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THE PRIVATE LIVES OF EMPIRE: EMOTION, INTIMACY AND COLONIAL RULE

Will Jackson

In the published account of his 1907 tour around the British East Africa Protectorate, Winston Churchill described a journey he took on the Uganda railway from Mombasa to Lake Victoria. To mark his status, Churchill was allowed to ride on a bench attached to the cow-catcher on the front of the train. Surveying the land through which the train advanced, Churchill remarked on the delights of seeing East Africa's natural environment at first hand. Game was plentiful. Birds and butterflies flitted from flower to flower. "Here," reflected Churchill, "is presented the wonderful and unique spectacle which the Uganda railway offers to the European".¹ It is a comment that captures well the subtle conveyance of racial meaning through the writing of apparently innocuous experience. What could be offensive about the butterflies and birds? Yet only Europeans, Churchill suggested, had the sensibility to derive enjoyment from the spectacle of colonial East Africa as seen from the train. Only Europeans, moreover, had the opportunity to gaze upon East Africa in this way. Africans appear as features within the spectacle: children waving or running alongside the train; women heaving water. Through its seemingly universal, apolitical nature, the act of seeing made political claims: the power to rule rested on the racially delimited ability to convert land into landscape, sites into sights and experience into the means by which the capacity for certain kinds of pleasure or satisfaction were claimed.

A little over twenty years later, another European man, William Jago, a doctor, was convicted of vagrancy at Juju, outside Nairobi. In January 1931, Jago wrote to the local District Commissioner to explain his impoverished state. For the previous three years, he had been attempting to earn his living in Tanganyika but at fifty years of age, the colonial medical service ruled him too old to practice. Jago was also suffering from chronic cutaneous leishmania – a

skin infection transmitted by sand fly bites, known as the “the Kandahar sore” and resulting in disfiguring lesions of the face. “Owing to my unpleasant appearance,” Jago wrote, “I have not been able to fully practice my profession among Europeans”.² Unable to gain European custom, Jago was compelled to work for Africans. For the past six months he had occupied a room in a “native hut” where his practice consisted “mainly of injections”. The image of the white man dispensing medical care to colonized people was a prominent theme in the colonial civilizing mission but here the doctor was caring for Africans not as an expression of his whiteness but his alienation from it. The “natives” were his clients; Jago was weaker than they. If not paid in cash, he was likely paid in kind. Boundaries, of several sorts, were being breached.³

Placed side by side, these two discursive fragments represent contrasting extremes on a spectrum of colonial power. They also comprise very different kinds of sources. Whereas Churchill constructed a racial type – “the European” – by describing his own, supposedly representative experience, Jago’s appeals for help were communicated privately and made no reference to the subjective, experiential dimensions to his illness, his exclusion from colonial society or his life shared with Africans. If colonial East Africa was, for Churchill, a delight, what it meant for Jago we simply do not know.

As these contrasting examples show, our ability to understand the emotional history of empire will always be constrained by the extent to which its expression was rendered public and subsequently preserved. In the essays that follow, scholars working on a range of contexts take the challenges of “the private” as the means to complicate the notion that, no matter their background or social status, colonizing subjects – within any particular colonial society at least – in some way felt as one. In East Africa, Brett Shadle argued, all white settlers possessed a common “settler soul”. Whether men or women, rich or poor, criminals or “poor whites” – all shared in a common fund of attitudes and beliefs.⁴ Yet as Shadle himself admitted, what he termed the “flotsam and jetsam of empire” remain “barely visible in most accounts”. How,

then, are we to write about the barely visible without overwriting their interior lives with the thoughts and feelings of their more conspicuous peers?

These essays do not attempt to write exclusively about those marginalized or absented from existing histories. Rather, they challenge the dominant mode for writing about colonial emotions – that is, through the template of emotional communities or regimes. Based on models developed by Peter and Carol Stearns, William Reddy and Barbara Rosenwein, scholars of emotions in empire have plotted the ways in which emotions operated as a “dimension of racialized power”.⁵ The expression of emotion, according to this literature, shaped the boundaries of self and other, defining communities of settlers, Christian missionaries and, indeed, of imperial nations themselves.⁶

In much of this writing, historians have worked from public discourse. They have mined newspapers and periodicals, political speeches and parliamentary debates, pamphlets and tracts, as well as published books in the form of travellers’ and missionaries’ accounts.⁷ In all these cases, texts were not only written for an audience but together worked to create systems, structures or communities of feeling. Thus, colonial emotions are understood in terms of a grammar of difference – as the affective repertoire that produced colonial subjects through “embodied ways of knowing”.⁸ Yet the emphasis on emotions as shared by and constitutive of groups fails to allow for the ways by which individuals, in Michael Roper’s words, interact with collective consciousness. The “deep, complex and varied emotional experiences that constitute the domain of subjectivity,” Roper has argued, too often “get flattened in analyses of external codes and structures”. How individuals felt is assumed, in other words, from analysis of cultural formations. As Roper argues, “such work over-extends the reach of the normative, investing it with a vocabulary that pertains to the domain of subjectivity but which denudes that domain of human subjects.”⁹

Roper's concern was with gender history but that same tendency is clearly apparent in colonial studies, most notably in a now substantial body of work on panic, fear and anxiety. Colonial cultures, it has been extensively argued, were riven with anxieties. In India, memories of the 1857 rebellion lived long into the twentieth century; in southern Africa white settlers lived constantly on the look-out for signs of an impending revolt.¹⁰ Anxieties over black peril – the sexual assault of white women by colonized men – and the apparently harmful effects of the tropical environment similarly expressed doubts over the placidity of colonized subjects and the long-term ability of Europeans to make colonial territories their home.¹¹ Yet these fears are to a great extent explained by the ideological work that they enabled. Watching out for signs of native unrest taught Europeans that the people they lived amongst were inherently violent; militating against the black peril helped white men control white women as well as black men; doubts over the ability of Europeans to acclimatize to tropical environments enabled elaborate regimes of self-defense to be publicly performed.¹² What all of this achieved was to endlessly re-instate the mythologies of race. Only white people were exposed to the dangers that colonial anxieties described. Only white people were prone to suffer tropical neurasthenia. Colonial fears were as much about constituting and controlling whiteness as they were an expression of a colonial condition or an emotional state.¹³

Our aim in this special issue is to disaggregate current writing on colonial emotions by focusing on the individual and the intimate. Writing on the advantages of “close-up” micro-historical analysis – and drawing on a theory developed by geographer Jay Appleton – John Brewer distinguished between two different types of historical writing. These he labelled as “prospect” history and “refuge” history. Prospect history, Brewer wrote, might be characterized by a single, superior point of view (reminiscent of Churchill on the train) in which an extensive, large-scale landscape is surveyed and analysed. Refuge history, by contrast, is small-scale and tightly focused. “Its emphasis,” Brewer writes, “is on a singular place rather than space, the

careful delineation of particularities and details [and] a degree of enclosure.”¹⁴ While the writer of prospect history is outside her field of study, the refuge historian is within it. Importantly, refuge history involves not a desire to control or master history but a sense of belonging or connectedness to persons and details in the past. “This sort of history,” Brewer suggested, “sees sympathy and understanding – a measure of identification which can range from the quite abstract to the deeply emotive – as essential to historical knowledge and insight.”¹⁵ “Even in the most private personal account,” Roper suggested, the writer imagines a reader and emotions are evoked through the communication between the writer or speaker and the audience, real or imagined. The historian, in viewing such communication, tries to be receptive to the states of mind being conveyed. In that way she or he is drawn into the unconscious dramas of the historical actor.”¹⁶

If historians do feel some sort of identification with the people and circumstances they are examining, then the question of to whom, precisely, one feels connected must inevitably ensue, a question felt especially keenly when studying colonial contexts, where categories of difference were so crucial. “Is it humanity” that shares in the connection, Brewer asked, “or a [particular] reference group based on race, class or gender?” In reconstructing a 1928 murder trial in London, Jonathan Saha placed that same question into historical context. Sympathy, suggested Saha, should be understood not as an emotion but as “a pathway for affect to move between people”. Sympathy informed “who could feel for whom”.¹⁷ Pointedly, Saha’s concern was not to show what people felt. To that extent, he moved beyond those works that focused on particular emotions such as anxiety and fear. He also allowed himself to avoid the need, so evident within histories of emotion, to navigate between emotions as “felt” (subjectivity) and emotions as culturally constructed and socially mediated. But his analysis returns us to the making of difference. Sympathy in 1928 reinforced boundaries and stereotypes. Hierarchies of race and gender were entrenched once again.

By working from sources conventionally understood as private – diaries, memoirs and personal correspondence – the essays that follow move away from the public circulation of emotion. Only one – Nadia Rhook’s essay on the death of a young white settler in Australia— shows how emotion, through its public transmission, performed ideological work. But Rhook’s analysis of a legal trial is matched by her attention to the circumstances that preceded it. She stages her account both in the very public setting of a court-room and in the very private space of a boarding house room and the human relations therein. She holds a tension, in other words, between two quite different ways of reading her story: one that emphasizes how emotions were channeled in the making of difference and one that directs attention to those intimate, “scarcely visible” spaces where difference was eroded. Moreover, the way she does so enables a reader to feel connection to various actors in her story. While the other essays all involve “private” sources – diaries, letters, memoirs and, in Deborah Posel’s article, oral testimonies – they are all relational nonetheless, populated with casts of characters that include “I”, the historian, and “you”, the reader.¹⁸ Writing these essays has forced us to think reflexively about how we sift evidence and how we are drawn to the stories that we write.¹⁹

The principal shift in these essays, then, is away from thinking about emotion in terms of public codes and expectations and towards the interior, subjective worlds of individuals. That, in turn, represents a move away from what has been a point of settled consensus since the cultural turn – that there is no bounded, private self. As Barbara Taylor has written, in critiquing this view:

Subjectivity, it is widely argued...is no timeless, cultureless essence of personhood, but a cultural artifact that mutates over time. The present-day notion of an inner self – an ego, source and site of personal identity – is no human eternal but a contingent product of Western modernity.²⁰

As Taylor went on to observe, this rejection of the notion of the private self ironically became ascendant at the same time as historians directed ever-increasing attention towards the intimate,

writing on topics such as sexuality and the body, health and illness, disability and madness and childhood and the family. “The new cultural history,” Taylor wrote, “set out to explore inner life, the deep waters of human nature, while declaring “the subject” officially dead. We see the same correlation within colonial history. Influenced by the historical ethnographer, Ann Stoler, historians have documented in now-exhaustive detail the ways in which colonial states’ attempted to regulate the intimate. Though racial categories appeared to rest on biological distinctions, Stoler argued, they depended in fact on tacitly and tenuously held beliefs in the emotional capacities attached to different groups, capacities that were read, in turn, principally through intimate relations. Who lived with whom, who had sex with whom and who felt what kinds of feelings in the colonial milieu: it was around these questions that the politics of racial classification revolved. At the same time, the need to efficiently exploit indigenous land, labor and natural resources meant that colonial regimes were as concerned with the intimate domains of pregnancy, birth and child care amongst subject peoples as they were with the suppression of rebellion, the raising of tax and the propping up of proxy powers.²¹

In approaching the intimate as an aspect of colonial governance, historians have shared the reticence to countenance a recoverable “private” self.²² Medical journals, child rearing manuals, commissions of enquiry and the institutional records of clinics, prisons, orphanages and asylums have all proved more appealing than sources written in the first person and that claim to record unmediated lived experience.²³ To be sure, intimate histories set during earlier periods – roughly speaking, before the mid to late nineteenth century – have done much to reveal the agency of subaltern groups and individuals, their movement through space and the fluid, still embryonic aspect of racial, social and territorial boundaries.²⁴ According to a commonly accepted narrative, however, the rise of scientific racism during the second half of the nineteenth century, rebellions in India in 1857 and the Caribbean in 1865 and the intensification of imperial competition amongst the European powers led to an increasing

awareness of racial difference and a hardening of boundaries. The expanding capacity of colonial states to intervene in the intimate lives of their human subjects, meanwhile, generated the archival records from which accounts of state regulation were subsequently written.

If the writing of “private lives” must also be histories of the archive, they must also inevitably be histories of gender. The public sphere, as Joan Scott argued, “has often been impervious to gender analysis because historians’ focus has been with men’s activities, public institutions and power, and not with women and the ‘private sphere’”.²⁵ As Adele Perry acknowledges in her study of the Douglas-Connolly family, to reconstruct the intimate, interior worlds of men and women is bound to involve engaging with an archive that constructs the intimate in part precisely through the confining of female subjectivities to the private sphere.²⁶ Of the essays that follows, just one, that by Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie, can be said to take place within that sphere but it is a story built around the “private life” of one exemplary public man: the Chief Immigration Officer of the Cape Colony. The only essay located within the material space of the home, meanwhile, is set within that very public home of Government House. Charlotte Macdonald’s reading of the diary of Harriet Gore Browne, wife to the New Zealand Governor during the New Zealand wars of the 1860s, takes the principal trope for structuring colonial anxieties – “the native rising” – not as the object of colonial emotions but as the setting or the scene. The species of nervousness that Harriet describes concerned her husband and what Harriet felt for him and on his behalf: anxieties over the outcome and legitimacy of colonial wars of conquest here intersected with the very “private” fortunes of a marriage. Macdonald offers, then, a perfect micro-historical arrangement for tracking the movement through personal and political – and for decentering and individuating what appears from the historiography at any rate to be the principal colonial emotion: that of fear.

The only other essay here issue to be written overtly around fear – Kim [A. Wagner](#)’s account of Amritsar – is also written from the diary of a woman – and a wife. Whereas the heat

and noise of the New Zealand wars was a distant thunder within the corridors of Auckland's Government House, the violence of the Indian "mob" was near at hand for Melicent Wathen, wife of an English school master at Amritsar in 1919. In reconstructing Melicent's diary, however, Wagner notes that she wrote of pending catastrophe retrospectively, from the cool of the hill station once the crisis had been averted – yet before the events for which Amritsar became famous: the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh. Wagner is interested, then, in "the content of the form" – in questions of timing and periodization by which events get spaced and by which the act of writing itself becomes an act of self-composure. Dhupelia-Mesthrie's essay, also sourced from a diary, likewise shows the composition of the self. Everything that Clarence Cousins, the Chief Immigration Officer in Cape Town, wrote of as his private subjectivity, and through which he expressed attachment to place, was underwritten by all that he kept out. His public work in excluding undesirable immigrants was echoed in what the writing of his private life also worked to suppress.

That Harriet Gore Browne's inner turmoil went on within the confines of Government House brings to mind Stoler's insistence that the "thresholds of inside and out were not confined to those people caught on the margins, as if "mixed bloods" and "half-castes" (the "undesirable" for Cousins) were the only categories of people wrought with interior battles of bitterness and grief".²⁷ My own essay is peopled with men and women on the margins who sought to displace their marginality in the act of writing: theirs is an autobiographical corpus that didn't just draw on but produced a discourse of respectable failure. Their letters were addressed to the British Governor-General in South Africa – and sometimes to the British monarch. Private experience was rendered public matter but was written in such a way as to personalise the state by assuming some level of confidence between recipient and sender.

Petitions such as these show the reality of failure and disappointment for many of those British emigrants who sailed for Southern Africa around the turn of the twentieth century. The

argument offered here is that in writing of their failure, petitioners sought to suppress the intensity of their subjective experience, channelling their writing into the bloodless prose-style of official correspondence. Disrupting that style, however, intruded “stray emotions”: anger, resentment and despair.²⁸ The discourse of poor white petitions shows the limits to the emotional community of white settlers in Southern Africa. At the same time, they reveal the ways in which a changing racial climate in the country generated variable kinds of social alienation. There is a larger history here: on the return migrations that accompanied European decolonisation and the intimate histories to which they gave rise.

Begging letters, addressed by failed settlers to the colony’s Governor, presumed a relation, just as the autobiography, as Durba Ghosh notes, must always reference an “I in relation to you”.²⁹ If relations are most plainly marked by the addressing of a letter, the politics of the relation between one individual and another must always be one of recognition. Ghosh, drawing on Leela Gandhi, Judith Butler and Adriana Cavarero, considers the implications of framing the relation between an Indian “terrorist”, Trailokya Nath, and his British jailor, Francis Lowman. Like Gandhi, Ghosh identifies selfhood through a relational ontology, one characterized – in Caravero’s words – by “reciprocal exposure, dependence and [the] vulnerability of an incarnated self who postulates the other as necessary”.³⁰ “One can only tell an autobiography,” wrote Butler, “without the ‘you’ my own story becomes impossible.” In writing her own narrative, Ghosh is forced to reference herself in relation to both the terrorist and the jailor. But she also invokes “us” – each of us – in its telling. As Sara Ahmed argued, emotions are precisely about the intimacy of the “with”, bound up with how we inhabit the world “with” [and against] others.³¹ Attempting to write of – if not with – emotion leads us to reconsider to what or to whom we are bound.

That question rests in turn on how we imagine categories or groups. In writing of imperial anxieties amongst the British working class in India, Alexandra Lindgren-Gibson has

noted a tendency amongst historians to “look to the lowest of the low – the beggars, prisoners and lunatics”.³² While it is true that work focused on each of these groups inevitably leaves out those amongst the non-elite who did not get arrested, imprisoned or deported, it is also the case that each of these groups were constructed by and through a particular discourse.³³ A “lunatic” might also be a beggar at one time – and might at another have established himself as a respectable member of the working, or even middling, classes, a process likely to have involved a selective self-disclosure of earlier lives and “private” selves.³⁴ Like emotions, lives were never still. People moved through categories yet colonial categories of knowledge are echoed in the partitions that frame our own research, borne out by the historiographical fractures that represent colonial society as – however diverse – nonetheless divisible into segments or groups.

Yet, as Antoinette Burton and Tony Ballantyne have written, histories of the intimate must also be histories of movement.³⁵ In her finely wrought study of the trial that followed the death of a young white man in Portland, Victoria – “a coastal frontier at the southern edge of the British Empire” – in 1898, Nadia Rhook tracks the movement of individuals through hierarchies of race and class. Around the pivot of a death, we see the changing fortunes of those around the diseased – his father and his European and Indian doctors – as identities got challenged, claimed and imputed. These are all global lives but in Rhook’s telling they “drag us back”, as John-Paul A. Ghobrial put it, “to a deep local history.”³⁶ We know the emotional satisfaction that whites in other settler contexts gained from dispensing medical care to colonised people – but the experience of Ranja and Assaf, two Indian doctors in caring for a young European man, is here obscured in the record.³⁷ Instead what the archive reveals is the racial function served by grief. After the death of his son, Bailey the elder orchestrated the conviction of the Indians for manslaughter. Grief, in this instance, helped to firm up the racial boundaries distinguishing white doctors from Indian “oculists” while reinstating the authority of the “white man” within the wider context of Australian settler nationalism.³⁸ It takes Rhook’s

intimate retelling, however, to link the public space of the court with the down-at heel boarding house where Bailey died – and to conjure a story that is framed as much by the success of Indian doctors in establishing themselves within colonial society as it is by the effects of racialized emotion in keeping them at its edge.

Deborah Posel’s article also links the “barely visible” worlds of intimate encounters with a public sphere in which racial boundaries were clearly marked. As with the private exchanges that went on when Ranja treated Bailey, what transpired between Ernest Mchunu, a black consumer research guru in apartheid South Africa and Neville Isdell, Mchunu’s white supervisor, as they drove around the townships in Neville’s Peugeot 403 remains out of view. As Stoler argued, “the hermeneutic of intimacy might actually rest on the inaccessible and unseen.”³⁹ Yet intimacy is not autonomous, as if immune from social context. Mchunu and Isdell were in the car because of a convergence of interests that resulted from the need for South African business to get to know the country’s black population as consumers. In apartheid-era South Africa it was the master-servant relation that perhaps best expressed the paradox of what Posel terms, “racial strangeness” but it was through the closeness of that same relation that the problem of white ignorance was first addressed.⁴⁰ “When the day dawns, who delivers your morning paper and the milk?” began one marketing agency’s promotional pamphlet. The intimacy of things opened the possibility for difference to erode but colonial power did not automatically dissipate in the intimate, nor were colonial discourses more remote. Instead, intimacy might be thought of as a space where difference was challenged by the possibilities for the understanding of what resulted from it, subjectively, for the other that is “you” yet who is marked at the same time as Other from yourself.

We should be cautious not to misinterpret what Isdell and Mchunu recalled of their drives together in the township. Mchunu rode in the front seat beside Isdell – not in the back. They talked about their children and their wives. They talked of the intimate, in other words –

striking in itself – but both had ulterior motives to learn about the other. The emergence of market research in South Africa and with it the imagining of the African as a “consumer” created spaces for new kinds of research encounters. Yet Mchunu and Isdell were only flung together because the owner of a Department Store chain wanted to eliminate racial mixing in his shops.⁴¹ It is because knowledge of the other was not disinterested – because individuals like Mchunu and Isdell, Trailoyka and Lowman, had other reasons to know – that we are able to see these intimacies as part of their colonial situations. Intimacy “happened” not despite of colonial racism but because of it.

Posel’s essay is also – chronologically speaking – the only piece in the collection that works across the mid-twentieth century “moment” of decolonisation. India became independent in 1947. Apartheid began in 1948. Trailoyka Nath published his autobiography in 1963, the same year that Ernest Mchunu began in his role as a black guru in South Africa. This is the period that Jordanna Bailkin has described in the British context as the post-war, entangled with the postcolonial, a period for which histories of welfare, humanitarianism and human rights intersect with the history of decolonisation.⁴² But what happens to the intimacies of empire through this transition? What is the emotional history of decolonisation? Histories of intimacy written around sex and the family have remained within a time-frame that ends before, or at, imperial decline yet agents of international development are no less socially situated – and intimately connected – than those colonial Europeans before them.⁴³ In another vein, we might ask: how might historians understand colonial anxieties when writing on the wars that preceded decolonisation in South-East Asia and across French, Portuguese and Anglophone Africa?

These essays do not claim to be comprehensive but our impetus here has been less towards a definitive mapping of intimacy and the emotions in empire than a reflection on what an emotionally involved, intimate way of writing colonial histories demands of us as historians

and the methodologies we employ. As ever the problem with the local and the particular is its relation to larger scales of analysis: what light do these studies give on anything beyond their immediate context? Must close attention to “ordinary” lives always be at the expense of a bigger, more consequential picture?⁴⁴ Yet in writing of empire’s “private lives” we are forced to connect a whole series of fields that are frequently positioned apart – from the emotions to psychoanalysis; from the conventions of individual life-writing to the wider webs of social and political allegiance that families, friendships and dependencies entail; and from the specter of violence to its inescapable necessity as a mechanism of rule. The small-scale, locally grounded, micro-histories presented here are certainly not marked by the detachment that has characterized so much imperial historiography yet nor do they resemble that tendency within much social history to pursue an emotional or ideological identification with those eclipsed from dominant narratives.⁴⁵ Of the individuals presented here, only one – Trailoyka Nath – can be said to represent “the colonized”. By focusing on the individual and the local we have sought to disaggregate what colonial emotionality might mean. But underlying each of these essays remains the question: what other stories might be told?

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Endnotes

¹ Churchill, *African Journey*, 11.

² Kenya National Archives (here after KNA): AP / 1 / 1105, V. Cole, Magistrate, II Class Court at Juja, 3 January 1931.

³ KNA: AP / 1 / 1105, President of the Kenya Branch of the British Medical Association to the Acting registrar of the Supreme Court, 15 January 1931. On poor whites see Neil Roos, "White Folk"; Fischer-Tiné, *Low and Licentious Europeans*; Mueller, *Bad Colonists*.

⁴ Shadle, *Souls of White Folk*, 17.

⁵ Allen and Haggis, "Imperial Emotions".

⁶ Allen and Haggis, "Imperial Emotions"; Abusharaf, "Colonialist Emotionality"; Lewis, *Empire of Sentiment*; Vallgarda, *Christian Mission*. Rosenwein does distinguish between emotional communities and emotional regimes. "Regimes," she notes, suggests that one set of emotional norms is true for all, "whereas emotional communities are plural, describing any social group that adheres to the same valuations of emotions and how they should be expressed". The key works are Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*; Stearns and Stearns, "Emotionology" and Rosenwein, "Worrying about Emotions". The corresponding French historiography involves a related though distinctive set of concepts around world-views or mentalités. As with the notion of an emotional regime or community, the focus remains on the "external codes and structures" that regulate mental life, such as – for example – aesthetic images, linguistic codes, religious rituals or social conventions. See Hutton, "The History of Mentalities" and Febvre, "Sensibility and History".

⁷ For an exception see Uchida, “Sentimental Journey”. He notably works largely from self-authored memoirs. Striking too is his emphasis not only on how emotions reveal how colonial boundaries were constituted but also how they were transgressed.

⁸ Sartre, *The Emotions*, 15-16.

⁹ Roper, “Slipping Out of View”, 57-58.

¹⁰ Wagner, “Treading upon Fires”; Krikler, “Hysterical Pre-Cognition”

¹¹ Etherington, “Natal’s Rape Scare”; Martens, “Settler Homes and ‘Houseboys’”; Cornwell, “Social Meaning”; McCulloch, *Black Peril, White Virtue*.

¹² Kennedy, *Colonial Diagnosis*; Crozier, “Sensationalising Africa”.

¹³ From an expanding literature see Choudhury, “Sinews of Panic”; Reinkowski and Thum, *Helpless Imperialists*; Peckham, *Empires of Panic*; Fischer-Tiné, *Anxieties, Fear and Panic*; Beattie, *Empire and Environmental Anxiety*; Lindgren-Gibson, “Imperial Anxieties”.

¹⁴ Brewer, *Microhistory*, 89.

¹⁵ Brewer, *Microhistory*, 89.

¹⁶ Roper, “The Unconscious Work of History”, 174.

¹⁷ Saha, “Murder at London Zoo”, 1471-472.

¹⁸ For an examination of the methodological implications of an individual life, see Lee, “Gender without Groups”.

¹⁹ Kennedy and Burton, *How Empire Shaped Us*.

²⁰ Taylor, “Historical Subjectivity”, 195.

²¹ Summers, *Intimate Colonialism*, 800. See also Allman, “Making Mothers”; Stoler, *Race and Carnal Knowledge*; Briggs, *Reproducing Empire*; Levine, *Prostitution, Race and Politics*; Camiscioli, *Reproducing the French Race*; Hodges, “Contraception”; Saada, *Empire’s Children*.

²² A connected body of work, written around the family, shifts emphasis away from the state and towards the agency and subjectivity of “ordinary” lives. See Buettner, *Imperial Families*; Cleall, Ishiguru and Manktelow, *Histories of Family*; Pomfret, *Youth and Empire*.

²³ Burton, *Colonial Modernities*; Clancy-Smith and Gouda, *Domesticating the Empire*; Stoler, *Haunted by Empire*. For an overview that works across multiple empires, see Rizzo and Gerontakis, *Intimate Empires*.

²⁴ Frequently these have been written in biographical form. Dalrymple, *White Mughals*; Colley, *Elizabeth Marsh*; Ogborn, *Global Lives*; García-Arenal and Wieggers, *Man of Three Worlds*. On the tensions between a biographical and micro-historical approach, see Lepore, “Historians who love too much”.

²⁵ Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category”.

²⁶ Perry, *Colonial Relations*.

²⁷ Stoler, “Intimidations of Empire”, 6; Burton, *Trouble with Empire*.

²⁸ Stoler, “Intimidations”, 7.

²⁹ Butler, “Giving an account of oneself”. On letters see Earle, ed. *Epistolary Selves*; Samuelson, “Community of Letters”; Lindgren-Gibson, “Imperial Anxieties”; Rappaport, “Bombay Debt”. For a sensitive commentary on the letters of two failing British colonists in the South Pacific see Eves and Thomas, *Bad Colonists*.

³⁰ Cavarero, *Relating narratives*.

³¹ Ahmed, “Collective Feelings”, 28.

³² Lindgren-Gibson, “Imperial Anxieties”.

³³ Lindgren-Gibson supplies only Harald Fischer-Tine, *Low and Licentious Europeans* to reference historians’ tendency to look to the lowest of the low. The relevant work includes Ernst, *Mad Tales from the Raj*; De, *Marginal Europeans*; Jackson, *Madness and Marginality*;

On white working class history elsewhere see Roos, *Ordinary Springboks* and Van-Zyl Hermann, “White Workers in the Late Apartheid Period”.

³⁴ McKenzie, *Imperial Underworld*. Charles Van Onselen’s biographies, *The Fox and the Flies*; and *Showdown at the Red Lion* both show just how permeable were categories of “beggars, prisoners and lunatics” as well as the possibilities that movement around empire afforded for individuals moving between them.

³⁵ Burton and Ballantyne, “Politics of Intimacy”.

³⁶ Ghobrial, “Uses of Global Microhistory”.

³⁷ Shadle, *Souls*, 40-41.

³⁸ Lake and Reynolds; *Global Colour Line*; Schwarz, *White Man’s Countries*.

³⁹ Stoler, *Intimidations of Empire*, 16.

⁴⁰ Psychological research had also confronted the question of white ignorance of Africans but had done so without the instrumental element that rectifying that ignorance could be commercially lucrative. MacCrone, *Race Attitudes in South Africa*.

⁴¹ On the intimacy of research, see Bank, “The ‘Intimate Politics’ of Fieldwork”; Hansen, “Urban Research in a Hostile Setting”. On colonial knowledge more widely see the recent special issue of *Itinerario*, titled “Knowledge Brokers and Knowledge Production in Colonial Orders”, edited by Brett Bennett and Gregory Barton: *Itinerario*, 41:1 (2017).

⁴² Bailkin, *Afterlife of Empire*; Hilton, “International Aid and Development NGOs”; Sasson, “Milking the Third World?”

⁴³ In this respect, histories of childhood and child welfare do represent a connecting thread between literatures on colonial intimacy and decolonisation. See Boucher, *Empire’s Children*; Jacobs, *A Generation Removed*; Firpo, *The Uprooted*; McCabe, *Colonial Resettlement*. For studies looking at the intersection of sex and race during decolonisation and

after see Buettner, “Would you let your daughter marry a Negro?” and Shepard, “Something notably erotic”.

⁴⁴ For a powerful argument against placing the intimate or micro-historical into a wider analytical plane, see Magnusson, “The Singularization of History”.

⁴⁵ Salber Phillips, “Distance and Historical Representation”, 128. On detachment in imperial history see Schwarz “Unsentimental Education” and Hall, “Thinking Reflexively”.