



INTRODUCTION

Affect and the Anthropology of the State

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In his novel *The Satanic Verses*, Salman Rushdie ([1988] 2006: 454) describes a police raid on a nightclub, the epicenter of a riot in a migrant-populated London neighborhood: “A helicopter hovers over the nightclub, urinating light in long golden streams ... The machine of state bearing down upon its enemies ... The noise of rotor blades drowns the noise of the crowd ... A man lit by a sun-gun speaks rapidly into a microphone. Behind him there is a disorderment of shadows ... The reporter speaks gravely: petrolbombs plasticbullets policeinjuries watercannon looting.” At a time when anthropologists are highlighting the narrativized nature of ‘the state’ and the role of imagination in its emergence and maintenance (Aretxaga 2000; Hansen and Stepputat 2001; Navaro-Yashin 2002; Taussig 1997), it seems appropriate to introduce a project exploring new ways to understand the state ethnographically with a fictional scene—all the more so, a scene written by an author whose own biography became one of the central narratives shaping contemporary public imaginaries of the political.

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The helicopter in the quoted passage embodies many of the attributes of the state as depicted in recent anthropological writing (Aretxaga 2003; Hansen and Stepputat 2005; Harvey 2005; Linke 2006; Navaro-Yashin 2012; Scott 1998; Spencer 2007). It is abstract and remote, yet simultaneously tangible and concrete. It is empowered through technology, yet seemingly possessed of an autonomous organicity, able to affect its subjects in ways at once denigrating and elevating. It is capable of prodigal displays of violence. It is inimical, awe-inspiring, and irresistible. It overpowers the senses and turns human lives on the ground into a confusing, insubstantial tangle dependent on the state's force for sense and substance. And all the same, 'the state,' like the helicopter, remains just a construct, a man-made machine that could be chased away or even shot down, as numerous other scenes from popular fiction and newsreels remind us. Despite that, the state captivates and excites. Numbing and deafening, it also provokes speech that is 'rapid' and 'grave'. In Rushdie's episode, the reporter trying to capture the agitation of the state in action spurts out a violent frenzy of portmanteaus: "petrolbombs plasticbullets policeinjuries watercannon." Scholars' attempts to describe the state's workings have produced a similarly frantic language of hybrid neologisms: nation-state state-system state-idea governmentality power/knowledge state-effect state-fetishism (Abrams [1977] 1988; Foucault 1980, 1991; Mitchell 1999; Taussig 1992).

The chapters in this book address the affective charge that 'the state'—the signifier, the fiction, the fantasy, the social fact—evokes and that so often leaves analysis resorting to neologisms. Although commonly treated in scholarship as a 'fantasy' and an object of deconstruction, the state remains one of the most powerful institutions for enacting and organizing difference in the contemporary world (Trouillot 2001) and as such continues to elicit powerful emotions: hope, fear, desire, hatred, pride (Aretxaga 2003). With the present chapters, we highlight that affects are not just epiphenomenal to the political, "a smoke-screen of rule ... a ruse masking the dispassionate calculations that preoccupy states" (Stoler 2004: 6). Rather, we argue that the affective is "the substance of politics" (*ibid.*), a complex, dynamic, and resilient reality that structures both opportunities and challenges for political actors and is constitutive of the acting subjects themselves. We use the expression 'affective states' (borrowed from Ann Stoler) to cover a range of affects, feelings, and emotions for and about 'the state' and its agents, and explore how those contribute to the state's emergence, transformation, endurance, or erosion.

Recent political anthropology has foregrounded the multiplicity of modalities—now banal, now exceptional—through which the state materializes in daily life (Chalfin 2010; Das and Poole 2004b; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Gupta 2012; Jeffrey 2013; Krohn-Hansen and Nustad 2005; Navaro-Yashin 2002). There has been a flourishing of scholarship attentive to the ways in which the state is reproduced in the enactments of state officials and citizens alike, from form filling and letter writing to laying roads, attending court sessions, or searching for the documents needed to certify a birth or death (Beyer 2014; Cabot 2012; Dunn 2008; Friedman 2011; Hull 2012; Knox and Harvey 2011; Mathur 2012) to acts of terror involved in policing, surveillance, crossing and controlling

borders, or resolving conflicts (Aretxaga 2005; Jeganathan 2004; O’Neill 2012; Reeves 2014; Sluka 2000). Scholars have drawn attention to ‘sovereign’ violence (Agamben 1998) as the core of state power, sometimes hidden beyond layers of rationalized government practice (Graeber 2012) and at other times spectacularly exposed (Kapferer 1988; Mbembe 2001; Spencer 2007). Recognizing that the secret of modern state power lies precisely in the interpenetration of reason and violence (Taussig 1992), ethnographers have begun to highlight how state bureaucracy operates through the production and circulation of fear, hope, and suspicion as much as through practices of classification and inscription (Navaro-Yashin 2007; Nuijten 2004). This multi-directional approach has enabled anthropologists to embrace the empirical diversity of the ‘social lives’ of the state (Ssorin-Chaikov 2003).

However, in the proliferation of ethnographic studies of bureaucratic practice, ideological production, or organized violence, the emotional or affective intensities elicited by the state often risk being obscured. Affect and emotion, when brought into an analysis of the political, are often reduced to an instrumental mechanism of governmental power or are treated as epiphenomenal to the real business of rule. The current study builds on recent concerns to explore the state as the object of emotional investment—a site of fear, paranoia, or mutual suspicion (Aretxaga 2000; Thiranagama and Kelly 2010), of desire for political recognition and political participation (Hasty 2005), or perhaps just of hope for order and a ‘normal’ life (Greenberg 2011; Jansen 2014; Laszczkowski 2014; Reeves 2011)—by considering how emotion is implicated in a variety of everyday and exceptional encounters between citizens, state agents, and the dispersed material traces of state power. We contend that affects and emotions are much more than epiphenomena of the political: through their “embodied agency” (Linke 2006: 207), affects and emotions are crucial in structuring political fields, imaginaries, subjects, and objects. How, we ask, does the state become ‘real’ through the mobilization or suspension of affect? What is the role of affect in sustaining the state as (putatively) sovereign, as a source of authority, seemingly over and above its population? How are affects entangled in the coupling of reason and violence at the heart of state power? And how do emotions come to be invested in particular sites, people, material infrastructure, projects, documents, and legal enactments?

The seven chapters in this book bring ethnographic specificity to these questions by focusing on particular sites and spaces of affective engagement: Uzbek-language online political discourse (Kendzior); land rights administration in post-apartheid South Africa (Beyers); migrants’ encounters with the Russian migration bureaucracy (Reeves) and Eritrean refugees’ experience of the transnational powers of the regimes they flee (Bozzini); citizens’ appeals to the post-war Salvadoran state at the time of elections (Montoya); the negotiation of legal and technical uncertainty surrounding the building of new infrastructures in rural Peru (Pinker and Harvey); and domestic space in rural China (Steinmüller). Linking all of the chapters is a concern to understand how these practices, whether routine or exceptional, are affectively charged: how petitioning a land claim, negotiating the route of a new railway, or just getting one’s

right to temporary residence acknowledged is charged with feeling, and how this exchange of feeling is itself integral to the ‘state effect’ (Mitchell 1999).

Specifying the ‘Affect’ in ‘Affective States’

To try to get at this affective working of the state, the chapters in this collection engage a range of theoretical approaches to affect, feeling, and emotion. They offer a critical reading, through the lenses of ethnography, of the recent ‘affective turn’ in cultural theory (Clough and Halley 2007; Gregg and Seigworth 2010), along with the earlier anthropological scholarship on emotion (Lutz and Abu-Lughod 1990; Lutz and White 1986). Ours is an exploratory project rather than a prescriptive one, however; the chapters are united less by a single set of theoretical debts than by a common concern to understand the ways in which sensitivity to affect, feeling, or emotion might enliven the ethnography of the political. The project is guided by the contention that while the affective dimensions of state practice have often been noted in recent scholarship—for instance, Gupta (2012: 113) has recently argued that “affect needs to be seen as one of the constitutive conditions of state formation”—they have not yet received sufficient ethnographic attention.

Two sets of reasons can be identified for this scholarly gap. The first, we suggest, has to do with the disparate nature of the theoretical field. Affect, feeling, and emotion have been widely invoked in scholarly literature in ways that are sometimes contradictory and not necessarily easily conducive to ethnographic inquiry. Within cultural studies and allied fields, the body of literature that has recently come to be loosely designated as ‘affect theory’ encompasses a variety of approaches, diverse in theoretical orientation and methodological commitment. In much of the literature on the entanglements of the political and the affective (e.g., Ahmed 2004; Stoler 2004), the terms ‘affect’, ‘emotion’, and ‘feeling’ are often used interchangeably, without specifying what differences of meaning are implied. So far in this introduction, we too have frequently concatenated those terms in a similarly imprecise manner. However, there are subtle variations in usage that deserve elaboration. For some authors, ‘affect’ designates a category of subjective feeling. For others, especially in the intellectual tradition deriving from Spinoza via Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987) and Brian Massumi (1995), ‘affect’ evokes a presubjective intensity that is the living current of social formation (see Mazzarella 2010; in this book, see also Pinker and Harvey). This approach places conceptual emphasis on intensity and emergence that is rather different from earlier anthropological scholarship, which focused on the cultural constructedness of emotions and the role of language in establishing fixed, culturally specific categories of feeling (Lutz and Abu-Lughod 1990; Lutz and White 1986). While emotion describes the subjective experiences of an individual, affect is an intersubjective (or, as some say, presubjective) intensity. In Nigel Thrift’s (2008: 221) words: “[E]motions are everyday understandings of affects ... constructed by cultures ... with their own distinctive vocabulary.”

There are also significant variations in how authors conceive of the transmission of affect. While some authors argue that material objects, documents, buildings, and public and intimate places can be considered autonomous agents and sources of affect (Brennan 2004), for others this represents an error of attribution: affects may be elicited by particular socio-legal formations, but can be transmitted only by the feeling (human) subject (see, e.g., Jansen 2009). Massumi (1995: 96) notes that affect engages the synesthetic system, so in this sense affect is bodily, sensory. It connects human subjectivity with the material environment (Navaro-Yashin 2012; Thrift 2008). Moreover, affect exceeds and ‘escapes’ the individual body. Emotion, in this reading, is a form of blockage or capture of affect—as well as an expression of the fact that there is always some surplus that is not captured. William Mazzarella (2010: 292) sums up much of this theorizing when he emphasizes that affect implies something corporeal, tactile, sensory, and involuntary, and (unlike emotion) “is not always already semiotically mediated.”

Further disagreement emerges when we turn to the political implications of affect. Some authors have explicitly contrasted the realm of ‘affect’ as distinct from the realm of state practice. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) construe affect as an original, visceral intensity, animating pre-cultural forms of sociality: multiplicities such as ‘schools’ (as in a school of fish), ‘bands’, ‘herds’, ‘populations’, and ‘packs’. They juxtapose these to “organizations such as the institution of the family and the State apparatus” (ibid.: 242) and accordingly they contrast “pack affects [to] family feelings and State intelligibilities” (ibid.: 246). As anthropologists, we are as suspicious of the implicit romanticization of ‘non-state’ or ‘non-institutional’ forms of sociality as we are of a vision of the state as a coherent subject of intelligibility (cf. Scott 1998). We appreciate, however, the impulse to seek the non-rational, visceral, vibrant core of the social. The chapters in the present collection explore the possibility that the state is not necessarily a disenchanting and rational apparatus of containment and regulation, but might rather be one of those “dark assemblages, which stir what is deepest within us” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 242). The spaces, documents, laws, and material objects through which the state is encountered in everyday life are not merely artifacts of contemporary bureaucracy. They are, like the helicopter in Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses*, constitutive of the political as a field that is capable of eliciting intense feeling.

Part of the analytic purchase we find in introducing affect to political analysis is that it helps highlight the domain of feeling that comes before or beyond its narration as emotion. That domain, we contend, is a space of productive encounters between subjectivity, language, aesthetics, and the materiality of state-like practice, a space infused with the often violent intensities and ruptures of routine through which ‘the state’ acquires viscerally felt features. But the language that scholars associated with recent ‘affect theory’ use—a language of ‘dark assemblages’ and ‘non-linear complexity’—points in turn to the second challenge of exploring ‘affective states’ ethnographically: the empirical difficulty of capturing the quality of a ‘pre-subjective intensity’ or, still more, the way that intensity might be animated or shaped by particular material-political

formations (Pelkmans 2013). In the Spinozan-Deleuzean perspective, affect is considered non-discursive and non-representational. As Guattari (1996: 158) puts it with characteristic ellipsis, affect is “hazy, atmospheric, and nevertheless perfectly apprehensible.” In this line of reasoning, grasping affect ethnographically is akin to “chasing tiny firefly intensities that flicker faintly in the night, registering those resonances that vibrate, subtle to seismic, under the flat wash of broad daylight, dramatizing (indeed, for the unconvinced, *over*-dramatizing) what so often passes beneath mention” (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 4).

‘Chasing tiny fireflies’ might not sound like an invitation to sustained ethnographic inquiry. We confront this challenge by drawing on the capacity of detailed ethnographic description to trace capillary movements and exchanges and to register the difference often made by the seemingly insignificant, contingent, or ephemeral. Ethnography helps to highlight the complexities involved in the generation of affects and to explain the force of affective intensities in generating social dynamics. It does so without reducing the effects of those intensities to the play of ‘objective’ structures or ‘subjective impressions’. We suggest that attempting to register affective resonances ethnographically promises to open up horizons of the political beyond objectivism, semiosis, and the world of bounded subjects. This is what we understand Kathleen Stewart (2007: 3) to be gesturing toward when she writes that affects are “more directly compelling than ideologies, as well as more fractious, multiplicitous, and unpredictable than symbolic meanings.”

Recognizing the heuristic potential of affect, as well as the difficulties it poses for description and analysis, several anthropologists have sought ways to flesh out the workings of affect ethnographically by locating the (not exclusively human) bodies that affects animate, mapping the milieus they shape, and identifying the various media through which affects circulate (Kuntsman 2009; Kuntsman and Stein 2015; Navaro-Yashin 2012; Richard and Rudnyckj 2009; Schwenkel 2013; Winegar 2012). In her study of ‘affective geography’ in northern Cyprus, for instance, Navaro-Yashin (2012: 159) argues that affect “is produced neither by materialities nor by the inner world alone; it is produced through their interaction ... within the contingencies and historicity of those specific interactions between spatial materialities and human beings that change through time.” Navaro-Yashin underscores the linguistic (or discursive) mediation of affects, arguing that while spaces and things ‘discharge’ affects upon people, people qualify affects through discourse and politicize them. The politicization of the affects of particular spaces—that is, the act of tying these intensities to political symbols and discourses—is an important way that the state acquires a tangible, affective, and spatial reality. The chapters collected in this book pick up the exploratory effort initiated in that literature. They examine the political resonances of diverse ‘affective states’ distributed across the conceptual spectrum spanning from ‘affect’ to ‘emotion’. Some of the authors are concerned more with the political uses of emotions relatively fixed in a cultural idiom (e.g., Steinmüller), while others explore the wavering productivity of affective flows (e.g., Pinker and Harvey, Reeves). We follow Mazzarella’s contention that processes of social formation, including state-like

political processes, involve both the energy of affective currents and cultural efforts at fixing affect.

Mapping ‘Affective States’

The various approaches to affect, we suggest, can usefully be brought into conversation with anthropological attempts to understand the force of the political beyond rationality and governmentality and, specifically, to understand the state’s enduring hold in shaping subjectivities and social relations. The present volume, while inspired by the burgeoning anthropological literature on the state, seeks to advance this conversation in three distinct ways. First, as our contributors document ethnographically, the ‘state effect’ (Mitchell 1999) emerges and is reproduced not only through the routine operations of bureaucratic practice, infrastructural development, or the application of coercive force, but also through the affective engagements of ordinary citizens and non-citizens in relation to state agents and state-like activities: their feelings, their emotions, their embodied responses as they navigate state bureaucracy or anticipate state violence. Affect should be considered not merely as an epiphenomenon of political life—an outcome of state practice or a consequence of particular techniques of governance—but as constitutive of the political itself.

One dimension of this is to take seriously the state as a locus of affective investment, to recognize hope ‘for’ the state as well as ‘against’ it (Jansen 2014; cf. Spencer 2007: 141–142). In the current book, Montoya and Beyers both demonstrate how in specific political circumstances—here, those of post-war El Salvador and post-apartheid South Africa—there can be a short-lived, partial, but viscerally powerful sense of anticipation that the state, as a locus of redistributive power, might be able to wrong past injustices. Hope, however, is just one of the many affective registers that animate ‘the state’. Kendzior’s and Bozzini’s chapters both demonstrate, for example, how cynicism and paranoia can replace hope with menace, turning the state into a ‘boogeyman’, as Kendzior puts it, and colonizing personal relationships through fear.

Second, the chapters that follow collectively demonstrate that any consideration of the role of affect in political life needs to be attentive to history and, more specifically, to the historical specificity of particular state forms and modes of governance. One important critique of ‘affect theory’ in its Deleuzian key is that by foregrounding questions of emergence and sudden rupture in its rejection of linear temporality and its antipathy to analyses of structure—that “place where nothing ever happens, that explanatory heaven in which all eventual permutations are prefigured in a self-consistent set of invariant generative rules” (Massumi 1995: 87)—affect theory displaces questions of history and forecloses (indeed, in some readings, explicitly rejects) the possibility of critique. In his review of the ‘affective turn’, for instance, Stef Jansen (2016) criticizes precisely this dehistoricizing move: “The ‘affective turn’ calls on us to ‘perform’ affect and to refrain from hermeneutic attempts to historicise it: the autonomy of affect, its theorists say, places it beyond interpretation.” This is

true of certain accounts of affect and certain experiments in narrative form in certain theoretical traditions, to be sure. But we contend that an attentiveness to the visceral, pre-linguistic, unsettled moments of intensity (to ‘affect’, as we are defining it here) does not necessarily entail a displacement of considerations of history or of power and inequality.

What emerges forcefully from the chapters in this book is the way that the salience of particular moments of subjective feeling—the sense of expectation and indignation that characterized FMLN supporters in El Salvador (Montoya), the anxiety of Eritrean refugees in Switzerland hiding from the Eritrean secret service (Bozzini), the crippling circulation of suspicion and fear between on- and off-line worlds among the Uzbek opposition-in-exile (Kendzior), or the longing and betrayal that overwhelm the forms filled out by South African land claimants (Beyers)—stems from specific histories of subjectification and particular experiences of rule, whether colonial, authoritarian, apartheid, or clientelist. Likewise, the languages used to render legible those affects and to forge relations with the state—the intimacy of ‘My Old Man Mao’ for farmers in rural Bashan (Steinmüller), or the addressing of a Russian border guard as ‘little brother’ to undermine his claim to stately authority (Reeves)—need to be understood in the context of such situated histories of rule. Attending to the ‘affect’ in ‘affective states,’ in our reading, may require attentiveness to states of feeling that are experientially fleeting and elusive. However, this does not mean that they are not historically constituted, nor does it preclude the recognition that certain kinds of feelings (fear, hope, abandonment, nostalgia) are found with particular regularity or intensity in specific social formations.

Indeed, it is precisely an attentiveness to such historical layerings and regularities that enables a properly ethnographic elucidation of affect, acknowledging the relational dynamics entailed in any attempt to interpret another person’s experience. Recognizing the ‘autonomy’ of affect in the sense that it is taken up, for instance, in the chapter by Pinker and Harvey does not entail a depoliticization of the concept, nor does it foreclose the possibility of intersubjective understanding. As Pinker and Harvey express it: “Instead of attempting to demonstrate how the study of affective practices may be made to comply with empiricist demands ... we argue that the turn to affect is helpful precisely in offering a renewed emphasis on what has always been characteristic of ethnographic work: that its ‘findings’ are crafted out of fields of doubt and indeterminacy.”

The question of indeterminacy brings us to the final contribution that we wish to highlight concerning the relationship between ambivalence, governance, and what we might gloss as the ‘distributed state’. Much critical literature on the state in a Foucauldian tradition has drawn attention to the increasing governmentalization of society, whether this is articulated in the grand schemes for human improvement critiqued by James Scott (1998) or the tendency for ever-proliferating domains of life to become objects of technical expertise, data management, and state or para-state governance. This literature has been immensely generative, theoretically and empirically, in illuminating the ever-brachiating capillaries of power, but it also tends toward

the rearticulation of boundaries between ‘state’ and ‘society’, ‘power’ and ‘resistance’. A focus on the role of affect in political life, we suggest, provides a way, ethnographically, for moving beyond this dichotomization. Attending ethnographically to the possibility that it is precisely the ambivalence or indeterminacy of affect that may be socially generative (Mazzarella 2010) gives specificity to what Michael Taussig (1992: 113) calls the “powerful insubstantiality” of the state (see also Laszczkowski 2015).

For example, in this collection, Pinker and Harvey describe a meeting between local government officials and representatives of a railway company in Peru during which subtle and complex negotiations took place regarding the precise routing of a planned railway. In the conversations, the state constantly appeared and disappeared from the conceptual horizon, fleetingly invoked and represented by different actors. In the end, it was the state’s “virtual presence” as an organizing signifier but not a stable, coherent, or locatable entity that allowed for a resolution of the conundrum at hand. Kendzior explores another aspect of the state’s insubstantiality that produces powerful affects. For Uzbek dissidents, the secret police are all the more maddeningly threatening for appearing simultaneously present and absent. Here, insubstantiality, technologically amplified by the Internet, means that the state’s threatening security force “inhibits whatever space [the citizens] inhabit—physical, psychic, and virtual” (Kendzior, this book).

There are two aspects to this ambivalence that we want to emphasize. On the one hand, such an approach illuminates how the state may be the object of conflicting attachments—the ‘mixed feelings’ of Bashan farmers toward a state that is both intimate and distant (Steinmüller), or the simultaneous hope and disillusion felt toward the state that can rapidly follow electoral change (Montoya). On the other hand, attentiveness to the circulation of affect provides an insight into the intrinsic indeterminacy of the state form itself. The existential condition of “living from the nerves” that Reeves (this book) identifies among undocumented and “fictively hyper-documented” Central Asian migrants in Moscow, for instance, is generated precisely from the ‘nervousness’ (Taussig 1992) of the Russian state—now powerful and threatening, now a laughing-stock or not there at all—whether one might be fearing it or needing it. Officially promoted narratives of deportation shape an imagining of a righteous Russian state that has no mercy for ‘illegal aliens’. Yet stories of corruption, often firsthand, add up to a different picture: a state that causes anxiety to be sure, but also a state that deserves contempt.

What emerges from such accounts is a story not of governance through control but of the proliferation of spaces of indeterminacy and their effects (cf. Dunn and Cons 2013). Bozzini analyzes how, among Eritrean refugees in Switzerland, fears of treason, surveillance, and violence give rise to a spectral image of the threatening state that reaches far beyond the geographic boundaries of Eritrea and into the capillaries of individuals’ relationships with their kin, friends, and acquaintances. Where, in such a situation, does the ‘state of Eritrea’ begin and end? In Montoya’s chapter, narratives of mass violence that occurred in the past but may reoccur any moment produce juxtaposed but

oddly compatible fantasies of the Salvadoran state as a source of anxiety and as the object of hope for redress. In Beyers's account, applicants to a land restitution program in post-apartheid South Africa narrativize the trauma of dispossession and displacement they suffered at the hands of the state in the past, hoping to elicit an affective response from the renewed state in the present. But that new state, epitomized by offices, forms, and bureaucrats, often remains unresponsive, failing to acquire the holism of a feeling Leviathan. Attending to affect, in other words, provides insights into how the state interchangeably materializes and disappears—contingently yet consequentially—in everyday interactions. In this manner, it becomes possible to think of the 'spectral state' as a visceral reality that has to be navigated in daily life and not simply as a fiction that warrants deconstruction.

Conclusion

As Navaro-Yashin (2009: 15) has argued: "Ethnography works against the grain of paradigm-setting." The chapters here seek to bring ethnographic specificity to debates about the sources, transmission, and specificities of affect that have often been cast in quite abstract and generalizing terms. Their aim is less to 'set a paradigm' than to integrate an influential, if diffuse, debate about affect with growing concerns to consider the anthropology of the state in ways that go beyond deconstruction and critique. The contributors to this book explore a range of affectively charged bureaucratic, technocratic practices, including planning a railroad (Pinker and Harvey), holding an election (Montoya), documenting legal residence (Reeves), filling out claims forms (Beyers), and imposing fines (Bozzini), just as they show the affects that are at stake in remaking the sacred space of a home (Steinmüller) or criticizing state security services (Kendzior). Collectively, they demonstrate that the state needs to be understood not as a seemingly bounded entity—one that is set apart both from individuals and from 'society'. Rather, it should be understood as thriving in embodied, affective resonances within and between persons and things. Without exploring these embodied affects, it is hard to grasp, for instance, why exactly the policeman's cry, "Hey, you there!" should make citizens who have every reason to believe that they have done nothing wrong turn around, as in Althusser's ([1971] 2006: 105) famous example of the spectacular efficacy of "Ideological State Apparatuses." We contend that without affective states in view, it is difficult to comprehend how and why it is that the state "should so powerfully shape ... political and moral imagination" (Spencer 2007: 99). If wars are waged and lives are—it often seems—willfully wasted to create or preserve states, and if so much of the ordinary experience of so many people the world over is organized under that signifier, we need to look for something visceral and emotional to begin to understand the 'magic of the state' (Taussig 1997). These chapters signal a sustained attempt to give that affective charge some ethnographic specificity.

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