

## EMOTIONS AS JUDGMENTS OF VALUE AND IMPORTANCE

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*It is almost impossible to understand the extent to which this disturbance agitated, and by that very fact had temporarily enriched, the mind of M. de Charlus. Love in this way produces real geological upheavals of thought. In the mind of M. de Charlus, which only several days before resembled a plane so flat that even from a good vantage point one could not have discerned an idea sticking up above the ground, a mountain range had abruptly thrust itself into view, hard as rock—but mountains sculpted as if an artist, instead of taking the marble away, had worked it on the spot, and where there twisted about the another, in giant and swollen groupings, Rage, Jealousy, Curiosity, Envy, Hate, Suffering, Pride, Astonishment, and Love.*

Marcel Proust, *A la recherche du temps perdu*

The story of an emotion, I shall argue, is the story of judgments about important things, judgments in which we acknowledge our neediness and incompleteness before those elements that we do not fully control. I therefore begin with such a story, a story of fear, and hope, and grief, and anger, and love.

I.

Last April I was lecturing at Trinity College, Dublin. As my mother was in the hospital convalescing after a serious but routine operation, I phoned at regular intervals to get reports on her progress. One of these phone calls brought the news that she had had a serious complication during the night, a rupture of the surgical incision between her esophagus and her stomach. She had developed a massive internal infection and fever, and, though she was receiving the best care in a fine hospital, her life was in jeopardy. This news felt like a nail suddenly driven into my stomach. With the help of my hosts I arranged to return on the next flight, which was not until the following day. That evening I delivered my scheduled lecture, on the subject of emotions. I was not then the same exuberant self-sufficient philosopher delivering a lecture, but rather a person barely able to restrain tears. That night in my room in Trinity College, I had a dream in which my mother appeared emaciated and curled into a fetal position in her hospital bed. I looked at her with a surge of tremendous love and said, "Beautiful Mommy." Suddenly she stood up, looking as young and beautiful as in the photographs of the time when I was two or three years old. She smiled at me with her characteristic wit and said that others might call her wonderful, but she preferred to be called beautiful. I woke up and wept, knowing that things were not so.

During the transatlantic flight the next day, I saw, with hope, that image of health before me. But I also saw, and more frequently, the image of her death, and my body wanted to interpose itself before that image, to negate it. My blood wanted to move faster than the plane. With shaking

hands I typed out paragraphs of a lecture on mercy, and the narrative understanding of criminal offenders. And I felt, all the while, a vague and powerful anger—at the doctors, for allowing this crisis to occur, at the flight attendants, for smiling as if everything were normal, and above all, at myself for not having been able to stop this event from happening, or for not having been there with her when it did.

On arriving in Philadelphia I called the hospital's intensive care unit and was told by the nurse that my mother had died twenty minutes before. My sister, who lived there, had been with her and had told her that I was on my way. The nurse asked me to come and see her laid out. I ran through the littered downtown streets as if something could be done. At the end of a maze of corridors, beyond the cafeteria where hospital workers were laughing and talking, I found the surgical intensive care unit. There, behind a curtain, I saw my mother in bed, lying on her back, as I had so often seen her lying asleep at home. She was dressed in her best robe, the one with the lace collar. Her make up was impeccable. (The nurses, who had been very fond of her, told me that they knew how important it had been to her to always have her lipstick on right.) A barely visible tube went into her nose, but it was no longer hooked up to anything. Her hands were yellow. She was looking intensely beautiful. My body felt as if pierced by so many slivers of glass, fragmented, as if it had exploded and scattered in pieces round the room. I wept uncontrollably. An hour later I was on my way to my hotel, carrying my mother's red overnight bag with her clothes and the books I had given her to read in the hospital—strange relics that seemed to me not to belong to this world any more, as if they should have vanished with her life.

## II.

This story embodies several features of the emotions which it is my endeavor to explain here: their urgency and heat; their tendency to take over

the personality and move one to action with overwhelming force; their connection with important attachments, in terms of which one defines one's life; one's sense of passivity before them; their apparently adversarial relation to "rationality" in terms of cool calculation or cost-benefit analysis, or their occasionally adversarial relation to reasoning of any sort; their close connections with one another, as hope alternates uneasily with fear, as a single event transforms hope into grief, as grief, looking for a cause, expresses itself as anger, as all of these can be the vehicles of an underlying love.

In the light of all these features, it might seem very strange to suggest that emotions are forms of judgment. And yet it is this thesis that I shall defend. I shall argue that all these features are not only not incompatible with, but are actually best explained by, a version of the ancient Greek Stoic view, according to which emotions are forms of evaluative judgment that ascribe great importance to things and persons outside one's control. Emotions are thus, in effect, acknowledgements of neediness and lack of self-sufficiency.<sup>1</sup> The aim is to examine this view and the arguments that support it, showing how the original Stoic picture needs to be modified in order to be philosophically adequate. In this way I hope to restore to the philosophical and political discussion of emotion a dimension that has too frequently been overlooked in debates about whether emotions are "rational" or "irrational."<sup>2</sup>

My focus will be on developing an adequate philosophical account. But since any adequate account in this area must respond not only to the data of one's own experience and to stories of the experience of others, but also to the work done to systematize and account for emotional experience in the disciplines of psychology and anthropology, I draw on those disciplines as well. Neo-Stoic views have recently been gaining ascendancy in cognitive psychology, in work on helplessness and control,<sup>3</sup> and on emotion as "appraisal" of that which pertains to a creature's "thriving";<sup>4</sup> and in anthropology, in work on emotion as an evaluative "social construction."<sup>5</sup> Since

the Stoic view needs to be connected to a plausible developmental account of the genesis of emotion in infancy, I also draw on pertinent material from the object-relations school of psychoanalysis,<sup>6</sup> which converges with the findings of cognitive psychology and enriches the account of the complexity of human history.<sup>7</sup>

Throughout, the explananda will be the genus of which grief, fear, love, joy, hope, anger, gratitude, hatred, envy, jealousy, pity, guilt, and other relatives are the species. The members of this family are distinct, both from bodily appetites such as hunger and thirst as well as from objectless moods such as irritation or endogenous depression. Through there are numerous internal distinctions among the members of the family, they have enough in common to be analyzed together; and a long tradition in philosophy, beginning from Aristotle, has so grouped them.<sup>8</sup>

### III.

The Stoic view of emotion has an adversary: the view that emotions are “nonreasoning movements,” unthinking energies that simply push the person around and do not relate to conscious perceptions. Like gusts of wind or the currents of the sea, they move, and move the person, but obtusely, without vision of an object or beliefs about it. In this sense they are “pushes” rather than “pulls.” This view is connected with the idea that emotions derive from the “animal” part of our nature, rather than from a specifically human part—usually by thinkers who do not have a high regard for animal intelligence. Sometimes, too, the adversary’s view is connected with the idea that emotions are “bodily” rather than “mental,” as if this were sufficient to make them unintelligent rather than intelligent.<sup>9</sup> The adversary’s view is grossly inadequate and, in that sense, it might seem to be a waste of time to consider it. The fact, however, that it has until recently been very influential, both in empiricist-derived philosophy and in cognitive psychology,<sup>10</sup> and through both of these in fields such as

law and public policy,<sup>11</sup> gives reason to reflect on it.<sup>12</sup> A stronger reason for reflecting upon this view lies in the fact that the view, though inadequate, does capture some important aspects of emotional experience, aspects that need to figure in any adequate account. If we first understand why this view has the power that it undeniably does, and then see why and how further reflection moves us away from it, it will lead to an understanding of what we must not ignore or efface in so moving away.

Turning back to my account of my mother's death, we now find that the "unthinking movements" view does appear to capture at least some of what went on: my feeling of a terrible tumultuousness, of being at the mercy of currents that swept over me without my consent or complete understanding; the feeling of being buffered between hope and fear, as if between two warring winds; the feeling that very powerful forces were pulling my self apart, or tearing it limb from limb; in short, the terrible power or urgency of the emotions, their problematic relationship with one's sense of self, the sense of one's passivity and powerlessness before them. It comes as no surprise that even philosophers who argue for a cognitive view of emotion should speak of them this way: Seneca, for example, is fond of comparing emotions to fire, to the currents of the sea, to fierce gales, to intruding forces that hurl the self about, cause it to explode, cut it up, tear it limb from limb.<sup>13</sup> It seems easy for the adversary's view to explain these phenomenal for if emotions are just unthinking forces that have no connection with our thoughts, evaluations, or plans, then they really are just like the invading currents of some ocean. And they really are, in a sense, non-self; and we really are passive before them. It seems easy, furthermore, for the adversary to explain their urgency for once we imagine these forces as extremely strong.

By contrast, the neo-Stoic view appears to be in trouble in all these points. For if emotions are a kind of judgment or thought, it would be difficult to account for their urgency and heat; thoughts are usually imagined as detached and calm. Also, it is difficult to find in them the passivity that we undoubtedly

experience: for judgments are actively made, not just suffered.

Their ability to dismember the self is also overlooked: for thoughts are paradigmatic,

as it were, of what we control, and of the most securely managed parts of our identity. Let us now see what would cause us to move away from the adversary's view and how the neo-Stoic view responds to our worries.

What, then, makes the emotions in my example unlike the thoughtless natural energies I have described? First of all, they are *about* something; they have an object. My fear, my hope, my ultimate grief, all are about my mother and directed at her and her life. A wind may hit against something, a current may pound against something, but these are not *about* the things they strike in their way. My fear's very identity as fear depends on its having an object: take that away and it becomes a mere trembling or heart-leaping. In the same way, the identity of the wind as wind does not depend on the particular object against which it may pound.

Second, the object is an *intentional* object: that is, it figures in the emotion as it is seen or interpreted by the person whose emotion it is. Emotions are not *about* their objects merely in the sense of being pointed at them and let go, the way an arrow is let go against its target. Their aboutness is more internal and embodies a way of seeing. My fear perceived my mother both as tremendously important and as threatened; my grief saw her as valuable and as irrevocably cut off from me. (Both, we might add—beginning to approach the adversary's point about the self—contain a corresponding perception of myself and my life, as threatened in the one case, as bereft in the other.) This aboutness comes from my active way of seeing and interpreting: it is not like being given a snapshot of the object, but requires looking at it, so to speak, through one's own window. This perception might contain an accurate view of the object or it might not. (And, indeed, it might take as its target a real and present object, or be directed at an object that is no longer in existence, or that never existed at all. In this way too, intentionality is distinct from a more mechanical directedness.)

It is to be stressed that this aboutness is part of the identity of the emotions. What distinguishes fear from hope, fear from grief, love from hate—is not so much the identity of the object, which might not change, but the way the object is perceived: in fear, as a threat, but with some chance for escape; in hope, as in some uncertainty, but with a chance for a good outcome;<sup>14</sup> in grief as lost; in love as invested with a special sort of radiance. Again, the adversary's view is unable to account for the ways in which we actually identify and individuate emotions, and for a prominent feature of our experience of them.

Third, these emotions embody not simply ways of seeing an object, but beliefs—often very complex—about the object.<sup>15</sup> It is not always easy, or even desirable, to distinguish between an instance of *seeing x as y*, such as I have described above, from the belief that *x is y*. In order to have fear—as Aristotle already saw it<sup>16</sup>—I must believe that bad events are impending; that they are not trivially, but seriously bad; that I am not in a position to ward them off; that, on the other hand, my doom is not sealed, but there is still some uncertainty about what may befall.<sup>17</sup> In order to have anger, I must have an even more complex set of beliefs: that there has been some damage to me or to something or someone close to me;<sup>18</sup> that the damage is not trivial but significant; that it was done by someone; that it was done willingly; that it would be right for the perpetrator of the damage to be punished.<sup>19</sup> It is plausible to assume that each element of this set of beliefs is necessary in order for anger to be present: if I should discover that not *x* but *y* had done the damage, or that it was not done willingly, or that it was not serious, we could expect my anger to modify itself accordingly or recede.<sup>20</sup> My anger at the smiling flight attendants was quickly dissipated by the thought that they had done so without any thought of disturbing me or giving me offense.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, my fear would have turned to relief—as fear so often does—had the medical news changed, or proven to be mistaken. Again, these beliefs are essential to the identity of the emotion: the feeling of agitation by itself will not reveal to me whether what I am feeling

is fear or grief or pity. Only an inspection of the thoughts will help discriminate.

Here again, then, the adversary's view is too simplistic: severing emotion from belief, it severs emotion from what is not only a necessary condition of itself, but a part of its very identity.

Finally, there is something marked in the intentional perceptions and the beliefs characteristic of the emotions: they are all concerned with *value*, they see their object as invested with value. Suppose that I did not love my mother or consider her a person of great importance; suppose I consider her about as important as the branch on a tree nearby my house. Then (unless I had invested the branch itself with an unusual degree of value) I would not fear her death, or hope so passionately for her recovery. My experience records this in many ways—not least in my dream, in which I saw her as beautiful and wonderful and, seeing her that way, wished her restored to health and wit. And of course in the grief itself there was the same perception—of enormous significance, permanently lost. This indeed is why the sight of the dead body of someone one loves is so painful: because the same sight that is a reminder of value is also an evidence of irrevocable loss.

The value perceived in an object appears to be of a particular sort—although here I must be more tentative since I am approaching an issue that is my central preoccupation. The object of the emotion is seen as *important* for some role it plays in the person's own life. I do not fear just any and every catastrophe anywhere in the world, nor (so it seems) any and every catastrophe that I know to be bad in important ways. What inspires fear is the thought of the impending damage that threatens my cherished relationships and projects. What inspires grief is the death of a beloved, someone who has been an important part of one's life. This does not mean that the emotions view these objects simply as tools or instruments of the agent's own satisfactions: they may be invested with intrinsic worth or value, as indeed my mother had been. They may be loved for their own sake, and their good sought for its own sake. But what makes the emotion center around her, from among all the many wonderful people and

mothers in the world, is that she is *my* mother, a part of my life. The emotions are in this sense localized: as in the Ruickert poem in the epigraph, they take up their stand “in my tent,” and focus on the “small lamp” that goes out there, rather than on the general distribution of light and darkness in the universe as a whole.

Another way of putting this point is that the emotions appear to be eudaimonistic—that is, concerned with the agent’s flourishing. And thinking about ancient Greek eudaimonistic moral theories will help us to start thinking about the geography of the emotional life. In a eudaimonistic ethical theory, the central question asked by a person is “How should I live?” The answer lies in the person’s conception of *eudaimonia*, or human flourishing. The conception of *eudaimonia* includes all that to which the agent ascribes intrinsic value; for instance, if one can show that there is something missing without which one’s life would not be complete, then that is sufficient argument for its inclusion.<sup>22</sup> The important point is this: in a eudaimonistic theory, the actions, relations, and persons that are included in the conception are not all valued simply on account of some instrumental relation they bear to the agent’s satisfaction. This is a mistake commonly made about such theories under the influence of utilitarianism and the misleading use of “happiness” as a translation for *eudaimonia*.<sup>23</sup> Not just actions but also mutual relations of civic or personal *philia*, in which the object is loved and benefited for his or her own sake, can qualify as constituent parts of *eudaimonia*.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, they are valued as constituents of a life that is my life and not someone else’s, as my actions, as people who have some relation with me.<sup>25</sup> This, it seems, is what emotions are like, and this is why, in negative cases, they are felt as tearing the self apart: because they have to do with<sup>26</sup> damage to me and to my own, to my plans and goals, to what is most urgent in my conception of what it is for me to live well.

We have now gone a long way toward answering the adversary, for it has been established that his view, while picking out certain features of

emotional life that are real and important, has omitted others of equal and greater importance, central to the identity of an emotion and to discriminating between one emotion and another: their aboutness, their intentionality, their basis in beliefs, their connection with evaluation. All this makes them look very much like thoughts after all, and we have even begun to see how a cognitive view might itself explain some of the phenomena the adversary claimed on his side—the intimate relationship to self-hood, the urgency. But this is far removed from the neo-Stoic view, according to which emotions are just a certain type of evaluative judgment. For the considerations we have brought forward might be satisfied by a weaker or more hybrid view, according to which beliefs and perceptions play a large role in emotions, but are not identical with them.

We can imagine, in fact, three such weaker views, each with its historical antecedents:<sup>27</sup>

1. The relevant beliefs and perceptions are *necessary conditions* for the emotion.
2. They are *constituent parts of* the emotion (which has non-belief parts as well).
3. They are *sufficient conditions* for the emotion, which are not identical with it.

The logical relations among these options are complex and need scrutiny.

(1) does not imply but is compatible with (3). (3) does not imply but is compatible with (1). (1) is compatible with (2)—the beliefs may be necessary as constituent elements in the emotion; but we might also hold (1) in an external-cause form, in which the beliefs are necessary conditions for a very different sort of thing that is not itself a belief. The same can be said for (3): a sufficient cause may be external or internal. (2) is compatible with (3), since even if the belief is just a part of the emotion, and not the whole, it may be a part whose presence guarantees the presence of the other parts.

We have gone far enough, I think, to rule out the external-cause form of (1) and of (3), for we have argued that the cognitive elements are an essential part of the emotion's identity, and of what differentiates it from other emotions. So we are left, it appears, with (2)—whether in a form in which the belief part suffices for the presence of the other parts, or in a form in which it is merely necessary for their presence. What are those other parts? The adversary is ready with a fall-back answer: non-thinking movements of some sort, or perhaps (shifting over to the point of view of experience) objectless feelings of pain and/or pleasure. A number of questions immediately come to mind about these feelings: What are they like if they are not *about* anything? What is the pleasure *in*, or the pain *at*? How are they connected with the beliefs, if they do not themselves contain any thought or cognition?<sup>28</sup> These questions will shortly be reviewed.

#### IV

I must begin a fuller elaboration and defense of the neo-Stoic view by saying something about judgment. To understand the case for the view that emotions are judgments, one needs to understand exactly what a Stoic means when he or she says that; I think we will find the picture intuitively appealing, and a valuable basis (ultimately) for a critique of the familiar belief-desire framework for explaining action.<sup>29</sup> According to the Stoics, then, a judgment is an assent to an appearance.<sup>30</sup> In other words, it is a process that has two stages. First, it occurs to me or strikes me that such and such is the case. (Stoic appearances are usually propositional, although I shall later argue that this aspect of their view needs some modification.) It looks to me that way, I see things that way<sup>31</sup>—but so far I haven't really accepted it. Now there are three possibilities. I can accept or embrace the appearance, take it into me as the way things are: in this case it has become my judgment, and that act of acceptance is what judging is. I can repudiate it as not the way things are: in that case I am judging the contradictory. Or I

can let it be there without committing myself to it one way or another. In that case I have no belief or judgment about the matter one way or the other.<sup>32</sup> Consider a simple perceptual case introduced by Aristotle.<sup>33</sup> The sun strikes me as being about a foot wide. (That's the way it looks to me, that is what I see it *as*.) Now I might embrace this appearance and talk and act accordingly; most children do so. If I am confused about astronomy, I may refuse to make any cognitive commitment on the matter. But if I hold a confident belief that the sun is in fact tremendously large, and that its appearance is deceptive, I will repudiate the appearance and embrace a contradictory appearance. There seems nothing odd here about saying both that the way of seeing the world is the work of my cognitive faculties and that its acceptance or rejection is the activity of those faculties. Assenting to or embracing a way of seeing the world, acknowledging it as true, *requires* the discriminating power of cognition. Cognition need not be imagined as inert. In this case, it is reason itself that reaches out and accepts that appearance, saying, so to speak, "Yes, that's the one I'll have. That's the way things are." We might even say that this is a good way of thinking about what reason *is*: an ability by virtue of which we commit ourselves to viewing things the way they are.

Let us now return to my central example. My mother has died. It strikes me, it appears to me, that a person of enormous value, who was central to my life, is no longer there. It feels as if a nail has entered my insides; as if life has suddenly a large rip or tear in it, a gaping hole. I see, as well, her wonderful face—both as tremendously loved and as forever lost to me. The appearance, in however many ways we picture it, is propositional: it combines the thought of importance with the thought of loss, its content is that this importance is lost. And, as I have said, it is evaluative: it does not just assert, "Betty Craven is dead." Central to the propositional content is my mother's enormous importance, both to herself as well as to me as an element in my life.

So far we are still at the stage of appearing—and notice that I was in

this stage throughout the night before her death, throughout the long transatlantic plane ride, haunted by that value-laden picture, but powerless to accept or reject it, for it was sitting in the hands of the world. I might have had reason to reject it if, for example, I had awakened and found that the whole experience of getting the bad news and planning my return trip home had been just a nightmare. Or, I might have rejected it if the outcome had been good and she was no longer threatened. I did accept that she was endangered—so I did have fear. But whether or not she was or would be *lost*, I could not say. But now I am in the hospital room with her body before me. I embrace the appearance as the way things are. Can I assent to the idea that someone tremendously beloved is forever lost to me, and yet preserve emotional equanimity? The neo-Stoic claims that I cannot. Not if what I am recognizing is that very set of propositions, with all their evaluative elements. Suppose I had said to the nurses, “Yes, I see that a person I love deeply is dead and that I’ll never see her again. But I am fine: I am not disturbed at all.” If we put aside considerations about reticence before strangers and take the utterance to be non-deceptive, we will have to say, I think, that this person is in a state of denial. She is not really assenting to *that* proposition. She may be saying those words, but there is something that she is withholding. Or, if she is assenting, it is not to that same proposition but perhaps to the proposition “Betty Craven is dead.” Or even (if we suppose that “my mother” could possibly lack eudaimonistic evaluative content) to the proposition “My mother is dead.” What I could not be fully acknowledging or realizing is the thought “A person whom I deeply love, who is central to my life, had died,” for to recognize this is to be deeply disturbed.

It is of crucial importance to be clear about what proposition or propositions we have in mind. For, if we were to make the salient proposition one with no evaluative content, say, “Betty Craven is dead,”<sup>34</sup> we would be right in thinking that the acceptance of that proposition could be at most a cause of grief, not identical with grief itself. The neo-Stoic claims that

grief is identical with the acceptance of a proposition that is both evaluative and eudaimonistic, that is, concerned with one or more of the person's most important goals and ends. The case for equating this (or these) proposition(s) with emotion has not yet been fully made, but so far it appears far more plausible that such a judgment could in itself be an upheaval. Another element must now be added. The judgments that the neo-Stoic identifies with emotions all have a common subject matter: all are concerned with vulnerable externalities: those that can be affected by events beyond one's control, those that are unexpected, those that can be destroyed or removed even when one does not wish it. This implies that the acceptance of such propositions reveals something about the person: that she allows herself and her good to depend upon things beyond her control, that she acknowledges a certain passivity before the world. This emerges in the complex combination of circumstantial and evaluative considerations that must be present in the relevant propositions.

At this point, it can be concluded not only that the judgments described are necessary constituent elements of the emotion, but that they are sufficient as well. It has been argued that if there is no upheaval the emotion itself is not fully or really present. The previous arguments suggest that this sufficiency should be viewed internally: as that of a constituent part itself causes whatever other parts there may be. I have spoken of the way in which the relevant judgments are a part of the identity conditions of the emotion; however, there is need for further analysis, since it may still appear counter intuitive to make the emotion itself a function of reason, rather than a nonrational, cognitive movement.

Well, what element in me *is* it that experiences the terrible shock of grief? I think of my mother; I embrace in my mind the fact that she will never be with me again—and I am shaken. But how and where? Does one imagine the thought as causing a trembling in my hands, or a fluttering in my stomach? And if so, does one really want to say that this fluttering or trembling *is* my grief about my mother's death? The movement seems

to lack the aboutness and the capacity for recognition that must be part of an emotion. Internal to the grief must be the perception of the beloved object and of her importance; the grief itself must quantify the richness of the love between us, its centrality to my life. It must contain the thought of her irrevocable deadness. Of course, one could now say that there is a separate emotional part of the soul that has all these abilities. But, having seemingly lost one's grip on the reason for housing grief in a separate non cognitive part, reason looks like just the place to house it.

The adversary might now object that this is not yet clear. Even if one concedes that the seat of emotion must be capable of many cognitive operations, there also seems to be a kinetic and affective aspect to emotion that does not look like a judgment or any part of it. There are rapid movements, feelings of pain and tumult: are we really to equate these with some part of judging that such and such is the case? Why should we not make the judgment a cause of emotion, but identify emotion itself with these movements? Or, we might even grant that judgment is a constituent element in the emotion, and, as a constituent element, a sufficient cause of the other elements as well, and yet insist that there are other elements, feelings, and movements, that are not parts of the judgment. I have begun to respond to this point by stressing the fact that we are conceiving of judging as dynamic, not static. Reason here moves, embraces, refuses; it moves rapidly or slowly, surely or hesitantly. I have imagined it entertaining the appearance of my mother's death and then, so to speak, rushing toward it, opening itself to absorb it. So why would such a dynamic faculty be unable to house, as well, the disorderly motions of grief? And this is not just an illusion: I am not infusing into thought kinetic properties that properly belong to the arms and legs, or imagining reason as accidentally colored by kinetic properties of the bloodstream. The movement toward my mother was a movement of my thought about what is most important in the world; that is all that needs to be said about it. If anything, the movement of my arms and legs, as I ran to University Hospital, was a vain

mimesis of the movement of my thought toward her. It was my thought that was receiving, and being shaken by, the knowledge of her death. I think that if anything else is said it will sever the close connection between the recognition and the being-shaken of that experience. The recognizing and the upheaval belong to one and the same part of me, the part with which I make sense of the world.

Moreover, it appears that the adversary is wrong in thinking of the judgment as an event that temporally precedes the grieving—as some of the causal language suggests. When I grieve, I do not first of all coolly embrace the proposition “My wonderful mother is dead” and then set about grieving. No, the real, complete, recognition of that terrible event (as many times as I recognize it) is the upheaval. It is as I described it: like driving a nail into the stomach. The thought that she is dead sits there (as it sat before me during my plane ride) asking me what I am going to do about it. Perhaps, if I am still uncertain, the image of her restored to health sits there too. If I embrace the death image, if I take it into myself as the way things are, it is at that very moment, in that cognitive act itself, that I am putting the world’s nail into my own insides. That is not preparation for upheaval, that is upheaval itself. That very act of assent is itself a tearing of my self-sufficient condition. Knowing can be violent, given the truths that are there to be known.

Are there other constituent parts to the grief that are not themselves parts of the judgment? In any particular instance of grieving there is so much going on that it is very difficult to answer this question if one remains at the level of token identities between instances of grieving and instances of judging. We have a more powerful argument—and also a deeper understanding of the phenomena—if we inquire instead about the general identity conditions for grief, and whether there are elements necessary for grief in general that are not elements of judgment. In other words, would we withdraw our ascription of grief if these elements were missing? I believe that the answer is that there are no such elements. There usually will be

bodily sensations and changes involved in grieving, but if we discovered that my blood pressure was quite low during this whole episode, or that my pulse rate never went above sixty, there would not, I think, be the slightest reason to conclude that I was not grieving. If my hands and feet were cold or warm, sweaty or dry, again this would be of no criterial value. Although psychologists have developed sophisticated measures based on brain activity, it is perhaps intuitively wrong to use these as definitive indicators of emotional states. We do not withdraw emotion-ascriptions otherwise grounded if we discover that the subject is not in a certain brainstate. (Indeed, the only way the brain-state assumed apparent importance was through a putative correlation with instances of emotion identified on other grounds.)

More plausible, perhaps, would be certain feelings characteristically associated with emotion. But here we should distinguish “feelings” of two sorts. On the one hand, there are feelings with a rich intentional content—feelings of the emptiness of one’s life without a certain person, feelings of unrequited love for that person, and so on. Such feelings may enter the identity conditions for some emotion; but the word *feeling* now does not contrast with the cognitive words *perception* and *judgment*, it is merely a terminological variant for them. As already mentioned, the judgment itself possesses many of the kinetic properties that the “feeling” is presumably intended to explain. On the other hand, there are feelings without rich intentionality or cognitive content—for instance, feelings of fatigue, of extra energy. As with bodily states, they may accompany emotion or they may not—but they are not necessary for it. (In my own case, feelings of crushing fatigue alternated in a bewildering way with periods when I felt preternaturally wide awake and active; but it seemed wrong to say that either of these was a necessary condition of my grief.) So there appear to be type-identities between emotions and judgments; emotions can be defined in terms of judgment alone.

## NOTES

This article is based on the first of my Gifford Lectures delivered at the University of Edinburgh, spring 1993. The subsequent lectures not only offer further arguments

for the theory and extend it to the analysis of other emotions but also argue that the theory as stated here needs to be modified in certain ways in order to yield an adequate account of the development of emotion and of the emotions of non human animals. I address various normative questions about the place of emotions, so defined, in an account of public and private rationality. I cannot hope here to provide more than a sketch of those further developments, and, hope that the reader will understand that some questions that may arise about this theory are questions that are addressed later. Despite these drawbacks, I did want to put forward this particular essay as my attempt to honor the memory of Bimal Matilal, not only for its subject matter, but because it is at the core of my work, rather than a peripheral addendum. Matilal was a scholar of profound insight and intellectual courage, whose contribution to philosophy is sui generis, a paradigm

of cross-cultural historical and philosophical inquiry. I also knew him as a person possessing great warmth, grace, and wit, whose particularity these abstract terms do not go very far toward conveying.

1. I discuss the Stoic view historically in Nussbaum 1994, chap. 10. Some parts of the argument of this lecture, especially in sec. IV, are closely related to that argument; but I have added new distinctions and refinements at every point in the argument, and, in secs V and VII, have substantially modified my position. Further modifications occur subsequent to the material of this article.

2. Some elements of a related philosophical position are in Lyons 1980, Solomon 1993, Gordon 1987, and de Sousa MIT 1987. None the emotions' cognitive content.

3. See esp. Seligman 1975.
4. See esp. Lazarus 1991; Ortony, Clore, and Collins Press, 1988; and Oatley 1992. For a related view, with greater emphasis on the social aspects of emotion, see Averill 1982.
5. See, Lutz e.g., 1988. See also Briggs 1970.
6. Above all, see Fairbairn 1952, Bollas 1987, and Chodorow 1980; with much reservation and criticism, Klein 1984, and 1985. Experimental psychology, anthropology, and psychoanalysis are brought together in an illuminating way in Bowlby 1982, 1973, 1980.
7. Most of the detailed discussion of all this material is in parts of the project subsequent to this paper; I include the references to convey an idea of my larger design.
8. The word I shall use for the explananda is *emotions*. The Stoic view used the term *pathe*—previously a general word for “affect”—in order to demarcate this class and to isolate it from the class of bodily appetites. For this reason, the philosophical tradition influenced by Stoicism has tended to use the word *passions* and its Latin and French cognates. To contemporary ears, this word denotes a particular intensity, especially erotic intensity, as the more inclusive Greek term *pathe* did not. I therefore use *emotion* as the best translation and the best generic term—although I shall comment both on the kinetic element that led to the original introduction of that word and also on the element of passivity that is stressed in the Greek term.
9. I believe, and argue subsequently, that emotions, like other mental processes, are bodily, but that this does not give us reason to reduce their intentional/ cognitive components to non intentional bodily movements. For my general position on mind/body reduction, see Nussbaum and Putnam 1992.
10. See the illuminating criticisms of both in Kenny 1963, which shows that there is a close kinship between Humean philosophy and behaviorist psychology.

11. We see such views, for example, in the behaviorist psychology of Richard Posner (1990, 1992). Even many defenses of emotion in the law begin by conceding some such view of them—for documentation of this point, see Nussbaum 1993.

12. The Stoics had similar reasons: the adversary's view was represented, for them, by some parts of Plato, or at least some ancient interpretations of Plato.

13. See my Nussbaum 1994.

14. This difference of probabilities is not the whole story about the difference between fear and hope. In my case, where there was both a serious danger and a robust chance of escape, both were possible, and the shift from the one to the other depended on whether one focused on the possible good outcome or on the impending danger.

15. Subsequently, I argue that in the case of animal emotions, and in the case of some human emotions as well, the presence of a certain kind of *seeing as*, which will always involve some sort of a combination or predication, is sufficient for emotion.

16. Aristotle 1991, 11.5.

17. One might argue with this one, thinking of the way in which one fears death even when one knows not only that it will occur but when it will occur. There is much to be said here: does even the man on death row ever know for sure that he will not get a reprieve? Does anyone ever know for sure what death consists in?

18. Aristotle insists that the damage must take the form of a “slight” suggesting that what is wrong with wrongdoing is that it shows a lack of respect.

This is a valuable and, I think, ultimately very plausible position, but I am not going to defend it here.

19. See *Rhesorid* II. 2–3.

20. In my case, however, one can see that the very magnitude of accidental grief sometimes prompts a search for someone to blame, even in the absence of

any compelling evidence that there is an agent involved. One reason for our society's

focus on anger associated with medical malpractice may be that there is no way of proving that medical malpractice did not occur—so it becomes a useful target for those unwilling to blame hostile deities, or the cosmos. about the events at hand; I discuss this elsewhere in my project.

22. On this, see Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1; and for a particular case, IX.9, on the value of *philia*.

23. For the misreading, and a brilliant correction, see Prichard 1935 and Austin, 1961.

24. For a good account of this, where *philia* is concerned, see Cooper 1980.

25 The contrast between such eudaimonistic and more impartialist views is brought out and distinguished from the contrast between egoism and altruism in Williams 1973.

26. As we shall see, “have to do with” should not be construed as implying that the emotions take the conception of *eudaimonia* as their *object*. If that were so, they would be in error only if they were wrong about what conception of value I actually hold. On the neo-Stoic view they are about the *world*, in both its evaluative and its circumstantial aspect. If I grieve because I falsely ascribe to a thing or person outside myself a value he or she does not really possess (Stoics think of all grief as such), I am still really grieving, and it is true to say of me that I am grieving, but the grief is false in the sense that it involves the acceptance of propositions that are false.

27. See Nussbaum 1994, chap. 10.

28. By “cognitive” processes I mean processes that deliver information (whether reliable or not) about the world; thus, I include not only thinking, but also perception and certain sorts of imagination.

29. I discuss this issue in a subsequent chapter of my project.

30. See Nussbaum 1994, chap. 10, with references to texts and literature.

31. It should be stressed that despite the usage of the terms *taking in* and

*acknowledging*, this notion of appearing is not committed to internal representations,

and it is fully compatible with a philosophy of mind that eschews appeal to internal representations. It seems that neither Aristotle nor the Stoics had an internal/representationalist picture of the mind; nor do I. What is at issue is *seeing x as y*: the world strikes the animal a certain way, it sees it *as* such-and-such.

Thus the object of the creature's activity is the world, not something in its head (or heart). In this essay I proceed as if all these ways of seeing can be formulated in linguistically expressible propositions. Subsequently I argue that this is too narrow

a view to accommodate the emotional life of children and other animals, as well as many of the emotions of human adults. And it neglects the fact that other forms of symbolism—music, for example—are not simply reducible to language but have expressive power in their own right.

32. Aristotle points out that such an unaccepted “appearance” may still have some motivating power, but only in a limited way: as when a sudden sight causes one to be startled (but not yet really afraid), see *De Anima* III.9, *De Motu Animalium*

II. Seneca makes a similar point concerning the so-called pre-emotions or *propathēiai*:

see *De Ira* II.3; it is remarkable that Richard Lazarus reinvents, apparently independently, the very same term, *pre-emotions*, to describe the same phenomenon

in the animals he observes (1991). The Greek sceptics suggest that one might live one's entire life motivated by appearances alone, without any beliefs—pointing to the alleged fact that animals are so moved. But their case is dubious, since, for one thing, it seems to misdescribe the cognitive equipment of animals.

33. *De Anima* III.3.

34. Of course the moment we insert the name of a human being, there is some evaluative content and some moral theories would urge that this is all the value there should properly be, in any response to any death.