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Article

Philosophical Aspects of Emotion

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Abstract: In this paper, I give readers an idea of what some scholars are interested in, what I found interesting, and what may be of future interest in the philosophy of emotion. I begin with a brief overview of the general topics of interests in the philosophy of emotion. I then discuss what I believe to be some of the most interesting topics in the contemporary discourse, including questions about how philosophy can inform the science of emotion, conceptions of the mind and the mind-body problem, concerns about perception, cognition, and emotion, along with questions about the place of 4E approaches and meta-semantic pluralist approaches in the embodied cognitive tradition. Finally, I discuss the emerging field of cultural evolution, the import of a dual-inheritance theory in this emerging field, and I propose a possible way to integrate the frameworks of dual-inheritance theory and meta-semantic pluralism to demonstrate at least one way in which the philosophy of emotion can contribute to the emerging field of cultural evolution.

Keywords: philosophy of emotion; science of emotion; meta-semantic pluralism; embodied cognition; mind; mind-body problem; perception; cognition; emotion; cultural evolution; dual-inheritance theory, evolutionary norm psychology

1. Introduction

In thinking about the philosophical aspects of emotion, I decided to proceed by informing readers about what I believe to be some of the most interesting research currently being pursued in the philosophy of emotion, especially from an interdisciplinary perspective. In short, to give readers an idea of what some scholars are interested in, what I found interesting, and what may be of future interest. I begin, in section 2, with a brief overview of the general topics of interests in the philosophy of emotion. In section 3, I discuss what I believe to be some of the most interesting topics in the contemporary discourse, including questions about how philosophy can inform the science of emotion, conceptions of the mind and the mind-body problem, concerns about perception, cognition, and emotion, and the embodied cognitive tradition, along with questions about the place of 4E approaches and meta-semantic pluralist approaches in the embodied cognitive tradition. In section 4, I discuss the emerging field of cultural evolution, the import of the dual-inheritance theory in this emerging field, and I propose a possible way to integrate the frameworks of dual-inheritance theory and meta-semantic pluralism to demonstrate at least one way in which the philosophy of emotion can contribute to the emerging field of cultural evolution. I will note, however, that what I highlight here is only a small representative of the various interests in the philosophy of emotion, and I am sure that those topics and scholars whom I have not mentioned here will forgive me for not doing so. As we are all aware, there is only so much time and space in a paper, let alone one's lifetime, to highlight all the interesting ideas that have been and are being pursued in the philosophy of emotion.

2. General Interests in the Philosophy of Emotion

The philosophy of emotion is currently a hot topic [1], yet one might say it was always a very interesting topic. For examples, refer to Calhoun [2], Kenny [3], Neu [4], Rorty [5], Harré [6], Lyons [7], Gibbard [8], Solomon [9], de Sousa [10], Greenspan [11],

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Lazarus [12], Scheff [13], Stocker & Hegeman [14], Panksepp [15], Damasio [16] Goldie [17], Helm [18], Nussbaum [19], Ekman [20], Prinz [21], Robinson [22], Frijda [23], Maiese [24], Deonna & Teroni [25], Mulligan & Schrerer [26], Colombetti [27], Barrett [28], Johnson [29], Tappolet [30], Brady [31-32], Cochrane [33], Furtak [34-35], Kristjánsson [36], LeDoux [37], Asma & Gabriel [38-39], Candiotto [40], Maiese & Hana [41], Benenti [42], Mun [43], Flanagan [44], and Alfano [45].

It has ancient roots across cultures, and one might say that many of the same questions that earlier scholars were concerned with still concern scholars of emotion, including philosophers of emotion. One might broadly categorize the topics of concern covered by the above texts as those in the philosophical study of metaphysics, epistemology, language, (moral) psychology, ethics, and the social-political aspects of the world. Other topics which might be included are moral attitudes [46], moral education [47-48], and affects [49].[1] The topic of emotions and religion, from a philosophical as well as cultural perspective would also be a worthy topic [52]. One might also consider the study of specific kinds of emotion or species of emotion. For example, grief [53], boredom, frustration, anticipation [54-55], contempt [56], envy [57-58], anger [59-61], disgust [62], shame [63-73], and love [74-77].

The *metaphysics of emotion* is a vast topic of interests, and it is primarily concerned with the question of what kind of thing emotions are. For example, one might ask whether emotions are mental states, bodily states, a combination of mind-body states, or perhaps something wholly other than mental or bodily states, such as an action or a process [78-80]. One can also ask questions about what they are made of, what constitutes an emotion, or what their parts or components are (if they can be said to have parts or components). The *epistemology of emotion* can range from questions about whether one can have any kind of knowledge from or through our emotions to questions about whether emotions can be "rational" or have some sort of epistemic weight, similar to beliefs or perceptions. We can also ask questions about how we can know anything about emotions at all, and one could characterize such questions as questions in the *philosophy of the science of emotion*. The *philosophy of the language of emotion* involves questions about whether emotions are or involve some kind of language; and if so, how one might characterize such a language, explain how it not only has the meanings that it does, but also conveys them, as well as identify the function or purpose of such a language and how it can be manipulated to do what it can do, has done, or is intended to do. This last aspect of the philosophy of language might be more narrowly referred to as the study of *rhetoric*. The *moral psychology of emotions* can be said to be concerned with the psychological nature of our emotions, and especially those that are related to our values and ethical decision-making. Given this, moral psychology often overlaps with ethics and meta-ethics, and is also a pivotal facet of socio-political explanations of aspects of our world. Moral psychology can also involve what one might refer to as the *ethics of emotion*, which includes questions about the moral appropriateness, correctness, rightness, or goodness of our emotional responses, and how we use our emotions. Such concerns, however, more often fall under concerns about *virtues*, *moral character*, and *moral education*. And currently, social-political explanations, including those based on emotion as the unit of measurement, are also of high interest.

3. Meta-Semantic Pluralism

[1] Although, I argue that a distinction ought to be drawn between attitudes, emotions, and affects [50]. I will not do so here, but for those who might be interested in doing so, I recommend they also consider reading up on propositional attitudes [51].

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My most recent concerns have encompassed questions about specific emotion types or species, and especially the emotion of shame [81-82], as well as the genus *emotion* [83]. They have also included questions about what emotions are, how we can know through our emotions, and the relationship between our minds and our bodies in general, as well as in our emotional experiences. I refer to the interdisciplinary approach that I take in answering these questions as *meta-semantic pluralism about emotion* (meta-semantic pluralism[e]). This approach—which can also be understood as a framework for a philosophy of science—was inspired by many foregoing theories of emotion (some of which are listed in the introduction), but it is especially rooted in a particular reading of an Aristotlean approach to the philosophy of emotion. There are many such approaches (including many of those that are listed in the introduction), yet like each of these approaches, mine also differs from those published before it. Unlike many of the Aristotlean theories that have gone before mine, meta-semantic pluralism emphasizes the semantically dualistic nature of Aristotle's hylomorphism [83] (p. 118). Furthermore, also unlike other Aristotlean theories, meta-semantic pluralism entails that conscious, first-person experiences are simply another dimension of the kind of material beings that we are. As I noted in my most recently published monograph:

> [A] corollary of this conclusion is that various things in the world can be categorized in accordance with their degree of objectivity, which would amount to their observational profusion, and one might regard such degrees of objectivity as defining degrees of "reality." For example, two dimensional figures would have less objectivity, and would therefore be less "real," than three dimensional figures, which would have less objectivity and reality than four dimensional figures. [83] (p. 143, fn. 23):

One might consider this claim—that conscious, first-person experiences are constituted as another real dimension of the kind of material beings that we are—to be quite controversial. I believe, however, that I might not be the only one who believes so. For example, such a view might also be held by laypeople, spiritual people, physicists, and other philosophers of mind, including Hindu, Buddhist, and Confucian philosophers. I refer to this view about the relationship between the mind and the body as *semantic dualism* [83] (ch. 5). Furthermore, the transition from a non-mental to a mental being may be a matter of crossing a certain degree of information integration threshold that would be necessary and sufficient for conscious, first-person experiences [83] (ch. 10), which has been made possible primarily by our evolutionary history [84-87].

Meta-semantic pluralism also entails an account *of conscious experiences*, as opposed to the broader category of experiences of the *mind*. As I noted in my earlier work:

> [I]f we were to discover the physically necessary and sufficient neural conditions that a subject of blindsight lacks, which would "give rise" to the conscious experience of the stimulus of which these subjects can be said to have only "access consciousness" (Block 2007), or be "informationally sensitive" without being "experientially sensitive" (Flanagan [1992] 1998), these physically necessary and sufficient neural conditions, along with their bio-physio-psycho-social causes and effects, would be the physical constituents of that subject's conscious experience of that stimulus. [88] (p. 126).

One can interpret this as claiming that what a blindsighted person's experience lacks, which would make it possible for that person to have only access consciousness or be informationally sensitive to without being experientially sensitive to some stimuli in

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their blindsighted visual field, would be what would constitute that person's conscious experience of that stimuli if that person had full vision in their blindsighted visual field. My claim, of course, was also built on my interpretation of Block's [89] and Flanagan's [90] work. I look forward to reading their more recent contributions to see if my interpretation remains to be, at the least, consistent with their current views.[2]

Furthermore, although one might conclude that by including the "bio-physio-psycho-social causes and effects" as the physical constituents of a subject's conscious experiences of some stimuli, semantic dualism—and therefore, meta-semantic pluralism—rejects the extended mind thesis. As I also noted earlier, in my most recent monograph:

> Although the idea that cognition is an aspect of a whole, living, embodied being as it interacts with the world in which it lives pre-dates the work of Varela, Thompson, and Rosch ([1991] 2016), they are typically recognized as the progenitors of the contemporary 4E movement (embodied, embedded, enactive, extended) with which the notion of *embodied cognition* is typically associated. Semantic dualism accepts that the mind is embodied, embedded, and enactive, but it rejects that it extends outward beyond the boundaries of a subject's living body. It does, however, accept the possibility of an artificially integrated, hybrid cognitive system, and therefore a kind of artificially integrated, hybrid cognition. [93] (p. 140, fn. 4.)

Furthermore, that semantic dualism is not a 4E framework does not make it any less of an embodied cognitive framework. The extended-mind thesis is often associated with philosophers Andy Clark and David Chalmers [94], and one of the main contentions between their view and my own is that on my view "meat matters." There's a difference between the kind or degree of integration that can be done by animal proteins and fats, compared to other kinds of information processing substrates. I agree that this sort of view is rather conservative, but I believe that it's important to make sense of a wide variety of ordinary language meanings and intentions, even if the meanings and intentions of ordinary languages are always evolving. In other words, meta-semantic pluralism is *optimistic* about ordinary language meanings and intentions. This is also one aspect of what makes meta-semantic pluralism a kind of realism about emotion. Yet, I am also open to alternative perspectives, as long as I am reasonable and can be convinced of their reasonableness.

The rejection of the extended-mind thesis also does not entail that semantic dualism is inconsistent when it claims that the "bio-physio-psycho-social causes and effects" of conscious experiences are also aspects of the physical constituents of a subject's conscious experience of objects in the world. The world consists of more than that of material extension: the world is also constituted by relations between materially extended things in the world. Yet, these relations are not yet another kind of substance, they can instead be fundamentally understood as powers, for example in a way consistent with Nancy Cartwright's [95] powers ontology, which she refers to as "Trias" ontology [95] (ch. 2). Relations are especially necessary, as additional units of measurement, for any science. Yet all relations, including relations of ideas, can be ultimately traced back to

[2] For Block, refer to *The Border Between Seeing and Thinking* [91], which is currently in print. There will also be a book symposium on Block's book, at the 2023, Pacific, American Philosophical Association conference, in San Francisco, CA. For Flanagan, I look forward to the publication of his commentary on my monograph, in the *Journal for Philosophy of Emotion*, which we hope will be published fairly soon. One might gain some insights, however, as to how Flanagan might respond by reading his most recent monograph, *How to Do Things with Emotion* [92].

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interactions between materially extended things. This includes our ideas of causation, and how we understand the world based on our culture [96].

4. Culture, and the Objective Kinds versus Subjective Kinds Debate

I also attempted to contribute to the debate on the question of whether or not emotions, or really any psychological phenomena, can be cleanly divided into *natural kinds* and *social constructions*, although I prefer the language of *objective kinds* and *subjective kinds* [97]. The question I addressed goes beyond the level of species, and it also asks whether the genus *emotion* can be a natural kind or a social construction. In this argument, I also focused primarily on the cultural diversity of emotion concepts. In my contribution, I argued that, "In order for the cultural diversity of emotion concepts to have any metaphysical import on the status of Emotion as an objective kind, it must be shown that the cultural diversity of emotion concepts is significantly related to concerns regarding the objective kind status of Emotion" [97] (263-264).

I also observed that one way of doing so would be to prove one of the following claims to be true:

1) Cultural Diversity Hypothesis: "If emotion terms or concepts were culturally diverse, then Emotion would not be an objective kind." [97] (pp. 264)

2) Objective Kind Hypothesis: "If Emotion were an objective kind, then emotion terms or concepts would not be culturally diverse." [97] (pp. 264).

For these two conditions to be able to adjudicate the debate between natural kind theorists and social constructionists, they must be mutually exclusive statements. In other words, for these two claims to be opposing hypotheses, one must presuppose that both cannot be true at the same time, although they can both be false, or one can be true while the other is false. I also argued that the problem with this presupposition—i.e., the assumption that the natural kind versus social construction debate can be resolved by proving one of the above claims to be true or false—is that these two claims are not mutually exclusive claims. They can both be true at the same time. In support of this claim, I offered evidence for the analogous case of the culturally diverse concept for "cow," or "gau" or "gow" (in Hindu Sanskrit). The concept for "cow," or "gau" or "gow" (in Hindu Sanskrit), is culturally diverse, yet the referent of these concepts can be said to be an objective kind (i.e., a bovine). Thus, as I argued, the debate regarding the question of whether or not emotions are natural kinds or social constructions, or whether emotion is a natural kind or social construction, cannot be resolved by any evidence regarding the cultural diversity of a concept.

Given my arguments, one might wonder whether there is any sense to be made of the ongoing research on the cultural diversity of emotions [98-102]. One interesting observation based on a reading of Gendron's paper, "Revisiting Cultural Diversity: Cultural Variation Reveals the Constructed Nature of Emotion Perception" [103], is that at least one aspect of the debate has shifted from concerns about the cultural diversity of emotion concepts to questions about the nature of emotion perception (which is also often referred to as "emotion recognition"). Questions regarding the cultural diversity of the concept of emotion, however, may still be relevant depending on whether or not the perception or the experience of emotion can be said to be cognitively penetrable, and the implications of such findings on how one conceives an emotion type/species or emotion. Another question with which research on the cultural diversity of emotion might help us is the question of whether emotions are products of a unified system, with localized neural correlates that

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have evolutionarily evolved into a unified system to respond to a restricted domain of internal and external problems, and which can be differentiated from other evolved systems (e.g., emotion *versus* non-emotional cognition), or the product of the responses of evolved "general purpose" systems to external and internal problems. Such considerations can also occur at the lower level of emotion, in which the object of inquiry is a particular emotion type or species.

Traditionally, these are the questions that differentiated realists [104-105] and eliminative-realists [106-108] from instrumentalists [109-110] and eliminativists [111-114] about emotion. Such debates are also commonly cast in terms of the debate between those who hold the Universality Thesis from those who do not [115]. The appeal to cultural universalities or variations of an emotion type/species (or of emotions, more generally) is intended to demonstrate that an emotion type/species (or emotion) is an objective kind or subjective kind. On the side of those who hold the Universality Thesis, the concern is primarily with demonstrating that there is at least some kind of emotion system (*qua* an emotion type/species or emotion) that is typical or representative of humanity or our capacity for emotions. One example is Haidt and Keltner's interpretation of the Universality Thesis, which claims that, "there is a small set of facial expressions that are interpreted reliably and similarly as expressions of specific emotions, at levels far above chance, by (most) people in (nearly) all cultures" [115] (p. 228). I'll refer to this as the *Universal Facial Expression and Interpretation Thesis*.

One crucial assumption here is that such universal capacities are grounded by some underlying set of mechanisms or features of the human mind, which are unified through evolutionary processes, to express and detect a narrow set of emotion types or species. On the opposing side—those who deny the Universality Thesis—the primary concern is to demonstrate that no such unified system exists. For those who deny the Universal Facial Expression and Interpretation Thesis, this might entail not only challenging the methods used by those who uphold the Universality Thesis, but also collecting countervailing evidence against this thesis. For an example of such a discussion, refer to Mun [116] (ch. 4).

One might also argue that evidence for the cultural universalities or diversities of emotion would help adjudicate the debate between those who hold the Unity Thesis and those who hold the Disunity Thesis, as defined by Colombetti [117] (p. 28). According to Colombetti, the Unity Thesis is the thesis that, given a distinction between basic emotions and non-basic emotions, there is some kind of unifying relationship between the two different kinds of emotion [117] (p. 26). The Disunity Thesis is defined as the position that basic emotions are entirely distinct from non-basic emotions [117] (p. 26). Ekman [118], Damasio [119], LeDoux [120], Plutchik [121], and Prinz [122] are given as examples of those who hold the Unity Thesis, and Griffiths [123] and Panksepp [124], are given as examples of those who hold the Disunity Thesis. Yet, there is a question as to how evidence regarding the cultural universality or diversity of emotions could adjudicate this debate. This is especially so since Colombetti also regards herself as holding the Unity Thesis, although one that rejects the initial presupposition that there exists a distinction between basic emotions and non-basic emotions [125]. Given this possibility, one might also include Barrett [126-127], Russell [128-129], and now LeDoux [130] as those who hold a version of the Unity Thesis. The result, however, would be that the distinction between those who hold the Unity Thesis and those who hold the Disunity Thesis is no longer practically useful for adjudicating between certain types of theories, such as objective kind theories from subjective kind theories.

One can also question the applicability of the evidence for the cultural universalities or diversities of emotion in adjudicating between debates about the Universality Thesis.

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As noted earlier, the Universality Thesis is typically associated with debates between objective kind theorists and subjective kind theorists. Objective kind theorists can be categorized into realists about emotion or eliminative-realist about emotion, whereas subjective kind theorists can be differentiated into instrumentalists or eliminativists. These categories of objective kind theorists and subjective kind theorists can also be respectively mapped on to the categories of natural kind theorists and social constructionists, although the overlap may be somewhat fuzzy. So, the question about the applicability of the evidence for the cultural universalities or diversities of emotion can—to some extent—also be understood as a question about the applicability of this evidence in adjudicating the traditional debate between natural kind theorists and social constructionists. Furthermore, because of the vastly complex ways in which one might interpret the Universality Thesis, any scientist who wishes to garner evidence for one side or another must narrow their interpretation to reportable/observable factors. This is why Haidt and Keltner narrowed their interpretation to, what I referred to as, the Universal Facial Expression and Interpretation Thesis.

Now, given this narrowing of the debate, one might ask how evidence about the cultural universality or variability of emotion facial expressions/recognitions might help adjudicate the debate between objective kind theorists and subjective kind theorists. Let us say that a considerable amount of evidence was found in support of the claim that, despite there being a significant amount of cultural variability in facial expressions/recognitions between individuals across cultures, there is also a significant amount of evidence for the cultural universality of facial expressions/recognitions for a very narrow set of emotions. How can we imagine the ways in which such evidence can be explained by either an objective kind theorists or a subjective kind theorists, and how must these explanations differ in order for one type of explanation to rule out the other? An answer to these questions would be necessary if the aim is to appeal to the cultural diversities or the cultural universalities of emotion expressions/recognitions to adjudicate between these two seemingly opposing positions.

Yet, this question is still too broad for us to get any real traction on the problem of determining whether evidence for the cultural universalities/diversities of emotion can help adjudicate the debate between objective kind theorists and subjective kind theorists. The reason is that there is a difference between emotion expression and emotion recognition, and one might argue that the mechanism that grounds these capacities may differ in significant ways. For example, Gendron argues that there is strong evidence against the Universality Thesis, as it pertains to the perception of emotion (i.e., emotion recognition) [131]. With respect to emotion expression, Coles, Gaertner, Frohlich, Larsen, and Basnight-Brown, discovered that posed facial expressions can feedback to affect a subject's occurrent emotional state [132]. This suggests that there is strong evidence in favor of an objective kind theorists' interpretation of the Universality Thesis, as it pertains to facial expressions, such as Haidt and Keltner's. That it does, however, also relies on the assumption that facial expressions involve first-person, reflexive recognitions of emotion types/species. It is in this sense that research on facial expressions can also serve as research on emotion recognition. The two can come apart, however, as suggested by the two sets of findings taken together.

Yet, what do these findings tell us about the debate between objective kind and subjective kind theorists? If one were to suppose that what explains the social constructed nature of second/third-person emotion perception is that it is a product of a system, nothing stops one from postulating that the "system" is an aspect of more "general purpose mechanisms" working together in concert, as long as some principle for unifying the system can be identified. For example, a *superordinate inference rule* for an emotion type/species or emotion [133]; [134] (ch. 2); [135] (ch. 8 & 10). Nothing also stops someone from

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proposing that the systems (or system) responsible for the expression and recognition of first-person, reflexive experiences of an emotion type/species is an evolutionarily evolved, modular system that can be differentiated from the more general-purpose kind of system that might be postulated for second/third-person emotion perception. It might simply depend on how one might define what it means for a system to be *modular*, and whether such an account can be regarded to be something like a *connectionist* or *dynamic system*. Furthermore, it might be possible to unify these two systems through something like the mechanisms of mirror neurons or simulation [136]. One might also raise methodological question, such as questions about the conditions for experimental observations [137].

Given these possibilities, what might one say about the objective kind/subjective kind debate. *The answer is, quite a lot!* The reason being that the position one takes on fundamental questions, including whether emotions or emotion is a subjective or objective kind, is a guiding presupposition that is intended to direct ongoing research. It may be the case that two seemingly opposing frameworks are not in fact mutually exclusive, but we cannot know this unless we initially assume that it is, and then pursue rigorous research. Furthermore, if some framework happens to become the foundation for a normal science (refer to Kuhn [138]; cf. Feyerabend [139]), this would not preclude the importance of past frameworks or the pursuit of future frameworks that are believed to challenge the widely accepted framework(s) of a "normal science." As we can see, however, the science of emotion has yet to settle into a normal science, and one might suppose that the complexity of the object of inquiry might inhibit it from doing so. *We don't know yet*. Perhaps the best decision here, then, is to continue to pursue rigorous research in the science of emotion, with scholars attempting to defend and critique a variety of frameworks, including philosophical work in this area. Granting this, I now turn to a discussion of the emerging field of cultural evolution, which may provide a foundation for yet another position within the objective kind/subjective kind (natural kind/social construction) debate, including on the nature of emotions or emotion. Such a position, however, should be regarded as a realist or eliminative-realist position, depending on whether one is an optimist or pessimist about ordinary language, with respect to the science of emotion.

5. Cultural Evolution, Dual-Inheritance Theory, Norms, and Emotions

In the paper, "A Cultural Species and Its Cognitive Phenotypes: Implications for Philosophy" [140], Henrich et al. introduce the emerging field of *cultural evolution* (also refer to Lewens [141]). It is a new interdisciplinary field of research that includes anthropologists, psychologists, linguists, neuroscientists, computer scientists, and philosophers, much like the field of cognitive science.[3] Furthermore, much like cognitive science and psychology, the main goal of the field is to proffer evidence and arguments with respect to the question of whether reliable findings about individual-level psychology can be generalized to the human species, especially in light of the fact that there are diversities across human cultures. In other words, it is a field that can be understood as being dedicated to questions about the debate between natural kind theorists and social constructionists (or, perhaps more precisely, objective kind theorists and subjective kind theorists), especially with respect to human psychological phenomenon, given the presupposition that there is a diversity of patterned, human behaviors—which are rooted in human psychologies—that can explain the phenomena of cultural diversities. Here, then, *cultures* are the *object of study*. To this extent, the field of cultural evolution can be understood as a field in the discipline of anthropology, from an interdisciplinary perspective. More broadly speaking, one might simply understand the cultural evolution as a field in the *study of human culture*.

[3] For a discussion on the relationship between cognitive science and culture, refer to Kelly and De Block [142].

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Kelly and De Block note several approaches to the study of human culture, including biological, structuralist, and evolutionary psychological approaches, although they discount ecological approaches and those that appeal only to more general-purpose psychological mechanisms (e.g., causal reasoning and trial-and-error reasoning) as being strictly about the study of culture [142]. Drawing from Ramsey [143], Kelly and De Block define *culture*, as the "information transmitted between individuals or groups, where this information flows through and brings about the reproduction of, and a lasting change in, the behavioral trait. (Ramsey 2013: 466)" [143]. What ecological and general-purpose psychological approaches lack, according to Kelly and De Block, is the focus on the transmission of information between individuals and groups. One interesting implication of demarcating the study of human culture in this way, especially for the philosophy of emotion, is the question of whether such boundaries inhibit ecological and general-purpose psychological approaches from making or being recognized as making any significant contribution in the study of culture. For example, consider Atzil, Gao, Fradkin, and Barrett's theory of sociality [145], and Barrett's theory of constructed emotion [146]. Given Kelly and De Block's definition of culture, one might wonder if these explanations count as contributing to the study of culture, including the cultural diversity of emotions. Insofar as these approaches are interpreted as providing explanations of *evoked culture* rather than *transmitted culture*, Kelly and De Block might deny that they do [147]. Accordingly, general-purpose psychological approaches might then be categorized along with evolutionary psychological approaches and ecological approaches as providing explanations of *non-cultural mechanisms*.

The field of cultural evolution, then, can be understood as a position that has been carved out in the debate over the existence of natural kinds/social constructions (or objective kinds/subjective kinds), including with respect to emotions or any other psychological phenomena. However, rather than postulating that the psychological kinds under inquiry are fundamentally natural kinds or social constructions, the field of cultural evolution presupposes that at least some psychological kinds have both evolutionary roots that are biologically traceable through our evolutionary history (e.g., in terms of genetic factors or evolutionarily evolved mechanisms), and exhibit a degree of plasticity (e.g., in terms of epigenetic factors or material factors) in such a way that requires an appeal to cultural explanations [148-150]. The basic idea here is that of the coevolution of biology and culture wherein, through the passage of time and natural selection, one influences the other.

Henrich and his colleagues refer to their approach in the field of cultural evolution as *dual-inheritance theory*, according to which human beings have "evolved a suite of reliably developing cognitive abilities" that ontogenetically adapt our minds, information-processing capacities, and emotions to a diverse, culturally-constructed world [151]. Furthermore, Henrich and McElreath note that dual-inheritance theorist also hold the following three principles as core principles of their framework:

1) *Cultural capacities as adaptations*: Culture, cultural learning and cultural evolution arise from genetically evolved psychological adaptations for acquiring ideas, beliefs, values, practices, mental models, and strategies from other individuals by observation and inference.

2) *Cultural evolution*. Our cultural learning mechanisms give rise to a robust second system of inheritance (cultural evolution) that operates by different transmission rules than genetic inheritance, and can thus produce phenomena not observed in other, less cultural, species.

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3) *Culture-gene coevolution*. The second system of inheritance created by cultural evolution can alter both the social and physical environments faced by evolving genes, leading to a process termed culture-gene coevolution. [152] (556-557)

According to Kelly and Hoburg's reading of Henrich's dual-inheritance theory, this theory models the process of coevolution in terms of a two-tiered system [153]. The first tier is constituted by *social instincts*, which are biologically evolved mechanisms that work in conjunction with other mechanisms to solve problems of cooperation [153] (pp. 7). With respect to Henrich and his colleagues' three principles (listed above), they are the *cultural capacities* that give rise to culture, cultural learning, and cultural evolution, which are explained by individual-level, evolutionarily-adapted mechanisms of observation and learning, which function for the purpose of acquiring ideas, beliefs, values, practices, mental models, and strategies. The second tier is constituted by *tribal instincts*, which are phylogenetically younger, biological mechanisms compared to social instincts [153] (p. 7). Tribal instincts are cultural capacities that arise from the co-opting of social instincts, through alternative rules for observation and learning compared to social instincts. They are the capacities that are responsible for what Henrich and McElreath refer to as *cumulative cultural evolution* [154]. Kelly and De Block refer to first-tier mechanisms as *cognitive instincts*, whereas second-tier mechanisms are referred to as *cognitive gadgets* [155]. They also refer to the capacities that are enabled by these social instincts or cognitive instincts as *cognitive capacities* [155]. The ability to attend to kin relationships and participate in reciprocal altruism, as discussed by Kelly and Hoburg, can be understood as examples of cultural capacities of social instincts/cognitive instincts; the capacity to track non-kin group membership, and recognize, acquire, and deploy normative rules, can be understood as examples of tribal instincts/cognitive gadgets [156] (p. 7).

A dual-inheritance theory approach to the study of culture, however, need not take the kind of approach proposed by Henrich and his colleagues. For example, consider the area of *cultural norms*, which can be understood as a narrower focus in the field of cultural evolution. Kelly and Davis, introduce two models for a *theory of social norms*. They refer to the first as "Bicchieri's social expectation account" [157] (p. 1). Bicchieri's account regards social norms to be *individual-level rules*—rules that operate at the level of an individual's psychology—and their functions produce group-level regularities, which can be understood as social norms. Kelly and Davis refer to the set of individual-level rules that are both necessary and sufficient for the emergence of a social norm as a *Bicchieri-cluster* [158] (p. 11). The norm that arises from a Bicchieri-cluster is referred to as a *Bichierri norm*. A Bicchieri-cluster can then be said to explain the formation of a social norm by establishing a set of conditions: the condition of contingency and the condition of conditional preference [158] (p. 11).

The condition of *contingency* can be considered an epistemic-motivational condition, in which an agent has knowledge of a social norm and appropriately applies it within a given situation [158] (p. 11). The condition of *conditional preference* might be what Kelly and Davis refer to as Biccheri's motiviational feature (i.e., "conditional conformity" [159] (p. 1.)), in which an agent has a preference to conform to a social norm because they have both (a) an *empirical expectation* that a sufficiently large number of people conform to the norm in question, and either (b) a *normative expectation* (with sanctions) or (c) a *normative expectation* (without sanctions) [160] (p. 11). Empirical expectations can be understood as perceived or predicted statistical regularities of a social norm being imple-

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mented within a population, whereas a normative expectation (with or without sanctions) can be understood as involving predictive-processing mechanisms that track and predict self-reflexive, other-oriented, normative assessments.[4]

Kelly and Davis refer to the second as the *Minimal Account*, which takes what they refer to as a *cognitive psychological approach* to cultural evolution. One way in which the Minimal Account differs from Bicchieri's social expectation account—as well as Henrich and his colleagues's—is that the Minimal Account seeks to provide an explanation of a wider set of phenomena by focusing on both the evolutionary and the cultural factors involved in cultural evolutions. With respect to Henrich and his colleague's account then, Kelly and Davis's framework is interested in providing an account of *culture-gene coevolution* as well as an account of *gene-culture evolution*, thereby closing the circle of explanation for an account of cultural evolution. With respect to Bicchieri's account, the focus of Kelly and Davis's account is also broader, aiming at explaining norms in general (e.g., moral and nonmoral norms), whereas Bicchieri's account aims primarily to provide an account of "social norms," in contrast with *descriptive norms*, including *conventions*, and which are conceived as functioning to solve coordination problems, specifically problems of individual-group conflict (i.e., "a tension between individual and collective gains" [162] (p. x). Such problems of coordination might also differ from problems of cooperation, although there are problems of cooperation that would include problems of individual-group conflict.

Kelly and Davis also differentiate what is *normative* from what is *normal*. One might say, what is normal is what is tracked by Bicchieri's mechanisms for empirical expectations (i.e., statistical regularities), and although what is normal may in fact also be normative, that something is normal does not alone qualify it as something that is normative [163] (p. 4). What is normative goes beyond what is normal to the extent that what is normative is *internalized* in such a way that it acquires a kind of *motivational force* (i.e., *normative force*) [163-165]. Such a force is often associated with feelings or beliefs about "the right thing to do," what one "ought" to do, or what is *intrinsically good*, rather than what is *instrumentally good*. To this extent, one might refer to such a normative force as a motivationally *deontic force*. Although one might also describe Bicchieri's social expectation framework as including an internalization process (i.e., the embedding of social norms into scripts), Kelly and Davis's framework is distinct from Bicchieri insofar as it also includes an explanation of social norms that have deontic force (i.e., *moral norms*). This is primarily because, Bicchieri also divides "social norms" from "moral norms," and her social expectation account is intended to only account for what she refers to as "social norms" [166] (p. 20).

Referring back to my foregoing discussion about the debate between objective kind theorists and subjective kind theorists, one might say that Bicchieri's social expectation account takes social norms to be a subjective kind, whereas Kelly and Davis's Minimal Account seems to take social norms, and norms in general, to be heterogeneously-objective kinds.[5] One reason is that Bicchieri's account ultimately takes beliefs to the be the primary units of explanation, and beliefs are ultimately accounted for by postulating the operation of more general-purpose mechanisms. In contrast, the Minimal Account takes dual-inheritance theory as its overarching framework for situating norms within the larger context of cultural evolution. Accordingly, the Minimal Account can be inter-

[4] For more information about predictive processing, one might begin with Clark's *Surfing Uncertainty: Prediction, Action, and the Embodied Mind* [161].

[5] Refer to Mun [167] (ch. 2), regarding subjective kinds and objective kinds, including heterogeneously-objective kinds.

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preted as postulating a model of culture-gene coevolution that focuses on two components: genetically inherited motivations for recognizing, acquiring, and implementing some set of norms (social instincts), and internalized, culturally-inherited motivations for recognizing, acquiring, and implementing norms (tribal instincts) [168]. Social instincts are proposed to operate within the context of kin or intra-group relations and attend to status based on dominance, whereas tribal instincts operate within the context of larger, tribal or inter-group relations and attend to status based on prestige [168]. Both sets of instincts, however, can be understood as having adapted, survival functions (i.e., cooperative and competitive functions).

One might also situate Davis and Kelly's *molecular approach to emotion* within their broader Minimal Account of a dual-inheritance theory of coevolution. The molecular approach to emotion adheres to an *etiological functionalist* architecture of the mind [169]. As Davis and Kelly note:

> Another basic feature of our account will be a general conception of psychological explanation that we refer to as etiological functionalism. According to this doctrine, also discussed as "homuncular functionalism" (Lycan 1981, 1995, following Dennett 1978) and "functional analysis" (Cummins 1975, 1983, 2000), psychological explanations ideally begin by individuating behavioral capacities, or identifying distinct abilities in terms their functions—what they are for. Explanation then proceeds by construing the performance of functions in a hierarchical fashion, such that more complex functions are analyzed into component parts which are ascribed their own, simpler functions, each of which is in turn further analyzed into its own component parts with their own functions, and so on. What makes this kind of hierarachical analysis etiological, however, is a further commitment to a specific way of identifying and individuating functions. [169]

Given the complexity of the kind of explanation that Davis and Kelly seek to provide, it makes sense to conceive of the mind in terms of an *etiological-functionalist account*. With respect to the objective kind/ subjective kind debate, insofar as the Minimal Account postulates evolutionarily adapted functions that are genetically inherited to be objective kinds, the framework's ability to unify a cluster of mechanisms into a larger mechanism would primarily depend on the ability to functionally unify the mechanisms in question. With respect to the molecular approach to emotion, Davis and Kelly first differentiate motivational functions from cognitive functions, and they associate emotion types/species primarily with motivational functions, although an emotion type/species might be further differentiated into sub-categories in accordance with their cognitive contents. For example, anger, according to Davis and Kelly, provides the *intrinsic motivational force* for the emotions of *righteous anger*, *defensive anger*, and *competitive anger*, and what differentiate these three subtypes are their cognitive contents (which includes their ecological and social context) [169]. More specifically, righteous anger, unlike defensive anger and competitive anger, has *normative* cognitive content (i.e., are motivations with deontic force) [169]. To this extent, defensive anger and competitive anger may be understood as social instincts, whereas righteous anger might be understood as a kind of tribal instinct.

I applaud their intricate framework, and I'd like to suggest a way in which one might incorporate meta-semantic pluralism, and especially semantic-dualism, to help further flesh out and unify the Minimal Account, and the molecular approach to emotion. First, let us suspend the question of optimism/pessimism about emotion, and focus primarily on the objective kind/subjective kind debate. This ought to be fairly easy to do, given that both the Minimal Account and meta-semantic pluralism are realist theories of

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emotion, although the Minimal Account, as conceived by Kelly and Davis, and their colleagues (including Scarantino [170]), might be more appropriately characterized as an eliminative-realist account rather than a realist account (given the contingency of their position on the question about optimism/pessimism about ordinary language). Second, Kelly and Davis also note that their "molecular approach is not primarily concerned with the phenomenological, qualitative experiences that accompany various physiological states" [171]. Let us then agree to bracket phenomenological or physiological factors for the time being, and focus primarily on providing a functional account. Granting all of this, the question remains as to how one might incorporate a meta-semantic pluralistic approach with a Minimal Account, and a molecular approach to emotion.

One ideal place in which one might do so is with the question of how one might demarcate a *function*, such as a motivational, cognitive, emotional function, or the functions of an emotion subtype (e.g., fear, anger, disgust, shame, awe, joy). According to the molecular approach, emotions can be differentiated into at least two subtypes: social instincts and tribal instincts. Furthermore, the *core of anger* can be identified with the social instincts of anger, whereas righteous anger can be identified as a tribal instinct. The social instinct of anger provides the emotional core of anger (i.e., *basic anger*), and defines its function as a type of *anger*, and righteous anger is a cognitively elaborated mode of this function (i.e., *moral anger*). More specifically, one might say that righteous anger is a *normative mode of anger*, which is an experience of anger that is mediated by a social norm. A social norm is an internalized norm, which has been identified, acquired, and employed within the context of tribal-intergroup relations, rather than within the context initially defined by basic anger (i.e., the context of kin-intragroup relations). Another important factor to highlight is that according to the molecular approach to emotion, basic anger—which forms the core of *moral anger*—provides the motivational component of experiences of anger, and the internalized social norm that mediates basic anger into a tribal instinct of moral anger is what constitutes an essential cognitive component of moral anger. Thus, the distinction between a motivation and a cognition is thought to be cleanly maintained, where basic emotions might be thought to constitute essentially *non-cognitive motivational function* compared to essentially *cognitive normative functions*.

To further elaborate, one might consider Kelly's account of disgust as both a social instinct and a tribal instinct [172-173]. According to Kelly, basic disgust is a culturally adapted mechanism that is distinctive of humanity to the extent that it is a function that is constituted by at least two distinctive mechanisms: the *poison mechanism* and the *parasite mechanism* [173] (p. 510). These mechanisms are evolutionarily-adapted mechanisms that are shared across a variety of animal species, but according to Kelly, they have been entangled through human evolution to give rise to the very human, *basic emotion of disgust*. Furthermore, according to Kelly's account, basic disgust can be co-opted into a tribal instinct, what one might refer to as *moral disgust*, through the integration of normative considerations, including the operation of internalized cultural norms.

Granting the foregoing, one might ask exactly how the process of entanglement might have occurred, given that basic disgust is a unified, evolutionarily-adapted function. There is also a question of whether, as an evolutionarily-adapted function, one might also regard basic disgust to be a social instinct. I will propose an answer to the first question below. The answer to the second question might be contingent upon how one conceives a *function*, and insofar as a social instinct must necessarily have evolved within the context of a close-knit, social environment (e.g., kin relations). My proposal below, however, will also address this question. In giving my proposal, I will also draw from various aspects of my unified theory of shame [174-176], and thereby illustrate how meta-semantic pluralism about emotion might be integrated with a Minimal Account and a molecular approach to emotions. In doing so, I will also demonstrate how the

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emotion of shame complicates the framework for a molecular approach to emotion, and note how the meta-semantic pluralist approach can help resolve the observed complications.

According to a meta-semantic pluralist approach to emotion, one of the central defining features of an emotion type/species is what I refer to as the *superordinate inference rule* for a specified emotion subtype. Within the framework of a molecular approach to emotion, a superordinate inference rule might be understood as specifying the core function of a basic emotion. For example, one might suggest that basic anger and basic disgust, insofar as they constitute the core of the genus of anger or disgust, can be specified as a superordinate inference rule of anger or disgust. A superordinate inference rule for anger or disgust might also explain both the domain specificity of experiences of anger and disgust [176] (p. 233), as well as help unify the various mechanisms which constitute each emotion subtype through the identification of law-like interactions between the postulated constitutive mechanisms (e.g., poison and parasite mechanisms).

One might regard the superordinate inference rule for basic anger to involve something like the superordinate rule of *motivating an agent to use force as a means of undoing constraints*, whereas the superordinate rule for basic disgust might be conceived as a rule for *motivating an agent to use rejection and avoidance as a means of self-protection*. To this extent, one might question whether basic anger and basic disgust can be regarded to be social instincts since they need not have arisen within the context of a social environment. To illustrate, if the function of anger is conceived primarily in terms of the "core motivational element of an aggressive, approach-based impulse to attack" [177], one need not postulate any kind of intra-group, kin environment for such an instinct to emerge. One can say something similar about disgust. It is only once one postulates the significance of a self to the function of a proposed social instinct, and therefore an agent's psychological architecture, that the need for social relations becomes apparent for explaining the emergence of that mechanism. Thus, postulating the necessity of a self, which also entails the necessity of an *other*, would explain *why* the underlying mechanisms for basic anger and basic disgust became entangled so as to constitute an evolutionarily evolved, adapted function. This would provide an explanation of the evolution of basic anger and basic disgust. Such an explanation would also have to appeal to social conditions (of at least intragroup, kin relations) to be an explanation of the evolution of basic anger and basic disgust as kinds of social instincts.

I, therefore, propose that the functions of basic anger and basic disgust, as social instincts, have to do with maintaining *boundaries of the self*. This is what makes them distinctively human functions. Furthermore, in understanding disgust as having essentially to do with maintaining boundaries of the self, one might suggest that the evolutionary emergence of a *self* in the architecture of the human mind may be essential to explaining why poison and parasite mechanisms became uniquely entangled together to form the basic emotion of disgust. Something similar might be said here for basic anger. Accordingly, basic anger and disgust might be appropriately characterized as social instincts to the extent that social instincts are always and only those mechanisms that have evolved within an intragroup, social context (e.g., kin relations). Furthermore, the *self*, as it is postulated here, is the notion of the self that is often taken to be a distinctly human characteristic, and I propose that such a notion also requires a very human way of understanding others. Thus, postulating superordinate inference rules and the necessity of the evolution of a human conception of the self would help a Minimal Account, and a molecular approach to emotion, provide a more consistent and fuller explanation of the evolution, including cultural evolution, of at least some basic emotions.

So far, however, we are not yet at providing an explanation of the cultural evolution of anger or disgust. According to the Minimal Account, and the molecular approach

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to emotion, such an explanation requires the introduction of norms, along with a norm system [178]. According to Davidson and Kelly, a *norm system* is "a set of fairly functionally integrated psychological mechanisms dedicated to handling information and guiding behavior specifically concerned with norms and the situations they govern" [178] (196). In short, the system is responsible for the recognition, acquisition, internalization, and deployment of norms. They also differentiate the norm system from normative motivations. The norm system is constituted by the *acquisition mechanism* and the *execution mechanism* [178] (196). *Normative motivations* are products of a norm system [178] (197). Furthermore, Davidson and Kelly propose a two-pronged, self- and other-related structure of the human mind [178] (197), yet they do not go into detail about exactly how this two-pronged structure of the self is situated among a norm system, its normative motivations, or emotions.

Assuming that the Minimal Account of a norm system [179] and the molecular approach to emotion [180] presuppose a similar conception of a norm system and normative motivations, one can ask not only how an emotion like righteous anger culturally evolved from basic anger as a unified tribal instinct, but also how basic anger socially evolved into a unified social instinct. To be sure, group context (intragroup/intergroup) will play a significant role, but they do not explain the way in which a norm system, normative motivations, and emotions work in concert for a Minimal Account of norm systems or a molecular approach to emotions. Davis and Kelly seem to suggest that the molecular approach to emotion provides the cognitive component whereas emotions provide the motivational component for tribal instincts and, perhaps also social instincts [181-182]. Accordingly, a tribal instinct like righteous anger might be said to count as a normative motivation, perhaps along with the social instinct of basic anger. One problem, however, is that according to Davidson and Kelly, "*normative motivations* produced by the norm system are special: they are intrinsic, non-instrumental, perhaps psychologically primitive" [183] (197), and although one might be able to say that this might be the case for emotions as social instincts, I find it a bit difficult to grasp why this would be the case for emotions as tribal instincts. Perhaps this is an unreasonable prejudice of mine and let us assume that it is.

A second problem might be that what is left unexplained is whether emotions are regarded to be internal or external to the norm system. Given Davis and Kelly's molecular approach to emotion, and Kelly and Davis's Minimal Account of norm systems, one might conclude that at least *basic emotions* are external to the norm system, whereas *tribal emotions* are at least some of the products of the interaction between basic emotions and a norm system (i.e., tribal emotions are normative motivations). Although this does not make either accounts inconsistent, the question still remains as to whether or not basic emotions are internal to the norm system. My proposal is that basic emotions, as social instincts, ought to be conceived as essential aspects of a norm system, and one way to illustrate why this would be beneficial is to consider the emotion of shame.

As I have argued, the superordinate inference rule for shame can be defined as serving the following epistemic function:

> (a) the sudden realization (of which the subject may be unaware) that one is being seen (by the self or at least one other) as an aberrant member of one's epistemic community, and this experience may lead to at least one of the following epistemic conditions: (b) the recognition that one is taken to be an aberrant member of one's epistemic community, (c) the acceptance that one is an aberrant member of one's epistemic community, (d) the rejection that one is taken to be an aberrant member of one's epistemic community, or (e) the rejection of the (real or imagined) other as a legitimate authority on shared social or moral knowledge (such as knowledge

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> pertaining to shared hermeneutic resources), i.e., ostracism, self-isolation, or revolution, all of which can include a breakdown in epistemic trust. [184] (p. 40).

One might say that the above superordinate inference rule defines the motivational function of shame. The operation of such a rule—the holding of particular conditions during an episode of shame—might be said to constitute the basic emotion of shame (*basic shame*). Basic shame might also be said to culturally evolve into a more mature function of shame (*moral shame*) given the right social conditions and other aspects of learning [158-159]. So far, such an account is consistent with both a Minimal Account of norms and a molecular approach to emotion. Now, at this point, we can remain consistent with both accounts, and regard the basic emotion of shame to be external to the norm system, and conclude that moral shame, as a tribal instinct, would be a product of the interaction between basic shame and a norm system (a normative motivation). The problem might be that basic shame is a very sophisticated kind of basic emotion—one that requires a similar two-pronged structure of the self that was proposed to be necessary for normative motivations—and it is unclear whether the norm system, according to Kelly and Davis, is thought to require an interaction with such a two-pronged structure of the self. Furthermore, one might say that basic shame is necessary for the acquisition of at least some social norms, and this would suggest that basic shame might be an important aspect of both the acquisition, execution, and internalization of social norms, which would require them to be aspects of the norm system. Finally, one interesting implication of accepting the foregoing proposal would be that this revised Minimal Account of norms, and molecular approach to emotion, would be able to provide a more detailed account of the cultural evolution of norms.

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Notes

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