



HUMAN FEELINGS IN TIME: TOWARDS THE HISTORY AND HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGY OF EMOTIONS

Ljudska osećanja u vremenu: ka istoriji i istorijskoj sociologiji emocija

ABSTRACT: *The social and historical study of human emotions has undergone substantial theoretical and empirical development over the past several decades, yet its implications for mainstream historical and sociological scholarship remain insufficiently recognized. This paper examines the field of the history of emotions through several of its most influential classical and contemporary contributions. It begins with the foundational work of Johan Huizinga and Lucien Febvre, whose insights established the legitimacy of emotional life as a subject of historical inquiry. Particular attention is then devoted to the historical sociology of Norbert Elias, whose account of the civilizing process remains the most systematic macrosociological framework for understanding the long-term transformation of emotional standards and their structural determinants. The paper also analyzes the theoretical framework developed by Peter Stearns, especially his concept of emotionology, alongside Barbara Rosenwein's subsequent revisions through the concept of emotional communities, assessing the analytical strengths and limitations of both approaches. Drawing on recent scholarship, the paper identifies current theoretical frontiers in the field, and argues that a more rigorously emotion-informed perspective is essential for any adequate account of human social life across time.*

KEYWORDS: *history of emotions, historical sociology of emotions, the civilizing process, emotionology, emotional communities*

APSTRAKT: *Društveno i istorijsko proučavanje ljudskih emocija obeležio je značajan teorijski i empirijski razvoj tokom poslednjih nekoliko decenija, ali su implikacije tog proučavanja za osnovna istorijska i sociološka istraživanja i dalje nedovoljno prepoznate. Ovaj rad istražuje disciplinu istorije emocija kroz analizu*

nekoliko uticajnih klasičnih i savremenih doprinosa. Počinje sa utemeljujućim radovima Johana Hojzinge i Lisjena Fevra, čiji su uvidi ustanovili legitimnost emocionalnog života kao predmeta istorijskog istraživanja. Zatim, posebna pažnja je posvećena istorijskoj sociologiji Norberta Elijasa, čiji opis procesa civilizovanja ostaje najsistematičniji makrosociološki okvir za razumevanje dugoročne transformacije emocionalnih standarda i njihovih strukturnih determinanti. Rad takođe analizira teorijski okvir koji je razvio Piter Sterns, posebno njegov koncept emociologije, kao i naknadne revizije Barbare Rozenvajn kroz koncept emocionalnih zajednica, procenjujući analitičke prednosti i ograničenja oba pristupa. Oslanjajući se na recentna istraživanja, rad identifikuje i aktuelne teorijske proboje u ovoj oblasti, te argumentuje da je za svako adekvatno razumevanje društvenog života kroz vreme neophodna i perspektiva koja je značajnije zasnovana na ljudskim emocijama.

KLJUČNE REČI: *istorija emocija, istorijska sociologija emocija, proces civilizovanja, emociologija, emocionalne zajednice*

Introduction: Emotions in Science and History

It is hard to think of any significant aspect of the past that did not involve emotions (...) The beat of history is kept by the pulse of the human heart. (Dixon, 2023: 1)

Human emotions occupy an ambiguous and analytically contested position within the human sciences. Throughout much of the twentieth century, they were treated primarily as biological invariants: universal, ahistorical, presocial, and therefore epiphenomenal with respect to the structural and institutional processes that constituted the primary objects of historical and sociological inquiry (Reddy, 2001; Rosenwein, 2002; Turner and Stets, 2005; Leys, 2011; Kišjuhas, 2025). From the pioneering work of Darwin (Darwin, 1872/1989) to the influential research of Ekman (e.g. Ekman, Sorenson and Friesen, 1969), emotions and their expression were understood as genetically innate bodily reactions shaped by natural selection. Their function was to adjust the physiological, mental, and behavioral patterns of an organism in ways that increase its adaptive responses to various threats and opportunities (Panksepp, 1982; Nesse, 1990). In that sense, “the past explains the present”, but it is the human (and non-human) long *natural* history that matters the most (Tooby and Cosmides, 1990). Scholarship on emotions has also been burdened by a kind of psychological “imperialism”, or by the claims that emotions are “above all psychological categories” (Lazarus, 1991: 3) and “first and foremost a psychological phenomenon” (Kagan, 2007: 1).

At the same time, with the rise of behaviorism in the 1920s, and cognitivism in the 1950s as well, emotions were frequently viewed as irrational, overly subjective, “elusive”, or at least inaccessible to rigorous scientific analysis (TenHouten, 2007). The notion of emotions as “passions” or physical disturbances was also a perspective with a (far too) long philosophical tradition in the history

of Western thought (Dixon, 2012; Kišjuhas, 2018). Related to this, and despite numerous studies in the field of social and cultural history, history as a discipline “has never quite lost its attraction to hard, rational things” (Rosenwein, 2002: 821). Emotional episodes thus appeared in historical and sociological accounts principally as contextual colour or decoration rather than as analytically significant variables: the rage of a king, the affect of a crowd, the sentiment of a political movement, the grief of a bereaved community, etc. With notable precursors and/or exceptions (see Reddy, 2009: 302–303; Boddice, 2018: 11–26), the systematic investigation of how emotions are themselves (re)produced and transformed by historically specific social arrangements was largely absent from disciplinary agendas.

However, over the past several decades, this situation has changed substantially, especially in the field of history of emotions (see Stearns, 2001, 2008; Reddy, 2009; Wierzbicka, 2010; Matt, 2011; Plamper, 2012/2015; Stearns and Matt, 2014; Rosenwein, 2016a; Boddice, 2018; Rosenwein and Cristiani, 2018; Firth-Godbehere, 2021; Barclay, 2021; Dixon, 2023). As early as 1985, Carol and Peter Stearns (who also founded the *Journal of Social History* in 1967) argued that the history of emotions should become a territory of research in its own right (Stearns and Stearns, 1985). The inaugural address of a leading medievalist Caroline Bynum, when elected as president of American Historical Association in 1997, made particular reference to the changes in forms of emotionality between medieval and modern Europe (Bynum, 1997). Today it is argued that there is “the general turn to affect” among historians (Leys, 2011: 434) and that “history departments around the world appear to have taken the ‘emotional turn’” (Boddice, 2018: 1).

Furthermore, an interdisciplinary scholarship spanning social history, historical sociology, anthropology of emotions, and the cognitive science of affect has converged on the proposition that emotional experience is not simply a biological given but is constituted through cultural norms, social structures, linguistic conventions, and historical processes in meaningful and empirically tractable ways (Lutz and White, 1986; Thoits, 1989; Damasio, 1994; Reddy, 1997, 2001; Newton, 1998; Elster, 1999; Rosenwein, 2002, 2016a; Duncan and Barrett, 2007; Scheer, 2012; Plamper, 2012/2015; Boddice, 2020; Boddice and Smith, 2020). With the rise of the neurosciences, there were calls for formation of a “neurosociology (of emotions)” (Franks and Smith, 1999; Franks, 2007) and “neurohistory” (Smail, 2008; for the neuroscience of emotions see Panksepp, 1998). This convergence does not require the rejection of biological accounts of emotions, although it insists that biological capacities are always actualized through socially and historically specific forms. The implication is that the emotional life of past actors also cannot be adequately understood by projecting contemporary psychological frameworks backward in time, and that the transformation of emotional standards is itself a phenomenon requiring explanation in structural and historical terms.

In this regard, the term “emotions” appears in the *Oxford English Dictionary* relatively late, only in 1580, after terms such as “self”, “affects”, and “consciousness”

had lost their negative connotation, and individual experience had become a subject worthy of the attention of science, the public, or society as a whole (Franks, 2001; Kišjuhas, 2025). Therefore, the practice of grouping different emotional experiences (anger, love, grief, shame, etc.) within the framework of a single and discrete mental phenomenon is relatively recent. Accordingly, historical research points to fundamental transformations in emotional standards in the early modern period, that is, in the centuries after 1500, and particularly in the 17th and 18th centuries (Stearns, 2008: 23). In classical antiquity, the much narrower term “passions” was most commonly used for human emotions, deriving from the term *pathos*, which is associated with suffering or with mental events that (passively) overwhelm the individual. Thus, it was only the broader term “emotions” that, in the French language of the 16th century (*émouvoir*), with origins in the Latin word for “movement” or “migration” (*ex + movere*, “to move out” or “from without”), implied that emotions mentally or psychically move people toward a certain action (Kišjuhas, 2025: 25).

On the other hand, human emotions have always been a popular motif in various texts, myths, and narratives, from the very beginnings of civilization or the discovery of writing (Oatley, 2004). In the *Epic of Gilgamesh* we read of the negative emotions of the goddess Inanna provoked by Gilgamesh’s refusal of sexual intercourse with her (Oatley, 2004: 6). In texts from the Egyptian Middle Kingdom, there are songs about “a dispute between a man and his *Ba* (soul)” that witness to negative emotions such as grief and loneliness. In the Hebrew myths that became the Old Testament, emotions were the first thing to occur after the very creation of the world, since God *felt satisfied* with his creation (“and God saw that it was good”, Gen. 1:10). Likewise, Eve and Adam, shortly after eating from the tree of knowledge, *felt shame* because they were naked (Gen. 3: 7-10) (Oatley, 2004: 7; Kišjuhas, 2025: 26).

Furthermore, the first line of Homer’s *Iliad* has the poet calling upon the muse to speak to him of Achilles’ emotions of anger or rage (“Rage – Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus’ son Achilles”). Therefore, it can be said that a negative emotion (anger or rage) was “the first word of Western literature” (Engelen, 2009: 395). Various love stories are the most common narratives worldwide, followed by those concerning warlike intentions, aggression etc. (Oatley, 2004: 9). The proto-scientific consideration of human emotions in history can likely be traced back to Thucydides and *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, in which he addresses Athenian courage (as the disposition to fight despite feeling fear), law-abiding behavior (due to feelings of shame), and the concept of happiness (“Happiness depends on being free”, as said by Pericles) (see Boddice, 2018: 11–14).

The research field of the history of emotions today rests on two key assumptions. First, historians of emotions believe that emotions (rather than rational calculations) play a very important role in historical action and, second, that human emotions are subject to change in accordance with changes in the sociohistorical context (Stearns, 2001: 4466). The essence of the history of emotions resides in several “radical” claims: 1) emotions change over time (thus, emotions are as much the subject of historical inquiry as anything else),

2) emotions are not merely the effect of historical circumstances, but active causes of events, 3) emotions are at the centre of the history of the human being, considered a biocultural entity, 4) emotions are at the centre of the history of morality and human virtue (Boddice, 2018: 1–2).

The aim of this paper is to analyze the (socio)genesis and theoretical controversies of the history of emotions as a field, but also to demonstrate its significance for history and (historical) sociology in general. Despite its rich (pre) history, which will be discussed below, sustained scholarly attention to human feelings in history only emerges in the 21st century (Rosenwein, 2002; Leys, 2011; Boddice, 2018). We therefore argue for the relatively recent (yet rapidly expanding) field of inquiry or a long movement *towards* the history of emotions. Furthermore, alluding to the programmatic paper “Bringing Men Back In” by a sociologist George Homans (Homans, 1964), we aim to demonstrate that the time has come for bringing human emotions “back into” mainstream (and not merely specialized) historical and sociological scholarship as well, especially regarding the early considerations of emotions in these disciplines. In this manner, the paper traces the development of this scholarly project across several phases and its key practitioners (see Plamper, 2010), offering a kind of *history of the history of emotions*, while advancing the argument that both history and sociology require a more detailed attention to human emotions in their theory and research.

“Discovering” Emotions in History

Johan Huizinga’s *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (Huizinga, 1919/1955) represents one of the earliest systematic attempts in Western historiography to treat human emotions as a primary object of historical analysis (see also Arnade, Howell and van der Lem, 2019). His central argument was that the emotional life of 14th and 15th century France and the Low Countries was structurally distinct from modernity, marked by intense oscillations between many extreme and almost “childlike” states, and by the theatrical public expression of grief, joy, and terror (Huizinga, 1919/1955: 9–30). Human emotions were not simply features of individual psychology but collectively organized emotional performances shaped by the ceremonial and religious structures of late-medieval society.

For Huizinga, “all this general facility of emotions, of tears and spiritual upheavals, must be borne in mind in order to conceive fully how violent and high-strung was life at that period” (Huizinga, 1919/1955: 14). A particular role in the lives of medieval people were highly dramatized and extravagant rituals of mass grief and mourning (such as in the case of the death of a ruler), which are almost identical to Durkheim’s descriptions of the grief rituals of Australian hunter-gatherers (see Durkheim, 1912/1995: 403–405; on tears and weeping in the Middle Ages see also Gertsman, 2012). The function of this collective expression of emotions implied a collective fear of the instability of the soul and a peculiar horror of death. “The contrast between suffering and joy, between adversity and happiness, appeared more striking” and “all things in life were of a

proud or cruel publicity”, which produced “perpetual oscillation between despair and distracted joy, between cruelty and pious tenderness which characterize life in the Middle Ages” (Huizinga, 1919/1955: 9–10).

Several theoretical implications follow from Huizinga’s analysis, even if they were not made fully explicit. Most importantly, emotions are understood as culturally mediated rather than as natural expressions of interior states. For Huizinga, their form, intensity, and occasion are prescribed by shared conventions and enacted through public ritual (see also Kišjuhas, 2024). It also follows that emotional styles are taken to be historically variable: the volatility and expressive intensity Huizinga identified are not universal characteristics of human affective life but products of a specific historical configuration. Simply put, “in Huizinga’s Middle Ages there was a great deal of unrestrained weeping and anger” (Plamper, 2012/2015: 49), meaning that prevailing emotional culture functions as evidence of broader cultural and social organization. The emotional tenor of the later Middle Ages thus reflects and reinforces the symbolic structures of a world in which death, sin, and divine judgment were omnipresent social realities.

In this regard, Jean Delumeau in *Sin and Fear* also argued for a fundamental shift from the simple fear of bodily death to a more complex sets of fears built around sin, guilt, and the everlasting torment of the soul (Delumeau, 1990). This was made possible through a “pastoral of fear”, that is, a complex of sermons, religious literature, and macabre iconography that fostered a pessimistic and punitive outlook regarding earthly life. The gloomy sense of sin and human frailty then widened from the medieval monastic environment into general society. Between the 13th and 18th centuries, the Church was engaged in guilt-instilling efforts, systematically manufacturing anxiety about death, damnation, and bodily corruption as a tool of social discipline – structurally similar to contemporary manufacturers of “well-being” in the “happiness industry” analyzed by sociologists (Davies, 2015; Kišjuhas and Marinković, 2018).

Huizinga’s approach was not without limitations. Rosenwein directly attacks what she calls the “grand narrative” model as the assumption that medieval people were emotionally primitive, impulsive, and childlike (Rosenwein, 2002: 823), or that “Huizinga’s Middle Ages was the childhood of man” – a “fairy tale world” where feelings were sharper and unmediated in contrast to modernity (Rosenwein, 2006: 5). The tendency to treat the emotional character of an epoch as a unified collective psychology has been criticized for underestimating internal differentiation along lines of class, gender, region, and religious community (see Rosenwein, 2002: 844). His interpretive method, which relied primarily on literary and artistic sources, also raises questions about the representativeness of the emotional standards he reconstructed and about the relationship between normative expression and actual experience (see Arnade, Howell and van der Lem, 2019). Huizinga constructs a picture of emotional intensity that may be specific to an exceptional aristocratic context (court culture) and then generalizes it to the entire civilization of the later Middle Ages. Nevertheless, his work demonstrated that emotional phenomena could be subjected to rigorous

historical analysis, arguing that such analysis could illuminate aspects of the past that conventional historiography had overlooked.

Lucien Febvre's contribution to the history of emotions was more programmatic than Huizinga's, and its theoretical implications were correspondingly more far-reaching. In a lecture first delivered in 1938 and published in 1941 as *La sensibilité et l'histoire* ("Sensibility and History: How to Reconstitute the Emotional Life of the Past"), Febvre called explicitly for the development of what he termed a *histoire des sensibilités* (i.e., history of emotions) (Febvre, 1941). For him, the history of feelings or affective life (*la vie affective*) was part of a broader project of social history, namely the research into the "mentalities" of people from a given time (Stearns, 2008: 19; Dixon 2023: 5). That is, he called for a new field of historical inquiry: a systematic historical investigation of the affective and sensory life of past populations, grounded in attention to the historically specific physiological theories, religious frameworks, linguistic resources, and social conventions through which emotional experience was mediated. For these reasons, it can also be said that the historicization of emotions begins with "one solitary man: Lucien Febvre" (Plamper, 2012/2015: 40).

Febvre pointed out that historians already included emotions in their histories, but they did so in an unreflective and unhistorical manner, imposing their own contemporary conceptions of emotion on the past. He insisted that emotions are not automatic physiological responses to external stimuli, but historically specific expressions of cultural norms and social relations (Lang, 2018: 108). In this regard, Febvre "felt a deep antagonism towards psychological essentialism", and "spoke only to the *mentalité* of the present moment", since he understood that emotions "not only took place in social context, but also that they were formed and institutionalised in social contexts" (Boddice, 2018: 26). In this sense, the work of Roger Chartier is also important, as he moved away from the traditional "history of mentalities" approach to focus more on a social history of collective representations (or a cultural history of society) (see Chartier, 1989).

The reasons for his programmatic text were also strikingly sociohistorical: "When Febvre called for histories of emotions in 1941, he was recognizing something that, perhaps, only the Nazis could have brought home to a Frenchman: politics itself is not rational, not unemotional" (Rosenwein, 2002: 821–822). He believed it was important to study emotions because "emotional life is always ready to overflow the intellectual life" and because "the history of hate, the history of fear, the history of cruelty, the history of love" were not "idle chatter" – since this "idle chatter will tomorrow have turned the universe into a fetid pit of corpses" (Febvre, 1941: 19). In other words, by the 1930s, Febvre thought the time had come to take emotions seriously because "the emotions of the masses, stoked and harnessed for political purposes, seemed ready to destroy the world" (Lang, 2018: 108). After (re)reading Huizinga in the context of Nazi horrors, Febvre was actually calling for a moral history that would explain fascism and reveal the principles on which a more rational order could be constructed (Rosenwein, 2002: 823).

Febvre's programme rested on two key influential insights. The first was a constructionist view of emotional experience: what people feel is not determined solely by biological givens but is shaped by the conceptual and linguistic resources available to them (see also Shott, 1979; Harré, 1987: 5–10). For these reasons, it becomes possible to speak of historically formed emotions that are defined in accordance with the moral order of society. This view, now broadly accepted within the sociology and history of emotions (e.g., Reddy, 2001; Boddice, 2018), implied that the task of the historian was not to identify the universal emotion underlying a historical expression but to reconstruct the emotional vocabulary within which historical actors operated. In methodological terms, he proposed an expanded source base that moved beyond the literary and chronicle material which Huizinga had relied on, anticipating the interdisciplinary methodology that now characterizes the field (Dixon, 2023: 5; Plamper, 2012/2015).

The second Febvre's argument dealt with the social determination of emotional standards or "feeling rules" (see Hochschild, 1979). These are the norms governing what one ought to feel and how one should express feeling, implying that emotional displays are products of social institutions and arrangements, not of individual psychology alone. For Febvre, emotions are *not* "rigorously individual", "personal" and "momentary" but "imply relations between person and person, collective bonds" (Febvre, 1941: 7). Thus, emotions are irreducibly collective and socially contagious in character (see also Collins, 2004), which is the reason why emotional life is a legitimate and even necessary object of sociohistorical (rather than purely psychological) analysis. These are the reasons why *La sensibilité et l'histoire* is widely regarded as the founding programmatic text of the history of emotions as a scholarly field, and it remains the essential point of departure for any historical account of human feelings. Febvre urged his fellow historians to "plunge into the darkness of Psychology wrestling with History" and "rediscover a taste for exploration" (literally: "to find their appetite again") (Febvre, 1941: 5).

Together, Huizinga and Febvre planted the seeds of what would eventually grow into the history of emotions as a recognized field. This development indicates the broader intellectual context in which the systematic study of emotions in history began to take shape, namely the crisis of positivist historiography and the influence of the social sciences on historical method in the interwar period (see Plamper, 2012/2015: 49–59). Huizinga and Febvre were also interested in how different historical periods made different demands on the management of feeling, and how the emotional life of individuals was regulated by collective norms and institutions – thus anticipating the field of (historical) sociology of emotions (Hochschild, 1979, 1983/2003). In this respect, their concerns especially converged with those of Norbert Elias, whose *The Civilizing Process* appeared in the same year as Febvre's lecture (1939), though the two were developed independently (Elias, 1939/2000), as will be discussed below.

Emotions and the Civilizing Process

No theorist has contributed more to the historical sociology of emotions than Norbert Elias, whose monumental two-volume study *The Civilizing Process* remains the most ambitious and far-reaching account of the historical transformation of emotional conduct in Western Europe (Elias, 1939/2000). Written during his exile in England following the flight from Nazi Germany, and largely ignored for decades after its publication, it eventually received the recognition it deserved and became one of the most influential contributions to historical sociology of the 20th century (van Krieken, 1998; Mennell, 1998; Loyal and Quilley, 2004; Linklater and Mennell, 2010). It is also recognized as a “classic statement for the sociology of emotions” and a “lasting contribution to the sociology of emotions” (McCarthy, 1985: 320; see also Elias, 1939/2000: xviii; Newton, 1998).

Elias’s central thesis is that Western European societies underwent a systematic and structural transformation of behavioral and emotional standards between the late medieval period and the 18th century. Combining historical and sociological modes of analysis, and drawing on an extensive corpus of etiquette manuals, conduct books, and courtesy literature, he traced profound changes in the norms governing bodily and emotional conduct at the table, in the bedroom, in modes of address and gesture, and in the expression of aggression, shame, and sexual desire (Elias, 1939/2000: 52–182). This transformation, which he called the civilizing process, involved “the gradual transformation of behaviour and the emotions”, the “expanding threshold of repugnance” (Elias, 1939/2000: 71), and the progressive privatization of bodily and emotional functions that had previously been performed and expressed in public without apparent discomfort. Eating, defecation, sexual activity, violence, and the expression of strong emotions were all subject to increasing regulation, formalization, and concealment over this historical period. Some cognitive scientists also link this process to the (alleged) gradual decline in violence in world history (Pinker, 2011).

For Elias, as for Huizinga or Febvre, medieval gestures and movements were “embodiments of a different mental and emotional structure” (Elias, 1939/2000: 49). Since individuals in the Middle Ages “stood in a different relationship to one another than we do”, their emotional life “also had a different structure and character” (Elias, 1939/2000: 60). Modernity gradually gave rise to a new “invisible wall of affects between one human body and another”, grounded in feelings of “embarrassment at the mere sight of many bodily functions of others” or in the “feeling of shame when one’s own functions are exposed to the gaze of others” (Elias, 1939/2000: 60; for a sociological theory of shame and embarrassment, see Goffman, 1956; Scheff, 1988, 2000). In other words, “the civilizing process” also led to a transformation of human emotionality. As a result of this process, “emotions were no longer expressed violently, impulsively and directly. They became refined, subtle and varied. They began to have a history” (Rosenwein, 2016b: 9).

Elias's key theoretical innovation was the explanation of the causes or mechanisms through which this emotional and social transformation took place. Every particular characteristic that we attribute to "being civilized" was a product of a "particular structure of human relations" and of a "particular social structure" (Elias, 1939/2000: 52). His account of emotional change was embedded in a broader sociological theory of state formation and rising social interdependence (see also Newton, 1998: 62–63). In the medieval societies, social control of emotions was mild (Elias, 1939/2000: 91), which changed with the emergence of the absolutist state. "The civilizing process" was not simply a cultural development but was driven by structural changes in European society, above all the monopolization of state violence and the lengthening and densification of chains of social interdependence (Elias, 1939/2000: 257–276). Thus, it was not the result of rational deliberation, individual improvement or moral progress, but an unintended consequence of structural changes in social organization, such as the changing class structure, changes in the forms of authority, and the historical break-up of isolated regions and communities (McCarthy, 1985: 323).

The individuals Elias spoke of (at first) were "the elite, the warriors, men used to bloodshed and plundering" and "without a state to restrain them, they could do whatever their impulses led them to do" (Rosenwein, 2002: 826). The one exception was at the courts of the greatest lords, where more peaceful forms of conduct became obligatory. Thus, Elias especially focuses on how the late-medieval warrior aristocracies were gradually subordinated to the courts of absolutist monarchs from the 16th century onwards. In this process, the conditions that had made spontaneous emotional expression and physical aggression adaptive were progressively undermined. The court society (see also Elias, 1969/1983) constituted a (new) social environment in which one's survival and advancement depended on the management of impression (see also Goffman, 1959). The individuals who could manage their affect and exercise continuous self-monitoring in their interactions were systematically advantaged over those who could not. As market relations extended and the division of labor deepened, pressures toward emotional restraint and behavioral predictability were diffused from court to bourgeoisie and, eventually, to wider strata of European societies (Linklater and Mennell, 2010: 389–394).

As for Durkheim (Durkheim, 1893/1984) or Parsons (Parsons, 1951/1991), "the civilizing process" was in fact the process of "advancing integration, increased differentiation of social functions and interdependence, and the formation of even-larger units of integration" (Elias, 1939/2000: 254). Different (displays of) emotions in history are, thus, the result of different levels of social integration and differentiation. The argument regarding the sociogenesis of emotional constraint is actually rooted in a theory of social structure that Elias termed *figuration theory* or *process sociology* (van Krieken, 1998: 44). A figuration in Elias's sense designates a network of individuals bound together through chains of mutual dependency, in which the actions of each participant constrain and are constrained by the actions of others (see Elias, 1978). Within

this framework, social change is not the product of individual intentions or group decisions but the emergent result of interactions among interdependent actors within changing structural (con)figurations. This is why the long-term processes of social integration and disintegration *themselves* should become the key object of sociological study for Elias (van Krieken, 1998: 48).

Elias's civilizing process thesis has also attracted a substantial body of criticism. For example, in *Der Mythos vom Zivilisationsprozess* (1988–2002), Hans-Peter Duerr produced a rigorous five-volume critique of Elias, especially of the way he handles historical evidence in documenting medieval customs and sensitivities (see Mennell and Goudsblom, 1997). For Rosenwein, "Elias's narrative is fatally flawed in both its history and its psychology" (Rosenwein, 2016b: 9). She particularly criticises his "hydraulic model" of emotions (viewing emotions like gases or liquids under pressure, eager to be let out), which is inconsistent with the current empirical research in psychology and neuroscience of emotion (and derives from medieval medical notions of the "humors") (Rosenwein, 2002: 834–837). She also criticises his theory as the "grand narrative of emotions" in which the history of the West is viewed merely as the history of increasing emotional restraint, and which he shares with Weber, Freud and Foucault (Rosenwein, 2002: 826–827). According to this Huizingian "grand narrative", "The Middle Ages had the emotional life of a child: unadulterated, violent, public, unashamed", while "The modern period (variously defined) brought with it self-discipline, control, and suppression" (Rosenwein, 2002: 827), which is inadequate. After all, it could also be argued that "we have never been modern" (Latour, 1991/1993), especially regarding our bodily affects.

Today it can be said that this was a stereotypical Eurocentric narrative of civilizational advance that presupposes a normative hierarchy between "civilized" emotional restraint and "uncivilized" expressiveness, while ignoring issues like European colonial violence in modernity (Pepperell, 2016). Elias does focus solely on post-Renaissance Europe, which critics see as an arbitrary limitation of a claimed general theory of civilizing process, ignoring long-term forms of restraint and state formation outside Europe, especially China (Goody, 2002). Additional concerns target his limited treatment of religion (Linklater, 2022). Contemporary historical research on emotional self-regulation in earlier periods, such as Rosenwein's work on the early Middle Ages (Rosenwein, 2006, 2016a), Adams on managing love in medieval romance fiction (Adams, 2005), or McNamer's analysis of affective meditation in the later medieval period (McNamer, 2010), complicated the picture of a linear progression from medieval expressive "spontaneity" to modern managed "restraint".

Moreover, the 20th century presented Elias with an obvious empirical problem. The mass violence of two world wars and the Holocaust could not easily be reconciled with a narrative of civilizational advance, which is a tension Elias addressed through the concept of a "decivilizing process" and in his late work on the Germans (Elias, 1996; see also Frevert, 2019/2023). On the other hand, the brutal violence of the Holocaust can be seen as a "true" expression of "civilized" modernity (Bauman, 1989). Drawing on the emotions of pride and shame, an

interesting (historical) sociology of emotions in the context of nationalism and the world wars was offered by a sociologist Thomas Scheff (Scheff, 1994). Finally, Wouters explicitly extends Elias, showing how the civilizing processes actually *continued* well into the 19th and 20th centuries, focusing on the contemporary control and emancipation of “dangerous” emotions (Wouters, 2011). The notion of “informalization” of emotions from the mid-20th century onward serves as an important corrective to the unidirectionality of Elias’s scheme (Wouters, 2007).

Elias’s historical sociology of emotions demonstrated a fundamental connection between social structure and emotional life (Linklater and Mennell, 2010). What humans feel, how they express it, and what they are ashamed of are not biological constants but products of specific social arrangements. The figuration concept provided a relational view of social life that is more adequate to the analysis of emotional change than either individualist or structuralist alternatives. This standpoint makes it possible to analyze how emotional norms are transmitted, contested, and transformed through ongoing patterns of social interaction without reducing them either to individual psychology or to impersonal structural forces (Collins, 2004; Kišjuhas, 2019). In other words, the feelings of shame, disgust or displeasure are socially nurtured under specific conditions, and they are part of a sociohistorical process of state formation and advancing functional interdependence (McCarthy, 1985). This argument also connects the micro-level transformations in emotional conduct to macro-level processes of market expansion and power reconfiguration, which represents yet another important contribution of Elias’s theory (for the process of micro-macro translation, see Collins, 1981). Despite well-founded criticisms, *The Civilizing Process* “remains the paramount narrative of the history of emotions today, even though it is some sixty years old” (Rosenwein, 2016b: 8).

Emotionology, or the Emotional Communities?

It was not until the 1980s that the history of emotions began to take shape as a distinct scholarly field. As mentioned in the Introduction, the consolidation of the history of emotions as a recognized subdiscipline is directly associated with the theoretical contributions of a distinguished social historian Peter Stearns. In a foundational article co-authored with a psychiatrist/historian Carol Stearns in the *American Historical Review*, the Stearnses introduced the concept of *emotionology* (recalling “sociology” or “psychology”) (Stearns and Stearns, 1985). Emotionology was defined as “The attitudes or standards that a society, or a definable group within a society, maintains toward basic emotions and their appropriate expression; ways that institutions reflect and encourage these attitudes in human conduct” (Stearns and Stearns, 1985: 813). It is seen as a useful tool to distinguish “the collective emotional standards of a society from the emotional experiences of individuals and groups” and to “illuminate how and why social agencies and institutions either promote or prohibit some kinds of emotions” (Stearns and Stearns, 1985: 813). The historian Stearns also pays particular attention to the development of the sociology of emotions

as a discipline that can assist the research program of the history of emotions (Stearns, 1989b).

The theoretical and methodological significance of this concept lays in the sharp distinction it drew between emotionology (the domain of prescriptive norms) and actual human emotional experience. The former is the object of historical study precisely because it was encoded in accessible historical documents, while the latter remained largely inaccessible to the historical investigation. By restricting the primary object of inquiry to emotionology, Stearns provided historians with a tractable analytical target: the conduct manuals, advice literature, religious texts, legal codes, and educational materials that prescribed and enforced emotional standards in a given society. Through close reading of such sources, it was possible to reconstruct the emotional standards of a given period, i.e., what emotions were considered (in)appropriate in what circumstances, what forms of emotional expression were encouraged or discouraged, how the emotional life of different social groups was differently regulated, etc. He also deliberately avoided using “high-culture sources” and focused on the “common folk” or middle and working classes. For example, “the tradition of courtly love simply did not penetrate far enough into popular culture or into institutional arrangements to count as a genuine emotionology” (Stearns and Stearns, 1985: 830).

Emotionology's emphasis, then, is not on how people actually *felt* (or expressed their feelings), but on what people *thought* about such matters as crying in public, getting angry, or showing anger physically (Rosenwein, 2002: 824). The Stearnses also relied on some early sociological theories of emotions of the 1970s and the 1980s, namely the concepts of “feeling rules” that prescribed people how to feel and how to express those socially mandated feelings (Hochschild, 1979, 1983/2003). While sociologists such as Hochschild argued for “the managed heart” in contemporary times, the Stearnses wanted to look at “the managed hearts of the past” (Rosenwein, 2002: 824).

In this task, Stearns and others produced an impressive series of books and articles regarding emotional history of the United States: *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History* (Stearns and Stearns, 1986), *Jealousy: The Evolution of an Emotion in American History* (Stearns, 1989a), “The Role of Fear: Transitions in American Emotional Standards for Children, 1850–1950” (Stearns and Haggerty, 1991), *American Cool: Constructing a Twentieth-Century Emotional Style* (Stearns, 1994), *An Emotional History of the United States* (Stearns and Lewis, 1998; see also Gienow-Hecht, 2010), *Battleground of Desire: The Struggle for Self-Control in Modern America* (Stearns, 1999). Taken together, this body of work “comprises the most significant research in the history of emotions to date” (Rosenwein, 2002: 824).

Thus, Stearnses deployed their framework of emotionology across a series of empirically rich studies of American emotional culture, tracing long-run transformations in the norms governing emotions including anger, jealousy, fear, desire, “emotional cool” and others. Arguing that social expectations gave shape to feelings, they began an ambitious effort to chart how the norms governing

feelings (and the feelings themselves) had changed over time (Matt, 2011). In *Anger*, for example, they traced how and why Americans gradually came to adopt tighter restraints on their rage (Stearns and Stearns, 1986). In *Jealousy*, Stearns argued how this emotion, seen before as reflection of manliness and honor, gradually came to be regarded as selfish and “feminine” (Stearns, 1989a). Furthermore, Stearns has sought to uncover not just the history of particular emotions, but the underlying cultural rhythms, institutions, and ideologies that have shaped emotional codes more generally (Matt, 2011: 118). In *American Cool*, he argued that 20th-century Americans learned to restrain and contain their emotions at work and in public life, finding new opportunities for emotional expression (“to ventilate”) in leisure (Stearns, 1994; see Kišjuhas, 2024), and in *Happiness in World History* he traced the ideas and experiences of happiness from the early stages in human history up to contemporary consumerism (Stearns, 2021; see also Kišjuhas and Marinković, 2018).

As a contemporary addition to Elias’s civilizing process (see also Wouters, 2007, 2011) a central finding across these studies was the identification of a significant shift in American emotionological standards between the 19th and 20th centuries. Stearns argued for an earlier “Victorian moral economy of emotion” in which the disciplined management of feeling was construed as a form of moral development and character formation. This attitude later moved towards a distinctly modern culture of “emotional cool” that valorized restraint, composure, and the suppression of strong feelings in professional and public contexts (Stearns, 1994). In a neo-Eliasian manner, he especially analyzed “the dampening of the Passions” (guilt, grief and love), the “new principles of emotional management”, “preoccupation with dispassion”, and “the new standards” in controlling emotional intensity: “Cool has become an emotional mantle, sheltering the whole personality from embarrassing excess” (Stearns, 1994: 1). Stearns connected this transformation to structural changes in industrial capitalism, bureaucratic work organization, leisure, and the reconfiguration of family life as an affective rather than a productive unit (Stearns and Stearns, 1985: 818-821).

Stearns’s framework attracted significant critical attention. A primary objection was that the focus on prescriptive sources produced an account of what people were *supposed* to feel rather than what they *actually* felt, leaving unresolved the question of the relationship between emotional norms and emotional practice (see Scheer, 2012). Recently, however, there has been an effort to move beyond social prescription and to examine lived experience, in order to understand how individual emotions differ from social norms (Matt, 2011: 119). Like Huizinga earlier, the Stearnses in *Anger* also claim that the premodern period was an age with no general emotional control (Stearns and Stearns, 1986: 21–25), and in which adults were in many ways childlike in their indulgence in temper (Rosenwein, 2002: 825). It can also be said that emotionology, as a concept interchangeable with “emotional style” (see Gammerl, 2012), projects a degree of cultural homogeneity that obscured the internal diversity and stratification of emotional standards within any complex society.

Still, the beginning of a substantial historiography of the history of emotions can be precisely dated to Peter and Carol Stearns' "manifesto" in 1985. Their later empirical studies demonstrated the historical variability of emotional standards in concrete, documented ways, and their insistence on connecting emotional change to structural and institutional change established an approach to the history of emotions that was actually (historically) sociological. The history of emotions, from this point on, was clearly about emotions in society (Boddice, 2018: 59), although it minimized cultural context and biological universality.

The most influential theoretical revision of Stearns's approach came from the medievalist Barbara Rosenwein, whose 2002 article "Worrying about Emotions in History" constituted a direct intervention in the methodological and theoretical foundations of the field (Rosenwein, 2002; see also Rosenwein, 2010, 2016a, b). Rosenwein's critique was directed as much at the broader assumptions embedded in the historiography of emotions as at Stearns specifically: "There is a clear theoretical underpinning for the grand narrative. It is a particular model of the emotions, one that prevailed when Huizinga, Febvre, Bloch, and Elias were writing and that prevails today in our very language and in popular conceptions of the emotions" (Rosenwein, 2002: 834). For these reasons, we consider it appropriate to analyze her contributions at this point right away, even though she belongs to a somewhat later generation of researchers (Rosenwein, 2016a, compared to, for example, Reddy, 1997, 1999, and who will be discussed later).

Rosenwein's central target was what she termed the "hydraulic model" of emotion, which is pervasive in historical writing from Huizinga onward – that emotions are like fluids held under pressure by social constraints, as was mentioned before. In this "grand narrative", the history of emotional life is fundamentally a history of the progressive elaboration of mechanisms for containment, regulation, or (Foucauldian) discipline and punish. For Rosenwein, "The grand narrative that has dominated emotions scholarship cannot stand. It is based on a debunked theory of the emotions and its concomitant, but flawed, notion of progressive self-restraint" (Rosenwein, 2002: 845), adding that "Focused studies of emotions have treated the Middle Ages as one emotional period. I challenge this view" (Rosenwein, 2006: 2).

In place of this model, Rosenwein proposed the plural concept of *emotional communities*, defined as "groups in which people adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and value – or devalue – the same or related emotions" (Rosenwein, 2006: 2). Emotional communities may take the form of families, neighborhoods, monasteries, guilds, courts, or any other social formation in which shared norms of feeling are transmitted, enforced, and reproduced through practice and interaction. The researcher or historian of emotions looking at these communities seeks above all to "uncover systems of feeling". Such systems include the recognized "nature of the affective bonds between people" and "the modes of emotional expression that people within these communities expect, encourage, tolerate, and/or deplore" (Rosenwein, 2002: 842).

Multiple emotional communities coexist within any society at any given time: rather than a single, dominant emotionological standard, any given

historical period is characterized by a plurality of overlapping, nested, and sometimes competing emotional communities. “To sum up: there were many medieval emotional communities” (Rosenwein, 2002: 844). Therefore, the task of the historian is not to reconstruct a unitary emotional style (“emotionology”) but to map the emotional communities present in a given period, to analyze the norms and practices that constituted each, and to trace their interactions, transformations, and dissolution across time (Rosenwein, 2006: 1–31; Rosenwein and Cristiani, 2018). Rosenwein has taken a different task than uncovering unified “emotionology” in some historical period, focusing on the *multiplicity* of emotional modes and styles that often coexist in social life (Matt, 2011: 118). Every day and in all societies, individuals moved through various environments (families, churches, taverns), with its own guidelines, standards, and expectations for emotional expression, changing individual’s affects as they moved between venues.

Rosenwein developed her framework through detailed philological and contextual analysis of early medieval sources (letters, hagiographies, chronicles, and legal documents) demonstrating that emotional life in the early Middle Ages was neither uniformly intense in Huizinga’s sense nor simply undisciplined (“uncivilized”) in Elias’s. She carefully reconstructed how different social groups expressed grief, managed feeling, and regarded family relations. The emotional standards of one’s time is constructed at various social levels, in groups configured in any number of ways, and related to each other at various points of intersection (Boddice, 2018: 78). For Rosenwein, a community is forged on face-to-face encounters and common feelings of its members, which is a view she shares with many sociologists of emotions since Durkheim (Durkheim, 1912/1995; see also Goffman, 1967; Collins, 2004). The concept of emotional communities has now been widely adopted and productively extended in subsequent research. It has informed studies of religious communities (McNamer, 2010), but also views of the European Union as an emotional community (Koschut, 2024), or academic seminars (Karlsohn, 2016; see also Collins, 1998) and social science teaching as an emotional community as well (Blennow, 2019).

Bringing Emotions Back In

In the 21st century, the history and the (historical) sociology of emotions have been considerably advanced by theoretical contributions that both extend and challenge the frameworks examined in the preceding sections, especially in their dialogue with the (natural) sciences. For example, historian William Reddy’s concept of the “*emotives*” and the framework of *emotional regimes* and *emotional refuge* constituted a major theoretical advance (Reddy, 2001). He bridges the gap between the universalist thesis of cognitive psychology and the constructionist thesis of cultural anthropology, arguing that by making these two converge, the historian can use emotions to understand the mechanisms of historical change (see also Reddy, 1997, 1999, 2009). For Reddy, “there is no nature outside culture, and there is no culture outside nature” and “we are, as it were, biocultural” (Boddice, 2018: 63).

“Emotives” are a phenomenon that combines one’s beliefs about emotions and their appropriate social roles, implying that emotions are not simply expressions of inner states (feelings), but actively shape and alter those states (mainly through language). A speech act (to say “I am afraid”) is not merely to report fear, but to engage in an act that mobilizes, intensifies, or redirects the internal affective process. With this in mind, the “emotional regime” is the set of normative emotions and official rituals that any political regime imposes and depends upon, while “emotional refuges” are spaces where alternative emotions can be practiced outside the dominant regime control (Reddy, 2001: 128–129), similar to Rosenwein’s different emotional communities. Reddy also argued that romantic love is not a universal human emotion but a historically contingent Western invention produced by a very particular institutional pressure by the Catholic Church (and its attempts to eradicate sexual desire from social life) (Reddy, 2012; for constructionist sociology of love see also Jackson, 1993). Still, Reddy was “unconvinced by radical constructionists who seemed to throw out biology altogether”, while aspiring to transform emotion research as a whole (Boddice, 2018: 62).

For historian Monique Scheer, emotions should primarily be understood as *practices* rather than interior states that are subsequently expressed in behavior (Scheer, 2012). Drawing on Bourdieu’s sociological theory of practice, emotions are things that people *do* rather than things they *have*: they are “habits, rituals, and everyday pastimes that aid us in achieving a certain emotional state” and “manipulations of body and mind to evoke feelings” (Scheer, 2012: 209; see Kišjuhas, 2024). She views emotions as an act composed of interdependent cognitive, somatic, and social components, trying to integrate the material, bodily facets of emotional processes without having to resort to the ahistorical, universalist assumption that the body is conditioned only by human evolution (Scheer, 2012: 219–220).

In historiography, this shifts the evidentiary focus from introspective testimonies to observable practices, connecting the history of emotions directly to the history of the body and the history of material culture (see also Boddice and Smith, 2020). Similarly, historian Benno Gammerl outlined the concept of “emotional styles”, raising questions about the subject and its potential for choice and agency (Gammerl, 2012). The seminal work of Ute Frevert and colleagues at the Max Planck Institute on the history of emotions in modern Europe has produced a body of empirical research that models what a rigorous emotions-informed historical practice might look like. The edited volume *Emotional Lexicons* (Frevert et al., 2014) represents the analysis of emotional vocabulary across multiple European languages and periods, demonstrating how changes in emotional language contribute to changes in emotional practice and emotional knowledge.

Finally, the interdisciplinary project represented by Rob Boddice’s *The History of Emotions* (Boddice, 2018) and the co-authored *Emotion, Sense, Experience* (Boddice and Smith, 2020) has articulated a theoretically sophisticated programme for the history of emotions that engages with recent developments in

the cognitive science of emotion and affective neuroscience, while maintaining the historian's insistence on the irreducible historical specificity of emotional experience (see also Boddice, 2020). For Boddice, emotions are biological phenomena that are expressed through historically and culturally specific practices and meanings, which provides a framework that holds together the biological and the historical without collapsing one into the other. The similar can be said for some biosocial theories of emotion in sociology (e.g., Massey, 2002; Hammond, 2003; TenHouten, 2007; Turner, 2007).

Despite a rich prehistory, and the founding of the discipline in 1985 (Stearns and Stearns, 1985), the proliferation of studies in the field of history of emotions is relatively recent. As late as 2012, Jan Plamper said that the history of emotions is a "rocket ship taking off" (Boddice, 2018: 2), and Rosenwein argued that "despite a generation's worth of social and cultural history, emotions have seemed tangential (if not fundamentally opposed) to the historical enterprise" (Rosenwein, 2002: 821). It is also notable that in 2010 Plamper conducted an interview with leading practitioners of the history of emotions "as an burgeoning field": William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein, and Peter Stearns (Plamper, 2010). Their consensus was that the history of emotions is not merely a specialized field, but the crucial means of integrating the category of emotions into social, cultural, and political history.

Thus, it can be argued that "rational" historical and sociological accounts that view one's emotional life as analytically irrelevant are systematically inadequate to the phenomena they purport to explain. Even a superficial reflection on emotions points to the fact that they largely represent a kind of "glue" that "holds people together", and generate commitment to larger social and cultural structures (Barbalet, 1998; Hammond, 2003; Turner, 2007; TenHouten, 2007; Kišjuhas, 2024). In political history, for example, the analysis of processes such as the French Revolution or the rise of fascism without attention to the emotional regimes through which political subjects were formed and mobilized (the politics of fear, enthusiasm, shame, and resentment) produces accounts that are structurally incomplete (Reddy, 2001). The same goes for social history, the histories of everyday life, or the historical theories of social change, which fail to account for one's emotional communities (Rosenwein, 2006, 2016b). In sociological theory, frameworks of rational action, structural constraint, or cultural reproduction that fail to incorporate the affective dimensions of social life are correspondingly impoverished (Turner and Stets, 2005).

The concepts surveyed in this paper such as emotional figurations, emotionology, emotional communities, emotional regimes, emotional practices and others, provide key insights into the importance of "bringing emotions back in" to historical and sociological accounts. After all, the founders of sociology did incorporate the topic of human emotions in their research, including Marx's and Engels's feelings of worker's alienation and rage (Marx and Engels, 1848/1906), Weber's protestant anxiety (Weber, 1905/2005), Durkheim's emotional "collective effervescence" (Durkheim, 1912/1995), Simmel's analyses of love (Simmel, 1918/1984), or Cooley's analyses of pride and shame in social interaction (Cooley, 1902/1922), among others.

Emotions are much more than biological reflexes, and crucially they change over historical time. As vehicles of social and psychological meanings they were made possible only through particular modes of life and thought, and “as those modes of life and thought changed, the emotions experienced and expressed by people changed” (Dixon, 2023: 6). Thus, and recently, the first strictly historical journal focusing on emotions (*Emotions: History, Culture, Society*) with two issues per year, has been launched by Brill in 2017. *The Routledge History of Emotions in the Modern World* was published in 2023, offering the analysis of the modern (from the late 18th century onwards) history of emotions such as love, happiness, anger, pain, etc., among other topics (Barclay and Stearns, 2023; for the histories of fear and happiness see also Bourke, 2005; McMahon, 2006; Stearns, 2021). It is also worth noting that the history of emotions has been recently addressed by scholars in Serbia (Radenović, 2019a, b, c, 2020; Radenović and Akkad, 2022) and Croatia (see Janković, 2015).

This paper has traced the emergence and development of the historical study of human emotions across a century of scholarship. Huizinga and Febvre were credited with establishing the legitimacy of emotional life as an object of historical analysis, and Elias’s *The Civilizing Process* as the most ambitious macrosociological account of the long-run structural determinants of emotional change, despite the criticisms to which it has been subjected (its hydraulic model of emotion, Eurocentrism and implicit progressivism). Emotionology by Stearns provided the first systematic conceptual framework for historical inquiry into emotional standards, and his empirical studies demonstrated the analytical strength of that framework. Rosenwein’s emotional communities offered a theoretically more adequate and empirically more flexible alternative, one that has been widely adopted and productively extended. Contemporary scholarship, such as Reddy’s emotional regimes, Scheer’s emotional practices, Frevert’s comparative emotional histories, Boddice’s biocultural framework etc., has advanced the field both theoretically and empirically, addressing many of the limitations of the foundational generation while opening new methodological and substantive frontiers.

In conclusion, it can be argued that both historical and sociological perspectives are equally necessary for the analysis of human feelings in time, especially when it comes to emotions and social change (see Lemmings and Brooks, 2014) or emotions and social movements (Jasper 1998, 2011). The burgeoning field of history of emotions is also the reason why a specifically *historical* sociology of emotions is needed (see Newton, 1998), and which has not yet developed fully (Bucholc and Mennell, 2022). Unfortunately, key (historical) sociological accounts on state formation and the organization of coercive power (such as works by Charles Tilly, Theda Skocpol, and Michael Mann) “devote little or no attention to the transformation of human emotions” (Linklater and Mennell, 2010: 385–386). On the other hand, important sociological theories of violence that take human emotions (and history) into account have recently emerged (Collins, 2008, 2022; Malešević, 2022). Further research on this topic should imply a closer link between the history and (historical) sociology of

emotions, but also their closer communication with findings from the natural sciences regarding human affect.

“Bringing emotions back in“, or the integration of human emotional life into the mainstream of historical and sociological analysis, is underway but remains an unfinished project. Nevertheless, an emotions-informed approach is not just a supplementary refinement of established historical and sociological theories but a necessary condition of their scientific adequacy and relevance (Kišjuhas, 2025). After a century of detailed scholarship, it is a fact that “Emotions not only *make* history. They are also *made* by history. They are transformed by social institutions and events that differ across time and place. Emotions *have* a history, and it is complex” (Frevert, 2019/2023: 5). The case for a more systematically emotions-informed history and sociology is ultimately a case for a more adequate and more fully human science of social life across time.

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