impact of the turn to affect. While problematic issues remain and the debate is very much ongoing (e.g., Palmer 2017), the outlook for affect studies is better – more plural, more critically vigorous, more versatile in style and range – than most of its critics assume.

Our aim in compiling the present volume is to stay tuned to this inventive and engaged strand of affect studies while working towards a more systematic and theoretically coherent perspective on affect. We are convinced that the motivating insights of the “turn to affect” can be preserved and developed further in the form of a conceptually and methodologically more elaborated perspective. In particular, our focus is on the role “relational affect” plays in processes of subject formation. This is what our book’s title, *Affect in Relation*, is driving at. This volume brings together perspectives from social science and cultural studies in order to analyze the formative, subject constituting potentials of affect. We understand affect not as processes “within” a person, but as social-relational dynamics unfolding in situated practices and social interaction. Affect is *formative* of human subjects as it binds them into shared environmental (e.g., social, material and technological) constellations, which in turn shape modalities of agency, habit and self-understanding. Such situated

1 affective compartments coalesce into characteristic subject positions which
2 are addressed, policed, nudged and reckoned with as part of the practices
3 of paramount institutions and social domains. In turn, relational affect,
4 while it is a key formative and consolidating factor for both individuals and
5 collectives, might provide crucial hints to processes of transformation, as
6 affective stirrings may signal changes in institutional routines, in styles of
7 interaction, in habits and practices, and thus indicate the dynamic transi-
8 tion from one given social and cultural formation to another. Relational
9 affect, as we understand it here, is both *formative of* and *transformative for*
10 individual subjects and for the practices, institutions, life worlds and social
11 collectives they are engaged with and enmeshed in.

12 The volume aims to sharpen a transdisciplinary and cross-methodological
13 understanding of affective relationality. It combines empirical case studies
14 and theoretical contributions from social and cultural anthropology, soci-
15 ology, cultural geography, culture and media studies and related fields.
16 Expert authors from these disciplines have joined forces to articulate the
17 conceptual framework of affect studies and showcase the field's potential
18 for exemplary domains, opening up avenues for co-operation. In this
19 introduction, we hint at several theoretical developments that led to our
20 understanding of relational affect and its role in subject formation, and we
21 sketch a number of working concepts that helped to consolidate our
22 transdisciplinary perspective. We then introduce the four thematic sec-
23 tions of the book, the separate chapters and the various interrelations.

24 **Affect in relation: idea and theoretical background**

25 The motivating idea of this volume is that affect is best understood as
26 dynamic, intensive relations that unfold between human actors, in and
27 with complex environmental settings, material formations, (urban) land-
28 scapes and designed spaces, various artifacts, technologies and media. This
29 marks a significant break from the individualist approaches that are pre-
30 dominant, for example, in the psy-disciplines, while strengthening the
31 lines of thought that view the human psyche less in individual and more in
32 social, relational and political terms. In this section, we contextualize our
33 theoretical starting point by relating it to a number of accounts that
34 inform it. In recent years, several lines of work on affect and emotions
35 have converged on a situated, dynamic and interactive view of affect crit-
36 ical of individualism, mentalism and biological reductionism. We chart
37 some of these proposals in the present section, before we sketch several
38 working concepts that provide a clearer grasp of the main thrust of our
39 perspective.
40
41

42 A first important point of contact between our working understanding
43 of relational affect and the existing literature lies within recent accounts
44 of situated, social-relational, enactive, embedded or even "extended"
45 accounts of affectivity. A good place to start is the influential text

4 Jan Slaby and Birgitt Röttger-Rössler

“Emotions in the Wild” by the philosophers Paul E Griffiths and Andrea Scarantino (2009). In programmatic fashion, Griffiths and Scarantino align emotion theory with work on “situated cognition,” disconnecting from assumptions of psychological internalism similar to that of other authors in the area of cognition (e.g., Edwin Hutchins’ seminal “Cognition in the Wild” [1995]). Instead of psychic interiority and “inner machinery,” Griffiths and Scarantino stress social relationality, skillful engagement with the world, and the dynamic coupling of emoting organism and environment, linking their proposal with work in social psychology that emphasizes similar features (e.g., Parkinson, Fischer, and Manstead 2005). We share the interdisciplinary spirit of this paper and of the debates it ignited. However, we want to expand the scope of these perspectives further by taking up ideas and concepts from cultural studies and related disciplines in the humanities.

Additional important groundwork comes from the intersection of phenomenology and cognitive science, where there is a focus on the enactive embeddedness of sense-making organisms in their environment (Thompson and Stapleton 2009; Froese and Fuchs 2012), and on embodied interaction and corporeal “interactivity” (Fuchs and Koch 2014). These lines of work have informed efforts to radicalize the philosophical understanding of situated affectivity into accounts of “extended emotions,” where the token emotional state is said to *constitutively* involve parts of the emoter’s environment (Slaby 2014; Stephan, Wilutzky, and Walter 2014; Krueger and Szanto 2016). So far, however, not much exchange has taken place between this work and the highly productive scholarship on affect within cultural studies.

To get a sense of how these philosophical approaches might resonate with work belonging to the “turn to affect,” some clarification is called-for on the understanding of affect and on affective relationality in these strands of scholarship – usually from cultural studies and related fields. Most of these approaches assume a version of a dynamic, non-categorical and relational understanding of affect that aligns with the philosophical tradition of Baruch de Spinoza, although these links are not often developed in detail.² In the Spinozist perspective, affect is construed as dynamic, relational and thus primarily “transpersonal” – as opposed to something that goes on in the interior of an individual subject. In Spinoza’s monistic and naturalistic metaphysics, affect is viewed as *relations of affecting and being affected* between co-evolving bodies in the immanence of the one “substance” (or “nature”). On this understanding, affect is what unfolds between interacting bodies whose potentialities and tendencies are thereby continuously modulated in reciprocal interplay. In the most radical construal this means that affective relations are ontologically prior to the individuated actors and actants – they are, as feminist theorist Karen Barad puts it in a different context, “relations without pre-existing relata” (Barad 2007). While this is a contested formulation, the point we take

1 from it is an emphasis on formative processes and on the conditions –
2 both enabling and obstructing – of subject constitution.

3 With this orientation, the Spinoza-inspired perspective on affect is not
4 too far from what philosophy theorizes under the label of “enactivism,”
5 where relational processes of organism-environment coupling are taken as
6 continuously shaping and reshaping – “enact” – the boundaries between
7 an organism and its life-sustaining ambient. Dynamic relations take pre-
8 cedence over individual corporeal and mental states (cf. Di Paolo 2009;
9 Colombetti and Thompson 2008; Colombetti and Krueger 2015). Like-
10 wise, in this perspective, processes of formation and development are pri-
11 oritized over their “products,” such as comparatively stable affective states
12 or affective dispositions.³ Problematically though, these discourses and
13 theories have been conducted so far in a mostly depoliticized manner, so
14 that issues such as the differential allocation of resources, processes of
15 social marginalization, structural violence and political strategies of pre-
16 carization have not received enough attention in relation to the theoret-
17 ical terms of enactivism (an exception is Protevi 2009; 2013; see also Slaby
18 2016).

19 An understanding of affect as transindividual processes not attributable
20 to individual bearers also implies that affect cannot be equated with
21 emotion. Yet there is a place for emotion within this perspective, namely
22 as recurring sequences of affective interaction that have come to be
23 socially and culturally coded, that is, categorized, narrativized (e.g., in
24 terms of “paradigm scenarios,” cf. De Sousa 1987) and subjected to norm-
25 ative regulation with regard to agreed-upon “feeling rules” (cf. Hochschild
26 1979) in an “emotional community” (Rosenwein 2002) or as part of “emo-
27 tional regimes” (Reddy 2001), displaying varying “emotional styles”
28 (Gammerl 2012). Thus, contrary to some authors’ views – such as Massumi
29 (1995, 2002) – there is no sharp rift between affect and emotion. In effect,
30 just like many anthropologists and sociologists who deal with affective and
31 emotional phenomena, many proponents of cultural affect studies adopt
32 what amounts to a *developmental constructivist approach* that takes relational
33 affective dynamics to be primary, and emotion – including “subjects” of
34 emotion – to be derivative.⁴ Yet once emotional dispositions or emotion
35 repertoires have consolidated and become culturally codified, they have
36 an important role in how communal and individual affectivity subse-
37 quently play out. Researchers of affect are thus well-advised to have both
38 “affect” and “emotion” in their conceptual repertoire. As this issue is of
39 some importance and is a continuous source of confusion, it is worth elab-
40 orating on our take on the putative “affect-emotion gap”.

41 A strong claim for why not to lose sight of emotions when dealing with
42 affect has recently been put forward by social anthropologists. Some
43 scholars, such as Lutz (2017) and Martin (2013), take issue with the some-
44 times overly sharp distinction between affect – as preconscious, bodily felt
45 intensities – and emotions – as those feelings that are fixed through

various discursive practices. This critique partly echoes objections made by Leys (2011), Wetherell (2012) and other critics of the cultural “turn to affect” – objections directed mostly against Brian Massumi and his followers. Lutz and Martin argue that a sharp affect/emotion dichotomy holds strong traces of the old opposition between body and mind.⁵ Both opine that affect is conceptualized by many theorists as “something that belongs to an interior life fundamentally beyond social articulation” (Lutz 2017, p. 187), and emphasize that affect might be defined as presubjective and asocial but by no means as a *presocial* intensity; that it is – like emotion – embedded within and shaped by social processes (Martin 2013, p. 156). However, social anthropologists agree that there is a gap between the signifying order (emotion codes, convention, meaning) and the affective order (non-signifying, autonomic processes taking place beyond the levels of consciousness and meaning; cf. Martin 2013, p. 155; White 2017, p. 177). This epistemological gap “between how bodies feel and how subjects make sense of how they feel” (White 2017, p. 177) is especially demanding when analyzing the entanglement of emotion and affect within particular environments and social processes. A theoretically challenging aspect concerns the question of how far this “affect-emotion gap” encompasses a transformative potential, which might be at the interstices or fault lines between emotion and affect that subjects and collectives gain the power (motivation) to refigure their life or life worlds. However, on the flip side, the “affect-emotion gap” is – as White (*ibid.*, p. 176f.) emphasizes – not only appealing to affect theorists but also to those seeking to capitalize on its generative power, for example, technological companies that create emotional robots, such as the Japanese giant Soft-Banks, or that develop artificial intelligence programs specialized in reading facial expressions (e.g., Affectiva); or other affect-sensitive technologies, like those numerous apps that help individuals to perceive and label their feelings (e.g., GFK App Empathy) and thus implement new regimes of technological knowledge on how bodies might feel and react. These emerging technologies of affect and emotion constitute challenging new sites for researchers on affect. Accordingly, several contributions to this volume critically engage with novel technological apparatuses and setups that specifically target user affectivity.

In light of this, we consider the distinction between affect and emotion as analytically helpful. Where the focus is on emotion, the interest lies with consolidated patterns of felt forms of relatedness, viewed from the perspective of persons or collectives and their formulated self-understanding. Where the focus is on affect, the main thrust is towards subtle forms of relationality and processes of becoming; dynamics that are formative of subjects and their emotional orientations, but that might initially escape reflective awareness on the part of those involved. Affect, as heuristically *distinguished* but not sharply *separated* from emotion, is thus a lens to render visible such ongoing relational processes and the surprising turns

1 they might take. Ultimately though, these two conceptual perspectives
2 work best in concert.
3

4 **Central concepts** 5

6 Part of the promise – and the challenge – of the turn to affect has been its
7 rigorously transdisciplinary orientation. It is our conviction that well-made
8 and precisely elucidated *concepts* are required as connectors between
9 different academic and scientific fields, engendering collaboration,
10 enabling the transfer of insights, linking different disciplinary histories
11 and theoretical outlooks, while inspiring debate and contestation.
12 Working concepts help bridge theory and methodology as they inform
13 collaborative viewpoints on complex subject matters in the manner of
14 *sensitizing concepts* (see Bowen 2006), while also showing a capacity for
15 cross-fertilization between different fields and domains of study (*traveling*
16 *concepts* – see Bal 2002). Such concepts need to be sufficiently concrete but
17 have to remain open-textured enough to allow domain-specific elaboration.
18 In this section we sketch the contours of several such concepts that
19 will appear in the following chapters, and that all contribute to the guiding
20 idea of “affect in relation”. If only in outline, the following provides a
21 glimpse of an evolving field of interrelated notions, a larger set of working
22 concepts that has begun to take shape in the day-to-day research within
23 the Berlin-based collaborative research center *Affective Societies* (see Fore-
24 word to this volume). The multi-disciplinary team of researchers involved
25 in this initiative collaborates to further consolidate, expand and elaborate
26 this conceptual tableau – work that will be reflected in subsequent volumes
27 of this new Routledge book series (see the forthcoming volume entitled
28 *Affective Societies: Key Concepts*, edited by Slaby and von Scheve).

29 The first notable concept in this regard is that of *relationality* itself.
30 Here, the provisional, domain-general and theory-neutral character of a
31 working concept is most obvious. “Relationality” indicates an analytical
32 perspective that can be deployed in various fields and for different empiri-
33 cal and theoretical purposes. Thus, no particular type of relation is priori-
34 zed. The point is that affective phenomena are approached with a view
35 to their embeddedness within ongoing complex situations in which
36 various actors, objects, spaces, artifacts, technologies and modes of inter-
37 action coalesce, all contributing to the particular character of the affective
38 process in question. Thus, researchers might focus on interactive dynamics
39 between persons, from basic forms of preconscious embodied co-
40 ordination, synchrony and affect attunement up to fully self-conscious
41 forms of practical engagement. However, person-to-person relationality
42 is inextricable from further layers of embeddedness, from formative
43 relations to the environment ranging from the immediate socio-material
44 surroundings of interacting agents, to broader discursive, medial or insti-
45 tutional arrangements of various kinds.⁶ As a methodological orientation,

generic relationality works as a template for concept formation, as it leads scholars and researchers to construct relational conceptions of phenomena that were previously thought of as separate entities and individual capacities. Other prominent examples of this, outside the realm of affect, are relational conceptions of autonomy in feminist theory (Mackenzie and Stoljar 2000), relational construals of knowledge in social epistemology (Code 1991; Fricker 2007), relational approaches to social actors in sociology and economics (Granovetter 1985) and relational accounts of subject formation in poststructuralist thought (Butler 1997), to name just a few salient instances.

A key fault line between differing approaches to affect has been whether to prioritize interpersonal relatedness (articulated, for instance, in terms of interactive practices among human actors), or whether to focus on the dynamic material dimensions of relatedness, as highlighted in post-human, new materialist approaches (e.g., Bennett 2010; Coole and Frost 2010). In our view, it is crucial not only to keep both strands in play but also to understand them in their interrelatedness. To do this, we suggest that concepts from practice theory are combined with notions articulating a dynamic materialist ontology. This is why contributions to this volume combine notions such as “affective practice” and the related “domain” or “domain of practice” from practice theory (see e.g., Reddy 2001; Reckwitz 2012; Scheer 2012; Wetherell 2012), with notions such as *agencement* or *arrangement* – concepts whose purpose it is to illuminate close-knit entanglements of human and non-human elements, and to allow a focus on dynamic and agentive phenomena partially beyond the scope of human intentional agency and self-understanding.

The concept of an *affective practice* has gained particular purchase in recent scholarship, and is central to several chapters in this collection. Practices are social, situated and normative, not reducible to the contributing intentional comportment of individual actors viewed in isolation (cf. Rouse 2006). Accordingly, a notion of affective practice does justice to the distributed, socio-materially situated character of relational affect, while it keeps in play individual agency and skillful engagement. It allows us to “follow the actors” while assuming that more is going on than what is summoned, brought about or reflected upon by the actors alone (cf. Wetherell 2012, pp. 4, 12). A praxeological perspective strikes a balance between the assumption of order and the expectation of change or transformation – “affect does display strong pushes for pattern as well as signaling trouble and disturbance in existing patterns” (ibid., p. 13). An important dimension of elaboration lies in the direction of affective place-making or, more generally, the active and passive *sedimentation* of affective practices into relatively permanent formations inherent to particular sites and locales (cf. Anderson 2014; Massey 2005; Reckwitz 2012). To approach such affectively shaped and imbued settings, we employ the open-textured notion of a “domain of practice”. This concept refers broadly to those socio-spatial

1 settings that have reached a certain level of stability and permanence due
2 to repeated and ongoing affective performances and interactions.
3 “Domain of practice” is required as an initial identifier of fields of interest
4 for research but stands in need of concretization in the form of site-
5 specific elaboration.

6 As a bridge in the other direction, that is, from dynamic materialist
7 ontologies to the realm of human practice and interaction, we have found
8 the concept of an *affective arrangement* particularly useful – not least
9 because it can help achieve the kind of local specificity that the concept of
10 a “domain of practice” calls for (see Slaby, Mühlhoff and Wüschner 2017).
11 Inspired by Deleuze’s and Guattari’s notions of *agencement*, by Foucault’s
12 *dispositive of power* and by elaborations of their ideas within *apparatus theory*,
13 *actor-network* approaches and *assemblage theory* (Latour 2005; DeLanda 2006;
14 Buchanan 2015), the concept of “affective arrangement” helps scholars
15 carve out heterogenous ensembles of diverse materials that are directly
16 involved in enabling and sustaining a local tangle of affective relations. An
17 affective arrangement is a dynamic formation comprising persons, things,
18 artifacts, spaces, discourse, behaviors and expressions in a characteristic
19 “intensive” mode of composition, demarcated from its surroundings by
20 shifting thresholds of intensity (cf. Deleuze and Guattari 1986; 1987;
21 Foucault 1980; 1995). This provides a welcome concretization of affective
22 relationality, as the assumption is that relational affect always unfolds
23 locally as part of specific dynamic meshworks that knit together human
24 and non-human elements. In such dynamic formations, a given instance
25 of relational affect is patterned, channeled and modulated in recurrent
26 and repeatable ways. In each case, an affective arrangement brings mul-
27 tiple actors into a co-ordinated dynamic conjunction within a local setting,
28 and these actors’ mutual affecting and being-affected – as kindled, sus-
29 tained and mediated by the elements and conditions at hand – is the
30 central dimension of the arrangement. The analytical perspective opened
31 up by this notion can help researchers come to terms with an ongoing
32 affective relationality in complex and initially opaque domains, in par-
33 ticular where actors with different positions, roles, histories, dispositions
34 or habits regularly engage and interact against a background of specific
35 formative elements (such as technological, architectural or institutional
36 arrangements of various kinds). From the perspective of this volume, affec-
37 tive arrangements are seen as *intensive milieus* (Angerer 2017) of subject
38 formation and as key factors in the subsequent stabilization – and in the
39 variation and transformation – of subject positions and their paramount
40 patterns of affecting and being affected. Affective arrangements always
41 emerge in particular domains of practice, on the one hand they are
42 shaped by the social structures, histories and materialities of the given
43 domains and, on the other hand, they shape these structures themselves.
44 Examples discussed in this volume are: the scenes and settings of religious
45 rituals (Chapter 5); political mass events on public squares, such as the

Tahrir Square protests in Cairo in 2011 (Chapter 6); the increasingly informal, technologically framed work environments of “network corporatism,” with their emphasis on teamwork, communication and connectedness (Chapter 8); co-working spaces with their carefully crafted affective atmospheres and styles of interaction (Chapter 9); and the novel forms of man-machine hybrids in the domain of affective computing (Chapter 12). Also, the affective forms of *kin work*, that is, the practices applied by members of transnational families to perform “intimacy at a distance” that take place in, and create particular kinds of, affective arrangements (Chapter 2).

The daily lives of people who are embedded (like most migrants) in “transnational social fields” (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Glick Schiller 2005), that is, in networks of interpersonal connections stretching across many states, are framed by diverse legal, political and social institutions predominant in the nation-states which their networks transcend. These persons thus experience in their daily lives “multiple loci and layers of power and are shaped by them, but can also act back upon them” (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004, p. 1013). Incessant flows of information, resources, objects, ideas and services circulate through the sets of multi-layered and multi-sited interlocking networks of social relationships that make up transnational social fields. These flows – which are inextricable from communication technologies and media practices – involve people in different affective arrangements, both prompting and giving shape to specific affective interactions and practices. A particularly important dimension within transnational social fields are family relations. The contributions to the first thematic part of this volume deal with the different forms of *kin work* (Di Leonardo 1987), or “doing family” in transnational family constellations. They focus on the affective practices migrants engage in so as to come to terms with the complex challenges of living in dispersed family constellations. The practices and experiences connected with transnational life worlds deeply impact the processes of subjectivation, they influence how persons position themselves in their environments, how they mold their social relations, and how they articulate and sentimentalize their belonging.

This perspective on the affective practices of kin work in transnational social fields gives shape to the multi-dimensional understanding of affective subject formation discussed in this volume. The focus on relational affect allows a fine-grained analysis of the processes and activities that result in socially prevalent subject positions, it allows us to focus on both non-discursive and discursive elements, and it widens the scope of the paramount domain of subject constitution from well-researched settings (such as the nuclear family typical of Western middle classes) to a broader range of emerging social arrangements – for example digitized workplaces, online communities, users of novel technologies, or the new political collectives emerging “from below”. Highlighting relational affect in

1 the study of subjectivation enables researchers to identify operations of
2 power that might otherwise go unnoticed or remain under-theorized, such
3 as the subtle – or not so subtle – forms of oppression operative, for
4 instance, in everyday social situations or in the procedures of public insti-
5 tutions (cf. Ahmed 2007; Berg and Ramos-Zayas 2015). Affectively shaped
6 subject positions raise questions of social legibility, of tacit preconditions
7 for the allocation of recognition and esteem, and provide a lens on the
8 unifying or divisive factors within or between communities.

10 Thematic parts

12 *Affective families*

13 Part I of this volume deals with the affective dynamics unfolding within
14 transnational families. In a highly mobile contemporary world family con-
15 stellations are marked by tremendous economic, social and political trans-
16 formations. A high percentage of families around the globe are scattered
17 throughout different regions and nations. Families with members living in
18 two, three or even more countries are in no way unusual. They all face the
19 challenge of keeping in touch, to stay related and to care for each other
20 across long distances. Very few of these transnational families can afford to
21 meet on a regular basis; most have not seen each other for years, or even
22 decades, due to poor financial conditions and/or legal restrictions. But,
23 besides geographical distances, transnational families have to come to
24 terms with manifold rearrangements in their relationships that are linked
25 to the living conditions, social structures and normative orders prevailing
26 in the countries in which they dwell.

27 The contributors to this theme, who are all anthropologists, share the
28 assumptions that being embedded in transnational kin relations affords
29 particular forms of affective *kin work* or kin practices, which they analyze
30 from two different vantage points. The first perspective concerns *kin work*
31 *across long distances*: how do dispersed family members manage to stay
32 related? By what mediatized *affective practices* do they create long-distance
33 intimacies? How do they care for each other across space and time? The
34 last aspect relates not only to long family separations but also to the
35 reshaping of intergenerational relations due to aging. The second per-
36 spective deals with kin relations and *kin work beyond long distances*; it focuses
37 on the affective dynamics unfolding within immigrant families living in
38 diasporic contexts. Key issues concern the reshaping or transformation of
39 basic kin relations – for example, parent–child relations – through the
40 particular migration regimes, social structures, values and family patterns
41 that prevail in the “country of immigration.” How do family members
42 negotiate their roles and contesting ideas about partnership, family
43 responsibilities, parent–child relations and forms of parenting?
44 What intergenerational conflicts and affective tensions result from the
45

reconfiguration of family roles and clashing expectations and orientations? How do family members handle such dissonances?

The first contribution comes from Maruška Svašek, “Ageing kin, proximity and distance: translocal relatedness as affective practice and movement,” who explores the affective practices by which dispersed family members create – or fail to – a kind of “long-distance intimacy.” Svašek focuses on the role of communication technologies in transnational kin relations, particularly on the impact of different technological devices on long-distance care dynamics. Special attention is paid to the changing relations of dependency due to age progression, that is to the changing care needs of aging kin and the ways these are dealt with in migrant families. Svašek’s contribution builds on empirical research conducted in Northern Ireland on the relationships between adult children and their parents in “transmigrant” families.⁷ Her sample includes cases from differing transnational social fields, not only families who are scattered throughout India, Northern Ireland and the USA, or throughout Northern Ireland and Iran, but also families who are only separated by the Irish sea. Her case studies illustrate that many of the challenges faced by transmigrant families are independent of their social and cultural backgrounds but are rooted in their geographical separation and produce quite similar mediated affective kin practices in order to stay related and lead a translocal family life. Svašek’s contribution raises the theoretically important question of how far the technologically mediated interactions that shape the life of transnational families generate similar affective dynamics, which transcend social and cultural differences between migrants and merge them into “affective communities.”

The search for a better future through education is one focal motive for human mobility. Families who can afford it send their offspring abroad to study at internationally acknowledged universities; often parents work extremely hard, or migrate themselves, to earn the money needed to enhance the education of their children. Schools, especially universities, are sites of much hope, aspiration and expectation. The contribution by Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka, “*Education sentimentale* in migrant students’ university trajectories: family, and other significant relations,” follows the educational trajectories of individual university students with a “migration background” in Germany. Special attention is paid to circumstances where academic education becomes a means of social mobility, that is to the interplay of spatial and social mobilities. Based on biographical interviews with young students, who – as in the case of Svašek’s study – are from heterogeneous socio-cultural backgrounds, she analyzes how they perceive their affective relations with kin, friends and peers, and argues that at this transitional stage of life kinship relations need to be considered against the backdrop of other forms of affective relatedness. The affective dynamics of kin relations are not comprehensible without considering the other social realms in which a person is embedded. The central social sites

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45

1 in this case study are the complex space of the university, parental homes
2 and transnational family configurations, and the peer constellations within
3 and outside academia. Pfaff-Czarnecka conceives studying as a period of
4 transition between late adolescence and early adulthood, a period of
5 upmost importance for subject formation. She argues that studying affords
6 – often hard – affective “boundary work”; in order to fit in the academic
7 realm university students have not only to develop new relationships (with
8 peers and academic teachers), to learn new interaction styles and modes
9 of behavior, but also to negotiate and redefine older social bonds like
10 their familial relations. (A challenge that most of the students in her
11 sample have to meet is coming to terms with high parental expectations,
12 which often go hand in hand with emotional care and economic support
13 and thus form quite rigid “regimes of belonging”.) In her fine-grained
14 analysis Pfaff-Czarnecka depicts that the affective self-formation, the *educa-*
15 *tion sentimentale*, of the students takes place during their navigation
16 through the different social sites and domains of practice that make up
17 their transnational life worlds.

18 The chapter from Birgitt Röttger-Rössler and Anh Thu Anne Lam,
19 “Germans with parents from Vietnam: the affective dimensions of parent-
20 child relations in Vietnamese Berlin,” also deals with family relations
21 within transnational constellations, but unlike the two other chapters in
22 this part it focuses on one particular transnational social field, namely
23 Vietnamese Berlin. It addresses the challenges Vietnamese parents and
24 their children have to meet in the context of their immigration to
25 Germany. Based on an ethnographical study of parent-child relations
26 within the families of former Vietnamese contract laborers, who worked in
27 the previous German Democratic Republic and are now living in Berlin,
28 the authors describe the intergenerational conflicts arising in these fam-
29 ilies from the perspective of the immigrant’s offspring. They depict the
30 affective relations unfolding between parents and children and explore
31 how far these affective patterns are entangled, on the one hand, with the
32 particular socio-political structures of this Vietnamese migration and, on
33 the other hand, with the particular parenting styles and practices of the
34 Vietnamese immigrants. The analysis highlights that the children of Viet-
35 namese immigrants do not form a homogenous group but differ strongly
36 from each other. Depending on whether they have done most of their
37 growing up in Germany or in Vietnam, their childhoods have been shaped
38 by extremely different social and familial patterns, power structures, values
39 and practices. These diverse experiences lead them to position themselves
40 differently within the multi-layered and complex field of Vietnamese
41 Berlin and shape their affective relations – to their families and to the
42 other social domains they belong to. Röttger-Rössler and Lam argue that
43 the different childhood experiences separate the offspring of Vietnamese
44 immigrants into different affective communities; that is, into communities
45 that are formed by their affective relation to the world. While Svašek and

Pfaff-Czarnecka point to the fact that shared experiences create affective communities that cut across national, ethnic and cultural boundaries, Röttger-Rössler and Lam demonstrate that emerging affective communities have the power to divide even close social groups like families. Taken together, these contributions raise an important theoretical issue, namely, how emotion and affect shape processes of social differentiation.

Affect and place

Part II deals in different ways with space and place-making practices in their complex affective dimensions. The contributions, on the one hand, focus on affective relations to place in migration and diaspora contexts, on the other hand, they examine the political dimensions of public and private spaces and places. Affective attachments to place – with their intensively sensuous, bodily dimensions – are among the most significant dimensions of socialization. The multi-sensuous perception of places, that is, of the colors, forms, sounds, smells, odors, haptic textures and architectonic structures connected with them effects a complex somato-sensory habituation to places, which people do not often fully realize until they leave familiar places. It is thus not surprising that new studies of transnationalism and transmigration in sociology, social anthropology and cultural geography emphasize the central importance of place for feelings of belonging and focus on the multiple strategies of migrants to create “homes away from home” (e.g., Svašek 2012; McKay and Brady 2005; Conradson and McKay 2007; Wise and Chapman 2005). These studies show how many resources and capacities members of diaspora communities dedicate to place-making practices in order to attach themselves to a new place, or to more than one place simultaneously. They raise the question of how much people who are on the move need concrete, sensuously perceptible places, spaces and landscapes to integrate into new environments and to feel “at home”. This issue is addressed, on the one hand, from the vantage point of religious practices in different migrant settings, which are deeply entangled with spatiality and materiality and can thus be conceived as affective ways of place-making. On the other hand, the issue of place or home making is approached from the perspective of endangered homes. The deliberate destruction of homes by powerful political agents – be it the displacement of persons in the context of urban gentrification programs or the demolishing of homes through police raids in the name of security (e.g., governmental surveillance of potentially dangerous groups) – is a widespread and highly consequential means of social control. Violating private spaces is an affective practice of domination.

The entanglement of politics, place and affect also becomes manifest in the role particular places play in social and political movements. Although the fundamental importance of emotion and affect in political processes has long been widely ignored in political and social sciences it is now

1 receiving increased attention (e.g., Cepernich 2016; Goodwin, Jasper and
2 Polletta 2001; Gould 2009). However, the interlinkage of place, politics
3 and affect has not been much studied up until now. The case studies in
4 this part delve into the complex interconnections between place, space,
5 politics and affect. They comprehend the attachment of person to place as
6 a dynamic affective relationality, which is deeply shaped by social and
7 political processes.

8 The first contribution, “Spatialities of belonging: affective place-making
9 among diasporic neo-Pentecostal and Sufi groups in Berlin’s cityscape” by
10 the social anthropologists Hansjörg Dilger, Omar Kasmani and Dominik
11 Mattes, explores the ways in which the members of two diasporic religious
12 groups (the neo-Pentecostal church and the Sufi order) settled in Germa-
13 ny’s capital try to embed themselves in Berlin’s cityscape through different
14 religious practices. The authors show that these bodily focused, religious-
15 spiritual practices prove an effective means to instill a *sense of belonging* in
16 the actors and can thus be read as affective practices. Through their reli-
17 gious routine, which can involve highly interactive bodily performances,
18 the community members relate themselves to each other and to their
19 socio-material environments; they ground or place themselves through
20 these practices into their new local lifeworlds and reshape these local
21 worlds at the same time. The authors take a comparative perspective and
22 examine the similarities and differences between the two religious groups
23 with regard to their place-making practices. Their results point to interest-
24 ing affective similarities across the two communities, despite their highly
25 different orientations and historical trajectories. They show, for example,
26 that both religious groups engage in affective practices that transcend
27 their actual location in Berlin’s cityscape and involve them in a network of
28 translocal social relations and material flows. In their gatherings and
29 prayers, and through the mediatized circulation of religious objects
30 (video-sermons, books, spiritual music, etc.) the believers connect them-
31 selves to significant spiritual leaders and sacred places in other parts of the
32 world. It is through such localized religious practices that they create
33 translocal *affective communities*. Similarities also emerge regarding the affec-
34 tive relation to what is conceived by both religious communities as the
35 “sinful,” immoral Western style of life. Both groups developed practices to
36 protect themselves and to withstand the manifold seductions of their new
37 social environment. Such practices, the authors argue, constitute an
38 important means of place-making, that is, a means of affectively grounding
39 oneself in a new lifeworld.

40 The part’s second chapter, “Midān Moments’: conceptualizing space,
41 affect and political participation on occupied squares” by the political sci-
42 entists Bilgin Ayata and Cilja Harders, deals with the occupation of urban
43 squares in the context of political protest movements. Drawing on empiri-
44 cal data on the uprising in Egypt in 2011 the authors offer a “thick
45 reading” of Tahrir square as an affective space. They interpret the highly

affective dynamics enfold on the square during the 18 days of its occupation in January 2011 as “Midān Moments”. The Arabic term *midān* (English: square) refers to the central square of Egypt’s capital, the *Midān at-Tahrīr*, a place closely linked to Egypt’s political history; while the noun “moments” denotes the temporal dimension of the events that took place in Cairo’s “Liberation Square”. With “Midān Moments” the authors refer to periods out of ordinary times on a delineated space, periods that are characterized by an intense affectivity unfolding through the bodily co-presence of protesters and their practices in this space. Ayata and Harders argue that the practices of protest in conjunction with the materiality of the occupied square created an “affective arrangement” that enabled the protesters – at least momentarily – to downplay and neglect all gendered, political, economic, religious or ethnic differences between them, in order to form an affective community – however fragile and short-lived. Ayata and Harders provide a rich description of the mass protest on *Midān at-Tahrīr*. They depict in-depth how the affective atmosphere of the square was changed through the affective arrangements connected with its occupation (the tents and fire places, the unusual absence of traffic noise, the conversion of the mosque into a provisional hospital, the reshaping of the place’s spatial order through barricades and checkpoints, the manifold activities of the protesters and so on) and argue that, due to these affective rearrangements, during the 18 days of occupation the *Midān at-Tahrīr* turned from a battlefield into a utopian space, a place of becoming the “independent republic of Tahrir,” as it was called in 2011.

The third contribution in this part, “Muslim domesticities: home invasions and affective identification,” by Gilbert Caluya, who is an expert in gender and cultural studies, addresses the affective processes that unfolded during the course of home raids among Australian Muslims mandated by the Australian government in the context of state-organized counter-terrorist efforts. Caluya’s contribution maps out the affective meaning of home as a place of security, familiarity and intimacy, from the vantage point of domicile. He illustrates that police and military invasions of houses and flats always constitute violent acts against the home as a place of belonging, as the crystallization point of important social relations, and shows that these acts alter the affective relations of the persons concerned in a fundamental way; not only do their affective relations to the state and to their daily social environments become dissonant and flawed, but also their relations to each other become fragile. In his analysis, Caluya depicts how the circulation of images and stories of Muslim home destruction and invasion across the internet and in everyday life, produces “scenes of affective identification” (Berlant 2008) that simultaneously generate a Muslim counter-public. News media regularly film such raids to report them, they thus bring into circulation lots of images of Muslims being arrested and their homes being vandalized, which are shared not only in the public media, but also among different Muslim

1 networks. “In each shared post,” Caluya states, “members of the Muslim
2 community express their heartbreak, share condolences for the affected
3 family and pledge their prayers.” Through and with these expressions of
4 sympathy and the sharing of sadness, pity and anger a sense of solidarity,
5 of connectedness and belonging to the *ummah* (world community of
6 Moslems) is created. In other words: the *ummah* as an *affective community* is
7 enacted through these shared feelings.
8

9 *Affect at work*

10
11 In many countries of the Western hemisphere, capitalist corporations have
12 long begun to rival the nuclear family as a significant formative milieu of
13 affective socialization. The office has turned into a breeding ground for
14 personality – a dwelling place where actors are both habituated and
15 policed so as to fit the mold of their work environments with their charac-
16 teristic styles of interaction and requirements for performing professional
17 etiquette according to changing “laws of cool” (Liu 2004). In most work
18 environments a team of co-workers, a “boss,” a leader or divisional super-
19 visor, and the styles of interaction and etiquette paramount in the respec-
20 tive workplaces, are key factors for shaping individual comportment and
21 demeanor and for formulating the display rules of personality, self-image
22 and character (Boltanski and Chiapello 2007). In terms of affect and
23 emotion, corporate environments thus merit attention not only as a site
24 for research into processes of subject formation, but also as a domain that
25 calls for genealogical elucidation and critical reflection.

26 The contributions to Part III inquire into the ways in which affective
27 involvements continue to function as an important dimension of subjec-
28 tivation during adulthood. Perspectives from sociology, cultural and media
29 studies and social philosophy aim to assess the complications that lie in
30 those affective relations specific to the work cultures of modern “network
31 corporatism”. Increasingly, reciprocal and dynamic forms of affective
32 involvement – as opposed to hierarchical and authoritarian – have become
33 focal in these domains. Now prevalent are those forms of affective
34 involvement and skillful practical engagement with stylized workplaces,
35 with informal networks of co-workers, and also with digital workplace tech-
36 nologies, that seamlessly mix the realms of professional and private life –
37 such as, for instance, a Facebook friends list or group chat applications
38 (Gregg 2011).

39 The framework of relational affect can help theorists achieve a more
40 nuanced understanding of how these intensive, multiply mediated affec-
41 tive engagements are experienced as meaningful and rewarding, while
42 they might at the same time play a role in subtle schemes of (emotional)
43 exploitation and other precarious arrangements. Over time, affect-
44 intensive workplace arrangements can turn out to be draining or outright
45 toxic, leading to exhaustion, hopelessness or pain, especially on the part

of those who have to shoulder the brunt of the affective labor required to keep these spaces buzzing with energy and ostentatious joyfulness. Likewise, notwithstanding all talk of eye-level interaction and flat hierarchies, modern workplaces remain engines of difference when it comes to gender-related interaction patterns, hidden biases and stereotypes (see e.g., Koch et al. 2005).

In light of this, it is important to ask at which exact point an affective arrangement ceases to be enabling, motivating and empowering and instead becomes toxic, oppressive and exploitative. Which criteria might enable those involved to tell the difference? Is it even possible to gain a critical distance in the midst of one's own, full-on affective involvement, especially in times when professional work continues to be unrivaled as a major source for meaning in standard biographies? Relational affect shows up here in its full ambivalence. The joys of connection, the near-addictive thrill of the online contact and real-time feedback might play a role in numbing the critical faculties of those involved. High-octane information workplaces *affectively habituate* not only office-regulars, but also home workers or occupants of co-working spaces, by way of the immersive quality of their affective arrangements. In response to these developments, the focus of analysis needs to shift to the devices and techniques whose purpose is to govern employees by stimulating and intensifying affective relatedness, thereby potentially giving rise to new emotion repertoires. From teamwork to real-time employee engagement and creative open space arrangements, as in Google's offices or the hip co-working spaces springing up across the globe, employee governance – including templates for gratuitous self-governance – draws on techniques operating on a register of affect and social relations. Individual commitment, performance and creativity are stimulated not by coercion but by selective intensification of affective and interpersonal experiences, often within arrangements specifically designed for such purposes. As a result, affective over-identification with one's firm, mediated by the "team" as a friendly micro-habitat, and self-exploitative behaviors – often in line with traditionally gendered interaction patterns – are made more likely and seem more natural.

The contributions to this part inquire into the roles of affect and affective relationality within the organizational cultures of contemporary forms of corporate capitalism. The changing affective relevance of work-related activities is critically reflected, both on a case-based empirical level and in terms of conceptual foundations. Affective arrangements with immersive qualities, socio-technical assemblages that engender symbiotic man-machine couplings and a transformed guise of care work – epitomized in the new social position of "community manager" in co-working spaces – are focal points in these contributions.

The part's first chapter, by philosophers Rainer Mühlhoff and Jan Slaby, is programmatically entitled "Immersion at work". The authors

1 begin their text with a review of the main lines of the affect theoretical
2 perspectives of Spinoza and Deleuze, focusing on relationality, power
3 (*potentia*) and on the concept of an affective arrangement. On these
4 grounds, they then argue that the new affect-driven type of governmental-
5 ity in network corporatism comes with a new form of subjectivation, which
6 is not based on discipline but on immersion; the encompassing involve-
7 ment of individual actors by means of a full-on engagement of all available
8 personal and affective forces. Immersive arrangements do not merely
9 govern the employees' outward behavior but also their *potentials*: creative
10 and motivational resources on a deeper level of personhood. In a frame-
11 work that combines the study of power relations with a philosophy of the
12 subject, enriched by insights from affect theory and workplace ethnog-
13 raphy, Mühlhoff and Slaby differentiate these new regimes of "govern-
14 ance by affect" from earlier disciplinary regimes.

15 In Chapter 9, media theorists and workplace researchers Melissa Gregg
16 and Thomas Lodato attempt one of the first-ever, all-encompassing empir-
17 ical studies of co-working spaces in the US and worldwide. These are
18 places that not only sell workspaces and facilities but also community and
19 conviviality to the "solopreneurs" of post-financial-crisis embattled eco-
20 nomies. The authors' observations circle in on the role of community
21 managers – often self-employed, untrained, job-sharing individuals who
22 run those spaces, providing everything from concierge and clerk services
23 to network culture match-making, inspiration and emotional support for
24 members – a tech-inflected "infrastructure of care and guidance". The
25 diffuse task profile of the position is often matched by the precarious situ-
26 ations and patchwork characters of the occupants' biographies. A new
27 guise of affective labor emerges, albeit with resonances to earlier, gen-
28 dered types of office-based carework such as, classically, the secretary of
29 the Fordist corporation. It turns out that the affects that are so priced as
30 the atmospheric backbone of these informal workspaces need to be con-
31 stantly fueled by the labor and commitment of these novel *affect agents* of
32 network sociality, often in arrangements whose exploitative nature is
33 barely covered by a veneer of mandated cheerfulness, energy and
34 optimism. In a writing style that might be dubbed *tech melancholia*, Gregg
35 and Lodato mediate on the sometimes sad, sometimes hopeful realities of
36 affective labor at the current margins of professional work.

37 Sociologist and affect theorist Robert Seyfert (Chapter 10) ventures
38 into the realm of algorithmic trading with his case study on "Automation
39 and affect". Drawing on his own fieldwork, Seyfert focuses on the inten-
40 sive, multimodal and "symbiotic" nature of close-knit human-machine
41 relations in the domain of high-frequency trading (HFT). One of his find-
42 ings is that, contrary to what one might expect from "automated" trading
43 systems, the higher degree of technological sophistication in HFT environ-
44 ments does not come with fewer but with more forms of affective involve-
45 ment. Paramount in these domains are the intimate *bonds* between

humans and machines. This type of automation intensifies affective relationality and thus the level of engagement and absorption on the part of traders, and this is vital for the functioning of these systems. Seyfert points out that this has important consequences for the types of subjects that emerge on the digital trading floor. Steeped in cyborg-like symbiotic relationships to their machinic environment, these subjects are not reflectively *operating* the algorithmic trading systems but turn *themselves* into components of the systemic set-up. Accordingly, the subjectification at issue is not a matter of disciplining independent individuals, but a matter of *de-subjectifying* them so as to engender a more encompassing absorption – symbiosis – with the digital infrastructures on the trading floors. Inextricable from this are changes to patterns of attention, bio-physiological body types, aural regimes and pharmacological inclinations, as compared to earlier generations of stock market personnel, potentially with far-reaching consequences for habits of perception, reflection and decision-making. Seyfert's study, while exploring a novel type of human–machine affective relationality, also leads us to the final topic of this collection: the relationship between affect and media.

Affect and media

As a phenomenon of *relationality* – which here means, among other things, the dynamic *transmission* of impulses, energies, forms and expressions – affect displays an obvious proximity to media and processes of mediation. Historically, it can be shown that forms of inquiry into affective phenomena have long had an affinity to ideas of mediation, sometimes at the border between the ordinary (empathy, emotional contagion, atmospheres) and the occult (hypnosis, telepathy, séances with the dead or distant, and so on). Early forays into telecommunication and broadcasting technologies had fired up the scholarly imagination at the intersection of what would only later turn into the separate disciplines of sociology, psychology and communication and media theory (cf. Blackman 2012).

Resonating with these early trends, the renewed cultural turn to affect in the past 20 years is inextricable from changes to prevalent media regimes in digitized network societies. Affect – particularly when it is understood in terms of pre-personal intensities and relational dynamics – is congenial to a media landscape dominated by ultra-fast, often subliminal, stimulation, by constant multi-modal affecting through ambient technologies and ubiquitous computing, and to the increasing density of multiple media practices, technologies, forms and formats in tangles of transmediality (Chow 2012). The pre-personal, non-categorical and relational understanding of affect that is discussed in cultural affect theory fits this post-Gutenberg-Galaxy media landscape, but thus far, the broader implications of this media-invoked reformatting of subjectivity are not very well-understood. Given this, it is an important task for contemporary affect

1 studies to refine its command of media analyses. Studies of the co-
2 evolution of affective relationality and changing media practices, ambient
3 technologies and regimes of media use in various sites of public and
4 private life are urgently needed. The contributions to Part IV explore
5 aspects of this co-evolutionary entanglement between affects, subjectivity
6 and media by focusing on transformed and complexified milieus of
7 subject formation. Not coincidentally, they also bring into view aspects of
8 a profoundly transformed *public sphere* in an age of ubiquitous mediation
9 and in increasingly fragmented, dispersed and participatory media
10 landscapes.

11 There is no contemporary scholar better suited to be a guide for these
12 debates than Lisa Blackman, cultural theorist and “postdisciplinary” media
13 historian at Goldsmiths University. Blackman is acclaimed not least for her
14 comprehensive historical discussion of the early entanglements between
15 notions of affect and mediation, which links work on early sociology,
16 psychoanalysis and crowd psychology with debates on hypnotic suggestion
17 and paranormal phenomena (Blackman 2012). In Chapter 11, “Affect and
18 mediation,” Blackman charts a tableau of vital issues at the intersection of
19 media and subject theory from a present-day viewpoint. Her main points
20 of interest are the emergence of social media and dispersed, increasingly
21 user-driven, media environments characterized by the imbrication of
22 different media formats and practices (transmediation). An important
23 part of her survey is devoted to illustrating how the new media landscape
24 overlays different temporalities in a register of performativity, involving
25 users (“prosumers”) at a level of affect and agency rather than representa-
26 tion, co-shaping mediated events through forms of re- and premediation
27 while manifesting spectral versions of the past at the margins of the
28 dominant frames of presentation. In a more critical vein, Blackman
29 expresses skepticism not only with regard to ahistorical, psychobiology-
30 informed conceptions of affect but also with regard to work on media
31 practices forgetful of the complex histories of discussions on mediation,
32 transmission and relationality.

33 Complementing Blackman’s perspective Chapter 12, by German media
34 theorist and affect-studies-pioneer Marie-Luise Angerer, discusses transfor-
35 mations in embodied subjectivities in times of intensified human–machine
36 couplings, socio-technical hybrids and affective computing. Angerer
37 adopts a rigorously ecological perspective on both affect and media, an
38 optic that is well-suited to grasping technological transformations to the
39 background dimension of contemporary lifeworlds and interactive prac-
40 tices. Crossing an influential line of critical feminist work on human-
41 technology imbrications – from Donna Haraway, Sadie Plant and Patricia
42 Clough – with her own innovative approach to media ecology, Angerer
43 inflects recent developments in digital consumer technologies with their
44 pop-cultural uptake (e.g., recent movies centered on human-form AI
45 systems, such as Spike Jonze’s *Her*). Suggestively entitled “Intensive

bondage,” the chapter explores ways in which human actors come to find themselves bonded affectively to a growing panoply of “technological others” – digital assistants, control systems, network infrastructures – thereby forming intensive milieus. Particular emphasis is put on how the evolving algorithms of affective computing close-in ever more intimately on user subjectivities, signaling the dawn of a new age of biomediated bodies and psycho-cybernetic assemblages. Angerer’s text might be read as a plea to scholars of affect to update their perspective on affect and media so as to better understand today’s unprecedented degree of entanglement between subjectivity, milieu and digital technologies.

The final contribution in Chapter 13, by Berlin-based film scholars Nazlı Kilerci and Hauke Lehmann, marks a change of register which is still focused on the affective workings of contemporary media. The authors undertake a detailed case study of affect-poetic forms employed in recent Turkish-German cinema. By way of a close analysis of film sequences, it explores the role of affect in conceptualizing the link between political dimensions and the realm of audiovisual images. Inspired by the work of political philosophers Nancy and Rancière, Kilerci and Lehmann oppose the framework of identity politics. As an alternative, they conceptualize the political in terms of the conditions and conflicts that constitute a community, focusing on a dimension of the cinematic image in which aesthetic forms and modalities of perception provide the conditions for the description of commonly shared worlds. The text lays out building blocks for an approach that looks to concepts of affective experience and generic relationality in order to conceptualize the political relevance of cinematic images in a new way. Thereby, the authors locate the political significance of genre films on a deeper and more specifically affective level. In an exemplary fashion, this closing chapter demonstrates how an affect analytic perspective can approach contemporary art forms with a high degree of formal sophistication without losing touch with the wider contexts and conditions of art production and reception.

Outlook

Besides addressing their specific research questions, several of the contributions also assess the potentials, prospects and future pathways of affect studies more broadly. For more than two decades affect has been a productive, albeit contested, field of inter- and transdisciplinary inquiry. It is time to probe into *affect’s future*. It is our conviction that the best way to do this is by conducting case studies that not only ignite a focused reflection on the state of the field, but also showcase the fascination of affect, affective dynamics and affective arrangements as an inspiring and productive field of research.

To conclude this introduction, we want to point to one dimension of the topic that strikes us as particularly relevant and pressing for future

work. This concerns the specifically *political* character of relational affect. As several contributions to this volume elaborate, affect is a collectivizing force as it lets individuals coalesce into groups or “affective communities,” often on the grounds of interactive practices and relational dynamics that initially elude conceptualization. “Affective communities” are often extremely heterogenous, made up by persons stemming from different social, ethnic, national or religious groups. These different actors are united not by a unitary orientation, but by a set of partially shared experiences, practices and concerns. We conceptualize “affective communities” as complementary to Barbara Rosenwein’s’ notion of “emotional communities”. Rosenwein (2002) coined this term to describe groups of people who are united by a set of shared feeling rules or codes, that is, by a single predominant and normatively regulated way of labeling, expressing, controlling and evaluating feelings. Members of an emotional community are socialized into the same feeling systems, they know and master the same emotion repertoires. In contrast to emotional communities, which form around particular social and historical emotional regimes (Reddy 2001) and gain a certain stability over time, affective communities do not depend on shared feeling rules and emotion repertoires. On the contrary, as several chapters in this volume illustrate, affective communities emerge through experiences, practices and concerns that may cross-cut social, cultural, ethnic, religious and gendered differences. That is, affective practices and affective arrangements are capable of uniting actors into novel collective formations, if only transiently. Thereby, affectivity has the power to divide even close-knit social entities, such as families, for instance when family members are engaged in different social fields and thus come to be immersed within different affective arrangements, as is often the case in immigrant families. This may stir up tension and cause conflict, but may also contain the seeds for sustained social change. Here lies an important issue for future work on affect, namely to assess whether (and how) the emergence of affective communities out of shared experiences, practices and concerns facilitates not only the transformation of established social differences and boundaries but also the creation of new emotion repertoires and thus, in the long run, new emotional communities. Part of the promise of affect lies in its power to transcend and reshape conventional social and emotional orders and thus to alter societies.

Notes

- 1 An important but somewhat under-credited figure in this trend is Lawrence Grossberg. See, for instance, Grossberg (1992) and his highly informative interview with the editors of the *Affect Theory Reader* (Gregg and Seigworth 2010, pp. 309–338).
- 2 This metaphysical background is complex and multi-faceted. It includes the choice of a process-ontological instead of a substance-ontological framework.

- See Seyfert (2012) for a concise explication of the theoretical core of affect studies. Schaefer (2015) likewise provides a balanced theoretical and genealogical reconstruction.
- 3 Dorothy Kwek (2015) has elucidated Spinoza's conception of power as the capacity to affect and be affected (cf. Spinoza 1985). Kwek emphasises the aspect of receptivity or sensitivity (*being affected*), so that it becomes clear that the potentialities of bodies – in the sense of power (*potentia*) – at issue always include their agentive and their receptive capacities, respectively. See also Balibar (1997) and Gatens and Lloyd (1999) and especially the Deleuze branch in the Spinoza reception, for instance Deleuze (1988; 1990).
- 4 In sociology, symbolic interactionist approaches (e.g., Katz 2001; Collins 2004) stress the social situatedness of emotions, while work in social psychology takes emotions to be configurations of social relationships (Parkinson, Fischer and Manstead 2005). Christian von Scheve (2017) recently provided a discussion of these and related constructivist approaches vis-à-vis cultural affect studies. Other social relational accounts of affect/emotion of recent date are Burkitt (2014) and Wetherell (2012).
- 5 See for example the critique of Lutz (2017, p. 187) in Michael Hardt's (2007, ix) introductory statement to the volume *The Affective Turn* (Clough and Halley 2007).
- 6 See Pedwell (2014) for a convincing approach to affective relations that resonates in several respects with the one developed here.
- 7 The term "transmigrant" was introduced by Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc (1995, p. 48) in reference to "immigrants whose daily lives depend on multiple and constant interconnections across international borders and whose public identities are configured in relationship to more than one nation-state."

References

- Ahmed S 2007, "A Phenomenology of Whiteness", *Feminist Theory*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 149–168.
- Ahmed, S 2010, *The Promise of Happiness*, Duke University Press, Durham.
- Anderson, B 2014, *Encountering Affect: Capacities, Apparatuses, Conditions*, Ashgate, Farnham.
- Angerer, ML 2017, *Ecology of Affect*, meson press, Lüneburg.
- Bal, M 2002, *Traveling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- Balibar, E 1997, *Spinoza: From Individuality to Transindividuality*, Eburon, Rijnsburg.
- Barad, K 2007, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, Duke University Press, Durham.
- Bennett, J 2010, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, Duke University Press, Durham.
- Berg, U and Ramos-Zayas, AY 2015, "Racializing Affect: A Theoretical Proposition", *Current Anthropology*, vol. 56 no. 5, pp. 654–677.
- Berlant, L 2008, *The Female Complaint: The Unfinished Business of Sentimentality in American Culture*, Duke University Press, Durham.
- Berlant, L 2012, *Cruel Optimism*, Duke University Press, Durham.
- Blackman, L 2012, *Immaterial bodies: Affect, Embodiment, Mediation*, Sage, London.
- Boltanski, L and Chiapello, E 2007, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, Verso, New York.
- Bowen, GA 2006, "Grounded Theory and Sensitizing Concepts", *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 12–23.

- 1 Brinkema, E 2014, *The Forms of the Affects*, Duke University Press, Durham.
- 2 Buchanan, I 2015, "Assemblage Theory and Its Discontents", *Deleuze Studies*, vol. 9,
- 3 no. 3, pp. 382–392.
- 4 Burkitt, I 2014, *Emotions and Social Relations*, Sage, London
- 5 Butler, J 1997, *The Psychic Life of Power*, Stanford University Press, Stanford.
- 6 Butler, J 2009, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* Verso, London.
- 7 Cepernich, C 2016, "Emotion in Politics", in *The International Encyclopedia of Political*
- 8 *Communication*, 4 January. Available from DOI: 10.1002/9781118541555.
- 9 wbiepc238
- 10 Chow, R 2012, *Entanglements, or Transmedial Thinking about Capture*, Duke University
- 11 Press, Durham.
- 12 Clough, PT and Halley, J (eds) 2007, *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*, Duke
- 13 University Press, Durham.
- 14 Code, L 1991, *What Can She Know? Feminist Theory and Construction of Knowledge*,
- 15 Cornell University Press, Ithaca.
- 16 Collins, R 2004, *Interaction Ritual Chains*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- 17 Colombetti, G and Krueger, J 2015, "Scaffoldings of the Affective Mind", *Philosophical*
- 18 *Psychology*, vol. 28, no. 8, pp. 1157–1176.
- 19 Colombetti, G and Thompson, E 2008, "The Feeling Body: Toward an Enactive
- 20 Approach to Emotion" in WF Overton, U Mueller and JL Newman, (eds),
- 21 *Developmental perspectives on embodiment and consciousness*, pp. 45–68. Lawrence
- 22 Erlbaum, New York.
- 23 Conradson, D and McKay, D 2007, "Translocal Subjectivities: Mobility, Connec-
- 24 tion, Emotion", *Mobilities*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 167–174.
- 25 Coole, D and Frost, S 2010, *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*, Duke
- 26 University Press, Durham.
- 27 Cvetkovitch, A 2012, *Depression: A Public Feeling*, Duke University Press, Durham.
- 28 De Sousa, R 1987, *The Rationality of Emotion*, The MIT Press, Cambridge MA.
- 29 DeLanda, M 2006, *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity*,
- 30 Continuum, London.
- 31 Deleuze, G 1988 [1981], *Spinoza: Practical philosophy*, trans. by R Hurley, City Lights
- 32 Books, San Francisco.
- 33 Deleuze, G 1990 [1968], *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. by M Joughin,
- 34 Zone Books, New York.
- 35 Deleuze, G and Guattari, F 1986 [1972], *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*, trans. by
- 36 D Polan, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.
- 37 Deleuze, G and Guattari, F 1987 [1980], *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. by B Massumi,
- 38 University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.
- 39 Di Leonardo, M 1987, "The Female World of Cards and Holidays: Women,
- 40 Families, and the Work of Kinship", *Signs*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 440–453.
- 41 Di Paolo, E 2009, "Extended Life", *Topoi*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 9–21.
- 42 Foucault, M 1980 [1977], "The Confession of the Flesh" in C Gordon, (ed.), *Power/*
- 43 *Knowledge. Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, pp. 194–228. Pantheon
- 44 Books, New York.
- 45 Foucault, M 1995 [raiser 1975], *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans.
- by A Sheridan, Vintage, New York.
- Fricke, M 2007, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*, Oxford Univer-
- sity Press, Oxford.

- 1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
- Frøese, T and Fuchs, T 2012, "The Extended Body: A Case Study in the Neurophenomenology of Social Interaction", *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 205–235.
- Fuchs, T and Koch, SM 2014, "Embodied Affectivity: On Moving and Being Moved", *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 5, no. 508. Available from DOI 10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00508.
- Gammerl, B 2012, "Emotional Styles – Concepts and Challenges", *Rethinking History*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 161–175.
- Gatens, M and Lloyd, G 1999, *Collective Imaginings: Spinoza, Past and Present*, Routledge, London/New York.
- Glick Schiller, N 2005, "Transnational Social Fields and Imperialism: Bringing a Theory of Power to Transnational Studies", *Anthropological Theory*, vol. 5, no. 4, pp. 439–461.
- Glick Schiller, N, Basch, L, Szanton Blanc, C 1995, "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration", *Anthropological Quarterly*, vol. 68, no. 1, pp. 48–63.
- Goodwin, J, Jasper, JM and Polletta, F 2001, *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Gould, D 2009, *Moving Politics. Emotion and ACT UP's Fight Against AIDS*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Granovetter, M 1985, "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness", *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 91, no. 3, pp. 481–510.
- Gregg, M 2006, *Cultural Studies' Affective Voices*, Palgrave, Basingstoke.
- Gregg, M 2011, *Work's Intimacy*, Polity, Cambridge.
- Gregg, M and Seigworth, GJ (eds) 2010, *The Affect Theory Reader*, Duke University Press, Durham.
- Griffiths, PE and Scarantino, A 2009, "Emotions in the Wild" in P Robbins and M Aydede, (eds), *The Cambridge Handbook of Situated Cognition*, pp. 437–453. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Grossberg, L 1992, *We Gotta Get Out of this Place: Popular Conservatism and Postmodern Culture*, Routledge, New York.
- Hardt, M 2007, "Foreword: What Affects are Good for" in PT Clough and J Halley, (eds), *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*, pp. ix–xiii. Duke University Press, Durham.
- Hemmings, C 2005, "Invoking Affect: Cultural Theory and the Ontological Turn", *Cultural Studies*, vol. 19, no. 5, pp. 548–567.
- Hochschild, AR 1979, "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure", *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 85, no. 3, pp. 551–575.
- Hutchins, E 1995, *Cognition in the Wild*, MIT Press, Cambridge MA.
- Katz J 2001, *How Emotions Work*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Koch, SC, Müller, SM, Schroer, A, Thimm, C, Kruse, L and Zumbach, J 2005, "Gender at Work: Eavesdropping on Communication Patterns in Two Token Teams" in L Anolli, S Duncan Jr, MS Magnusson and G Riva (eds), *The Hidden Structure of Interaction: From Neurons to Culture Patterns*, pp. 265–281. IOS Press, Amsterdam.
- Krueger, J and Szanto, T 2016, "Extended Emotions" *Philosophy Compass*, vol. 11, no. 12, pp. 863–878.
- Kwek, D 2015, "Power and the multitude: A Spinozist view", *Political Theory*, vol. 43, no. 2, pp. 155–184.

- 1 Latour, B 2005, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*,
 2 Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York.
- 3 Levitt, P and Glick Schiller, N 2004, "Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Trans-
 4 national Social Field Perspective on Society", *International Migration Review*, vol.
 5 38, no. 3, pp. 1002–1039.
- 6 Leys, R 2011, "The Turn to Affect: A Critique", *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 37, no. 3,
 7 pp. 434–472.
- 8 Liu, A 2004, *The Laws of Cool. Knowledge Work and the Culture of Information*, Univer-
 9 sity of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- 10 Lutz, C 2017, "What Matters", *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 181–191.
- 11 Mackenzie, C and Stoljar, N (eds) 2000, *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on*
 12 *Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self*, Oxford University Press, New York and
 13 Oxford.
- 14 Martin, E 2013, "The Potentiality of Ethnography and the Limits of Affect Theory",
 15 *Current Anthropology*, vol. 54, pp. 149–58.
- 16 Massey, DB 2005, *For Space*, Sage Publications, London.
- 17 Massumi, B 1995, "The Autonomy of Affect", *Cultural Critique*, vol. 31, no. 2,
 18 pp. 83–109.
- 19 Massumi, B 2002, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*, Duke University
 20 Press, Durham.
- 21 McKay, D and Brady, C 2005, "Practices of Place-Making: Globalisation and Local-
 22 ity in the Philippines", *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, vol. 46, no. 2, pp. 89–103.
- 23 Ngai, S 2005, *Ugly Feelings*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA.
- 24 Palmer, T 2017, "'What Feels More than Feeling?' Theorizing the Unthinkability
 25 of Black Affect", *Critical Ethnic Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 31–56.
- 26 Papoulias, C and Callard, F 2010, "Biology's Gift: Interrogating the Turn to Affect",
 27 *Body & Society*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 29–56.
- 28 Parkinson, B, Fischer, AH and Manstead, ASR 2005, *Emotion in Social Relations: Cul-*
 29 *tural, Group, and Interpersonal Processes*, Psychology Press, New York.
- 30 Pedwell, C 2014, *Affective Relations: The Transnational Politics of Empathy*, Palgrave
 31 Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- 32 Protevi, J 2009, *Political affect: Connecting the Social and the Somatic*, University of
 33 Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.
- 34 Protevi, J 2013, *Life, War, Earth*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.
- 35 Reckwitz, A 2012, "Affective Spaces: A Praxeological Outlook", *Rethinking History.*
 36 *The Journal of Theory and Practice* 16(2), pp. 241–258.
- 37 Reddy, WM 2001, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotion*,
 38 Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- 39 Rosenwein, B 2002, "Worrying about Emotions in History", *American Historical*
 40 *Review* 107, pp. 821–845.
- 41 Rouse, J. 2006, "Practice Theories", in DM Gabbay, P Thagard and J Woods, (eds),
 42 *Handbook of Philosophy and Social Science*, vol. 15, pp. 500–540. Elsevier, Cam-
 43 bridge MA.
- 44 Schaefer, DO 2015, *Religious Affects: Animality, Evolution, and Power*, Duke University
 45 Press, Durham.
- Scheer, M 2012, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?", *History and Theory*, vol. 51,
 pp. 193–220.
- Seyfert, R 2012, "Beyond Personal Feelings and Collective Emotions: Toward a
 Theory of Social Affect", *Theory, Culture & Society*, vol. 29, no. 6, pp. 27–46.

28 Jan Slaby and Birgitt Röttger-Rössler

- Slaby, J 2014, "Emotions and the Extended Mind", in M Salmela and C von Scheve, C, (eds), *Collective Emotions*, pp. 32–46. Oxford University Press, Oxford. 1
- Slaby, J 2016, "Mind Invasion: Situated Affectivity and the Corporate Life Hack", *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 7, no. 266, Available from DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00266. 2
- Slaby, J, Mühlhoff, R and Wüschner, P 2017, "Affective Arrangements", *Emotion Review*, 20 October. Available from DOI: 10.1177/1754073917722214. 3
- Slaby, J and von Scheve, C, *Affective Societies: Key Concepts*, New York, Routledge (forthcoming). 4
- Spinoza, B 1985 [1677], *Ethics*, ed. and trans. by E Curley, *The Collected Works of Spinoza*, vol. 2, Princeton University Press, Princeton. 5
- Stephan, A, Wilutzky, W and Walter, S 2014, "Emotions Beyond Brain and Body", *Philosophical Psychology*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 65–81. 6
- Stewart, K 2007, *Ordinary Affects*, Duke University Press, Durham. 7
- Svašek, M 2012, *Emotions and Human Mobility. Ethnographies of Movement*, Routledge, London. 8
- Thompson, E and Stapleton, M 2009, "Making Sense of Sense-Making: Reflections on Enactive and Extended Mind Theories", *Topoi*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 23–30. 9
- von Scheve, C 2017, "A Social-Relational Account of Affect", *European Journal of Social Theory*, 26 January. Available from DOI: 10.1177/1368431017690007. 10
- Wetherell, M 2012, *Affect and Emotion: A New Social Science Understanding*, Sage, London. 11
- White, D 2017, "Affect: An Introduction", *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 175–180. 12
- Wise, A and Chapman, A 2005, "Introduction: Migration and the Senses", *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 26, no. 1–2, pp. 1–3. 13

Taylor & Francis
Not for distribution