

Emotional Phenomenology: Toward a Nonreductive Analysis

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Abstract – In this article I want to create a presumption in favor of a nonreductive analysis of emotional phenomenology. The presumption relies on the claim that none of the nonemotional elements which are usually regarded as constitutive of emotional phenomenology may reasonably be considered responsible for the evaluative character of the latter. In section 1 I suggest this is true of cognitive elements, arguing that so-called ‘evaluative’ judgments usually result from emotional, evaluative attitudes, and should not be conflated with them. In section 2 I argue the same holds true for conative attitudes (desires and acts of the will). And in section 3 I briefly mention some salient aspects of the version of nonreductive analysis I lean toward.

1. INTRODUCTION

My concern in this article is with the phenomenology of emotions, what it is like to have an emotion or the way it feels to have an emotion. I will leave open the question whether it makes sense to speak of the *nature* of an emotion regardless of the way it feels to have this emotion—and whether it makes sense to speak of unfeelt emotions at all. Therefore, I will restrict myself to the subjective experience of having an emotion, or to what is commonly called today “emotional phenomenology.” I take it that the *existence* of emotional phenomenology is beyond any doubt. What I want to address is the *character* of emotional phenomenology and, more pointedly, the question as to whether it may be subject to a reductive analysis or, on the contrary, whether it incorporates a primitive, nonreducible emotional element.

Emotional phenomenology is a fascinating topic. It gave rise to far-reaching investigations in the so-called phenomenological-descriptive tradition— which goes back to Franz Brentano, Carl Stumpf, Edmund Husserl, and others— and recently attracted renewed interest in analytic philosophy of mind. The issue I want to tackle here is how we are to describe emotional phenomenology. I will use the term “description” as a synonym for “analysis” and contrast different kinds of philosophical analysis. Basically, two pairs of notions need to be distinguished here: *reductive* vs. *nonreductive* analysis, and *phenomenological* vs. *intentional* analysis.¹ The meaning of these distinctions will, I hope, become clear in the course of this article.

As a first pass at the main available options, let us consider the following question. Can the sentence “S feels an emotion for x” (where x may equally denote an object, a person, or a state of affairs) be paraphrased in such a way that the paraphrase, no matter how complex it is, displays only *nonemotional* ingredients? To put it differently, can emotional phenomenology be analyzed away in nonemotional terms? If you answer *yes*, then you are a supporter of reductive analysis. If you answer *no*, you are a supporter of nonreductive analysis.

Several kinds of reductive analysis have been proposed in philosophical literature. So-called *cognitivist* theories of emotion tend to describe emotions as evaluative judgments, thereby suggesting that the evaluative character of emotional phenomenology is accountable for in terms of judgment or cognitive attitudes. The prototype of emotional cognitivism dates back at least to Robert Solomon (1977), who suggested that the subjective character of emotions was best captured in terms of *de se* judgments: “What constitutes the anger is my judging *that I have been insulted and offended*. It is my ‘taking it personally’ that makes this set of judgments anger” (Solomon 1977, 47). Since such judgments, in Solomon’s view, are identified by means of intentional, rather than phenomenal, features, this kind of analysis qualifies as *intentional reductive analysis*.²

In contrast, *feeling* theories of emotion rest upon the claim that emotions are nothing but bodily feelings, feelings detecting physiological changes. They go back to William James’s (1884) famous

¹ For similar distinctions regarding the notion of analysis from a historical point of view, see Beaney 2007.

² As Solomon puts it, the traditional theories “ignore what might be called *subjectivity*, one’s own viewpoint and what one experiences—other than sensations and their like—when he or she has an emotion. This is even true of the feeling theory, insofar as the ‘feelings’ so considered are restricted to the physical feelings of constriction, flushing, palpitation, etc. Phenomenologists have made much of this subjective viewpoint, and it is accordingly to them and their theory of intentionality that we turn to take the major step away from [the] traditional theories” (1977, 44).

article, according to which “*the bodily changes follow directly the perception of the exciting fact*” and “*our feeling of the same changes as they occur is the emotion*” (James 1884, 189–90). Since bodily feelings traditionally are identified by means of phenomenal features, this approach qualifies as a *phenomenal reductive analysis* of emotional phenomenology. More recently, Uriah Kriegel offered another, more sophisticated version of phenomenal reductive analysis, arguing that emotional phenomenology might be accounted for in terms of a combination of proprioceptive, cognitive, algedonic (pain/pleasure), and conative phenomenology (Kriegel 2015, 129–58).

Traditional versions of intentional reductive analysis and phenomenal reductive analysis have faced serious difficulties. Unsurprisingly, it has been objected that intentional reductive analysis was unable to account for the phenomenal character of emotions, whereas phenomenal reductive analysis was unable to account for their intentional and rational character. This diagnosis gave rise to hybrid forms of reductive analysis, viz. reductive analyses combining phenomenal and intentional features. Call them *hybrid reductive analyses*. On this approach, an emotion involves, *a minima*, (1) a judgment about x, (2) an evaluative judgment and/or a desire, and (3) a bodily sensation. The emotion then inherits its phenomenal properties from the bodily sensation, and its intentional properties from the judgment and/or the desire (see, e.g., Whiting 2009).

In contrast to all forms of reductive analysis, other people have suggested that a proper analysis of emotion, no matter how many nonemotional ingredients it reveals, inevitably leaves us with a primitive, nonreducible, distinctively *emotional* ingredient. It is probable that this view can be traced back to neo-Brentanian theories of emotions like those of Stumpf and Alexius Meinong. Recently, the view that emotions exhibit a kind of distinctive, *sui generis* phenomenology has been advocated by Michelle Montague in a series of articles (Montague 2009, 2017a,b). Interestingly, such neo-Brentanian, *nonreductive analyses* qualify *both* as intentional and phenomenal, for they take the relevant features of the *analysans* to be intentional and phenomenal at the same time.³

If this brief state of art is correct, the phenomenologist who wants to decide what the best description of emotional phenomenology is, has at least four main options to consider:

- Intentional reductive analysis
- Phenomenal reductive analysis

³ Such a conception has sometimes been dubbed “inseparatism” and has been advocated by supporters of “phenomenal intentionality.” See Graham, Horgan, and Tienson 2007; Graham, Horgan, and Tienson 2009; Kriegel 2013.

- Hybrid reductive analysis
- Nonreductive analysis

How are we to choose between those options? In this article I want to create a presumption in favor of nonreductive analysis, or NRA for short. The presumption I have in mind relies on the fact that none of the nonemotional elements that are usually taken as constitutive of emotional phenomenology seems to be responsible for the evaluative character of the latter. I will not offer a definitive argument, and I will rather adopt a somewhat indirect way of tackling this issue by considering what Brentano calls “one-sided separability” relations (Brentano 1995b, 15). My plan is as follows. The second section will be devoted to some separability relations between emotion and cognition, and the third to some separability relations between emotion and conation. The upshot will be an analysis of emotional phenomenology that accommodates for one-sided separability relations and plausibly qualifies as a version of NRA (§ 4).

2. EMOTION AND COGNITION

Consider the following scenario.⁴ Jane and Mark apply to the same research grant. They both desire to obtain the grant. As it happens, Jane’s application is successful and Mark’s is not. They receive a letter notifying the result to each of them. Jane reads her letter and realizes her application has been successful. She therefore feels joyful and elated at the thought of receiving the grant. Mark reads his letter, realizes his application has not been successful, and feels disappointed.

This scenario involves a number of mental states of various kinds and ends up with plain emotional experiences (feeling joyful, feeling disappointed). The classical way of tackling emotional experiences centers around two questions: What makes Jane’s and Mark’s experiences *emotional* at all, as opposed to nonemotional experiences like, say, desiring or understanding? And what makes Jane’s and Mark’s experiences *different* emotional experiences?⁵

⁴ This scenario may be found in Montague (2009), but in the course of this article I will unfold it and use it in a somewhat different way, namely, to contrast conative, cognitive, and emotional attitudes.

⁵ Note that there is a *prima facie* distinction between emotions and moods. Maybe the fact that Jane believes she obtained the grant put her in a very good mood, whereas the fact that Mark didn’t obtain the grant makes him feel bad and depressed. Unlike disappointment, which is directed at a certain state of affairs, depression arguably does not exhibit the same kind of directedness. For the

One influential way of settling these two questions is to describe emotional experiences in terms of some cognitive ingredient *plus* some bodily feeling. This raises the question as to what is the place of cognition in emotional experience.

To begin, it is plausible to claim that some cognitive element contributes to the existence and character of emotional phenomenology. In the opening scenario, Jane realizes (understands and comes to believe) she obtained the grant, and feels joyful, while Mark realizes (understands and comes to believe) he didn't obtain the grant, and feels disappointed. Suppose Jane and Mark knew there was only one grant, which would be awarded to one and only one candidate. Jane's success therefore is identical with Mark's failure. Objectively speaking, there is just one situation and two ways of describing it. As Montague (2009, 173–74) notices, the way one conceptually *frames* the situation is important and arguably is part of what it is to experience an emotion (see also Stumpff 1928, XIV). This suggests there is some intimate connection between cognitive and emotional phenomenology.

For the sake of clarity, note that the kind of cognitive phenomenology I just touched upon clearly outstrips sensory phenomenology. When Jane reads the letter notifying that she received the grant, she is naturally presented with a sensory content: the letters on the page look a certain way to her.

There is more to her experience of reading the letter, however, than just sensory phenomenology. When understanding the content of the letter, she *realizes* that she received the grant—and this realizing-experience arguably is an instance of cognitive phenomenology (see Dewalque forthcoming; Montague 2017c, 297). What makes us experience this emotion rather than that, and what makes us experience an emotion at all, heavily depends on how we conceptually frame the situation. Therefore, it seems a satisfying analysis of emotional phenomenology should take into account a distinctively *cognitive* ingredient.⁶

That said, supporters of cognitivist theories not only maintain that an adequate description of an emotional episode involves a cognitive ingredient. They maintain that the *emotional* dimension of the experience itself may be accounted for in terms of an evaluative *judgment*. Roughly speaking, Jane's feeling joyful would be identical to her judging that obtaining the grant is a *good* thing, or

purpose of the present article, I will set aside the distinction between moods and emotions, and I will confine myself to clear-cut cases of emotions.

⁶ Montague speaks of cognitive phenomenology, but some are reluctant to accept this notion. I believe there is no need to expand on that here. At this point, we can stay neutral as regards the phenomenal or intentional character of this cognitive element.

perhaps that the value of her work has been fairly acknowledged. Similarly, Mark's feeling disappointed would be identical to his judging that not receiving the grant is a *bad* thing, or perhaps that the value of his work has been unfairly underestimated. The details of such analyses do not need to concern us here. The question at issue is: Can the presence of a judgment—even though it is an “evaluative” judgment—really account for the emotional, evaluative dimension of the subjective experience of feeling joyful or feeling disappointed?

Like Brentano, I believe the answer is *no*. First of all, judging is a distinctive kind of attitude, namely acknowledging-as-true or rejecting-as-false (see Brentano 1995a). As Stout puts it, “judgment is the Yes-No consciousness” (Stout 1896, 97). We can say that judging is having a “yes/no attitude” toward *x*. It is worth insisting that, on a Brentanian view, this attitude has nothing to do with predicating something (e.g., “truth” or “falsity”) of something else (*x*). Rather, it is a distinctive kind of attitude: When judging, we acknowledge-as-true or reject-as-false *x*. Similarly, when emoting, we take *x* to be agreeable as good or we take it to be disagreeable as bad. Brentano precisely believes there is a striking analogy between judgmental and emotional attitudes. Analogy, however, is not identity. To be sure, there are judgments about goodness or badness: affirming “This is something to be loved” amounts to affirming that “This is something good,” just like affirming “This is something to be hated” amounts to affirming that “This is something bad.” Yet, it is plain that such judgments are not identical with the corresponding emotions (Brentano 1995a, 240). They merely result from an “objectification” of the evaluative attitude that is subjectively experienced in having an emotion. Furthermore, you can perfectly well affirm, with cold blood so to speak, that “*x* is something bad,” without experiencing any negative emotion about *x*.

The fact that cold blood evaluative judgments are conceivable shows that evaluative judgments are quite *separable* from emotions. Therefore, making an evaluative judgment is *not sufficient* to experience an emotion: There is more to emotion than cognition.

A supporter of hybrid reductive analysis might object that this “plus” may be accounted for by simply adding bodily feelings to the picture. Yet, it is hard to see how adding bodily feelings might account for the genuine *attitude* that consists of *presenting-as-good* or *experiencing-as-good* *x*. In Brentano's view, this emotional attitude rather is presupposed by the evaluative judgment “*x* is good,” which is a mere acknowledging-as-true the goodness of *x*. In fact, affirming “*x* is good” already is a “translation,” at the level of cognition or judgment, of the emotional experience of *presenting-as-good* or *experiencing-as-good* *x*. I will say more on this below (§ 4). Suffice it to note that switching from bodily feelings and judgments about *x* to *emotion* arguably is experiencing an

entirely new attitude toward x, which plausibly cannot be accounted for in terms of judgments, bodily feelings, or a combination thereof. If those considerations are on the right track, then the evaluative character of emotional phenomenology is not accountable for in terms of so-called “evaluative” judgments, or evaluative-judgments-with-feelings.⁷

3. EMOTION AND CONATION

In this section I want to address the relation between emotional and conative experiences. Recall, again, the opening scenario. Jane and Mark both *desire* to obtain the grant. They both undergo a conative experience. Jane, who obtains the grant, *feels joyful*, while Mark *feels disappointed*. Is conation a necessary ingredient of the phenomenology of the overall emotional experience? And, more importantly, can the presence of a conative element account for the evaluative dimension of the overall emotional experience?

Brentano himself argues that emotions and desires form one single unitary class of mental phenomena (see Brentano 1995a, 235f), which suggests that they are intimately related. In order to justify his claim, he presents two arguments. Montague calls them “the nature of desire” argument and “the transition” argument (Montague 2017a,b). Let us consider in turn these two arguments.

1 / First, Brentano argues that inner perception shows that emotion and conation are *phenomenally alike*: Both emotion and conation consists of presenting-as-good or presenting-as-bad *x*. To be sure, Brentano does not deny that there *is* a difference between feeling an emotion (e.g., feeling joyful) on

⁷ Interestingly, the same holds true for the perceptual version of cognitivism, according to which experiencing an emotion is perceiving the (positive or negative) value of *x*, and different emotional experiences are the perception of different values. As Montague (2017a, 85) notices, Brentano explicitly rejects such views: “I do not believe that anyone will understand me to mean that phenomena belonging to this class are cognitive acts by which we perceive the goodness or badness, value or disvalue of certain objects. ... This would be a complete misunderstanding of my real meaning. In the first place, that would mean that I viewed these phenomena as judgments; but in fact I separate them off as a separate class. Secondly, it would mean that I would be assuming quite generally that this class of phenomena presupposes presentations of good and bad, value and disvalue. This is so far from being the case, that instead I shall show that such presentations can stem only from inner perception of these phenomena” (Brentano 1995a, 239). This passage contains, again, two arguments. First, having an emotion for *x* is having a certain kind of attitude toward *x*, which attitude clearly differs from the judgmental, yes/no attitude. Second, in order to perceive that “*x* is good or bad,” I must already possess the notions of good and bad, which have their source in the reflection upon the emotional attitudes of presenting-as-good or presenting-as-bad *x*.

the one hand, and desiring or wanting something, on the other. What he rejects is the claim that this difference is *as fundamental as the difference between presentational attitude and judgmental attitude*. The talk of “fundamental” and “nonfundamental” distinctions may sound somewhat confused and arbitrary. Nevertheless, I think it loses a bit of its apparent arbitrariness as soon as one recalls that Brentano thinks of mental phenomena as *attitudes toward other (mostly physical) phenomena*. His classification of mental phenomena basically is a taxonomy of primitive (nonreducible) mental attitudes. From this perspective, the distinction between the most general attitude types (e.g., presenting vs. judging) may be said to be “fundamental,” while all other distinctions are considered secondary or derived.⁸ Therefore, saying that the distinction between emotion and desire is not fundamental amounts to saying that emotion and desire are manifestations of one and the same attitude type. Compare the distinction between presentation and judgment. When you switch from the presentation of a “red apple” to the judgment that “this apple is red,” you experience, Brentano claims, a new attitude type. The reason it is so is that presenting *x* as a red apple is neutral while judging (affirming or denying) *that* this apple is red is committal. Now there is no such gap, he argues, between emotion and desire. *S*’s loving of *x* and *S*’s desiring of *x* both consists of presenting-as-good *x*. The attitude type is essentially the same. Montague (2009a, 74–75) gives the following reconstruction of Brentano’s argument:

1. Desire is constitutively an experiencing, or a taking, of something as good.
2. If a mental phenomenon takes an object as good or bad, then it is an emotion.
3. Therefore, desire is an emotion.
4. Wishes, decisions, intentions, and all acts of the will are desires or expressions of desires.
5. Therefore, wishes, decisions, intentions, and all acts of the will are emotions.

What should we think of this argument? Clearly, the argument is valid. As far as I can see, one main concern that could be raised against it has to do with premise 1. But before going to the main objection, I would like to mention another motivation for distinguishing emotion and desire.

⁸ Derived distinctions are of different kinds. First, they obviously involve nonattitudinal, contentual distinctions: for example, presenting *x* as a tree or as an oak. Second, they involve attitudinal distinctions as well, as far as they are relative to the same attitude type: for example, the distinction between self-evident judgment and blind judgment may be said to be secondary or derived, because self-evident judgment and blind judgment are modifications of the same attitude type.

It has been noticed that it was quite possible to experience something as good (or bad) without having the slightest desire. Indeed, it seems emotion and desire are at least *one-sidedly separable* from one another: An emotional experience does not need to involve a conative ingredient. There are *emotions without desires*. Meinong's student, Christian von Ehrenfels, mentions the following two examples, which I will call the "surprise" example and the "resignation" example (see Ehrenfels [1887] 1988, 30–35). (i) When something pleasant or unpleasant takes us by surprise, Ehrenfels writes, there is no trace of conation in us. Suppose, for instance, you walk in the garden and notice an agreeable, unexpected smell coming from nearby flowerbeds. You may form the desire to find the source of this pleasant smell, and to keep enjoying the nice smell. Yet, it seems plausible to hold that, at the very moment you experience-as-agreeable the smell, you didn't experience any desire yet. (ii) Similarly, when we are in a state of resignation, it seems plausible to say that we experience-as-unpleasant the situation without having any positive or negative desire (without *hoping* that something happens), since resignation is, by its very nature, the absence of desire. So, it seems there are emotional states that lack any conative dimension. This is at least one reason why emotion and conation are to be distinguished (Ehrenfels 1988 [1887], 35).⁹

Next, it has been argued that desiring *x* would be best conceived of as "presenting *x* as something that *ought* to be (or ought to do)"—or, to put it in attitudinal terms, "presenting-as-ought-to-be *x*." The idea is that "one cannot have a positive emotion toward something without it appearing good in some way; and one cannot desire something without it appearing as something that ought to be. Values are the formal objects of emotions; norms are the formal objects of desires" (Massin 2017). If this analysis is correct, if conative attitudes are not equivalent to presenting-as-good (or presenting-as-false) *x*, but rather presenting-as-ought-to-be (or presenting-as-ought-not-to-be) *x*, it is hard to see how the presence of a conative element might account for the evaluative character of emotional phenomenology. *Conative attitudes simply are not genuinely evaluative*. I'll come back to this in next section. For now, suffice it to say that, whereas the presenting-as-ought-to-be may perfectly well result from the presenting-as-good, they are not to be conflated with one another.

2 / Let us now turn to what Montague calls "the transition" argument. The key idea is as follows. It is possible to construct a series of mental states (i) whose first term clearly is an emotional state and whose last term clearly is a conative state, and (ii) in which each term only is gradually distinct from

⁹ I won't dwell on the idea that conation is active while emotion is passive. This idea certainly is not uninteresting, but I think the notion of activity requires some clarification which falls beyond the scope of this article.

the neighboring terms. For instance: Mark feels disappointed because he didn't received the grant, hopes he'll be more successful next time, desires to be awarded the next grant, and decides to write a new application. On Brentano's account, there is a gradual transition between all those states, such as no real gap is noticeable (Brentano 1995a, 236). The "disappointment-hope-desiredecision" succession captures the continuous unfolding of a pro-attitude, which progressively grows stronger—or so it seems.¹⁰ Therefore, Brentano concludes, there is no essential distinction to be made between emotional and conative phenomenology. The difference is only of degrees.

Unlike Brentano and Montague, I do not think the transition argument has real cogency. True, the construction of such a continuous series is quite possible. But why should we understand the continuity at hand as the unfolding of one single, unitary ingredient? This is not the only way of describing the situation. Another way of accounting for the continuity is in terms of two elements combined in varying ratios, as George Stout suggests:

The assumption that each of the several phases of consciousness intervening in the psychological series between a sorrowful mood and voluntary determination to act must be referred either to the head feeling exclusively, or to the head conation exclusively, is entirely fallacious. There is another alternative. Both elements may be combined in varying ratios in the successive terms of the series, as in the case with blue and green in the blue-green series (Stout 1896, 118).

I believe the objection is sound. Again, the upshot is that, whereas a conative element might be part of the overall phenomenology of an emotional state, no conative element seems to be responsible for the evaluative character of emotional phenomenology.

4. TOWARD A VERSION OF NRA

Let's take stock. The view I have sketched in this article departs from some recent accounts of emotional phenomenology in multiple ways.

First, it takes emotional phenomenology to be *attitudinal* rather than representational. This attitudinal aspect has been touched upon in the previous sections, when we endorsed Brentano's rejection of emotional cognitivism and rejected his claim that emotion and desire are two expressions of the same fundamental attitude. Now it is time to say more about it. Emotions are

¹⁰ See Brentano (1995a, 237): "Is there not already a germ of the striving lying unnoticed in the yearning, which germinates when one hopes, and blooms when one thinks of possibly doing something oneself, when one wishes to act and then has the courage to do so, until finally the desire overcomes both the aversion to any sacrifice involved and the wish to reflect any longer, and it ripens into a decision?"

subjectively experienced as pro and con-attitudes. Accordingly, “*S* feels pleased with *x*” should not be paraphrased as “*S* presents *x* as pleasant,” but rather as “*S* presents-as-pleasant *x*” (see Kriegel 2015 for similar considerations). This means that the evaluative character that manifests itself in emotions (in that case, pleasantness) is a built-in, attitudinal feature of the phenomenal state *S* enjoys.

Maybe the phrase “*S* presents-as-pleasant *x*” is not the best way to capture this idea, for the verb “presents” suggests we stick with a representational approach, perhaps just a slightly subtler one. Yet, I think this objection probably is more verbal than substantial. The proposed view crucially departs from representationalism (in all its forms) in that it conceives what makes an emotional state distinct from another emotional state, and what makes it an emotional state at all, is independent from, and irreducible to, the (representational) *content* of the state. This is not to deny, of course, that emotions are intentional. The idea just is that emotionality initially is not a matter of content. Rather, it is a matter of how a subject *S* is intentionally directed at some content.

Furthermore, it is my contention that “*S* presents-as-pleasant *x*” may be paraphrased in turn in such a way that any reference to representational content is removed. A Brentanian approach to the notion of “presentation” offers exactly that. Interestingly, Brentano uses the word “presentation” whenever something *appears* to *S* (Brentano 1995a, 81, 198; 1956, 32; Seron 2017a,b). Therefore, presentations and intentionality, in Brentano, are intrinsically phenomenal. If this phenomenological understanding of the notion of “presentation” is plausible, as I think it is, then “*S* presents-as-pleasant *x*” might be paraphrased as “*x* appears-as-pleasant to *S*” or “*S* experiences-as-pleasant *x*,” thereby removing the sense of the (naturalist) representational view that still seemed to be implied in the previous phrasing. I won’t argue for this move here, though. My intention was just to suggest that there is a way of putting the attitudinal approach that does not commit us to a purely representational view of the mind—whatever the virtues or drawbacks of such a view may be.

Second, considerations put forward in section 1 have suggested that emotional attitudes are not reducible to judgmental or cognitive attitudes, nor are they accountable for in terms of perception of values. One reason why the attitudinal, noncognitive model is appealing is that, intuitively, values are not the kind of thing we can perceive or represent in a nonconceptual way. All we have, originally, is a pro or con-*attitude*, which is somehow felt or experienced. The possessing and mastering of value predicates like “good” or “bad,” “pleasant,” or “unpleasant,” not to mention the general notions of positive value or negative value, are not required for *S* to be in an emotional state. Now, arguably, this would be the case if emotional states were to be analyzed in terms of “*S* presents

x as good” or “ S judges that x is good,” because plainly it is impossible to conceptually represent something *as* F without possessing the concept F .¹¹ In order for S to judge that x is good, S must have the concept of good. But in order for x to appear-as-good to S , no conceptual skill is required. This, to my mind, probably is the more compelling reason why emotions are not reducible to judgmental and/or propositional attitudes. Brentano’s remarks about the analogy between “truth” and “good” strikes me as an interesting contribution to this question. Intuitively, judging that, say, “the sun is shining” is not the same as predicating “is true” of the proposition “the sun is shining.” It is a distinctive, acknowledging attitude, which has nothing to do with predicating the “truth” of some proposition. Similarly, feeling a positive emotion toward x is not the same as predicating “good” of x , or presenting x as good (Brentano 1995a, 240). Again, there is more to emotional phenomenology than just cognitive phenomenology.

On the other hand, the neo-Brentanian approach to emotions I lean toward involves a thought-provoking story about how one comes to acquire value predicates such as “good,” “bad,” “pleasant,” “unpleasant,” and the like. Basically, the core idea is that value predicates are obtained by reflection upon one’s emotional states. Therefore, any judgment that acknowledges the ascription of a value predicate to x somehow presupposes, not only an emotional experience, but also an act of reflection upon this emotional experience, by means of which the corresponding value predicate is acquired by S . The general lesson that seems to me to follow from such consideration is this: Values are, so to speak, injected into the world by emotional attitudes or, more precisely, by reflection upon one’s emotional attitudes. To put it more cautiously, value predicates have their source in emotional phenomenology. Of course, given the separation between value judgments and emotional states, a creature which is not capable of emotion would still be capable of making assertions about the positive or negative value of x , ascribing to x some (positive or negative) value predicate. Nevertheless, one way of understanding Brentano’s suggestion is to say that these value predicates would be devoid of any real meaning for this creature (see Montague 2017a, 82–83). They would be “empty,” meaningless words as long as they are not connected to the relevant emotional experience.¹²

¹¹ The strategy that consists of appealing to nonconceptual representational content strikes me as implausible when it comes to accounting for value predicates.

¹² It could be objected that those words would not be fully meaningless since their use is determined by some conventions that are acknowledged within a given linguistic community. I do not think the objection has much force. It could be replied that the meaning of a word is never fixed

Third, we have seen that, *pace* Brentano, there is no constitutive relation between emotion and conation. This entails a crucial departure from Kriegel's reductive view, according to which "emotional phenomenology incorporates a conative element characterized by the attitudinal feature of presenting-as-good" (Kriegel 2015, 156). In the course of section 2 we have found two reasons for resisting such a view. The first relies on the separability principle. If, indeed, emotion and conation are separable, then it is hard to see how a conative element could be *constitutive of* emotional phenomenology. The second reason undermines one central motivation for Kriegel's reductivist account of emotional phenomenology. Emotions are said to be inherently evaluative in the sense that, in emotions, we take something as good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, and so forth. Kriegel's reductivist account seemingly offers a straightforward explanation for this fact. The explanation starts with the combination of two claims:

1. Conative phenomenology is best captured in terms of presenting-as-good or presenting-as-bad x .
2. Emotional phenomenology incorporates a conative element.

From (1) and (2), it follows that

3. Emotions present-as-good or present-as-bad x .

The last premise is 4. For any mental state M and for any object or state-of-affairs x , M

is inherently evaluative if M presents-as-good or presents-as-bad x . From (3) and (4), it follows that

5. Emotions are inherently evaluative (cqfd).

The view is elegant and fits nicely within the overall reductive picture. The problem, as we have seen, is that premises (1) and (2) are disputable and indeed have been disputed. Against (2), it has been suggested that it is quite possible to enjoy an emotion without experiencing any desire or conation. And against (1), it has been suggested that conative pro-attitudes do not present-as-good x , but rather present-as-ought-to-be x . If it is so, then the presence of a conative element cannot account for the evaluative character of emotions, and the proposed explanation collapses.

A reductivist is left, it seems, with the following dilemma: Either another nonemotional ingredient can account for the evaluative character of emotions, or this evaluative character follows entirely

by convention alone, but by convention *plus* experience. Yet, I won't pursue this line of thinking here.

from the *combination* of the ingredients. Neither option seems entirely satisfying. Even if we didn't consider the possibility to anchor the evaluative dimension of emotional phenomenology into proprioceptive or algedonic phenomenology, such a move sounds highly implausible. On the other hand, could the combination of nonevaluative ingredients produce an evaluative state? Compare the case of judgmental attitude: Could the mere combination of presentations, viz. nonjudgmental attitudes, produce a judgmental (yes/no) attitude? Obviously not. When I combine some presentations with other presentations, I end up with more complex presentations—period. Why should it be different with a combination of proprioceptive, cognitive, algedonic, and conative phenomenology? Of course, you might insist that the case is somewhat different, for here there are ingredients of different kinds, and the combination of those various ingredients might give rise to the experience of an emotion. But wouldn't that be tantamount to accepting a kind of mental alchemy, which would magically turn nonevaluative elements into something evaluative?

In view of these difficulties, a more natural move, it seems, is to think of emotional phenomenology as involving a distinctively emotional, *sui generis* ingredient. This amounts to endorsing some version or other of NRA. Historically speaking, this position has found many supporters in the school of Alexius Meinong. Stefan Witasek, for example, acknowledges the existence of a primitive, distinctively emotional ingredient, which is constitutive of the overall phenomenology of an emotional experience:

The affective aspect, just like the act of presenting in presentation or the aspect of conviction in judgment, is a simple, idiosyncratic mental fact; it cannot be analyzed any further and cannot be reduced to other mental facts (Witasek 1908, 318).

According to such a nonreductive model, thus, emotional phenomenal states may still have various components—and even necessary components—but proprioceptive, conative, and algedonic phenomenology wouldn't exhaust the inventory of those components. There would be a primitive, nonreducible, *emotional* phenomenal ingredient as well.

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