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**The affective politics of fear (chapter 3)**

Sara Ahmed is a feminist theorist known also for the expression “a feminist killjoy”. In her book *The Cultural Politics of Emotions*, she has written a chapter on the *performativity of fear*. Fear (and affect) is produced in encounter through circulation and sticking to particular objects. She explains an encounter between a Negro and a white child (the text by Fanon, p62). Fear slides between signs and sticks to bodies by constituting them as its objects. In making this argument, she shows how fear sticks to some bodies and not others (to black man). “Fear works to secure the relationship between those bodies”. (Ahmed 2014, p. 63).

Sticking and sliding is shaped by particular histories of association (a cannibalistic childhood fantasy in which the white child says to its mother: ‘Mama, the nigger’s going to eat me up). It is crucial to the politics of fear. This circulation leaves impressions on bodies. The body shrinks back from the world in the desire to avoid the object of fear.

Affective politics have social and spatial expression. She argues that in the economy of fear, fear is produced through an ongoing circulation of affect. Fear works by establishing others as fearsome insofar as they threaten to take the self in (64). Such bodies become constructed as fearsome and as a threat to the very truths that are reified as "life itself."

In the case of politics of mobility, the vulnerability suggest women must always be on guard when outside the home. Just home is safe! A reproduction of public domestic space as dangerous and ‘appropriate’ forms of femininity become bound up with the reproduction of domestic space.

Subjects and objects are formed in these dynamics. More over Ahmed explains the difference between fear and anxiety. In fear the approach and passing of the object is key - if the object passes without harm, fear increases. In anxiety, the association and displacement of the object is key. Then Ahmed mentions the Little Hans case that conceptualized by Freud. Hans had a phobic relationship to horses. Freud argues that there is a displacement between objects (fear of father and fear of horse). This fear is itself a symptom that has been ‘put in the place’ of another fear, one that much more profoundly threatens the ego. The affect of fear is sustained, or is even intensified, through the displacement between objects.

In the final section, the author uses example of September 11, 2001 in order to illustrate the complexity of spatial and bodily politics of fear. Ahmed points out, how fear of terrorism is turned into the war on terror, resulting in mobilization of home: “the turning away from the object of fear involves a turning towards home, as a fellow feeling.” (p. 74) That would turn into act of war on terror seeking to eliminate the source of fear. Ahmed argues that fear is kept alive, through the figure of the fearsome terrorist. She illustrates how stereotypizaion sticks to certain bodies and thus restricts their mobility. By applying sticking theory, she proves that black man is associated with negro, dirty, ugly and fearsome; and the narrative `could be a terrorist` is linked to `its Muslim. ` But the terrorist could be anyone and anywhere.