Affective Intentionality and Practical Rationality

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1. *Emotion and truth*

'Emotions are Janus-faced,' writes de Sousa. 'This suggests that we might speak of a truth, or perhaps two kinds of truth of emotions, one of which is about the self, and the other about conditions in the world' (de Sousa, this volume, p. 313). Emotions, it is claimed, disclose facts about *how* the world is and about *who* we are. The articles in this volume all focus on one, the other, or both of these aspects of emotions – How do they contribute to provide reasons for judgements and actions? How do these judgements and actions, individual or collective, serve as occasions for interrogation and evaluation of the self or of morality?

2. *Affective intentionality*

Contributors to this volume all take seriously[1] the idea that emotions play specific roles in getting us acquainted with a world that is of significance or of value to subjects experiencing these emotions. Emotions thus exhibit a specific kind or specific kinds of intentionality. Accordingly, a significant chunk of the present articles is devoted to the understanding of the idea of *affective intentionality*, an idea that is articulated in more or less detail depending on the specific projects our authors respectively pursue.

Teroni's 'Emotions and Formal Objects' directly probes the nature of the objects of the emotions. Beyond the particular things that may emotionally affect us, is it the case that all emotions of a same type are directed at the same kind of object? What in emotions occupies the role that *truth* occupies for belief or the *probable* for conjecture? Teroni's answer, along with the tradition, is that this role is played by evaluative or axiological properties that are for this reason formal

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[1] 'Taking seriously' does not mean 'endorsing'. See in particular Dorsch's contribution to this volume, which explores the undesired consequences of accepting the idea that emotions play a distinctive epistemic role in aesthetic evaluation.

objects of their respective emotions. In what sense, thus, is, for example, the offensive the formal object of anger? Emotions are, according to Teroni, *sui generic* ways of apprehending evaluative properties.

Although Teroni defends and endorses the idea that emotions have a *sui generis* form of intentionality, his enquiry remains entirely conceptual; the psychological underpinnings of how emotions are to be thought of as intentional are left untouched. Not so with most of the other contributors to this volume. Whilst most of them either implicitly assume the correctness of the thesis that emotions are disclosers of value (Goldie, Betzler, Konzelmann Ziv, this volume), or explicitly endorse it,[2] most espouse a specific version of it based on the model of the intentionality of perception. Goldie speaks of the way in which we can be said to see evaluative and deontic facts, Döring speaks of affective perception of values, de Sousa stresses the analogies between perception and emotion, Betzler and Dorsch are sympathetic to the perceptual model for at least some emotions. A very serious question for all of these perceptual or perceptual-like accounts of emotions is how literally the idea that emotions as perceptions should be taken. While Döring seems to take the analogy very seriously, others are cautious not to assimilate emotion to perception. In this regard, the viability of the claim that emotion should be thought of on the model of perception leaves many questions unanswered: what plays the role of our perceptual organs for emotions, if anything? How sensitive is emotion to agents' short- and long-term motivations, especially if compared to the sensitivity of perception to these same motivations? If the intentionality of emotion is to be understood in terms of its phenomenology, should this phenomenology be understood in terms of bodily feelings or in terms of something else? What does it mean for emotions based on beliefs, memory or imagination to be like perceptions? Some of these questions receive some treatment in the following articles, but much remains open to philosophical investigation.

Whether or not emotions are literally perceptions is a peripheral issue compared with the following question: what kind of mental states emotions have to be in order for them to play their role as *reasons* for evaluative judgement or for action. This is one of Janus' faces, i.e. the type of information emotion reveals about the world and the way it does it. The first part of this introduction is focused on this issue. While Teroni and Dorsch are first and foremost concerned with the relation between emotion and evaluative judgement (section 3), Döring and Betzler are mainly concerned with the way in which emotions might become reasons for actions (section 4). In section 5 of this introduction, we present

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[2] Döring endorses it by rejecting what she calls, after Goldie, the add-on view of emotion, i.e. the idea that the feeling part of emotions is just an accompaniment to the evaluations performed by emotions.

Goldie's and de Sousa's proposal for the understanding of the role of emotion in making us *who* we are through the concepts of *virtue* and *authenticity* – this is the second face of Janus. Finally, in the last section of this introduction, we introduce the idea that emotions conceived on the model of affective intentionality might be experienced by collectives rather than just individuals. Konzelmann Ziv explores this possibility through her examination of collective guilt.

3. Emotions and (reasons for) judgements

(1) While Teroni tackles directly the question of how emotions might be grounds for evaluative judgements, Dorsch provides reasons for rejecting what he calls *sentimentalism*, i.e. the very general thesis according to which emotion is our epistemic entry to the realm of the evaluative, and of which perception-like theories of values are examples.

(a) Teroni's main concern is with a problem rarely frontally discussed in the literature or only in passing: are emotions reactions to prior cognitions of axiological properties ('*the priority thesis*') or are they endowed with *sui generis* intentionality to the effect that they are by themselves disclosers of values ('*the containment thesis*')? Teroni persuasively argues that, only on the latter picture, will the formal objects attributed to emotions be able to play the role the tradition wants them play, i.e. make emotions intelligible and assessable as well as justify judgements made on their basis. His strategy for establishing this claim consists in showing that all the ways in which the priority thesis can be cashed out defeats the purpose of positing formal objects in the first place, i.e. to account for their rationalising as well as their epistemic role. The proper articulation of how formal objects make emotions intelligible, assessable and grounds for judgements requires the abandonment of the priority thesis.

If the practice of taking our emotions as grounds for our evaluative judgements is to be taken seriously, then we ought to conceive of them as having a *sui generis* form of intentionality, i.e. as being in themselves disclosers of axiological properties. Only in this way can our practice of taking our emotions to be reasons for our evaluations be legitimate, i.e. be a way of invoking emotional evidence conducive to emotional truth. In others words, only like this, *that* which emotions disclose (i.e. formal objects) will be such that access to them via the emotions will provide by itself reasons for our evaluative judgements (and not just inherit its epistemic import from a prior evaluative cognition) and *that* which our emotions truly or falsely represent (as opposed to inheriting their correctness or incorrectness from the prior evaluative judgement which might have grounded it). This account of emotion as *sui generis* openness to values leaves of course totally open the question of what features make it the intentional state that it is. If it is phenomenology, then what dimension of it and what is distinctive of it?

(b) Dorsch, in his 'Sentimentalism and the Intersubjectivity of Aesthetic Evaluations', is, like Teroni, careful to distinguish between different ways in which emotions can be said to be appropriate: an epistemic sense and a semantic sense. An emotion might be said to be epistemically appropriate in the sense that it constitutes evidence for some evaluative judgement or it might be said to be semantically appropriate in the sense that it correctly or incorrectly represents (fits) the value of the object that has triggered it. The basic idea, of course, is that experiencing an emotion appropriately in the epistemic sense will be conducive to one's emotion ending up being appropriate in the semantic sense, i.e. fitting the worth of its object. This basic framework captures the essence of what we have called here affective intentionality, but more generally captures the essence of *sentimentalism* as a whole, that is, the broad view that our evaluations are grounded on, or constituted by, our emotional responses, which is the real target of Dorsch's contribution. Sentimentalism is compatible with both realist and anti-realist (including expressivist) conceptions of values.

Dorsch's project consists in showing that sentimentalism in all its varieties is incompatible with intersubjectivism, and thus a bad epistemology in all normative domains in which we want to hold on to intersubjectivity. Although the domain in which Dorsch deploys his argument is aesthetics and the experience of aesthetic values, he takes it that his claim will carry over to all evaluative domains in which we hold intersubjectivism dear. Although the argumentation is complex and intricate, the basic idea is simple enough. If the sentimentalist admits the possibility of faultless disagreement between epistemically ideally situated expert critics in matters of emotional response or evaluative judgement, – which he must – then he must reject the idea that it is a fundamental truth of an overall aesthetic evaluation concerning a work of art that it must be intersubjectively accepted. All attempts by the sentimentalist to either rule out the possibility of faultless disagreement in matters of emotional responses/evaluative judgements or to accommodate it within intersubjectivism are argued to fail.

Dorsch's paper raises a crucial question for all attempts to give an account of the specific intentionality of emotions. As we shall see in the remainder of this introduction, most of the contributors to this volume believe that the way in which emotions constitute our entry to the evaluative world is highly sensitive to the cares, concerns and character traits of the experiencing individuals. If that is the case, it should not be a surprise if intersubjective agreement in matters of evaluative judgements, in the realm of the aesthetic or in any other domain, is not all that common. Whether or not our authors would be happy to accept this consequence of their accounts remains somewhat unclear, though some remarks of de Sousa on the standards of aesthetical evaluation suggest that he would.

One dimension worthy of mention in Dorsch's formulation of *Sentimentalism* is its ontological neutrality with respect to the objects towards which our aestheti-

cal emotions are directed. It is interesting that, on the whole, sentimentalism tends to be expressed through a vocabulary that is reminiscent of a realist ontological viewpoint. Emotions are said to *present* values on the one hand, but the values presented via the emotions are often said to be highly dependent on the motivations, temperaments, commitments, projects, ideals, etc., of agents on the other hand – a dimension of the emotions the two next articles we introduce insist heavily upon. While there is no reason to think that there must be any incompatibility here – after all the presentational metaphor might be just a way of capturing the phenomenology of emotion – it is still unclear whether sentimentalism and its perceptualist variants can really accommodate any metaphysical framework – be it expressivism or realism.

4. *Emotions and (reasons for) action*

(2) Döring and Betzler are interested in the role of emotion in providing reasons for actions. Both of them believe that affective intentionality provides a new solution to the idea that at least some emotions can be said to constitute reasons for actions. And both argue that this implies that the belief-desire model of action explanation must be abandoned in favour of a different kind of model of the rationalisation of actions by emotions. They approach the problem in very different ways however: (a) Döring situates her argument in the framework of the debate on 'internalism' in ethics. (b) Betzler situates her argument relative to the challenge posed by those actions stemming from emotions which are difficult to explain rationally on their basis: so-called *a-rational actions* (Hursthouse 1991).

(a) In her 'Seeing What to Do: Affective Perception and Rational Motivation', Döring argues that only emotions – understood on the model outlined in section 2 of this introduction – can satisfactorily provide a solution to the problem of rational motivation as is familiar from the debate on 'internalism' between Kantians and Humeans (see e.g. Smith 1994). To recall: while Humean desires are perfect candidates for motivating actions, they are viewed by Kantians as not being capable of *rationalising* actions. Conversely, while Kant's *reasons* are universally viewed as perfect candidates for rationalising actions, they are considered by Humeans as incapable of *motivating* action.

Döring believes that all known attempts to rescue Humean desires from their manifest irrationality fail to reach their goal. Instead, she suggests that emotions, when properly understood, can play exactly this role. As perceptions of values – and not, for example, as raw feelings or just add-on epiphenomena of evaluative judgements – emotions can non-inferentially *rationalise* judgement and action. But, in addition, emotions have *motivational* force, which they can transmit to judgement and action. The transmission is due precisely to the justifying relation that may hold between an emotion and a normative judgement. Since this relation

forms a necessary (rather than a merely contingent) link between emotion and normative judgement, the reason provided by the judgement is necessarily, and in that sense 'internally', motivating (without this implying that the reason must be overriding). In this indirect way, Döring claims, emotions are perfectly suited to play the dual role of motivating and justifying action.

And they do this in a way that differs in crucial respects from desires. Rather than by reference to 'world-to-mind direction of fit', the emotions' motivational force is explained in terms of C. D. Broad's 'ought-to-be' (Broad 1930, 141 f.). Broad's notion connects evaluations with norms, and accounts for emotional actions (such as expressive actions) that cannot be rationalised in terms of means-end reasoning (see Betzler, this volume). Because emotions are rooted in an agent's affective commitments (cares, concerns, love and life projects), they now reveal to the agent a world that is value-laden because *deviating* from his expectations given these affective commitments. This is the sense in which one can say that emotions present the world as it ought to be, i.e. as a deviation (positive or negative) from how an agent wished it to be, as opposed to what ought to be done with respect to it. The basic idea is thus that thanks to our emotions, doing the right thing is much more a matter of immediately (non-inferentially) seeing things right than generally assumed in contemporary moral theory.

(b) In her 'Making Sense of Action Expressing Emotion', Betzler is also concerned with the manner in which actions motivated by emotions might be said to be accomplished for reasons. Her strategy consists in focusing on those actions that common sense tends to use as evidence for the disruptive nature of emotions, i.e. their tendency to make us act in ways that seem irrational. Key examples are tearing the photograph of a lover out of jealousy, kissing the sweater of a beloved partner out of affection or caressing the clothes of one's dead relative out of grief. After showing that these instances of behaviour should be viewed as actions, – after all we do hold people indulging in them accountable for them – Betzler puts herself the challenge of showing why these actions are made for reasons. Echoing Döring's position, Betzler believes that the fact that these actions come out as arational or possibly irrational on the traditional belief-desire model – i.e. that there is no intelligible good that could be pursued by the individuals featuring in the examples – should prompt us to abandon the model.

Actions expressive of emotions should be understood in the light of what Betzler calls agents' ongoing evaluative perspectives, which constitute their self-conception or identity. Intimate relationships, commitments to hobbies, careers or causes, constitute the transtemporal building blocks of agents' evaluative perspectives. Activities linked to these commitments acquire over time independent value for the individual engaged in them. Indulging successfully in these activities becomes expressive of the values they have come to be endowed with in the sense that they are the reflection of the agent's cares, loves and concerns.

The existence of these values *ipso facto* creates normative demands on agents, which find their most direct expressions in emotions. By valuing my intimate relationships, my career or my religious affiliation, I am now emotionally vulnerable to how these commitments fare – and so I should be. Progress, delays or obstacles in any of the happenings or activities associated with these commitments give me reasons to feel variously happy, hopeful, anxious or miserable. Betzler describes in detail the manner in which agents evaluative perspective engender rational demands on them, which are all reflected in agents' affective responses to how their commitments fare.

And it is of course in this light that the relevant expressive emotions should be made sense of. 'Actions out of such emotions,' Betzler argues, 'express rituals that are conducive to a manifestation or a revision of what one has come to value' (this volume, p. 447). The idea is that so-called expressive emotions are ways in which agents cope with changes affecting their emotional commitments, in particular those that do, or are likely to, affect these in dramatic ways. Death of a beloved, misfortunes in one's career, abandonment by someone dear, or unexpected success, are all occasions for an agent to reassert, question or revise his ongoing evaluative perspective. Betzler offers detailed explanations, sometimes speculative ones, of how and why different actions out of strong emotions reflecting alterations in life commitments can be interpreted as done unreflectively for reasons linked to a required reassertion or re-appraisal of these commitments.

While it is possible to examine the way in which the person we are determines and rationalises, through his or her evaluative perspectives, his or her emotions and the actions that they generate, another approach examines the way emotions and the actions they rationalise inform us of the kind of people we are by shaping, in more or less active ways, our evaluative perspectives. We turn thus to the other face of Janus.

5. *Emotion: the virtuous self and the authentic self*

Goldie and de Sousa are also concerned with the link between emotion and action; not, however, with the question as to whether the former can constitute a reason for the latter, but with the way our actions out of emotions reveal the kind of person we are. While (a) Goldie examines this question through the concept of *virtue*, (b) de Sousa examines it through the concept of *authenticity*. Intuitively, while the virtuous person is one who might be said to act out of having affectively perceived what to do given who he is and what he ought to do, the authentic person is one who affectively perceives what to do given who he is and what he ought to be.

(a) Goldie's project in 'Seeing What is the Kind Thing to Do: Perception and Emotion in Morality' is in large part descriptive. He is concerned with trying to capture both (i) the phenomenological and psychological underpinning of think-

ing, feeling and acting virtuously, and (ii) how this capacity might be acquired and solidified. His major insight is that virtue approached from this angle can be fruitfully thought of on the model of a skill (with crucial differences) or at least one sub-class of skills. A skill in the relevant sense is the capacity to non-inferentially judge that this or that is the case on the basis of perception, where 'non-inferential' just means that it did not require on the part of the subject any conscious or phenomenologically salient deliberation or thought process. Extended to the notion of virtue, the idea is that the virtuous person is typically one who can non-inferentially (in the phenomenological sense just referred to) perceive that he ought to do something in a given context (while leaving the possibility that he might also be inferentially justified in the epistemic sense). A significant part of the paper is devoted to the manner in which virtue might be learned through various methods. Goldie then goes on to show that not all that constitutes virtue can be understood on the model of a non-inferential skill (application of thick concepts are more easily accommodated in the present model than application of thin concepts),[3] and then to show that virtue distinguishes itself in other important respects from skill. First, while one can take holidays from skills without losing one's skill, one cannot take a holiday from virtue without losing one's virtue. Second, virtue is fundamentally an emotional capacity, i.e. a capacity to emotionally apprehend evaluative and deontic facts, on the model of the *sui generis* affective intentionality with which we are by now familiar. And this is connected to the most crucial difference between skill and virtue: virtue requires from the subject a kind of engagement that is not required in the deployment of a skill.

Virtue, in words that Goldie borrows from A. W. Moore, requires that the relevant evaluative concepts which are non-inferentially applied in the relevant contexts be such that the subject shares the 'beliefs, concerns and values that give application of the concepts [their] point' (Moore 2006, 137). Here we are back to the part of Döring's and Betzler's projects that consists in trying to capture the way emotions are capable of both motivating and rationalising actions. All three authors emphasise how life projects, personal concerns and values together with the way one regard oneself as a person are at the core of how an agent might end up being motivated to act in certain ways and for specific reasons. And this is where the two types of emotional truth with which we started this introduction interact in illuminating ways.

(b) De Sousa, in his 'Truth, Authenticity, and Rationality', is specifically interested in articulating this interaction; an endeavour which he believes should make manifest what an authentic person might be. De Sousa is perhaps the

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[3] The manner in which Teroni (this volume) unpacks the idea of the formal objects of the emotions makes this claim particularly plausible. The values that are closely associated with certain types of natural properties are more adequately said to be objects of possible perceptual and affective experiences than the values associated with thin concepts.

philosopher who did most to articulate the idea that emotions have formal objects, and that these are axiological properties (de Sousa, 1987). Intentional states in general have satisfaction conditions as well as success conditions. While these coincide for belief, they clearly come apart in the case of desire. A desire is satisfied when what is desired becomes true; it is successful when the thing desired is desirable. But what about emotions? If emotions were purely cognitive states conceived on the model of belief, then as with beliefs, satisfaction and success would always coincide for emotions. Not so, however, in de Sousa's articulation of affective intentionality. The axiological properties of events, processes, objects, etc., are in large part dependent on factors having to do with the motivational set of agents. This motivational set will be determined in a significant part by biology, but in large part also by personal, social, cultural factors. As a result, at each point in time, each of us has a unique emotional repertoire, shaped by both biology and life history. The fact that Sam's emotion presents Maria's gift as offensive, if true in the satisfaction sense, informs Sam of a fact about his environment, namely that her present is offensive. But it also informs him, if true in the success sense, of the kind of person he is, i.e. the kind of person that gets offended by the kind of circumstances Maria's gift represents. It informs him of a region of his emotional repertoire or idiolect. Sam's emotional idiolect constitutes the standard on the basis of which his emotions are to be evaluated for success. And as we shall see, one dimension of success is authenticity. But how can an emotional repertoire constitute a standard if it stems from an idiolect?, asks de Sousa.

One's particular emotions are both the expression of one's emotional repertoire and, at the same time, what is to be assessed on its basis. Now, the exercise of the dispositions constituting the repertoire can fail in distinct synchronic and diachronic ways. From the synchronic perspective, two different felt emotions might pull in different directions with regard to the actions they elicit. Although primarily factual, this kind of consistency might turn into rational inconsistency if the emotions are experienced as stably committing the subject to different and incompatible courses of actions. From the diachronic perspective, one's emotional repertoire might lack a certain form of coherence, which, de Sousa argues, is the distinct failure of the inauthentic. Given that my emotions play for me the role of rendering salient for me how I should behave given the circumstances, they document the kind of person I am from a normative perspective. I am the kind of person that should act so and so in this or that circumstances and sometimes fail to do so. Of course, success and failure in each given case will be very difficult to assess, for, as de Sousa emphasises, a more or less coherent narrative can be built out of any sequence of emotions. Perhaps the most fascinating part of de Sousa's paper is precisely concerned with the kind of standards implicated in the assessment of particular emotional idiolects. The only standards suitable for such evaluation, argues de Sousa, are those that we deploy in aesthetic appreciation. Singular

lives are like work of arts: the calculation of their merit is a serious and consuming enterprise, but not one that follows any neat algorithm.

Our emotions inform us about who we are. We just had a glimpse of the difficulties the elaboration of this idea might give rise to. The meaning and evaluation of a single individual's emotion given its place in potentially many layered sequences of emotions is hard to determine, if at all. And things might even be more complicated than this. For the fact is that the bearer of the emotion, in very standard cases, might not be a single individual, but a group of which this individual is only a member ('the class is bored', 'this nation is guilty'). If so, some or perhaps many emotions are shared, opening the possibility that the determination of the meaning of a single emotion for a single self must be also informed by the social setting and history in which this emotion occurs. While the study of this possibility must be postponed to another day, its successful conduct rests on a sound account of what a shared or collective emotion is in the first place. This is the theme of the last article of this volume.

6. Collective affective intentionality

A group might be thought to be collectively guilty for wrongdoings committed by one or some members of that group. If so, it might be thought that it is appropriate for that group to feel guilt over the wrongdoing in question. In her 'Collective Guilt Revisited', Konzelmann Ziv examines anew the very notion of collective feelings in general, and sets herself the task of establishing the claim that collective regret – as opposed to collective guilt – is the appropriate feeling for a group to be sharing over wrongdoing committed by members of the group in question. But what does it mean to be sharing an emotion like regret – or guilt –, and why is regret more appropriate than guilt? Konzelmann Ziv – contra the traditional analysis of Gilbert (1997) – argues in favour of an individualist conception of collective intentionality. The sharing of a mental state of the kind relevant for collective guilt – or regret – does not necessitate the positing of anything beyond and above the individual group members' intentional states. To account for the collective nature of the relevant feeling, it is sufficient that the individual members' respective attitudes be held on what Konzelmann Ziv, after Tuomela (2006), calls the 'We-mode', according to which individuals do have we-states that they hold 'as group members because of a group reason'. This interpretation allows one to account for the personal and societal impact of we-feelings without giving up the naturalist view of individual subjects of intentionality. In that way, there is no need to posit an ontologically distinct 'collective subject' of the collective feeling.

Konzelmann Ziv argues that this picture of collective intentionality is not only ontologically less costly, but also the only intelligible manner to account for the fact that a moral emotion should be apt for motivating action. Only if the emotion

is conceived as being (at least in part) of a phenomenological or sensory character – and not merely judgemental – and thus as belonging to particular incarnated individuals of the group, does it make sense to speak of emotional feelings motivating action (see e.g. Döring, this volume, for a discussion and defence of this idea). Each member of the group, as opposed to some dubious collective entity, is individually motivated to act in accordance with whatever action tendencies are associated with the emotion in question. In the context at hand, the relevant action tendencies are those associated with the wrongdoing allegedly committed by the group one belongs to. And this of course raises the question of which emotion this wrongdoing should elicit. Regret, and not guilt, is Konzelmann Ziv's answer. Guilt, being constitutively related to *personal* fault and thus to *personal* responsibility, requires too much of an individual who by definition could have done nothing to prevent the wrongdoing in question. By contrast, the way in which the self is connected to the emotion of regret being much looser, regret appears more suited to account for the proportionality of the individual's implication in the relevant type of collective wrongdoing; and it does all this without blocking the action tendencies – such as apology or reparation – which the awareness of being a member of the group having committed the wrongdoing should prompt. It is thus collective regret, and not collective guilt, concludes Konzelmann Ziv, that reason commands us to feel over wrongdoings one has not individually committed, but one in which one is implicated as a group member.

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Articles in this volume are chiefly contributions to the epistemology of emotions. Emotions entertain important relations to values, to judgement (and action more generally), and to the self. These relations can be investigated from different angles, the epistemological one being at the centre of the claims and arguments we have just reviewed. Emotions, we have seen, can be justified by the values they disclose. They might do that, some claim, by being perceptual-like experiences of them. This is one of Janus' faces. Now, being candidates for epistemic evaluation, emotions might in turn be what justify judgement and action. More often than not, however, this justificatory role can only be understood in the framework of the complex net of personal concerns and commitments of the self experiencing the emotion, alone or as part of a group. But those concerns and commitments, it was argued, are in turn and in large measure, made sense of by these very emotions subjects undergo. This is Janus' other face. If more work is to be done to show that this epistemic circle is a virtuous one, our conviction is that the contributions to this volume constitute an important first step in this direction.*

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