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Language and the politics of emotion

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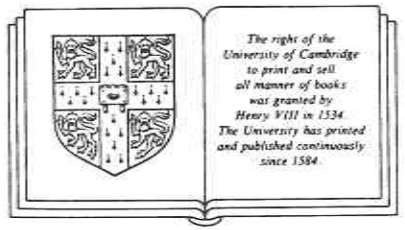

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Contents

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Our work on this book is for Jonathan and Lianna, and for Tim.

1. Introduction: emotion, discourse, and the politics of everyday life

LILA ABU-LUGHOD AND CATHERINE A. LUTZ

Emotions are one of those taken-for-granted objects of both specialized knowledge and everyday discourse now becoming part of the domain of anthropological inquiry. Although still primarily the preserve of philosophy and psychology within the academic disciplines, emotions are also ordinary concerns of a popular American cultural discourse whose relationship to such professional discourses is complex and only partially charted. Tied to tropes of interiority and granted ultimate facticity by being located in the natural body, emotions stubbornly retain their place, even in all but the most recent anthropological discussions, as the aspect of human experience least subject to control, least constructed or learned (hence most universal), least public, and therefore least amenable to sociocultural analysis. The essays in this collection seek to demonstrate, on the contrary, that the sociocultural analysis of emotion is both feasible and important and to suggest new ways of going about it.

In this introductory chapter, we begin by setting out four strategies that have been or could be used to develop the anthropology of emotion: essentializing, relativizing, historicizing, and contextualizing emotion discourse. We then consider the field of meanings and diverse deployments of the key term "discourse," without which, we argue, "emotion" cannot properly be understood. Paying special attention to the theoretical terms "discourse" is meant to replace, we argue that the most productive analytical approach to the cross-cultural study of emotion is to examine discourses on emotion and emotional discourses as social practices within diverse ethnographic contexts. Finally, we review the common themes and specific arguments of the essays in this collection, drawing out their contributions to a new approach to emotion, an approach distinguished by its focus on the constitution of emotion, and even the domain of emotion itself, in discourse or situated speech practices, by its construal of emotion as about social life rather than internal

states, and its exploration of the close involvement of emotion talk with issues of sociability and power – in short, with the politics of everyday life.

This book enters a dynamic and growing field of debate on questions about the relationship between the emotions, society, and cultural meaning.[1] Most anthropological works in this field prior to 1980 simply accepted psychological orthodoxy on emotions: Emotions are psychobiological processes that respond to cross-cultural environmental differences but retain a robust essence untouched by the social or cultural. The diverse approaches within the anthropology of emotions may have reflected the heterodoxies of psychology, insofar as there developed various Freudian approaches (e.g., Hiatt 1984), analyses based on learning theory (e.g., Robarchek 1979), and ethological and attachment perspectives (e.g., Lindholm 1982). But only recently has the *doxa* itself – that emotions are things internal, irrational, and natural – been exposed and questioned.

Much work done in the fields of psychiatric and psychological anthropology can be characterized as essentialist in its approach to emotion (even when other aspects of the person are viewed as more fundamentally social in origin or character). From early culture and personality work between World Wars I and II through much contemporary work in psychological anthropology, the amount and kinds of emotion that people experience are assumed to be predictable outcomes of universal psychobiological processes. A particular experience is assumed to stimulate identical emotions in all nonpathological humans, as when mothers are assumed to become attached to their newborns naturally and independently of social context (Scheper-Hughes 1985). In some of this work, for example, it is taken for granted that individuals have a limited and/or necessary amount of affection or love to distribute across persons to whom they become attached; hence the not infrequent concern with the effect on a child of having multiple caretakers, and the question of whether such children have less intense feelings for the mother and/or for other adults. In a related vein, Lindholm (1982) has argued that Swat Pukhtun (Pakistan) social organization promotes fragmented and agonistic social relations, thwarting the need for love in most contexts, but particularly in adult males. The result is that the institution of friendship must bear, virtually alone, the heavy burden of fulfilling that need; because love cannot be expressed in other arenas, friendships become intense and voracious.

Elsewhere (e.g., Hiatt 1984, Scheff 1977), emotions are viewed as

"things" with which social systems must "deal" in a functional sense. Ritual frequently has been seen as a device that allows for the expression of preexisting emotions that would create problems if not expressed. Adolescent initiation ceremonies, for example, are presented as means for containing the affective turbulence of young boys. In a somewhat different vein, emotions are sometimes treated as psychic "energies" implicitly marshaled in the service of constructing a social order. Spiro (1965) presents a version of this view when he argues that the emotional conflicts of Burmese men, which include, in his view, their homosexual feelings, are channeled into and defused by entrance into the monkhood.

The strategy of essentializing emotions has several unfortunate consequences. First, if feelings are considered the essence of emotion, then the most reliable way to explore emotions would be through introspective reports. This approach deflects attention from social life and its possible implication in the very language of emotion. It also prevents us from looking at the role of emotional discourses in social interactions. Second, it reinforces the assumption of universality in the forms of distinct emotions (e.g., shame and guilt are each central and separate feelings), in their meaning (e.g., anger in one culture feels/means the same as anger in another), and in emotional processes (e.g., emotions are primarily intrapsychic and subject to masking, repression, and channeling). Finally, hand in hand with essentialism goes a strange invisibility of emotion itself as a problem, since positing emotion universals allows us more easily to take emotion for granted.

For those both committed to some sort of cross-cultural analysis and suspicious of the certainties and unexamined cultural assumptions about that which we most take for granted, three alternative strategies of questioning appear to be fruitful. The first strategy is to do what anthropologists have always to some extent done: to bring into question the certainty and universality of ways we think about and talk about things such as emotions by investigating whether it is so elsewhere.[2] A good deal of (often implicitly) comparative work exists, from the fertile early work by H. Geertz (1959) on the vocabulary of emotion in Java, by C. Geertz (1973) on the person in Bali, and by Briggs (1970) on Utku emotion expression, to Levy's (1973) explication of Tahitian ideas and silences on the subject of emotion.

The most important recent examples of the relativizing strategy are found in the seminal work of Myers (1979, 1986) and Rosaldo (1980).

Unlike much of the earlier ethnopsychological work on emotion, their interpretive approach to emotions stresses not what culturally variable ideas about emotion can tell us about other "deeper" psychological processes, but rather what implications these ideas have for social behavior and social relations. These analysts helped place emotions squarely in the realm of culture by pointing to the ways local cultural concepts of emotion such as the Ilongot *liget* (anger) and the Pintupi *ngaltu* (compassion) borrow from broader cultural themes and reflect, in their ideological shape, the forms of indigenous social relationships. If these works did not always or consistently deessentialize emotions (see Rosenberg, this volume), they certainly began the important process of suspending concern with the psychological paradigm. For both, furthermore, differences observed in talk about emotion had to be traced to social structure rather than to a pure realm of autonomous ideology.

While some of the work of relativizing has been done by examining specific concepts of emotion used in different cultures, many studies of emotion even show how fragile the category itself is. For example, Howell (1981) argues that for the Chewong (Malaysia), what we call "affect" is seen as a minor phenomenon; talk about emotion is replaced by talk about normative rules that provide, she argues, "an idiom for . . . organizing the individual's relationship to himself, to his fellow[s] . . . , and to nature and supernature" (142). Obeyesekere (1985) shows that in Sri Lanka emotion is likely to be taken as a sign of Buddhist religious prescription achieved or unachieved. For the Ifaluk (Micronesia), emotion is often construed as moral judgment and has a similar pragmatic force (Lutz 1988).

In Riesman's work on the Fulani of West Africa, a subtle transition from the analysis of particular emotion concepts and their role in social relations to the questioning of the very cultural meaning and social structural effects of emotionality itself illustrates the direction we think the anthropology of emotion ought to take. In his earlier work, Riesman (1977) was especially concerned to lay out the dimensions of Fulani notions of *pulaaku* (translated as 'Fulaniness' but something others might have called 'honor') and *semteende*, or 'shame'. In his later work (1983), he began to make a suggestive argument linking social hierarchy to emotionality itself (see also Irvine, this volume), arguing that self-control or relative lack of emotional expressiveness is simultaneously taken as a badge of, justification for, and realization of the social superiority of nobles over their ex-slaves. If the meaning of emotionality differs cross-

culturally and the applications to social organization of emotional practice are variable, then any certainties about universals are undermined.

A second strategy for those interested in emotions as sociocultural phenomena is to historicize them. That means subjecting discourses on emotion, subjectivity, and the self to scrutiny over time, looking at them in particular social locations and historical moments, and seeing whether and how they have changed. Although a host of potential studies remain to be done, a few works have attempted this sort of investigation. Some have been concerned with the history of formal and informal theories of emotions in the West, and others have examined the fate of particular emotions (Cancian 1987; Gardiner, Metcalf, and Beebe-Center 1970; MacFarlane 1987; Stearns and Stearns 1986). Norbert Elias (1978) has argued, mostly from a reading of etiquette manuals, that vast transformations of affective life in Europe took place concomitant with the development of the absolutist state. Among these he includes an expansion of the contexts in which disgust occurs and a diminution of aggressive affect or behavior. That he calls this the "civilizing process" is symptomatic of his uncritical interpretation of these changes as involving a refinement of a somehow preexisting affectivity, a position that many anthropologists would regard with skepticism. Still, his work opens up an argument about the kinds of changes that have taken place in one geographical, historical setting.

Other scholars have examined these changes in terms of the disappearance of or shift in the social locus of various emotions, as well as the manipulation of emotional discourses for state purposes. The problem of sadness has received an impressive number of historical treatments. Jackson (1985), like Harré and Finlay-Jones (1986), takes on the focused task of tracing the extinction of an emotion called "accidie" and the significance of the obsolescence of "melancholy," both so important during medieval times, in the contemporary period. Sontag (1977) argues that the nineteenth-century Romantic movement came to celebrate individuality in part by viewing sadness as a mark of refinement, as a quality that made the person suffering from it "interesting." The rise of individualism brought with it the celebration of difference; one of the routes by which the new individuals could distinguish themselves was through a focus on feelings defined as aspects of unique personalities. Radden (1987) takes these views further by noting that melancholy was primarily a male complaint, one that was at least in part socially valor-

ized. She argues that the related modern discourse on depression differs in pinpointing women as its bearers and in portraying the syndrome as more unequivocally deviant, deficient, and medical in nature.[3] In a different vein and in a non-Western setting, Good and Good (1988) explore the ways in which the Islamic Republic of Iran now organizes, to an unprecedented degree, both public and private emotional discourses. It has transformed the public discourse of sadness and grief, which before the revolution was central to religious ritual, self-definition, and social understanding, into a sign of political loyalty to the state.

What might be most productive, however, would be to begin by tracing the genealogy of "emotion" itself so that, in an enterprise analogous to Foucault's (1978) critical investigation of the production of "sexuality" in the modern age, we might consider how emotions came to be constituted in their current form, as physiological forces, located within individuals, that bolster our sense of uniqueness and are taken to provide access to some kind of inner truth about the self (Abu-Lughod, this volume; Lutz 1986). One promising line of questioning might be to build on Foucault's insights about the growing importance of confession (to which a discourse of emotion is often bound both inside and outside psychotherapy) as a locus of social control and discourse production in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Foucault's description of his own project suggests more directly how emotion discourse might represent a privileged site of the production of the modern self. He writes, in the second volume of *The History of Sexuality*, that he wishes "to analyze the practices by which individuals were led to focus their attention on themselves, to decipher, recognize, and acknowledge themselves as subjects of desire, bringing into play between themselves and themselves a certain relationship that allows them to discover, in desire, the truth of their being" (Foucault 1985:5–6).[4] He also notes that in each historical period it is "not always the same part of ourselves, or of our behavior, [that] is relevant for ethical judgment," but in contemporary Western society, "the main field of morality, the part of ourselves which is most relevant for morality, is our feelings" (1983:238). Feelings can play this role because they are currently constituted as the core of the self, the seat of our individuality.[5]

The third strategy is to focus on social discourse, building less on anthropology's comparative bent or the broad historical framing of the problem than on a commitment to careful analysis of the richness of specific social situations, whether here or there, as Geertz (1987) puts it.

It is a strategy followed by the authors of the chapters in this volume, all of whom share a concern with emotion and begin with the assumption that it is a sociocultural construct. They go on to explore, through close attention to ethnographic cases, the many ways emotion gets its meaning and force from its location and performance in the public realm of discourse. They also ask how social life is affected by emotion discourse. To assess the nature and value of this strategy first requires attention to the term at its center: the word "discourse."

"Discourse" has become, in recent years, one of the most popular and least defined terms in the vocabulary of Anglo-American academics. It pervades the humanities and now haunts many of the social sciences. Rather than being alarmed by its spread, however, it might be better to ask why so many have adopted it. The best way to pursue that question is to consider what theoretical work they want the term to do.

As everyone readily admits, defining discourse precisely is impossible because of the wide variety of ways it is used. To get a sense of why people use it, and why we have found it useful in thinking about emotion, it might be helpful to consider what terms it replaces. What is discourse not? To what is discourse counterposed? This varies by discipline, but we will be concerned only with anthropology because its peculiar appropriation of the term from the French poststructuralist vocabulary is inflected by the prior and concurrent usage of the term by anthropological linguists.

First, particularly for those whose concerns are linguistic, the term discourse marks an approach to language as spoken and used rather than as a static code analyzable apart from social practice. In Saussure's *langue/parole* distinction, discourse would fall on the side of *parole*. What those who invoke discourse in this context might want to add, however, is that *langue* either does not exist (e.g., Hopper 1987) or at least is always embodied in particular utterances by particular individuals. In privileging speech, those who use the term discourse generally also want to assert the importance of pragmatics versus semantics. The "code," whether it be grammar, structure, model, or, in this case, some purported underlying presocial emotional matrix, is taken as emergent in a social context, even if it is not analyzed as a peculiar Western cultural construct.

Although in some senses associated with speech, discourse is also commonly used instead to suggest a concern with verbal productions more formal, elaborate, or artistic than everyday conversation. Examples of classic forms of discourse in this sense are poems, songs, la-

ments, prayers, myths, and verbal dueling forms such as sounding (Labov 1972). Discourse is also used by some who identify with postmodernism in its literary incarnation to stress the spoken quality of language (Tedlock 1983, 1987) and to evoke its dialogic aspect, allegedly ignored by those of us who live in literate societies. Yet others use the term discourse as a way of including even the nonverbal, like music, crying, or the "unsaid" of past utterances and present unarticulated imagination (Tyler 1978) in our consideration of the meanings humans make.

Sherzer's (1987) recent article advocating a discourse-centered approach to language and culture demonstrates the wide range of uses and resulting ambiguity of the term. Blending many of these senses of discourse together in his "purposely vague" definition, he writes that discourse is

> a level or component of language use . . . [which] can be oral or written and can be approached in textual or sociocultural and social-interactional terms. And it can be brief like a greeting and thus smaller than a single sentence or lengthy like a novel or narration of personal experience and thus larger than a sentence and constructed out of sentences or sentence-like utterances. . . . Discourse is an elusive area, an imprecise and constantly emerging and emergent interface between language and culture, created by actual instances of language in use. (296)

The unfortunate vagueness of this definition is the product of a failure to grasp that terms are used to signal perspectives and to carve out academic domains, not just to refer to definable entities. The kinds of usages we have described thus far for the increasingly employed term discourse could be characterized as largely sociolinguistic or literary. All that is being keyed is an interest in language in context, texts, and the public and social character of what we study. And for the most part, the term as used in this volume stays well within this range of meanings.

Hovering around the edges of many of the chapters and informing the project of the volume as a whole is another way of using discourse, one with more ambitious theoretical goals and different disciplinary roots. Discourse in this other sense is a word that has been taken up by those who find the critique of social theory associated with French poststructuralists like Michel Foucault persuasive, or at least those who have begun to borrow its vocabulary. With this move, the semantic field and pragmatic deployment of the term have begun to shift.

Although only beginning to find its way into anthropological writing, discourse in this much wider Foucaultian sense is being adopted to do the theoretical work of refiguring two terms that it replaces: culture and ideology. For many, the no less definable term "culture" has become problematic for several reasons. First, built into it is a distinction between a realm of ideas, even if public rather than in people's heads, and material realities and social practices, a distinction some users of discourse would like to problematize. Second, the term seems to connote a certain coherence, uniformity, and timelessness in the meaning systems of a given group, and to operate rather like the earlier concept of "race" in identifying fundamentally different, essentialized, and homogeneous social units (as when we speak about "a culture"). Because of these associations, invoking culture tends to divert us from looking for contests for meaning and at rhetoric and power, contradictions, and multiple discourses, or what some now refer to as "heteroglossia" (see Irvine, this volume).[6] It also falsely fixes the boundaries between groups in an absolute and artificial way.[7]

"Ideology" too has come to carry with it meanings that some social theorists want to shed. The Marxist alternative to culture, it has the virtues of seeming less unifying than culture. It can be pluralized even within one society, and is always linked to historically specific social groups assumed from the start to be engaged in struggles of domination and resistance. However, it retains, perhaps even more strongly than the notion of culture, the radical distinction between a realm of ideas and a material or social reality because of its historical association with a distinction between base and superstructure.[8] And even more problematically, it sets up an implicit opposition between itself, denoting a mystifying or at least motivated and interested vision of the world, and some sort of uninterested, unmotivated, and objective truth available either to a class or, perhaps more commonly, to the critical social scientist. Foucault uses discourse to suggest his rejection of these dualisms that are easily and sometimes unconsciously evoked by the notion of ideology.[9]

Although the chapters in this volume do not explore many of the implications of Foucault's work, they do remain faithful to his premise that "discourses . . . [are] . . . practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault 1972:49). For the final work discourse is meant to do, as social theory, is to suggest a concern not so much with meaning as with a kind of large-scale pragmatics. Taking texts and talk and all sorts of other social practices as productive of experience and

constitutive of the realities in which we live and the truths with which we work, this approach also considers how power might produce discourses as well.[10] In suggesting that we attend to the efficacy of discourse, this newer and wider usage still resembles the more limited sociolinguistic uses outlined earlier. Yet it goes further by looking at more than speech, by recognizing the local, contradictory, and fragmented character of discourses, and by insisting that discourses be understood in relation not just to social life but to power.

Thus, although each of the authors in this volume uses discourse differently, the term, resonating with its many current uses, stands as a token of our common wariness of mentalist models, our refusal to treat language as simply reflecting thought or experience, and our insistence that all those productions in a community that could be considered cultural or ideological be analyzed as social practices, tied to relations of power as well as to sociability.

The chapters in this collection takes discourse, often as the situated social practices of people speaking, singing, orating, or writing to and about each other, as a point of entry for the study of emotion. They address one or both of two issues: the discourse *on* emotions – scientific or everyday, Western or non-Western – and emotional discourses, that is, discourses that seem to have some affective content or effect. Differing in the extent to which they bring the category of emotion itself into question and in the degree to which they speak as if emotions are internal things or not (and whether it even matters), the authors also differ in the aspects and forms of language they explore. Nevertheless, they all approach emotion through language and understand language as inescapably and fundamentally social.

The turn here to discourse is a turn to detailed, empirical studies of conversation, poetics, rhetoric, and argument about and with emotional content. Building on the work of others who have explored facets of emotion in performance and language (Basso 1985; Brenneis 1987; Crapanzano 1989; Feld 1983; Good, Good, and Fischer 1988; Irvine 1982; Ochs and Schieffelin 1989; Sabini and Silver 1987 and 1988; B. Schieffelin and Ochs 1986; E. Schieffelin 1976; Urban 1988; White and Kirkpatrick 1985), we argue for a view of emotion as discursive practice. What advantages does this have for our understanding of emotion? What can those interested in emotion learn from considering its relation to discourse?

In contrast to other approaches, the emphasis on discourse in studying emotion keeps us fixed on the fact that emotions are phenomena

that can be seen in social interaction, much of which is verbal. As the sociolinguist Gumperz has also said of discourse studies, "mere talk to produce sentences . . . does not by itself constitute communication. Only when a move has elicited a response can we say communication is taking place" (1982:1). Attention to discourse leads us therefore to study new problems, such as how an audience's response to emotional performances can be unpredictable given the former's ability to attend to only some parts of the performance and to make idiosyncratic sense of those parts. Attention to discourse also leads us to a more complex view of the multiple, shifting, and contested meanings possible in emotional utterances and interchanges, and from there to a less monolithic concept of emotion. The focus on discourse allows not only for insight into how emotion, like the discourse in which it participates, is informed by cultural themes and values, but also how it serves as an operator in a contentious field of social activity, how it affects a social field, and how it can serve as an idiom for communicating, not even necessarily about feelings but about such diverse matters as social conflict (White, this volume), gender roles (Lutz, this volume), or the nature of the ideal or deviant person (Fajans 1985).

The study of emotion as discourse allows us to explore how speech provides the means by which local views of emotion have their effects and take their significance. If earlier scholars who rejected the notion that emotion was sensation preferred the notion of emotion as judgment (Solomon 1976), their view has since been supplemented by the insight that judgments might better be viewed as socially contested evaluations of the world phrased in an emotional idiom and evident in everyday speech behavior. Rather than seeing them as expressive vehicles, we must understand emotional discourses as pragmatic acts and communicative performances. The more general interest in the social sciences in how language implements social reality coincides with the interest in how emotions are sociocultural facts. If emotions are social phenomena, discourse is crucial to understanding how they are so constituted.

The most important theme running through the chapters is that emotion and discourse should not be treated as separate variables, the one pertaining to the private world of individual consciousness and the other to the public social world. Taking seriously Wittgenstein's (1966) insights about the relationship between emotion and language, articulated first in his description of what kind of "language-game" talk of joy and anger is, we argue that emotion talk must be interpreted as *in* and *about* social life rather than as veridically referential to some internal state.

Emotion should not be viewed, as our quotidian perspective might suggest, as a substance carried by the vehicle of discourse, expressed by means of discourse, or "squeezed through," and thereby perhaps distorted in, the shapes of language or speech. Rather, we should view emotional discourse as a form of social action that creates effects in the world, effects that are read in a culturally informed way by the audience for emotion talk. Emotion can be said to be *created in*, rather than shaped by, speech in the sense that it is postulated as an entity in language where its meaning to social actors is also elaborated. To say this is not to reduce the concept of emotion to the concept of speech, even though a discourse-centered approach might be construed as a rejection or obscuring of the body.

Although in this volume we focus on emotion as discourse, working to pry emotion loose from psychobiology, that does not mean that we do not recognize the possibility that emotions are also framed in most contexts as experiences that involve the whole person, including the body (see Appadurai, this volume). Here Bourdieu's thoughts on "body hexis" are suggestive, providing ways of thinking about the fact that emotion is embodied without being forced to concede that it must be "natural" and not shaped by social interaction. He defines body hexis as a set of body techniques or postures that are learned habits or deeply ingrained dispositions that both reflect and reproduce the social relations that surround and constitute them. The child, for instance, learns these habits by reading, via the body rather than the mind's eye, the cultural texts of spaces and of other bodies (Bourdieu 1977:90).

Extending this definition to the emotions enables us to grasp how they, as cultural products, are reproduced in individuals in the form of embodied experience. To learn how, when, where, and by whom emotions ought to be enacted is to learn a set of body techniques including facial expressions, postures, and gestures. For example, rather than thinking or speaking the respect (*gabarog*) that helps reproduce a gender hierarchy on Ifaluk atoll in Micronesia, girls follow the curve of their mothers' backs in embodying the bent-over posture of respect. Similarly, emotions such as love or friendship that are thought to emanate from ineffable positive feelings between two people might be cued, Bourdieu notes (1977:82), by a sensed similarity of body hexis produced by being reared under similar physical and social conditions. We might eventually develop an analysis of the kinds of bodily discourse on emotion that includes emotional postures that are simultaneously (1) phenomenologically experienced, (2) vehicles for symbolizing and affecting social relations (e.g., when angry glaring represents the imposition of moral obligation), and (3) practices that reveal the effects of power (as in gestures of respect and shame in many cultures).[11]

The move to ensure that emotions remain embodied, however, should be seen as more than an attempt to position them in the human body. Embodying the emotions also involves theoretically situating them in the social body such that one can examine how emotional discourses are formed by and in the shapes of the ecologies and political economies in which they arise.

Emotion can be studied as embodied discourse only after its social and cultural – its discursive – character has been fully accepted. To take language as more than a transparent medium for the communication of inner thoughts or experience, and to view speech as something essentially bound up with local power relations that is capable of socially constructing and contesting realities, even subjectivity, is not to deny nonlinguistic "realities." It is simply to assert that things that are social, political, historically contingent, emergent, or constructed are both real and can have force in the world.

This volume goes a long way toward establishing the pragmatic force of emotion discourse and the social character of emotion by showing how centrally bound up discourses on emotion (local theories about emotions) and emotional discourses (situated deployments of emotional linguistic forms) tend to be with social issues. Because we think that it will be more theoretically productive, we have made central, in organizing this volume, questions about the ways emotion discourse can be related to the social. We have not been particularly concerned with cross-cultural differences or regional/cultural issues, although nearly all the chapters make sensitive contributions to the ethnography of societies in India, Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Egypt, Senegal, and the United States. Also, despite their intrinsic interest, we have not stressed the *types* of discourse subjected to analysis because of a link with the emotional. The range, however, is impressive. The chapters analyze poetry, song, and other aesthetic performances, narratives, actual conversations, interviews, regulated modalities of verbal interaction, linguistic registers, and scientific discourse.

Two aspects of social relations emerge as crucially tied to emotion discourse: sociability and power relations. The links to sociability can be seen in the salience of emotion language in settings where solidarity is being encouraged, challenged, or negotiated, or in the essentially inter-

actional nature of discourse as it engages performers or speakers and audiences or interlocutors. Fajans (1985) had earlier shown that the core of Baining (New Britain) emotional discourse was concerned with threats to social cohesion; a central emotion term, translated as "hunger," was used to talk about the importance of ties to others and their mediation through food exchange. In this volume, the chapters by White and Brenneis describe ethnographic contexts in which a relatively formalized emotional discourse is used to promote social harmony. The A'ara practice a quasi-therapeutic discussion to talk about and contain recent social conflicts that threaten a valued community or kin group sociability, and Indian Fijians enact performances whose emotional gestures draw in their audiences rather than alienate them.

Recent work has begun to show that power seems even more thoroughly bound up with such discourses. We look particularly for the ways power relations determine what can, cannot, or must be said about self and emotion, what is taken to be true or false about them, and what only some individuals can say about them. The real innovation is in showing how emotion discourses establish, assert, challenge, or reinforce power or status differences. Discourses on fear have been singled out in a number of studies of colonial violence as crucial aspects of the discursive practices of dominant groups (Stoler 1985; Taussig 1987). Talk of fear of the dominated other in colonial contexts can be interpreted as a means by which powerful groups accomplish several purposes. They justify their suppression of those their rhetoric of fear implicitly paints as powerful and threatening to erupt, as Taussig (1987) argues occurred among rubber collectors in Columbia in the early part of this century. As Stoler (1985) demonstrates in the case of Dutch planters in Indonesia, they also thereby bargain with other elites for the resources and support needed to face down the purported threat.[12]

Scheper-Hughes's fieldwork in a Brazilian underclass community traces the relationship between emotional discourse and political economy. In one analysis (1985), she shows how a purportedly universal mother love is replaced by an emotional rhetoric of detached waiting regarding young infants because of the high infant mortality rate. In another (1988), she discusses how the syndrome *nervios* is part of discursive practice that transforms the symptoms of hunger into the less politically charged terms of emotional anxiety and "nerves" and of individual pathology, whose therapy is tranquilizers rather than a redistribution of food, wealth, and power.[13]

Authors in this volume have explored instead how discourses on

emotion and emotional discourses can serve, in other instances, for the relatively powerless as loci of resistance and idioms of rebellion (Abu-Lughod, Lutz, Trawick), as means of establishing relationships and coercing gifts (Appadurai), or even as means of establishing complementarity with status superiors (Irvine). More broadly, the chapters tend to concentrate on the politics of emotion discourse by looking either at the pragmatics of emotion talk, the social deployment of particular emotional discourses, or the politics of ideologies of emotion.

Criticizing the referential models of language used by many anthropologists and the assumptions about human nature that animate much work, particularly that on cultural meaning and cognition, Abu-Lughod argues that we must ask not just what the cultural meanings of various emotions are and how emotional configurations might be related to social life, but how emotional discourses are implicated in the play of power and the operation of a historically changing system of social hierarchy.[14] Building on earlier arguments about what she calls the "politics of sentiment," she analyzes how Egyptian Bedouin love poetry, believed to have a certain force in the world, is now being deployed to challenge male elders. She also shows how this emotional discourse comes to have new social meaning and a different social basis as the Bedouin political economy is being transformed. Taking as her central case the love poems (on cassette) of a young man whose marriage was thwarted by an uncle, she explores the ways in which the introduction of semicommercial cassette recordings combines with the erosion of the tribal ideology concomitant with the economic transformations of Bedouin life to exclude women from this discourse of defiance. That poetry, as an emotional discourse, is seen by the Awlad 'Ali Bedouins as having pragmatic force, as suggested by the effects and intentions of playing these cassettes in particular social contexts.

Defending the importance of constructing models of indigenous conceptual models in anthropological analyses of emotion, White argues that the ethnography of emotion actually offers an opportunity to explore points of convergence between situated practices and interpretive models. In his chapter he tries to reconcile analytically, and show the interaction of, conceptual models and social institutions in a practice called 'disentangling' found on one of the Solomon Islands. The core of his chapter is a fascinating analysis of a narrative from one disentangling meeting that shows how this discourse, whose overt purpose is to make bad feeling public, works through the narrative reconstruction of problematic events to emphasize reconciliation instead of retribution by means

of emotion language. The discursive practice of disentangling works to create social harmony by re-creating and valorizing social relations. Yet power is not absent; through attention to both ideology and pragmatics, White reveals that the same narrative performance using the rhetoric of reconciliation can simultaneously work to establish the moral advantage of the speaker over those with whom he or she is in conflict. This alerts us to the crucial importance of analyzing emotional discourses for multiple meanings, intentions, and effects.

In exploring the many ways that ordinary Americans' discourses on emotion are related to gender ideology, Lutz makes a strong case for the argument that this emotion discourse is only apparently about internal state but in fact about social life, power relations in particular. She presents examples of talk about emotions in a group of American women and men, and argues that this discourse on affect is also a discourse on the nature of women, their subordination, and their potential for rebellion in American society. A "rhetoric of control" (of emotion) found more frequently in women's than men's conversations is one of the primary ways people tell a narrative of women's weakness. She also traces the deep resonance of this lay discourse on the relation between gender and emotion with scientific discourse on the same topic. But finally, her chapter presents a finding that demonstrates the importance of distinguishing carefully between multiple levels of discourse. Her analysis of the organization of emotion discourse on a syntactic level shows how it actually fails to differentiate female and male speech. This suggests that ideas about links between emotion and the female, however pervasive at the ideological and narrative levels, do not organize discourse at the more microscopic or unconscious levels.

Taking a different strategy for the exploration of the complex relationship between discourse and emotion, Appadurai begins with a culturally inflected discursive form: praise in Hindu India. He then proceeds to show that understanding the meaning and pragmatic force of such a form in Indian life requries attention to several things: the multiple and mutually relevant contexts (praise of the divine, of kings, of patrons, and assessment of people and goods) that give it a particular meaning; the social uses to which this form is put in a variety of different social relationships (from flattery of politicians to coercion by beggars); and the indigenous theories of emotion and the local topography of the self, which render our own Western judgments of its excesses and emotional inauthenticity inapplicable. Arguing that praise is a public, regulated discourse and an embodied strategy of interaction that does not assume

anything about the "inner" states of those involved, he shows how the practices of praise nevertheless create sentimental bonds with social consequences.

Like White and Appadurai, Brenneis begins with the argument that we have to take indigenous theories of emotion seriously because they inform emotional performances. Noting a tendency in the new literature on language and emotion to focus on speakers, he warns us not to overlook the audiences who actively interpret and respond to emotional communications and may become interlocutors. He suggests that local "social aesthetics" among a group of Hindi-speaking Indians in Fiji inform audience responses to communicative events. Here sociability and emotion discourse appear to be closely associated in two ways. First, villagers distinguish between social and individual emotions but only positively value the former. Second, socially recognized emotions like amity and friendship are the only emotions to be indexed and enacted in performances that are social and sociable. One implication of understanding how emotions are generated in particular types of events is that we can begin to see how groups excluded from participation in particular events may thereby also be precluded from having certain emotional experiences. Brenneis hypothesizes that women in that community may be prevented from realizing the socially valued emotions of sociability because they do not join men in certain performances and social settings.

Turning to another dimension of the relationship between social performance and emotion, Irvine explores one important way that linguistic structure is tied to emotion. She argues for the copresence in many languages of registers, that is, situational variations in language use, many of which have an affective dimension. Proposing the term "affective registers" to suggest a culturally defined set of complementary representations of emotion linked to conceptions of the person as well as the situation, Irvine analyzes the differences between two Wolof (Senegal) styles of speaking in these terms. She shows how a variety of features – prosody, phonology, morphology and syntax, lexicon, discourse management and interactional devices – distinguishes the speech of two social castes, nobles and griots (a hereditary caste of bards) and how, furthermore, the contrasts in speech styles are rooted in images of the person. Even more important than her argument that conventional linguistic displays of affectivity index social divisions is Irvine's suggestion that the essential complementarity of this heteroglossia also helps the Wolof define relationships of power difference as nevertheless sociable.

Stepping back from the emergent field defined by this volume, Rosenberg offers a critical overview of the first wave of anthropological work on emotion and personhood done by cultural anthropologists claiming an interest in language. With a linguist's eye, he reads some representative texts for the thorny problems raised when language is invoked as a locus of meaning and as a methodological key. He argues that despite an avowed interest in situated discourse and rejection of ethnographic semantics, most earlier studies make a number of problematic theoretical moves. For example, they abstract individual words, mostly nouns, from their discursive contexts and then recontextualize them into a social matrix; they use these key terms as master metaphors for a culture; they expand the references of nouns to include mental models or schemas and misattribute to others the ideas we have about language and meaning; and through inadequate attention to the way actual conversation proceeds, they mistake grammatical or indexical features of language for nontrivial cultural facts. The problem with these moves, he argues, is that they smuggle back into studies of emotion and personhood our ethnopsychology and our metalinguistic habits, making it difficult to distinguish methodological differences from cultural differences. He sorts out a number of distinct ways emotion and language might be related and suggests that future work attend carefully to the distinctions between semantics, reference, pragmatics, and ideology.

Bringing together issues of the language of power, the power of language, and the entanglement of emotion and power, Trawick closes this volume with a lyrical and itself quite moving meditation on caste pollution, the fear of death, and a song sung into a tape recorder for her by an untouchable Tamil woman from South India. Building on some of Julia Kristeva's thoughts on abjection and language, she tries to answer the question of "how it feels to be beyond the pale." Through a close textual and stylistic analysis of this hymn, Trawick reveals the singer's concern with the problems of inclusion and exclusion so crucial to caste and with the issues of separation and remainders so critical to a sense of personal wholeness. She argues that the singer's artistic technique, which involves deviating from the code of grammar as well as the social code, is a strategy for challenging that which has cast her out.

In suggesting in their many ways that we consider not emotions but the discourses of emotion, the chapters in this book do not deny the force of emotion and subjective experience. They do advocate a shift in focus that may be illuminating. Arguing that the reality of emotion is social, cultural, political, and historical, just as is its current location in

the psyche or the natural body, they show clearly how discourses on emotion and emotional discourses are commentaries on the practices essential to social relations. As part of the politics of everyday life, these discourses are not, therefore, just the stuff of psychological anthropology but of sociocultural and linguistic theory as well. The chapters to follow offer positive ways of developing both a nonindividualized and a nonreductionist approach to emotion and a more dynamic socially and politically grounded analysis of all discursive practice.

Notes

1. For recent reviews, see Heelas (1986), Levy and Wellenkamp (1987), and Lutz and White (1986).
2. For a recent consideration of anthropology's (with the exception of feminist anthropology's) role in developing cultural critiques, see Marcus and Fischer (1986).
3. This shift may have corresponded to the general process of medicalization and normalization that, for Foucault (1978), characterize the modern age.
4. See also Foucault (1983) for a clear discussion of his views on the relationship between subjectivity and subjection or the creation of the individual through disciplinary power.
5. Foucault's assertion, of course, calls for ethnographic evidence, the beginnings of which Lutz (1988:53–80) provides. It would be worth speculating further whether the proliferation of emotion discourse in American life, combined with the construal of emotion as a private and subjective state, might not both confirm a sense of self as separate (in giving the individual "experiences" of his or her own – as Lutz (1986:299), Riesman (1983:123), and Foucault (1985:5) have argued in linking the construction of "experience" and the sense of individuality) – and provide an idiom for asserting the existence of bonds between people in the face of the actual attenuation of such bonds by mobility, distance, and the social fragmentation of class, gender, and race.
6. Heteroglossia is a term that seems to have filtered into anthropology, both in the narrow linguistic sense of many languages and in the larger sense of many discourses, through Bakhtin (1981). For a critical discussion of the absence of social theory in and the conservative implications of most of the work on culture done under the rubric of cognitive anthropology, see Keesing (1987). The notion of culture promoted by interpretive anthropology has many critics, but Asad's (1983) consideration of the problems as related to the study of religion is particularly intelligent.
7. See Appadurai (1988) for a persuasive argument that "natives," people from certain faraway places who belong to those places and are somehow incarcerated in those places and especially in their "mode of thought," are "creatures of the anthropological imagination" – that is, produced by anthropological discourse. For a discussion of the similarity of the concepts of culture and race, see Mitchell (1988:105).
8. See Williams (1973, 1977) and Comaroff (1985) for attempts to mediate this divide.

9. For an elaboration of the problems with ideology, see Foucault (1980:117–18).
10. Foucault himself substituted the term 'apparatus' (*dispositif*) for discourse in some of his later work on sexuality in order to emphasize that he was concerned with "a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble" of nondiscursive elements – statements, writings, architectural forms, rules, institutions, etc. – that are related to one another in varying ways and have, as a formation, "a dominant strategic function" (1980:194–5).
11. See Scheper-Hughes and Lock (1987) for a view of the "three bodies" that can be applied to the three bodies of emotion just described.
12. She also shows the power of the denial of fear by those same planters. Denial or negation both posits a fear and a threat and claims to have conquered them (cf. Kress and Hodge 1978).
13. See also Hochschild (1983) on the relationship between power and the emotional practices of service workers, such as stewardesses, in the United States.
14. Other strong critiques of the referential view of language have been made by Crapanzano (1981) and Good and Good (1982).

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