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Ten Perspectives on Emotional Experience: Introduction to the Special Issue

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The ten contributions to this special issue constitute a survey of philosophical and psychological work on the topic of emotional experience. With this special issue, *Emotion Review* responds to the increase of interest in recent years in the topic of consciousness generally (e.g., Block, Flanagan, & Güzeldere, 1997; Chalmers & Bourget, 2007–2008; Jokic & Smith, 2003), and the topic of emotional consciousness in particular (e.g., Barrett, Niedenthal, & Winkielman, 2005; Colombetti & Thompson, 2005; Izard, 2009). In the recent debates about consciousness in general, the emotions have, in fact, only been marginally considered. In contrast, philosophers and psychologists of emotion have a longstanding interest in emotional experience, as a consequence of which both disciplines can muster a rich tradition of theorizing on the subject. This is not surprising given that emotions—states like fear, anger, sadness, envy, pity, joy, pride, shame, and guilt—are regarded as prototypes of conscious experiences in common sense, and that until the 20th century nearly all emotion theorists accepted the common sense view. As a consequence, prior to the 20th century, theories of *emotion* were theories of *emotional experience*. This is still true today for probably the majority of emotion theorists in philosophy (e.g., Döring, 2007; Goldie, 2000; Helm, 2001), and for many in psychology (e.g., Barrett, 2006; Clore, 1994; Oatley, 1992; Russell, 2003). Even those emotion theorists who are reluctant to identify emotions with emotional experiences usually acknowledge that emotional experience constitutes an essential aspect of emotion (e.g., Frijda, 2007; Roberts, 2009; Scherer, 2005). In line with this, self-reports of emotional experience, typically in the form of ratings on scales, continue to be the most common method of measuring the presence, quality, and intensity of emotions in today's psychology (Reisenzein, 1994; Scherer, 2005).

In our introduction, we try to locate the contributions to the special issue in a historical context. The best starting point for our historical introduction seems to us the late 19th century, when psychology began to establish itself as an independent academic discipline. At that time, most philosophers were still also dealing with psychological questions; the new experimental psychologists were still mostly also philosophers; conscious experience was still the central object of psychological analysis; and a number of classical models of emotional experience were developed that have directly or indirectly shaped the discussion up to the present day.

Theorizing About Emotional Experience: A Historical Perspective

Emotion Theory as Theory of Emotional Experience

When psychology started out as an independent discipline in the late 19th century, it defined itself as the science of conscious mental states and declared introspection to be its main (although by no means its only) method (e.g., Brentano, 1874/1955; James, 1890/1950; Wundt, 1896). Given this understanding of psychology, and accepting that emotions are a class of conscious experiences, the theory of emotion and the theory of emotional experience coincide. This implies that the theory of emotional experience needs to answer whatever questions the theory of emotions needs to answer, such as: How many and which emotions are there? How are they generated? What effects do they have on cognition and action? Which role is played by evolution versus learning in the construction of the emotion system? And how are the emotion mechanisms implemented in the brain? These questions were in fact all addressed

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to some extent within introspectionist psychology (e.g., James, 1890/1950; McDougall, 1908/1960; Wundt, 1896).

Structural Versus Causal Theories of Emotion Experience

However, the main interest of the philosopher-psychologists of consciousness in the field of emotion, as elsewhere, was on what can be called the *phenomenological structure of experience* (e.g., Brentano, 1874/1955; Meinong, 1894; Wundt, 1896; see also D.W. Smith, 1989). Structural questions related to emotions include: Which kinds of emotional experiences are there? What distinguishes them from each other, and from nonemotional mental states? How are they related to other mental states (e.g., do they presuppose cognitions)? And, relatedly, are emotions composed of and consequently reducible to elementary mental states (see also, Reisenzein, 1992, 2000)? The primary form of analyzing emotions thus consisted of locating them in the domain of conscious experiences, by clarifying both their internal structure or composition (if any) and their relation to other, better understood kinds of mental state, such as beliefs, desires, and sensations (e.g., Meinong, 1894).

It might be argued that such structural analyses of emotional experience belong to a bygone era preoccupied with "mental chemistry" that have today been replaced by causal questions regarding the production of emotions and their effects on cognition and action; and that structural analyses of emotions are therefore largely irrelevant to today's emotion research (e.g., Mandler, 1984). However, this argument is unconvincing. This is so not only because structural questions—such as which beliefs and desires might characterize the different emotions—*are* of importance to the theory of emotion (e.g., Castelfranchi & Miceli, 2009; Döring, in press; Goldie, 2000; Helm, 2001; Johnson-Laird & Oatley, 1989; Ortony, Clore, & Collins, 1988; Reisenzein, 2000; Roberts, 2003), but also because structural and causal questions are closely connected in the analysis of mind. In particular, the analysis of the phenomenological structure of emotions provides important *constraints* for theories of the causal mechanisms that underlie emotions. That is, any theory of the emotion mechanisms—the information-processing mechanisms that generate emotions—needs to be formulated in such a way that the properties of their products, the emotional experiences, are consistent with and ideally make intelligible what is suggested by phenomenological analyses of emotions (Arnold, 1960; Goldie, 2009; Reisenzein, 2009a).

Three Properties of Emotional Experience

Since 19th-century introspectionist psychology—which in this respect only continued a much longer philosophical tradition—three properties have been widely assumed to be characteristic of conscious mental states and, as a consequence, of emotions: immediate awareness, phenomenality, and intentionality.

First, as with all conscious experiences, one is *immediately aware of* emotions (at least in a nonfocal, prereflective way) whenever they occur (Brentano, 1874/1955; see, e.g., D.W. Smith, 1989, for further discussion).

Second, like at least some other mental states—the prototypes are sensory experiences, such as sensations of color, tone, or touch—emotions are characterized by *phenomenality* (phenomenal character, experiential quality). When a person is angry, sad, or afraid, there is something that it "is like" for the person to be in the respective mental state (Nagel, 1974). This quality of "what it is like" or "feels like" for the subject to have an emotion is the emotion's phenomenal or experiential quality. However, theorists of emotional experience typically assume not only that (a) emotions *do have* phenomenal character, as opposed to not having one; but also usually assume that (b) the experiential quality of emotions differs in characteristic ways from that of nonaffective phenomenal states (e.g., feeling tired or hungry, or seeing the Baltic sea glistening in the sun); and also that (c) it differs between at least some kinds of emotion (e.g., being angry feels different from being sad or afraid). Finally, it is usually taken for granted that (d) the different emotion qualities can be instantiated in different intensities (e.g., one can be a little, moderately, or highly angry).

Third, again like at least some other mental states—the prototypes in this case are beliefs and desires—emotional experiences are characterized by *object-directedness* (the technical term is *intentionality*). When one is angry, sad, or afraid, one is at least in the typical case angry about something, sad about something, and afraid of something; or so emotions present themselves to the subject. This something (which need not actually exist) is the emotion's intentional object (e.g., Brentano, 1874/1955; Green, 1992; Searle, 1983). In today's terminology, "intentionality" typically amounts to "mental representation"; thus the claim that emotional experiences are directed at objects translates into the claim that emotions are representational mental states; states that present objects to the subject in a particular way.

The first of the three described features of emotional states—immediate awareness, sometimes called *acquaintance* (e.g., D.W. Smith, 1989)—was agreed on by all introspectionist philosopher-psychologists. However, because direct awareness was considered a property exhibited by all mental states in a uniform manner, it was not deemed to be in need of specific explanation in the case of emotions (nor indeed in need of explanation at all; see Rosenthal, 2009). The two features of emotional experience that commanded attention were thus phenomenality and intentionality.

At this point, a difference of opinion emerged among the introspectionist philosopher-psychologists concerning the question of which of these two features of emotional experience—phenomenality or intentionality—was to receive priority in the theory of emotion.

Theorists such as James (1890/1950) and Wundt (1896) emphasized the emotions' peculiar phenomenal character as their most salient feature, and, at the same time, as the feature most in need of explanation. Whatever else emotional experiences are, they argued, they are first and foremost *feelings*—conscious states with phenomenal character—and the task of psychology is to clarify the nature of these feelings.[1] Furthermore, while not denying that emotions are object-directed in the typical case, James and Wundt argued—possibly already under the influence of their "sensory" theory of emotions—that object-directedness is not an intrinsic but a derived feature of emotions; that is, a

feature which emotions somehow acquire through their association with perceptions and beliefs (see Reisenzein, 1992; Reisenzein, Meyer, & Schützwohl, 1995).

In contrast, for Brentano (1874/1955) and his students (e.g., Husserl, 1901/1975; Meinong, 1894; Stumpf, 1899), the really important feature of emotions was their intentionality. The phenomenal character of emotions was not denied, but was—in line with a long philosophical tradition (e.g., Bentham, 1789/1970)—essentially reduced to a pleasure–displeasure dimension and given little further attention in the analysis of the emotions. Progress in the theory of emotions was expected to result primarily from following the cue provided by the object-directedness of emotions (see e.g., Meinong, 1894).

Explaining Emotions' Phenomenality: The Sensory (Feeling) Theory[2]

The starting point of the emotion theories proposed by James (1890/1950) and Wundt (1896) is the intuition that emotions have special phenomenal quality; that is, it feels a special way to have them. James expressed this intuition with a metaphor that has since been used by many emotion theorists (e.g., Mandler, 1984; Schachter, 1964): Emotional experiences have "warmth"; they are "hot" experiences in contrast to "cold" nonemotional mental states such as intellectual perceptions or thoughts, which James described as "purely cognitive in form, pale, colorless, destitute of emotional warmth" (James, 1890/1950, p. 451). However, James's beliefs about emotional phenomenality comprise much more than this. In fact, they comprise the complete set of intuitions mentioned earlier: Emotions do have phenomenality; they feel different from nonemotions; their experiential quality differs more or less between different emotions; and each emotional quality can occur in different intensities.

The main aim of James's theory of emotion is to explain this set of intuitions, and the central tenet of the theory—that emotions are bodily sensations—is meant to explain them all at one stroke. "A unique group of related experiential qualities, that can occur in different intensities": this description seemed to fit the definition of sensations (e.g., of tone, color, or taste) that were extensively studied at James's time by the new experimental psychologists (see Wundt, 1896). To explain the intuitions about emotional phenomenality, it thus seemed natural to propose that emotions are a kind of sensation, or are at least analogous to sensations. This is the core idea of the *sensory* or *feeling theory of emotion*, which until today has remained—at least in a cognitively softened, "hybrid" variant (see below)—the most prominent attempt to account for the phenomenality of emotional experiences. According to James's (1890/1950) version of the feeling theory, emotional feelings literally *are* a class of sensations, namely the interoceptive sensations of the bodily changes elicited by emotional events. In contrast, according to Wundt (1896), emotional feelings (which for Wundt comprise the feelings of pleasure and displeasure, activation and deactivation, and tension and relaxation) are not produced by sense organs at the periphery of the nervous system, but are generated centrally (in the brain). Apart from this difference, however, they retain all properties of sensations (Reisenzein, 1992).

Of the two basic versions of the feeling theory—peripheralist versus centralist—the bodily feeling theory is more radical, but also less plausible. Although this theory still has adherents in both psychology (e.g., Laird, 2007) and philosophy (e.g., Robinson, 2005), it was strongly criticized on theoretical and introspective grounds from the beginning (see Gardiner, 1896) and today has to cope with weighty empirical counterevidence (see, e.g., Reisenzein, 1996a). Two main criticisms have been raised against the bodily feeling theory. The first is that the theory is, in fact, unable to account for the very feature of emotions that motivated it—the phenomenality of emotions. The second criticism is that the theory is unable to account for emotions' intentionality.

Problems with phenomenality. As to the first criticism of bodily feeling theory—that it fails to live up to its claim to explain emotions' phenomenality—the arguments to that conclusion can be summarized in terms of a theoretical and an empirical problem of the theory. The *theoretical problem* of the bodily feeling theory is that it fails to explain what distinguishes nonemotional organic changes (e.g., a quickened pulse from running) from emotional ones (Irons, 1894; Stumpf, 1899). Hence, the theory leaves an explanatory gap. The *empirical problem* of the bodily feeling theory is that the covariation and temporal synchrony between emotional experiences and patterns of bodily sensations seems to be not as tight as the theory requires by far (e.g., Reisenzein, 1996a). Contrary to what is implied by James's type-identity claim—that emotional experiences are organic sensations—the weight of the evidence suggests that bodily sensations are neither necessary nor sufficient for emotional experiences, and do not match the qualitative differences and the intensity of emotional experiences.

Feeling theorists who accepted the critique of the bodily feeling theory have reacted to it in three ways:

1. Following Wundt (1896), some feeling theorists replaced bodily by centrally-generated feelings. This move is natural, given that (a) it is the *sensory character* of the postulated feelings, not their *origin*, that carries the explanatory burden in the feeling theory (see also Reisenzein, 2009a); and given (b) the fact that suitable candidates for centrally-generated feelings have long been available. The oldest and most prominent centralist feeling theory holds that the feeling core of emotions consists in feelings of pleasure and displeasure (e.g., Bentham, 1789/1970). Notwithstanding James's (1894, p. 525) protest that this "hackneyed psychological doctrine. . . . [is] one of the most artificial and scholastic of the untruths that disfigure our science" (p. 525), this theory is much better established than James's own (see e.g., Russell, 2003) and is today held, in some form, by numerous psychological emotion researchers (e.g., Mellers, 2000). A variant of this theory approximately follows Wundt's (1896) in assuming that the "feeling core" of emotions consists of mixtures of pleasure or displeasure and (cortically produced) activation or deactivation (Barrett, 2006; Reisenzein, 1994; Russell, 2003). Several contributors to this special issue also hold a variant of the feeling theory: Oatley (2009) proposes that the feeling core of emotions consists of a set of up to nine

basic emotion qualities, which include happiness, sadness, fear, and anger (see also Buck, 1985 and Oatley, 1992). Reisenzein (2009a) proposes that the emotional feelings comprise pleasure and displeasure, surprise and expectancy confirmation, combinations of these feelings such as relief and disappointment, plus hope and fear. Frijda (2009) and Castelfranchi and Miceli (2009) also assume that feelings of pleasure or displeasure are an essential element of emotional experience, albeit not the only one, as explained later.

2. With respect specifically to accounting for the experiential differences *between emotions*, many feeling theorists have proposed bringing other mental elements into the emotion, in addition to feelings. For most theorists, the best candidates for this purpose seemed to be the cognitions (and possibly desires) by which the emotional feelings are (presumably) caused. The reason for this is that it is easy to make plausible that the cognitive-motivational causes of the feelings are finely differentiated (see e.g., Castelfranchi & Micheli, 2009; Ortony et al., 1988; Reisenzein, 2009a; see also the next section). A potential cost of this second strategy is that the "pure" feeling theory is diluted, in that emotions now are no longer *only* feelings, but complex mental states that also contain other components. However, in view of the problems of "pure" feeling theories, many emotion theorists have been happy to pay this price. This was all the more so because the resulting "hybrid" theory, specifically the cognition-feeling theory, seemed to simultaneously provide for a natural explanation of the object-directedness of emotions (see below). For one or both of these reasons, this path has been taken by many emotion theorists in both philosophy (e.g., Gordon, 1987; Lyons, 1980; Marks, 1982) and psychology (e.g., Lazarus, 1991; Schachter, 1964), including several of the contributors to this special issue (Castelfranchi & Miceli, Frijda, Lambie, Oatley, and Siemer).

Notwithstanding the continuing popularity of "hybrid" (feeling-plus-*X*; specifically cognition-feeling) theories, particularly in psychology, this solution to the problem of explaining the experiential differences between emotions can only be successful if the cognitions or other mental states that are "added on" (Goldie, 2000) to the feelings have experiential quality themselves. Precisely this has, however, been questioned for beliefs and desires, which according to many philosophical authors do not have any experiential quality at all (e.g., M. Smith, 1987). According to this view, we are conscious of our beliefs or desires only in the sense of being *immediately aware* of them (see above); but it *does not feel like* a particular way to have them. To illustrate, according to this view, Peter's thought "Mary came to visit" does not by itself feel in a particular way to Peter, nor does it feel different from his thought "Mary did not come to visit," or any other thought that Peter might have. Although this claim has been disputed (e.g., Goldie, 2009; Parrott, 1988; D.W. Smith, 1989), it would, if correct, completely defeat the "hybrid" theories' strategy of accounting for the experiential differences between emotions. Furthermore, even if conscious beliefs and desires do have phenomenal quality, one may well ask whether their phenomenal properties are *salient* and *distinct* enough to be of real help for explaining the experiential differences between the emotions. These problems may not be insurmountable, but they have in our view not been convincingly addressed.[3]

3. Again with respect to explaining the experiential differences between emotions, some feeling theorists have tried to reduce the size of the explanatory problem by arguing that these differences are not as great as some critics of the theory have thought. This was in fact a standard argument of some introspectionist proponents of pleasure-displeasure theory. For example, although joy, pride, and gratitude undoubtedly are different emotions, they are plausibly all forms of pleasure, and may not really *feel* different. In other words, a good part, and perhaps most, of the differences between the emotions distinguished in common sense may not be *experiential* differences, and therefore not in need of an explanation in terms of differences in *feelings* (Reisenzein, 2009a).

In view of the problems with the "hybrid" (feeling-plus-*X*) theory in solving the feeling theory's problem with phenomenality, we recommend that feeling theorists reconsider this third strategy. Indeed, we suspect that some proponents of "hybrid" theories may have confused the *differences between emotions* (which are undoubtedly due in large part to differences in their cognitive and motivational basis) with differences in the *phenomenal quality of emotions*. If what needs to be accounted for is just the difference between emotions, then all the feeling theorist needs to do is to *functionally define specific emotions* as feelings with particular cognitive causes (and possibly, particular consequences) (Reisenzein, 2009a; also see Reisenzein, 1994). For example, to account for the difference between joy and pride, it is sufficient to define *joy* as pleasure caused by the belief that a desired event occurred, and *pride* as pleasure caused by the belief that one did something praiseworthy. The functional-definition strategy allows the feeling theorist to stick with the pure feeling theory: all emotions still are just feelings; it is only that subclasses of feelings are discriminated by referring to their special causes and consequences.

Problems with intentionality. The second objection against James's theory was that it fails to account for the other central feature of emotional experiences, their object-directedness (e.g., de Sousa, 1987; Goldie, 2000, 2009; Green, 1992; Kenny, 1963; Lyons, 1980; see also, Döring, in press; Frijda, 2007; Reisenzein et al., 1995). In contrast to the first objection, this second criticism is independent of which version of feeling theory (peripheralist or centralist) one endorses, although the objection has again been mostly directed at bodily feeling theory. For this case, the objection is: whereas joy, sadness, anger and their kin are directed at states of affairs or perhaps individual things (e.g., one feels happy about having won in the lottery, or feels afraid of the neighbor's dog), it is not easy to see how bodily feelings could come to be directed at (i.e., come to represent) these kinds

of objects. As Goldie (2009) and Reisenzein (2009a, 2009b) note, this is true even if one is willing to grant to Brentano (1874/1955) and recent authors (e.g., Crane, 1998)—as we are—that sensory qualities can be considered to be a form of representation (e.g., that a heat sensation may be said to represent temperature, or that, as Reisenzein argues, pleasure represents the detection of a belief–desire match). The feeling theorists can react to this critique in at least three ways:

1. Feeling theorists can follow James, who proposed that objectless feelings (in James's case, bodily sensations) somehow "borrow" the objects from the perceptions or beliefs by which they are caused (see Reisenzein et al., 1995). However, it appears that this theory of "derived intentionality" cannot be given a coherent explication (e.g., Green, 1992).
2. Feeling theorists can soften the feeling theory by assuming that emotions are not just feelings, but complex mental states that comprise, in addition to feelings, suitable object-directed mental states. As already hinted, the most suitable candidates for this purpose are again the beliefs (and desires) by which the feelings are caused. This strategy therefore leads once again to a "hybrid" cognition-feeling theory, albeit through a different route. According to the hybrid theory, emotions have objects because they contain object-directed beliefs (and desires) as components; and their objects are just the objects of these beliefs (and desires). For example, according to Castelfranchi and Miceli's (2009) version of the hybrid theory, Peter's joy about Mary's visit (p) is a complex mental state that emerges from a gestalt integration of Peter's desire for p, his belief that p is the case, and the pleasure caused by this belief–desire constellation. The directedness of Peter's joy at p would then be owing to the belief that p and the desire for p, which are part of Peter's joy.

Attractive as this second strategy for solving the feeling theory's problems with intentionality may at first look, it has problems similar to the first strategy. In particular, it needs to be explained how a complex of causally connected beliefs, desires and feelings, of which one component is not intrinsically object-directed, can *as a whole* get directed at (i.e., come to represent) the emotion's object. This seems again to require adopting the questionable theory of derived intentionality (Green, 1992). Although a number of authors have proposed ways of how the emotion components might be synthesized into the whole "emotion"—proposing either a gestalt-forming process (Castelfranchi & Miceli, 2009) or a process of categorization (Barrett, 2006; Mandler, 1984)—they have not spelled out how the *intentionality* of the resulting whole, the emotion, is constructed from the intentionality of its (representational) parts. The problem is further complicated if one accepts that the cognitive-motivational basis of some emotions (e.g., envy or jealousy) comprises a whole set of different beliefs and desires (see Castelfranchi & Miceli, 2009).

3. Feeling theorists can deny that emotions *really* have objects; that is, they can argue that their object-directedness is *only apparent*. This path is taken by Reisenzein (2009a, 2009b). In view of the problems with the "hybrid" cognition-feeling theory in solving the feeling theory's problem with intentionality, we recommend that feeling theorists reconsider this third strategy. Its success depends on giving a plausible explanation for the *appearance* of object-directedness. Reisenzein (2009a) promises to provide such an explanation.

Exploring Emotion's Intentionality: The Cognitive Theory

Emotion theorists such as James (1890/1850), who took the phenomenality of emotions as their starting point, usually arrived at a sensory (feeling) theory of emotion. By contrast, those theorists who took the object-directedness of emotions as their point of departure, such as Meinong (1894, 1906), Stumpf (1899), and later Arnold (1960) and Kenny (1963), typically arrived at a *cognitive theory of emotion*. Readers should note that this concept has come to be used somewhat differently in contemporary psychology and philosophy. In psychology, a "cognitive emotion theory" usually means any theory which assumes that cognitions—paradigmatically beliefs—are necessary conditions of emotions; or as Meinong (1894) put it, that emotions "psychologically presuppose" cognitions. This definition is neutral with regard to why or in what sense cognitions are necessary for emotions (Calhoun & Solomon, 1984). It therefore also covers theories that take cognitions to be necessary causes of emotions, without assuming that the emotions themselves are or contain cognitions. By contrast, contemporary philosophers of emotion usually restrict the label "cognitive emotion theory" to a theory which holds that emotions *are cognitions* (of a certain kind), either wholly, or in part; implying not only that emotions are intentional mental states, but more specifically, that they are cognitive (information-providing) mental states. As we illustrate in the following paragraphs via a brief review of Meinong's (1894) theory of emotion, both of these intuitions behind "cognitive" have their roots in reflections on the intentionality of emotions.

Cognition as a psychological precondition of emotion. According to Meinong (1894, 1906), the intentionality of emotions rather directly entails that emotions presuppose certain cognitions. His argument to this conclusion, here illustrated for joy, is straightforward: since one cannot feel joy without feeling joy about something, one can also not feel joy without cognitively representing the emotion's object. Hence, (a) the minimum necessary precondition of joy is a *cognitive representation of the object of joy.* Given this cue, however, psychological analysis quickly reveals a great deal more about the mental preconditions of emotion. Thus, by means of examples it can next be made plausible (b) that the cognitive representation of the object required for joy is a *belief* or *judgment*. To be happy about having won in the lottery, one needs to firmly believe that one has, indeed, won. No other, epistemically weaker representation will do: as long as one is in doubt about the winning, one may feel hope, but one will not feel joy. And if one only imagines that they have won, one may feel fantasy joy, but will not feel real

joy. Next, (c) it is clear that believing *p* is not sufficient for happiness about *p*; for one can have this belief without feeling happy about *p*, and even with feeling sad about *p*. Hence, a second mental precondition of joy needs to be postulated. This second condition has been explicated either as a desire for *p* (Green, 1992; Meinong, 1906), or as a positive evaluation of *p* (the belief that *p* is good for oneself; e.g., Arnold, 1960; Lyons, 1980). This results in one of two main types of cognitive emotion theory: *cognitive-motivational theory* (belief–desire theory), or *cognitive-evaluative theory* (appraisal theory; for more detail, see Castelfranchi & Miceli, 2009; Reisenzein, 2006, 2009a). (d) After the principal kinds of preconditions of emotion have been determined, one can vary them in thought and note the effects (e.g., Green, 1992; Meinong, 1894). This thought experimentation reveals that different constellations of beliefs and desires are related to different emotions. To illustrate for the cognitive-motivational theory: joy about *p* is experienced if one believes *p* and desires *p*, sorrow about *p* if one believes *p* but desires *not-p*; hope for *p* if one desires *p* but is uncertain whether or not *p* is the case; and fear of *p* if one desires *not-p* and is uncertain about *p*. In fact, every distinct kind of emotion is revealed to be characterized by a different constellation of beliefs and desires (see also, Castelfranchi & Miceli, 2009; Reisenzein, 2009a). Pursuing the implications of the intentionality of emotions thus reveals, step by step, the cognitive (and motivational) preconditions of the different emotions.

Emotions as cognitions. Focusing on the intentionality of emotions suggests that certain cognitions (and desires) are necessary preconditions of emotions. For example, according to Meinong (1894), joy about *p* presupposes the belief that *p* is the case plus the desire for *p*. This still leaves the questions: What are the emotions themselves, and how *exactly* are the beliefs (and desires) related to them, that is, *in which sense* are they necessary for the emotions? Although these questions are still unanswered, the range of possible answers appears to be fairly limited. The first answer (which is in fact Meinong's) is that the cognitions and desires in question are the *causes* of the emotion, which are a separate mental state. Take that state to be an affective feeling, and you are back to the feeling theory. The second answer is that the cognitions and desires in question are *components* of the emotion. Take the other emotion component to be an affective feeling, and you are back to the "hybrid" cognition-feeling theory. The third answer is that the cognitions and desires in question just *are* the emotion. Depending on the version of cognitive emotion theory ones favors—the cognitive-evaluative or the cognitive-motivational one—this means to identify emotions with certain (evaluative) beliefs (Solomon, 1988), or with certain belief–desire combinations (Marks, 1982).

Which of these three theories of the nature of emotions, if any, is the correct one? In trying to answer this question, the intentionality of emotions seems to give another powerful cue. For if one takes the emotion's intentionality at face value (as opposed to taking it to be an illusion), then one thing seems clear: whatever emotions are, they are intentional states—mental states that contain representations of the objects at which they are directed. This consideration seems to immediately rule out the causalist feeling theory, as well as all other causal theories that take the emotion proper to be a nonintentional state. And among the object-directed candidate mental states, it appears that only cognitions (and desires) have the *right* objects, namely, the same objects as the emotions with which they are identified (Reisenzein & Schönpflug, 1992). For example, it seems that joy about *p* can only be identified with a mental state that also is about *p*. The belief that *p* is the case and the desire for *p* would qualify, but few other mental states do. This is one reason why Arnold's (1960; see also Frijda, 1986) proposal to identify the emotions with *action tendencies* (action desires) does not work (Reisenzein & Schönpflug, 1992; for other reasons, see Reisenzein, 1996b). For example, the intentional object of the action desire to flee in the case of fear, or to attack in the case of anger—what one wants to do—is to flee or to attack, respectively; but these are not the things one is afraid of, or angry at.

So it seems that the best option one has is to identify emotions with their cognitive (or cognitive-motivational) presuppositions and thus to assume that emotions *are cognitions* (of a certain kind); at least in part. What is more, taking the intentionality of emotions seriously suggests that emotions should be identified *only* with these cognitions (and desires): if an emotion is an intrinsically intentional mental state directed at object *p*, then any structural explanation of what that state is (any explanation of the emotion in terms of another, better understood mental state) can only be given, and only needs to be given, in terms of an intentional state *directed at p*. A welcome side effect of this strategy is that the earlier-mentioned problems with the hybrid cognition-feeling theory are avoided.

Reflection on the emotion's intentionality thus seems to lead to the conclusion that emotions should be *identified* with what Meinong called their "psychological presuppositions," or with part of them. For cognitive-evaluative emotion theorists (appraisal theorists), this means that emotions are to be identified with certain (evaluative) beliefs (e.g., Nussbaum, 2001; Solomon, 1988). For cognitive-motivational theorists, it means that emotions are to be identified with certain belief–desire combinations (e.g., Marks, 1982). To illustrate this idea, fear of an event is simply the conscious belief that this event poses a danger; or alternatively, fear is the belief that the event is likely to happen, together with the desire that it should not happen.

This theory can explain the intentionality of emotions at least as well as the hybrid cognition-feeling theory while avoiding the problems of that theory. However, it has at least one serious problem: it does not provide a good explanation of the phenomenal character of emotions. The reason for this was mentioned earlier: it is questionable whether beliefs and desires, even when conscious, exhibit phenomenal properties, at least experiential qualities of a sufficiently salient and distinct kind. This is probably why there seem to be no proponents of the theory that emotions are (just) cognitions in contemporary psychology. And as to philosophy, at least the proponents of the view that emotions are *beliefs* or *judgments* have come to increasingly emphasize that emotions are not ordinary beliefs,

but beliefs of a very special kind (e.g., Nussbaum, 2004; Solomon, 2004). It is not clear, however, that this assumption succeeds in solving the cognitive theory's problems with accounting for the phenomenality of emotions. The theory here encounters a problem parallel to that encountered by the bodily feeling theory with nonemotional organic sensations: it fails to explain what distinguishes nonemotional evaluative judgments, or belief–desire pairs, from emotional ones. Hence, the theory leaves an explanatory gap.

Fortunately, the options are not yet exhausted. As pointed out in more recent philosophical discussions in particular, emotions may not be identifiable with cognitions *construed as beliefs*; but they could still be cognitive mental states in a wider sense of the term. Even if they are not beliefs, emotions could still be cognitive in the sense that they, like beliefs, represent the world as being a certain way and are therefore subject to a correctness condition (e.g., Döring, 2007; Döring & Peacocke, 2002). The two main alternatives that have been proposed are that emotions are a special kind of perception (e.g., Döring, 2007; Meinong, 1894; Roberts, 2003); and that they are a separate, new variety of (at least partly) cognitive mental states (Goldie, 2000; Helm, 2009; Meinong, 1917).

As it turns out, Meinong proposed both of these alternatives at different times in his career (Meinong, 1894, 1917). We will here only look at Meinong's perceptual theory of emotion. Significantly, Meinong held this theory in tandem with his cognitive theory of emotion generation. That is, Meinong combined a causalist theory of *emotion generation*—emotions are caused by beliefs and desires—with a perceptual theory of the *nature of emotion*: emotions themselves are a perception-like mental state. The considerations that motivated Meinong's perceptual view of emotions seem to have been in part the following. First, the typical temporal sequence of the mental events that end up in joy—one desires *p*; one then acquires the belief that *p* obtains, and as soon as this happens, one experiences joy about *p*—suggests that the belief that *p* together with the desire for *p cause* the experience of joy about *p*. The joy about *p* must therefore be a mental state that is distinct from the belief and the desire that caused it (on this issue, see also Castelfranchi & Miceli, 2009). Furthermore, Meinong agreed with tradition that introspection reveals the phenomenal quality of joy to be one of pleasure. However, as he was convinced that all mental states including emotions are (intrinsically) object-directed, he could not accept that the mental pleasure of joy is objectless. Besides, he claimed (Meinong, 1917) that direct introspection confirms that joy is indeed directed at an object: one does not experience objectless pleasure when one comes to believe that a desired state of affairs *p* has materialized; one feels *pleasure-about-p*. Thus, Meinong came to the conclusion that emotional experiences are simultaneously object-directed or representational and have phenomenal quality. In these respects, emotions are similar to *perceptions*. This consideration suggests that emotions might be a kind of perception, or perception-like (see Döring, 2003, 2007). This suggestion fits well with what Meinong proposed about the *function* of emotional experiences, a view he had arrived at independently through a reflection on the psychological basis of value judgments (Meinong, 1894). According to Meinong, emotions provide the experiencer with information about the value of objects. Indeed, according to Meinong, emotions constitute the *primary value experience*s; they are the basic, original forms of becoming aware of the value of things and states of affairs. The value of objects is construed by Meinong as a dispositional property, namely as the objects' capacity to elicit emotional experiences under normal circumstances (see also Reicher, 2005).

Partly in response to the difficulties encountered by other versions of cognitive theories of emotion, several philosophical contributors to this volume have come to a position that closely resembles Meinong's, in that they treat emotions as intentional mental states *sui generis* (e.g., Döring, 2007; Goldie, 2000; Helm, 2001). While differing in the details, they agree in conceptualizing emotions as intentional and representational states of a special kind that are at least partly cognitive. Furthermore, thanks to their representational content, the emotions are capable of making other mental states and actions rational, rather than merely causing them (see Döring, 2009a).

To sum up our necessarily selective review and discussion, both the feeling theory and the cognitive theory of emotion seem to contain important insights. On the one hand, it is hard to deny that paradigmatic emotions—joy and sadness, hope and fear, anger, guilt, pride, and so on—depend on cognitions and desires: the way we take the world to be, and the way we want it to be. Also, there is the strong intuition that emotions themselves are intentional, that they truly relate us to things in the world. On the other hand, the intuition that "emotion dissociated from all . . . feeling is inconceivable" (James, 1890/1950, p. 462) likewise seems irresistible, even though we disagree with James that the feelings in question are bodily sensations. Hence, to paraphrase Goldie (2009), the challenge is to get (the right) feelings into emotions in the right way.

Ten Perspectives on Emotional Experience: The Articles

The ten perspectives on emotional experience collected in this special issue represent a survey of attempts within contemporary psychology and philosophy to reconcile the two described traditions of theorizing on emotional experience. Despite important differences, all contributors to the special issue share a number of crucial assumptions. First, they all advocate a cognitive approach to emotion*, broadly conceived* (meaning in particular, broad enough to cover both appraisal and cognitive-motivational theories of emotion, as well as the view that emotions are a kind of perception). Second, all accept that emotional experiences are characterized by phenomenality as well as object-directedness, and that these features need to be accounted for in some way. Third, all contributors are unconvinced that emotional experiences can be reduced to bodily sensations, or to a combination of bodily feelings and cognitions. However, many are still convinced that emotions do contain a sensation-like feeling element, albeit one that has its origin in the brain rather than the body.

The opening article by Oatley (2009) is by one of the pioneers, in contemporary psychology, of the idea that emotional experiences are at core unique, centrally-generated feelings (Oatley & Johnson-Laird, 1987). Oatley first summarizes the latest version of his theory of emotion and then gives an overview of the extensive research inspired by the theory. In agreement with the cognitive-motivational view of emotion generation, Oatley assumes that emotions arise from a goal-monitoring process. For example, happiness occurs when progress towards a goal is cognized; fear occurs when a threat to a goal is detected. The resulting emotions are conceived of as centrally-generated, nonpropositional signals that are consciously experienced as sensation-like qualities. Oatley assumes that the function of the emotion signals is to reconfigure the cognitive system into one of a small modes of operation that evolved to allow humans to deal quickly and effectively with recurrent generic events in relation to goals, such as goal progress or goal threat. In the original version of the theory, five basic emotion modes and, correspondingly, five basic, irreducible emotion signals were proposed: happiness, sadness, fear, anger, and disgust. Like sensations, the basic emotion signals have experiential quality and intensity, but are intrinsically objectless. However, Oatley assumes, emotions get object-directed when the basic emotion signals are conjoined with cognitions about eliciting objects (appraisals). Simultaneously, these appraisals elaborate the basic emotion signals into an indefinite number of complex emotions, thereby accounting for the richness of human emotions.

Similar to Oatley, Reisenzein (2009a) uses a version of the cognitive-motivational theory of emotion generation as his starting point; in his case, it is the philosophical belief–desire theory of emotion (e.g., Meinong, 1894; Green, 1992). Guided by the belief that some of the central questions about emotions can only be answered if one reconstructs the cognitive machinery that underlies emotions, he has previously (e.g., Reisenzein, 2001; 2009b) proposed a computational explication of the belief–desire theory. In the present article, this computational model (or rather sketch of such a model) is applied to the explanation of emotional experience. The central assumption of the model is that the emotion-generating mechanisms are part of the evolved machinery of the mind that monitors and updates the belief–desire system. Accordingly, the emotion mechanisms are but two in kind: a mechanism that compares newly acquired beliefs to preexisting beliefs, and a another that compares newly acquired beliefs to pre-existing desires. Emotions occur when these mechanisms detect an actual or impending change in the belief–desire system (e.g., the fulfillment of a desire, or the disconfirmation of a belief), and they consist of centrally-generated nonpropositional signals (cf. Oatley, 2009) that represent such changes in consciousness in a sensation-like format as, for example, feelings of pleasure and displeasure or surprise. Reisenzein argues that his computational version of a feeling theory is capable of answering central explanatory questions posed by emotional experience, including their phenomenality and intentionality (the latter is explained as an illusion created by the specific way in which the emotional feelings are produced).

The article by Castelfranchi and Miceli (2009) further elaborates the belief–desire theory of emotion that Reisenzein also used as his point of departure, by applying it to the family of emotions related to social comparison (e.g., the feeling of inferiority, admiration, envy, and jealousy). In the first part of their article, the authors present a structural analysis of the social comparison emotions, demonstrating that the belief–desire theory is able to deal not only with comparatively simple emotions such as happiness and unhappiness, but also with complex and presumably uniquely human emotions. In the second part of their article, Castelfranchi and Miceli reexamine the question of the nature of emotional experience within the framework of belief–desire theory. Different from Reisenzein's functional definition of emotion, the authors propose that emotional experiences arise from a subconscious process that integrates beliefs, desires, and the pleasure and displeasure evoked by belief–desire (mis-) matches into an *emotional gestalt*. As discussed by the authors, this theory constitutes an alternative to previous proposals by "hybrid" cognition-feeling theorists about how the presumed components of an emotional state are integrated; in particular the idea that emotional experiences are constructed from their components through a process of categorization (e.g., Barrett, 2006; Lambie, 2009; Mandler, 1984; Russell, 2003).

Although Goldie (2009; see also Goldie, 2000) shares the intuition of the feeling theorists that phenomenality is a central feature of emotional experience, he is unconvinced that the feeling theory of emotion, including the "hybrid" cognition-feeling theory, is viable. Instead, Goldie proposes that emotions are to be viewed as a special kind of object-directed mental states, called *feelings towards*, that have intrinsic affective phenomenality. That is, like the feelings of the sensory emotion theorists, *feelings towards* have phenomenal character (that is presumably unique for emotions). But unlike the feelings of the sensory theorists, *feelings towards* are object-directed and relate the subject to the world.

Goldie's proposal amounts to a revival of the intentionalist emotion theory of the Brentano school, in particular the theories proposed by Meinong (1894; see Reisenzein, 2006) and Stumpf (1899; see Reisenzein & Schönpflug, 1992; also see Irons, 1897). Given the problems of the pure feeling theory and "hybrid" cognition-feeling accounts of emotional experience, Goldie's proposal is attractive. However, it raises questions of its own. In particular, many theorists believe that only two *basic* modes of mental representation exist, the cognitive mode (paradigmatically: belief) and the motivational mode (paradigmatically: desire). How do *feelings towards* fit into this picture? Goldie points to one possible answer by noting that emotions share many commonalities with perceptions. This suggests that *feelings towards* might be understood as a species of perception (e.g., Döring, 2007; Roberts, 2003; Tappolet, 2000; see also Frijda's, 2009, and Lambie's, 2009 "nonreflective" forms of emotional consciousness). However, while Goldie accepts the commonalities between emotions and perceptions, he is not convinced that emotions can be *identified* with "affective perceptions". His view is, rather, that emotional experiences typically involve a range of different intentional states

(e.g., perceptions, beliefs, and desires), *each of which* can be "bound up" with feelings towards the object.

The theory that emotional experiences are *affective perceptions* is, however, defended by Döring (2009a). One important argument in support of the theory, Döring argues, is that it provides a plausible explanation of the phenomenon of "conflict without contradiction". If you simultaneously believed that the dog in front of you is dangerous, and that it is not dangerous, you would not only hold conflicting beliefs, you would clearly be contradicting yourself; and there would be normative pressure on you to give up one of the two conflicting beliefs. By contrast, no such contradiction is involved if you feel fear of the dog whilst believing that it is not dangerous. Drawing an analogy to sensory perception, Döring argues that conflict without contradiction between emotion and judgment is a manifestation of *noninferentiality*: like the content of perception, and unlike the content of judgment, the content of emotion is not subject to inferential constraints. Conflict without contradiction is thus explained by a difference in content between emotion and judgment. Furthermore, Döring argues, this difference in *mental content* finds its counterpart in a difference in the *mental attitude* which the subject adopts towards the content of emotion, versus the content of judgment.

Yet another explication of the view that emotions are distinct kinds of mental states that unite intentionality and phenomenality is Helm's (2009) theory of emotions as *evaluative feelings*. Similar to Meinong (1894) and Stumpf (1899), Helm proposes that emotions are ways of being pleased or pained by, and about, the circumstances that matter to us. However, rather than trying to establish that these evaluative feelings, or *feelings of import*, are a subform of, or at least analogous to a better known category of mental states such as perception, belief, or desire, Helm explores the idea that they might be an entirely distinct class of mental states. Helm finds that to explicate this idea, it is necessary to reject the traditional categorization of mental states in favor of a holistic theory of cognition, motivation, and emotion. *Feelings of import* are construed within this holistic framework as a distinctive type of mental state that unites properties of cognitive, perceptual, and motivational representations. A central assumption of Helm's theory of *feelings of import* is that the capacity to experience a particular emotion (e.g., fear that one's tomato plants might be killed by the frost) requires the capacity for many other emotions (e.g., the capacity to feel relief when the frost does not materialize). (See Meinong [1894], for a related dispositional analysis of "import", or value).

Whereas the nine other contributors to the special issue focus on emotional experiences, Siemer's (2009) focus is on moods. However, we agree with Siemer that the theory of moods is of great relevance to the theory of emotions. As Siemer notes, only two kinds of mood theory that seem to fulfill basic explanatory requirements have been proposed. The *feeling theory of moods* assumes that moods are simply emotional feelings that occur in the absence of the subject's awareness of eliciting objects, or appraisals of objects (e.g., Oatley, 2009). In contrast, the *dispositional theory of moods* assumes that moods are temporarily heightened dispositions to react with (object-directed) emotions. This theory should be particularly attractive to cognitivist emotion theorists who regard emotions as essentially object-directed (e.g., Meinong, 1894). In view of this, it is perhaps not surprising to learn that a dispositional theory of moods was already proposed by Meinong and his students (see Siemer, 2009, for a brief historical review). Siemer himself elaborates a specific variant of this theory, according to which moods are temporarily heightened dispositions to make emotion-specific appraisals (e.g., of danger), and he reports the results of a series of studies that support the theory. It should be noted, however, that the dispositional theory of moods and the issue of whether or not emotional states contain a sensory feeling core are in principle independent. For this reason, the dispositional theory could well be the correct account of moods even if emotions do contain a sensation-like component (e.g., a feeling of pleasure or displeasure; Reisenzein, 2009a).

The focus of the last three articles, by Frijda (2009), Lambie (2009), and Roberts (2009), respectively, is not on the causal generation of emotions and the constitution of the resultant emotional states, although the authors do have clear opinions on these matters: Frijda and Lambie view emotions as states that comprise several components (similar to Castelfranchi and Miceli, 2009; and to Oatley's theory of complex emotions), whereas Roberts views emotions as a kind of perception (called *concern-based construals*). However, these assumptions are to a large degree independent of the authors' central point, which is that the experience of an emotion (e.g., an experience of anger) is not a unitary phenomenon, but can take several, systematically different forms depending on the person's *mode of awareness* of her mental states. Specifically, Frijda and Lambie propose—drawing in part on the phenomenologists' (e.g., Husserl, 1991; Sartre, 1948) distinction between nonreflective and reflective awareness, that has its roots in Brentano's (1874/1955) distinction between "inner perception" and "inner observation" (see Zahavi, 2004)—that humans can be conscious of their mental states, including emotions, either in a *nonreflective* or a *reflective* manner (Lambie speaks of first-order versus second-order consciousness; Roberts distinguishes, with similar intent, between bare awareness on the one hand, and felt and intellectual awareness on the other hand).

The focus of Frijda's (2009) present article is on working out this theory of the varieties of emotional experience and its implications for his own version of cognitive emotion theory (e.g., Frijda, 2007). In contrast, Lambie (2009) probes the implications of the various forms of emotion consciousness for the role played by emotional experience in rational action and self-knowledge. His central claim is that, although emotions of which we are not reflectively aware motivate actions and color our view of the world, they do so in a nonrational way. If emotions are to play a rational role in action selection, one must be reflectively aware of them because, presumably, only then does one have the capacity to inhibit one's emotional reactions (but see Döring, 2003; 2009a).

Finally, Roberts (2009) explores which functions the different forms of emotional consciousness have in personal

relationships such as friendship, enmity, and good and bad parenthood and collegiality. According to Roberts, emotions that one is aware of as having (i.e., for which there is second-order awareness, either feeling awareness or intellectual awareness), in contrast to first-order experiences, have a relationship-constituting function. Feeling awareness or intellectual awareness are claimed to be crucial to this function because of the epistemic and practical import of these kinds of emotional consciousness. Roberts puts forward this thesis in the conceptual framework of his perceptual theory of emotions that conceptualizes emotions as *concern-based construals* (Roberts, 2003).

Conclusion

We began our historical introduction by noting that the two central properties of emotional experiences—their special phenomenality and intentionality—have given rise to two different and partly conflicting traditions of theorizing about emotions, the feeling theory and the cognitive theory. Looking back at the fate of the two theoretical traditions, we find that, under the pressure of theoretical arguments and empirical evidence, they have moved increasingly closer to each other. Although the question of how best to integrate the two theories is still debated, the convergence of views documented in this special issue is encouraging.

Notes

1 This weak interpretation of the claim "emotions are feelings" (as "emotions have phenomenal character") must be carefully distinguished from the stronger interpretation that emotions are a kind of sensation, or at least analogous to sensations. The latter is the central tenet of sensory feeling theorists.

2 It should be noted that the explanations of emotional phenomenality by emotion theorists are not intended as solutions to the *philosophical* problems posed by phenomenal quality—briefly, to show how *qualia* fit into a naturalistic world view (e.g., Chalmers, 1995). The explanatory aims are much more modest: taking for granted that some kinds of mental states exhibit experiential quality, one seeks to explicate the nature of emotions in such a way that their having the special experiential quality they have becomes understandable.

3 Note also that, according to some psychological emotion theorists, the cognitions and desires that cause feelings may remain unconscious. Thus, presumably, one can experience fear without being aware of the belief or desire that caused the fear. In that case, the belief or desire cannot possibly contribute to the emotion's phenomenal quality.

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