Affects, emotions, feelings, moods, and passions have been recurrent topics in the history of anthropology and philosophy for a long time. The mainstream position toward them was perfectly well described by Kant, the master of categorical judgment, in a way as succinct as laconic: to be subdued to affects and passions is always a mental disease. And the monsters of fantasy that the sleep of reason produces in Goya’s famous Capricho 43 no doubt appear as emotions. Until today, it is broadly considered an important goal in human development to get control over our feelings so that we can become rational agents with rational decisions leading to rational behavior.

But this is not so easy to do, and sometimes even counterproductive, as studies of psychological repression and all kinds of its possible consequences show. An alternative, to understand our feelings and reconcile them with reason, has a history as well. There are Pascal’s logic of the heart, Rosseau’s theory of the pre-rational origin of morality, Schiller’s aesthetics, the Romantic aspiration for an “enlightened anti-enlightenment” from Herder to Hölderlin, and existential philosophy from Kierkegaard to Sartre.

In the 20th century, analytical philosophy and its positivist offshoots into psychology and the social sciences, have largely reconquered the full pretense to dominance of rationality against emotions as philosophically doubtful generators of confusion and obscurity. However, the recent two or three decades have seen distinctly increasing attention for the useful and valuable functions of emotions in many aspects of life, together with a parallel emphasis on (phenomenological) first-person experiences versus (analytical) third-person accounts.

Two American philosophers have played key roles in this recent history: Robert Solomon with his The Passions – Emotions and the Meaning of Life (1976) and Ronald de Sousa’s The Rationality of Emotions (1987). Both authors were pivotal to criticize the idea that reason and emotions are antagonists which can only be understood as strictly opposing each other. A crucial point in their assessment is that emotions have their own rationality insofar as they serve judgmental functions as reason does – though in ways different from how reason does it.

Bob Solomon, a friend for years who deceased much too early not long ago, considered The Passions as his favorite among his numerous books. In the preface to a later edition (1993) he wrote:
The core of this book ... is the theory that *emotions are judgments*. It is, even in that single phrase, an attempt to shift the emotions, from their traditional demeaning role as unintelligent distractions and intrusions into the life of reason, to essential features of reason itself. My thesis is that the emotions are themselves rational (and therefore sometimes irrational too). ...

Emotions are not merely a “phenomenon”, a curiosity of human psycho-physiology, to be studied and understood. They are far more meaningful, moving and essential than that. Thus the connection between the passions and the “meaning of life”, a big question often swept under the rug by more modestly puzzle-minded philosophers.

The “meaning of life” is certainly an issue which lurks in the background of much work – conceptual, theoretical, experimental – on emotions today. However, general sympathy with Solomon’s provocative statement does not necessarily imply to delve into this extremely ambitious topic immediately. There are so many other difficult questions concerning the emotions that careful research in small but profound steps must be welcomed as well. This is the spirit of the contributions to this issue of *Mind and Matter*.

Ronald de Sousa’s paper posits the conceptual location of emotions between functional and unconscious operations of living beings to their conscious intentionality. This transition from the “intuitive” to the “analytic” goes hand in hand with the emergence of the constitutive role of (raw subpersonal) feelings and (consciously developed) emotions for cognitive and metacognitive tasks. De Sousa’s paradigm example for this is the way in which fear affects belief. But his main focus are “epistemic feelings”: feelings of knowing, of doubt, of certainty, and so on.

For these and more, he discusses in which respects epistemic feelings resemble full-fledged emotions, and in which other respects they must be delineated from each other. A very instructive historical example of the benefits of such an analysis is Descartes’ *cogito*, viewed as an epistemic feeling of correctness that Descartes overinterpreted as the justification of the truth of a knowledge claim. This and many other detailed discussions provide the reader with a terrific assemblage of the significance of epistemic feelings in our lives.

The paper by Stephan starts with a detailed examination of the research methodology of one of the current protagonists in affective neuroscience, Joseph LeDoux, that is representative for most of the field. In essence, neuroscience emphasizes the third-person (observer) account of emotions as unconsciously running “affect programs”. This leaves “feelings”, their experiential aspects, as not more than icings to the emotional cake. (Note that Stephan’s way to distinguish emotions from feelings differs manifestly from de Sousa’s.)
But, as Stephan argues, progress in neuroscience need not imply that we lose track of what we esteem most in our emotional life. He advocates the use of narratives as a step mediating between the psychophysiology of brain processes and direct first-person experience. This does not solve the puzzle of how experience itself is constituted (the qualia problem), but it may – e.g., through psychotherapeutic approaches – give access to unconscious sources of feelings which neuroscience can only address from an exclusively material perspective.

The review by Kagerer and Stark focuses on the neurophysiology of emotions or, in other words, their neural correlates. They describe how the contemporary field of affective neuroscience has developed from the pioneering work of Papez and McLean. The main body of their paper is organized according to a number of brain structures that are crucially involved in emotional processing: the amygdala, the insula, the nucleus accumbens, the prefrontal cortex, and the anterior cingulate cortex.

Kagerer and Stark describe how the study of human psychiatric and psychological disorders has profited from results achieved by modern tools of experimental neuroscience. With their help it becomes possible to demonstrate the effectiveness of psychotherapeutic practices. New pharmacological interventions can improve the treatment of patients with mental diseases. But it is also obvious how difficult and sparse theoretical progress toward a deeper understanding of the neural correlates of emotions appears to be.

The article by Gessner is, in its first part, a precis of his German book on the cognitive emergence of emotions: Die kognitive Emergenz von Emotionen (mentis, Paderborn 2004). In this book, he pushes the idea of the rationality of emotions as far as possible, without denying (or explaining) their appearance per se, and without disrespecting their neurophysiological underpinnings. This program of a rational reconstruction of essential features of emotions leads to a formal characterization of emotional states as propositional attitudes in the sense of the modern philosophy of mind.

In the second part of his paper Gessner proposes how his theoretical results can be applied to the construction of robots with emotional repertoires represented in mimics, gestures, postures, action tendencies, and speech acts. A far goal of this project is a contribution to sophisticated possibilities of communicative interaction between humans and androids. Could this be a way to design and refine “emotional Turing tests” of the kind so engagingly and compellingly paraphrased by Richard Powers in his novel Galatea 2.2?

Two book reviews conclude this issue (which are not directly connected with its theme). The first one is by Michael Silberstein, a philosopher of science and of mind who comments on Skrbina’s collection of articles in Mind That Abides: Panpsychism in the New Millennium. Skrbina was instrumental for the recent renaissance of the panpsychist doctrine that
everything material also has mental properties – of course, not in the same sense as human consciousness. This idea, as absurd as it may sound at first glance, has a number of conceptually elegant features and deserves to be considered more seriously than the first glance suggests. Silberstein’s opinionated review compares panpsychism with neutral monism and presents the reasons why he thinks the latter framework of thinking is preferrable.

A panpsychist-related view also features crucially (though implicitly) in the philosophical ideas of Wolfgang Pauli, one of the greatest theoretical physicists of the 20th century. Pauli developed these ideas partly in his interaction with C.G. Jung, whose depth psychology was of considerable influence for part of Pauli’s thinking. Robert Bishop reviews a collection of essays entitled *Recasting Reality – Wolfgang Pauli’s Philosophical Ideas and Contemporary Science*, which contains contributions ranging from physics to biology, and from psychology to the philosophy of mind. As the title indicates, some of Pauli’s speculations were and are of impact for the study of a variety of deep-seated and open problems in science, most prominently the relation between mind and matter.