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Introduction

Jonathan Baldo and Isabel Karremann

Memory Studies and the Affective Turn

In a recent book on "the new science of memory," Charles Fernyhough reminds us of a familiar fact about memory: "that emotional events are remembered more clearly and in greater detail than neutral ones. They may also stick in our minds for longer."[1] Far from a new discovery, the intimate relation between memory and affect has been widely appreciated since at least the ancient world. Their relation was fundamental to the memory arts, whose classic texts – Cicero's *De oratore*, Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* – all advocated the use of emotionally compelling imagery on the grounds that it would be longer retained in the memory. A survey of contemporary research in memory studies and affect studies, however, reveals surprisingly little interaction between them. Each area has its own journals, associations, and conferences.[2] There are signs of change, however. They include a recent online, interdisciplinary conference entitled "Memory, Affects and Emotions," which advises, "We are particularly interested in exploring the potential of [an] affective turn in memory studies."[3] And Harriet Phillips writes in her recent monograph, *Nostalgia in Print and Performance, 1510–1613: Merry Worlds*, of the "rich affective legacy of pre-Reformation memory in the later sixteenth century."[4] Our volume seeks to add to what we hope becomes a sustained, productive trend by exploring potential pathways between these two areas of inquiry, as well as their relationship to questions of individual personhood and collective identity in the analysis of culture and its expression in literature. It is the premise of this collection of new essays that the study of memory and affect stand in need not of uniting but of reuniting.

In his account of *memoria,* Aristotle stressed memory's emotional dimension. For Aristotle and his medieval Islamic proponent Averroes, according to Mary Carruthers, "recollection was understood to be a re-

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enactment of experience, which involves cogitation and judgment, imagination, and emotion."[5] Memory for Aristotle "is a *state* or *affection* . . . that follows on perceiving, apprehending, experiencing, or learning."[6] Deeply influenced by Aristotle, medieval thinkers held that the close connection between memory and affect was crucial for the "shaping of moral judgment and excellence of character," and hence for granting memory its "central place in medieval ethical life."[7] Carruthers writes, "Pre-modern psychologies recognized the emotional basis of remembering, and considered memories to be bodily 'affects'."[8] In medieval scholastic philosophy, "there is no such thing as an emotionally detached memory."[9] Memory was held to be composed of a visual aspect (*simulacrum* or *similitudo*) and an emotional one (*intentio*). The former "serves as a cognitive cue or token to the 'matter' or *res* being remembered"; the latter is the "'inclination' or 'attitude' we have to remembered experience"[10] and "serves to 'hook' a particular memory into one (or perhaps more) of a person's existing networks of experience."[11] *Intentio* does not merely correspond to the emotional state of the person who remembers; it refers also to that person's "attitudes, aims, and inclinations . . . , as well as to the state of physical and mental concentration required." Without *intentio*, memories would be "tossed into storage at random," rather than put in "places" and "'colored' in ways that are partly personal, partly emotional, partly rational, and mostly cultural."[12] For some modern researchers, the way in which a medieval model of memory took into account emotional and motivational aspects in addition to cognitive ones has prefigured "modern ideas about memories as inherently emotionally coloured."[13]

The age of Shakespeare that is the focus of this collection shared with the Middle Ages the related beliefs that remembering has an emotional basis and that the mind is essentially embodied. As the essays in this volume confirm, for the early modern period as well as for the medieval, "each memory involves some kind of emotion; each memory is thus to an important degree a physiological, bodily phenomenon."[14] The extensive and foundational work on the humors by Gail Kern Paster and others has demonstrated the degree to which mind and body were connected in the medical and psychological thinking of the period. Emotions were conceived not as private mental events but as "visibly written on the body."[15] In spite of these widely held assumptions, in early modern studies memory and affect have largely been treated as distinct areas of inquiry. This volume aims to remedy that situation by helping to open new lines of inquiry between the study of memory and affect in the early modern

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period. While "emotion" tends to be employed as an umbrella term for the linguistic and nonlinguistic expression of feelings – for instance, in literature and the arts – we follow Lauren Berlant in conceptually privileging the term "affect" in order to highlight that feeling has not only a personal but a sociopolitical dimension as well: an insight that has long been acknowledged with regard to the interplay of individual and collective memory.[16] This is particularly relevant with regard to the study of early modern culture and literature, as the early modern understanding of selfhood is much more overtly social and draws on memory as well as affect – alongside reason – as sources of individual and communal senses of self.[17]

The study of memory and of affect has been siloed not just in research on the early modern period, but more generally. Two of the most flourishing and broadly interdisciplinary trends across the humanities, social sciences, and neurosciences, affect studies and memory studies have developed concurrently since the mid-1990s. The rise of the "affective turn" is often traced to political philosopher Brian Massumi's influential essay "The Autonomy of Affect" (1995),[18] which draws heavily on his work of translating Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, the second volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. According to Ruth Leys, author of *The Ascent of Affect: Genealogy and Critique* (2017), the widely shared interest in affect among scholars in the humanities and social sciences represents a reaction against a perceived overvaluation of "the role of reason and rationality in politics, ethics, and aesthetics."[19] In her introduction to the volume *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*, Patricia Ticineto Clough observes that the turn to affect across a number of disciplines coincided with "a time when critical theory is facing the analytic challenges of ongoing war, trauma, torture, massacre, and counter/terrorism." She speculates that the affective turn constitutes a "shift in thought," one that registers "a change in the cofunctioning of the political, economic, and cultural."[20] For Michael Hardt, too, attention to affects, besides shifting attention to emotions and to the body, promises syntheses of various kinds, "because affects refer equally to the body and to the mind; and . . . because they involve both reason and the passions."[21]

At about the same time as the growth of affect studies, the study of memory across an equally broad range of disciplines gained momentum from the culture wars in the United States in the 1990s and the proliferation of new digital technologies for recording and preserving the past, as well as from the inevitable tendency to look backward at the end of a

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century and a millennium. Alison Landsberg postulates about the explosion of memory studies near the turn of the century:

> It should come as no surprise that at the beginning of the twenty-first century, memory has once again emerged as an urgent topic of debate for scholars in a wide variety of disciplines. As in the past, this interest in memory might be attributable to ontological insecurity at the start of the new century or anxiety about the shape of the "new world order."[22]

The fast-rising interest in memory across cultural studies has been driven in part by the foundational work of Jan and Aleida Assmann, whose concept of "cultural memory" has been transformative, hailed by some as a new paradigm for cultural studies. Building on the work of Freud and especially of the philosopher and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs' concept of collective memory in *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (1925) – the idea that a society may possess a group memory beyond that of any individual memory, though an individual's memory is influenced by and in turn may influence the collective memory – Jan and Aleida Assmann demonstrate how what they call cultural memory serves as the foundation of shared identities.[23]

Like twins separated at birth, the two fields of research known as memory studies and affect studies have had comparatively little influence on or communication with one another.[24] While the role of affect for the constitution of individual subjectivity and collective identity in the early modern period has been frequently addressed,[25] the specific links between affect and memory have gone largely unnoticed. It would be misleading to suggest that study of the literature and culture of early modern England has witnessed absolutely no traffic between affect studies and memory studies. In particular, studies of the impact of the Reformation on rituals of commemoration, most notably Stephen Greenblatt's *Hamlet in Purgatory* (2001), demonstrate how powerfully the two areas are connected. Recent work by Alexandra Walsham, Alison Shell, Gillian Wood, and Harriet Phillips likewise explores the intimate connections between personal recollection, social memory, and nostalgia in the aftermath of the Reformation.[26] But there has been no widespread and systematic communication between studies concentrating on either memory or affect in the period; independently, each represents a growing and immensely fertile area of research into the literature and culture of early modern England.[27] Memory studies in the early modern period, for the most part, have focused on epistemological and cognitive issues, on questions of belief, evidence, skepticism, confirmation, and perception.[28]

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We often forget that, in the view of early modern faculty psychology, the faculty of memory powerfully governs and is governed by affects such as suffering, pain, or shame but also laughter and love, and by actions with strong causal ties to affect, such as revenge or forgiving. Mnemonic phenomena like trauma or nostalgia cannot be separated from their affective impact on the individual and collective psyche.

Reviving as well as revising Halbwachs' oppositional distinction between memory and history, Pierre Nora distinguishes "between real memory – social and unviolated, exemplified in but also retained as the secret of so-called primitive or archaic societies – and history, which is how our hopelessly forgetful modern societies, propelled by change, organize the past."[29] Commenting on the now familiar distinction, Alison Landsberg concedes that, while agreeing with Marita Sturken's assertion that memory and history are "more entangled than oppositional," they "have different modes of address. Memory always implies a subjective, affective relationship to the past, while history strives to maintain a sense of distance from the past."[30] In this sense, Shakespeare's plays about England's medieval past are not "history plays" but rather "memory plays," whose intent was to enhance an affective relationship between audiences and their collective, national past. They are among the period's most indelible demonstrations of the close working relationship between memory and affect. By contrast, in our own time, the recent global rise of populist politics has only seemingly reunited affect with memory by harnessing a rhetoric of emotion to a nostalgic invocation of the geopolitical world of yesteryear that, however, aims at consigning to oblivion the lessons of history: caught up in the here and now of anxieties, fears, and resentments, populist rhetoric privileges affect over memory, to the exclusion of memory's cognitive fellow, reason.

Memory and Affect in the Early Modern Period: Conceptual Frameworks

We take our cue for uniting the study of memory and affect from Shakespeare. When Shakespearean characters speak of "hateful memory" (*Antony and Cleopatra*, 4.10.9) or "sad remembrance" (*Twelfth Night*, 1.1.31; *Richard III*, 4.4.252), they suggest a deep connection between memory and affect that has been neglected so far by students both of cultural memory and of the history of the emotions. Hamlet's exhortation of Queen Gertrude to remember her first husband is so cruelly effective because it instills in her feelings of shame and self-loathing. Henry's St.

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Crispin's Day Speech casts its spell by forging patriotic pride with the ritualized remembrance of military triumph into a national holiday. Sorrows often take root in the fertile soil of memory, as Macbeth suggests when he challenges the Scottish Doctor, "Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased, / Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow . . . ?" (5.3.43). Shakespeare also casts memory in the part of rescuer, a bringer of joy rather than sorrow, as an astonished Prospero suggests when he questions Miranda about a childhood memory, "how is't / That this lives in thy mind?" (1.2.49). Miranda's memory serves as prototype for all the play's subsequent acts of recovery, restoration, and redemption.

Specific states of feeling that are inherently intertwined with memory, such as mourning, vengefulness, or nostalgia, drive the plots of many Shakespearean tragedies and problem plays. The number of examples that can be found not just in Shakespeare but in the literature of his contemporaries suggests that this conjunction of memory and affect is more than a rhetorical conceit that forges two distant concepts through the power of poetic language; rather, it is a conjunction made possible and familiar by early modern notions of human physiology, psychology, and philosophy which suggest that memory and affect, while in themselves different, were thought of as related modes of embodied knowledge.[31] This becomes particularly evident in texts that warned against the perilous influence of each on the other. The stenographer John Willis, for instance, warned in his handbook on the memory arts that "natural memory," that is, the brain's disposition for retention, can be harmfully impaired by emotional disturbances such as "anxious care, fear, grief, too much bashfulness, covetous hope, Jealousie, &c." or by "Filthy desires, as avarice, envy, thirst of revenge, lust, love of harlots and the ardent Passion, *Love*."[32] And clergyman William Perkins' theological-rhetorical manual on *The Arte of Prophecying* warned that the striking nature of memory images, which made them memorable in the first place, could too easily lead to an "impious" arousal of the passions: "The animation of the image, which is the key of memory, is impious, because it requireth absurd, insolent, and prodigious cogitations, and those especially which set an edge upon and kindle the most corrupt affections of the flesh."[33] These warnings, we do well to note, do not speak to an opposition between mind and body, between intellect and emotion, but are rather a testimony to the entanglement of memory and affect.

The premodern perspective thus provides a more holistic understanding of cognitive processes as grounded in the body and influenced by its sense perceptions and passions. Such an understanding can be approached

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through the three conceptual frameworks of faculty psychology, Galenic humoralism, and, in modern parlance, distributed cognition. The first framework located the human psychological faculties of imagination, judgment, and memory in three different "ventricles," or regions, of the brain. As such, these cognitive faculties are linked to the material disposition of the brain, as the standard metaphor for the memory also suggests: like a wax tablet, the brain must be of the right kind of material quality – moist but not too moist, warm rather than cold – in order to receive a lasting imprint.[34] Moreover, imagination, judgment, and memory as the higher faculties of intellection were also affected by the passions of the soul, which, in the Aristotelian tradition, was thought of as an embodied entity.[35] The Jesuit Thomas Wright signaled this in the title of his *Passions of the Minde* (1604), a treatise which explains the complex entanglement of the faculties and the passions. What emerges from his description is, primarily, that both are kinds of embodied cognition:

> First, then to our imagination commeth, by sense or memorie, some object to be knowne . . . the which being knowne (for *Ignoti nulla cupido* [we do not know what we do not desire]) in the imagination which resideth in the former part of the braine, (as we proove) when we imagine any thing, presently the purer spirites flocke from the brayne, by certayne secret channels to the heart, where they pitch at the doore, signifying what an object was presented.. . . The heart immediately bendeth, either to prosecute it, or to eschewe it; and the better to effect that affection, draweth on other humours to help him . . .; and not onley . . . the heart draweth, but also the same soule that informeth the heart residing in other partes, sendeth the humours vnto the heart.[36]

Wright describes here a multi-tiered communication between sense perception, material brain, the heart as seat of the passions, and the soul as the seat of imagination as well as judgment and memory. The overall effect is "affection," a psychological or physical change happening in the body or involving the body;[37] or, in Wright's own words borrowed from Ovid's *Ars amatoria*, a knowledge born of passion: "we do not know what we do not desire." The passions thus are not unmediated responses to external sense perceptions but constitute a kind of cognitive processing, as Benedict Robinson points out: passions are "ways of seeing, and therefore also perceptions and modes of cognition."[38] According to Wright, passions may also be aroused by "memorie," another indicator that the embodied nature of knowledge in faculty psychology made the conjunction of memory and affect familiar. When Wright describes the imagination, drawing on "sense or memorie," as the operative faculty that sends outs

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"spirits" which affect both heart and soul, he formulates a key principle of the arts of rhetoric and of literary creation that is also acknowledged, for example, in Sidney's *Defense of Poesie* and especially the many contemporary defenses of as well as attacks on the theater.[39]

The second conceptual framework through which memory and affect were understood as related in the early modern period is Galenic humoralism. The pioneering work by Gail Kern Paster, begun in *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage* (2004), has firmly established the centrality of the material body for a "premodern ecology of the passions" that connected the body and affect. In Paster's "psychophysiological" account, the early moderns understood "the passions and the body that houses them in ecological terms – that is, in terms of that body's reciprocal relations to the world."[40] Paster explains that, for early modern individuals, "the passions actually were liquid forces of nature, because, in this cosmology, the stuff of the outside world and the stuff of the body were composed of the same elemental materials."[41] The humors also feature in Wright's description quoted above, where they have the role of a medium through which passions are transported and communicated through the body. Humoralism thus goes a step further than faculty psychology by linking embodiment to the environment in reciprocal relations, thereby adding a dimension to the holistic notion of embodied perception and experience as not only embodied, but also embedded.[42]

Modern scholarship on Galenic humoralism, however, tends to neglect the subject's agency in favor of the passivity of sense perceptions and somatic experiences. Yet if "the passions are what connects our minds to the world outside us," as Cummings and Sierhuis argue,[43] then this insight urges us to understand early modern emotions as intersubjective: they allow us to connect with the other human beings who inhabit the world. This is where the philosophy of the passions in the early modern period can usefully complement the psychophysiological understanding provided by Galenic humoralism to help us see the political and ethical dimension of the emotions. As such, the passions are necessarily more than bodily impulses. They form one of the many kinds of embodied knowledge about ourselves and our relations to the environment, as Miranda Anderson remarks: "physical processes and wider environments play manifold cognitive roles, including enabling or constituting phenomena now identified by terms such as mind, thought, reasoning, experience, emotions, memory, imagination, and perception."[44] The framework of 'distributed cognition' as "an activity that is always both embodied and extended into the world"[45] is particularly relevant for linking memory and affect with the

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environment the embodied subject inhabits. Although "the term originates in our own period," Anderson affirms that "distributed cognition was more widely manifest in the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century early modern belief system than it has become in current times."[46] Both memory and affect were conceived of as modes of cognition extending beyond the individual body, which was embedded in a material, social, and cultural environment. Thus, the memory arts encouraged the imaginative creation of "repositories," spatial environments through which the orator might walk in his mind to retrieve memorized facts, sentences, or names. These repositories were typically imagined as built environments, rooms, galleries, palaces, or – particularly relevant for our collection – theaters. Put into practice, especially by professional play-actors, the art of memory also relied on material artifacts like textbooks, plots, and props and on the material environment constituted by the other players and the playhouse itself, which extended the working field of recollection beyond the brain to material, tangible objects.[47] Importantly, material objects could become "triggers and sites of cognitive activity in their own right," as Sophie Duncan has recently shown in a study of props and cognition in early modern plays, actively forcing memories on figures: the handkerchief in *Othello* or the miniature portraits in *Hamlet* would be examples.[48] From the perspective of distributed cognition, memory thus not only functions *like* emotion: as externally stimulated modes of embodied knowledge, both are entangled in meaningful ways.

Early modern scholarship has been pushing toward a rapprochement between affect and memory not only from the perspective of the history of the emotions and historical phenomenology. Memory studies, too, have recently begun to shift their focus to "the affective, experiential and immanent aspects of memory, attending, in particular, to the way they foreground questions about gender and embodiment," as the authors of a review article in *Memory Studies* point out.[49] Attention to the physiology of memory itself is not new, of course: the early modern memory arts typically included quasi-medical regimens with dietary recommendations designed to improve the retentive faculties of the brain, and this has been part of scholarly discussions of the *ars memoriae*. When Amanda Bailey and Mario DiGangi state in the introduction to *Affect Theory and Early Modern Texts* that "[humoralism] understood the interrelated components of mind, psyche, soma, climate, food, and air,"[50] then something very similar can be said about the memory arts. While ostensibly focused on intellectual cognition and its training, the memory arts combined the disciplines of ancient rhetoric and humoral medicine in order to effectively manage

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the process of recollection by manipulating the disposition of the material body which enables it. Looking on the reception side, the memory arts were in the service of rhetoric that aimed at both cognitively persuading and affectively touching the audience, often at the same time. The recent affective turn within the field of memory studies expands this notion of embodied memory from "practices of memory cultivation" and "written and printed documents . . . to objects and places, to religious discourses and to a wide range of embodied, sensory and emotive experiences."[51] Prominent examples of such scholarship include Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass's *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (2000), which reconstructs the ability of clothes to "mold and shape [subjects] both physically and socially . . . through their power as material memories"; Alexandra Walsham's *The Reformation of the Landscape* (2011), which examines how religious assumptions influenced contemporary perceptions of the physical environment, and how in turn the reformed landscape shaped and commemorated the theological, political, and cultural transformations of the Reformation; or Patricia Phillippy's *Shaping Remembrance from Shakespeare to Milton* (2018), which explores textual, visual, and material forms of commemoration, often as gendered practices, including manuscript and printed memorials, portraits, jewelry, textiles or 'rarities.'[52]

This scholarship is interested in the individual and collective forms of cultural memories and affects, and in their transmission through various media and artifacts. If, in such studies, "[m]emories are formed and expressed by means of intersubjective social interactions,"[53] what must be acknowledged and conceptualized more systematically is the role that affect plays in shaping those intersubjective social interactions which produce cultural memory. Garrett A. Sullivan has shown how memory is "an embodied process that presupposes involvement with the environment" and that is also impacted by socially proscribed affects like shame or honor; hence, remembering must be understood not only as a cognitive act but as a social performance determined at least in part by affect: "Remembering is not recollection; it is instead an action or set of actions that arises out of the subject's response to specific social circumstance and a particular imperative to remember (that is, the imperative to behave in a certain way)."[54] The collection of essays edited by Cummings and Sierhuis examines the role of the passions for both subjectivity and intersubjective relations, ethics, and politics, although the only example of emotional collective memory touched on is the phenomenon of nostalgia. Nostalgia is indeed the best-studied intersection of memory and affect in early

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