



Book Review: The Routledge Handbook of Phenomenology of Emotion

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Thomas Szanto and Hilge Landweer assembled an impressive collection of essays on the still not fully explored and continuously evolving continent of phenomenological inquiries into the topic of affective experience. The volume not only surveys accounts of emotion from the history of the phenomenological movement, but also provides the coordinates to navigate contemporary debates in phenomenology as well as at the intersections with other disciplines and schools both within and outside philosophy.

The handbook targets three objectives (17–18). First, it aims at re-evaluating the historical resources that we can find in the phenomenology of emotions. Second, it seeks to provide comprehensive overviews of both traditional and current issues in the philosophy of emotions from a phenomenological perspective. Third, it strives to close a gap in emotion research by discussing general conceptions of emotions as well as 31 particular emotions in detail.

Besides the editors' *Introduction*, the volume includes 49 chapters divided in five parts which center around the three focal aims of the volume. Part 1: "Historical perspectives" contains 19 chapters featuring overviews of the theory of emotions by notable phenomenologists, from Brentano to Schmitz. The editors openly embrace "a fairly liberal notion of phenomenology" (17), thus covering authors who, at first glance, might not be immediately identifiable as belonging to the phenomenological tradition. Furthermore, this part contains comprehensive surveys of emotion theories by realist phenomenologists that have received little attention in the Anglophone literature: Alexander Pfänder (Genki Uemura and Tori Yaegashi), Moritz Geiger (Alessandro Salice), Else Voigtländer (Ingrid Vendrell Ferran), Dietrich von Hildeb-

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rand (Moritz Müller), Gerda Walther, and Herman Schmalenbach (Lina Tranas and Emanuele Caminada).

Part 2 addresses in 10 chapters “systematic issues and contemporary debates” on affective phenomena from a phenomenological perspective. It does so by contextualizing classical phenomenological accounts of emotions in the framework of current discussions on the ontology, epistemology, and the morality of emotions. Topics addressed in this part are taxonomies of affective states (John J. Drummond), existential feelings (Matthew Ratcliffe), trends in moral phenomenology (Bennet W. Helm, Roberta De Monticelli, John J. Drummond and Sonja Rinofner-Kreidl), situated and 4E-approaches to emotions (Achim Stephan and Sven Walter), emotional atmospheres (Tonino Griffero), embodiment and feminist thought (Luna Dolezal), psychopathology (Thomas Fuchs), and philosophy of art (Noël Carroll).

Part 3 to Part 5 provide fine-grained analyses of specific types of emotions and more general affective states. The editors adopt a general classification of emotions in individual and self-directed (discussed in Part 3), on the one hand, and collective and other-directed emotions (Part 4), on the other. Under the first label fall emotions such as shame (Dan Zahavi), self-esteem, pride, embarrassment and shyness (Anna Bortolan), humility, humiliation and affliction (Anthony Steinbock), disgust (Sara Heinämaa), fear, anxiety and boredom (Lauren Freeman and Andreas Elpidorou), grief (Lyne Ryberg Ingerslev), joy and happiness (Michela Summa). The second label refers instead to affective phenomena such as empathy, sympathy and compassion (Thiemo Breyer), aggressive emotions (Hilge Landweer), hetero-induced shame and survivor shame (Alba Montes Sánchez), joint feeling (Héctor Andrés Sánchez Guerrero), and political emotions (Thomas Szanto and Jan Slaby).

Part 5 concludes the volume by addressing phenomena that are not properly emotions, but which hold important functions in eliciting affective states or are themselves affectively charged in some form or another. These include experiences such as forgiveness and revenge (Fabian Bernhardt), gratitude (Sonja Rinofner-Kreidl), trust (Nicolas de Warren), solidarity (Jan Müller), pain (Fredrik Svenaeus), the uncanny (Dylan Trigg), hate of evil (Hans Bernhard Schmid), and love (Angelika Krebs).

Due to space constraints, I can only address a limited number of contributions here. It goes without saying that the selection was motivated both by the topical focus of this journal and by my personal research interests – it is therefore not based on the quality of the chapters I do or do not take into consideration.

The editors’ “Introduction: The Phenomenology of Emotions—Above and Beyond ‘What it is like to feel’” contains besides a synopsis and a rationale of the volume, an historical vignette and a general sketch of the phenomenology of emotion. The editors acknowledge a rediscovery of the emotions in phenomenology that “is only a very recent development and started on a broader international scale just a few years ago” (4). In fact, also many early phenomenologists thought that affectivity ought to play a central role in phenomenology. Nonetheless, the “‘first wave’ of the phenomenological rediscovery of the emotions” (3) stopped abruptly in the wake of the political and social upheavals surrounding World War II. From then on, phenomenologists around the world, with few but significant exceptions (Stephan Strasser and Hermann Schmitz), devoted themselves to other subjects, perhaps feeling justified by a then widespread intellectual distrust of emotion research permeating all spheres of West-

ern society. Among the major proponents of the “second wave of phenomenological rediscovery of emotions” are all the contributors to this volume (25).

In the “Introduction” the editors also address the question concerning the main common aspects and the main points of contention among phenomenologists of emotions. While rightly stressing that “there is no single account that could be taken as a paradigm of a phenomenological conception” (10), they nevertheless believe in the possibility of identifying certain core theses concerning the nature of emotions that anyone dealing with the subject from a phenomenological perspective shall agree with. These are (10–12): irreducibility, first-person perspective, sociality, axiological considerations (values), normative considerations (appropriateness/authenticity), embodiment, enactiveness, personhood, intentionality, embeddedness, and consciousness.¹

On the other hand, the disagreements among phenomenologists of emotion seem to revolve around two main points of contention: the right understanding of the intentionality thesis and the intricate relation between emotions and values (13–16). The first gathers questions such as whether all types of affective phenomena share “the mark of the mental,” the relationship of foundation between emotions and objectifying acts (perception or imagination), and in what sense emotions should be regarded as intentional presentations of values. The second concerns troubles in singling out the true nature of values and value realism, and whether value-feelings belong to a distinct type of intentional act that should be contrasted with emotions properly speaking. Regarding the latter issue, the editors hint at a solution which consists in viewing “the phenomenological relation between emotions and values in terms of a double-aspect evaluative intentionality of emotions” (16). This means that feelings disclose not only the evaluative property of an object, but also how valuable that object is to me, thus revealing something about my core values as a person.

Among the outstanding contributions of Part I devoted to major figures of the phenomenological movement and their respective take on emotion, I would like to focus on James Jardine’s chapter (53–62). Jardine offers an exquisitely written overview of Husserl’s phenomenology of emotional life which spans from the *Logical Investigations* to *Ideas I*, and also includes a body of manuscripts from the Göttingen period recently published in *Husserliana XLIII/2* (Husserl, 2020).

In the *Fifth Logical Investigation* Husserl (1984, 402–10/2001, 107–11) addresses the question whether feelings (*Gefühle*) are intentional experiences. Husserl’s response is well known and consists of a reassessment of the Brentanian thesis that emotional acts are based on acts of presentation. Thus, beside non-intentional feelings (sensory feelings such as pleasure and pain), Husserl admits the existence of

¹ In fact, the editors commit a logical *faux pas* including the conscious character of emotions among both the major points of convergence (12) and the general disagreements (13) between phenomenologists. The same seems to apply to the intentionality thesis. However, in this case one should specify that all phenomenologists agree on the intentional character of *emotions*, but not all phenomenologists claim that all *affective phenomena* are intentional. In this regard, the editors draw attention to “two broad paradigms in the phenomenology of emotions: the affective-intentionalist paradigm, on the one hand, and the affective-bodily-impact or the bodily being-affected paradigm of New Phenomenology, on the other” (14). The confusion arises from the fact that “emotion” is used throughout the volume as “an umbrella-term, encompassing a vast range of diverse affective phenomena” (1).

feelings which are intentional, while specifying that their being-directed-at an object (i.e., their intentionality) depends on an underlying intentional act of presentation. Jardine proposes to see the relationship between intentional feeling and act of presentation as a sort of “incorporation” of the latter into the former (55). Accordingly, he locates “emotional intentionality” in “a multi-layered experiential act” including (a) an underlying presentation, (b) “an affectively determined modality of this presentation which draws upon the non-intentional feelings elicited by the object or situation,” and (c) a higher-order component of intentional feeling (ibid.). Non-intentional feelings are thus an inner component of the whole emotional act, along with the act of presentation and the intentional feeling. This means that being affectively directed towards x (i.e., experiencing an emotion or feeling something about x , whereby x is either an object or a situation) implies, according to Husserl, a presentation of x as well as a certain sensation of pleasure or displeasure arousing in the subject by being “exposed to,” “confronted with” x .

In contrast to his earlier account in the *Logical Investigations* which centered around the noetic aspects of feeling, in *Ideas I* Husserl turns to elucidating the noematic correlate of emotional acts. The latter correspond to what Husserl calls “the value” (Husserl, 2001, 64–5). Jardine keenly points out that, according to Husserl, values do not represent a sort of ideal entity or even specific axiological properties of the worldly objects and situations to which they relate; instead, they are “the concrete object as disclosed in the underlying act, but now also furnished with ‘new inherent noematic aspect’” (56). Differently stated, Husserl does not assume that feelings reveal otherwise imperceptible features of objects; it is rather that emotions disclose objects or situations as (dis)valuable. Fear, for instance, does not just inform about the threatening aspect of a situation, rather it discloses it as a threat.

Thus, all emotions involve an evaluation of the object toward which they are intentionally directed. Jardine characterizes, following Husserl, emotive evaluation as “a form of ‘position-taking’ [...] analogous to the element of doxic positing or ‘belief’” contained in perception (ibid.). This is correct, because at the origin of any kind of valence (*Geltung*)—whether doxic or emotional—there is, according to Husserl, a specific position-taking. It is worth noting that *Stellungnehmen*—the act of taking a position towards x —is neither completely passive nor completely active. Everything we (passively-receptively) encounter in the surrounding world solicits an affective reaction on our part. This validates Kevin Mulligan’s (2010) reading of Husserl for whom “[i]t is hard to deny that emotions are reactions, viz. have the character of responses” (234). It seems then that, according to both Mulligan and Jardine, Husserl would embrace a “reaction view” of emotions (see Zamuner 2015 and Helm’s chapter in the reviewed volume).

Jardine himself elaborates on this view drawing on recently published manuscripts from the Göttingen period (Husserl, 2020, 1–190, 263–507). Husserl argues here that emotions such as anger, joy, fear, and the like are lived through as ways in which we react to experienced objects (60). Jardine brings out how Husserl accounts for two key components of emotional responses: (1) an intentional feeling of liking or disliking directed at the object of emotion; and (2) “bodily feelings or a general ambience of corporeal arousal” (ibid.) felt by the subject of emotion. Thus, for Husserl emotions not only enable to apprehend objects as (dis)valuable, but also reveal what a

subject personally likes and dislikes, what (literally or metaphorically) moves them or what they are indifferent to, thus indirectly bringing to light the distinctive personality of the person having the emotion.

One aspect of Husserl's theory of emotions that unfortunately remains uncovered by Jardine's otherwise excellent overview, is the axiological considerations related to the phenomenology of affective experience developed by Husserl in the Freiburg period (1916–1938). Specifically, "love" plays a crucial role in Husserl's late Freiburg ethics as well as in his understanding of human communities (see Husserl's notion of *Liebesgemeinschaft*). It remains an open question whether Husserl developed an understanding of love that differs from or identifies with the main tenets of his theory of emotions from the Göttingen period.

Husserl's mature conception of the relationship between emotions and value receives attention instead in "Morality and Emotions" by John J. Drummond and Sonja Rinofner-Kreidl. The authors review three themes in moral phenomenology: the role played by emotions in the disclosure of moral value, moral motivation, and human well-being. All phenomenologists agree that emotions are essential vehicles of the moral value of situations, actions, characters, and emotions themselves. However, they disagree when it comes to determining the nature of value and the specific way in which emotions are revelatory of axiological properties. The prevailing alternative rests between Husserl's and Scheler's approaches. For Husserl, the value of the object is grounded in the object's non-axiological properties, while Scheler claims that intentional feelings directly apprehend the value independently of an experience of the object as bearing that value (289). By disclosing the values of certain (anticipated) actions, emotions also provide us with a normative guidance in practical contexts. The authors argue that the assessment of the moral significance of a particular emotion should always consider both the situation in which it occurs and the "balance between self-interest and other-directedness" brought about by this emotional experience (292). They further believe that empathy is at the root of all moral obligations, while respect and sympathy, both of which are based on empathy, form the emotional basis of morality. From the inherently intersubjective nature of these basic moral emotions, the authors infer that sociality plays a decisive role in human flourishing. They share in this respect Husserl's view, for whom every agent depends upon other subjects in her teleological striving for evidenced truth in all spheres of reason (293).

In her "Values, Norms, Justification and the Appropriateness of Emotions" Roberta De Monticelli discusses the sources of normativity within the realm of affective phenomena. As mentioned above, the phenomenological approach sees emotions strictly related to our value experience. But, for De Monticelli, conceiving of emotion as a kind of perception of values "oversimplifies things to the point of getting them wrong" (278). It is not a question whether the perceptual theory of emotions is right or wrong, but rather if it can be integrated into "a full-fledged phenomenology of emotions" (280). After signaling the vagueness and ambiguity of the concept of emotion in recent literature, De Monticelli identifies a central core of all affective phenomena, namely "feeling" intended as "a way of encountering reality under its axiological aspect" (281). Accordingly, a general theory of "pure feeling" (282) should lay the foundation for any phenomenological endeavor in the sphere of emo-

tional experience. This theory grounds on three major principles (281). (1) Feeling is literally a perception of the axiological qualities of things. At this level, the perceptual theory of emotion becomes integrated in the full-fledged phenomenology of feeling. (2) All affective phenomena are founded on, but not reducible to, feeling. Feeling denotes a sense of “being affected by” something; but this is not all that constitutes an affective phenomenon. For, according to De Monticelli, to feel an emotion is also to be “moved” to act in a certain way, so that all emotions essentially involve a “conative or action-motivating component” (ibid.). (3) Feelings are further characterized as a “self-revealing experience of the world” (283). In feeling, the subject experiences not only the valued presence of objects but is also aware of her own valued presence. Ultimately, since values have each one a different “depth” (284) according to a (Scherlerian) hierarchy of values, emotional self-awareness enables a person to disclose to themselves one’s own value.

Michela Summa’s chapter “Joy and Happiness” is an outstanding example of how phenomenological analysis can be fruitfully employed to untangle conceptual confusions. A major trend of interdisciplinary research on happiness identifies the latter with joy. By contrast, Summa assumes that happiness and joy can and must be distinguished due to their different phenomenological traits. Drawing on insights from both analytic philosophers (Robert Nozick, Philippa Foot) and phenomenologists (Stephan Strasser, Moritz Geiger, Edmund Husserl, Sara Ahmed), Summa traces the differences between joy and happiness in relation to temporality, self-realization, and ethical and social relevance (423). Concerning the temporal aspect, Summa observes, first, that joy is an episodic state of mind, while happiness refers to larger segments of one’s own life or even to one’s life as a whole. Second, joy is felt while experiencing the accomplishment of a process, whereas happiness only comes at the end and as a result of a process. Third, happiness implies an evaluative stance concerning one’s life as a whole. This dictates the characteristic temporality of happiness, which, while being experienced in the present, necessarily entails a reference to the past and an anticipation of the future (421). Concerning the other aspects, Summa notes that self-realization occurs in both joy and happiness but has respectively different meanings. In joy, self-realization is related to a sense of achievement and an increment of the power to act that accompany a certain experience (420). On the other hand, happiness’ self-realization is connected to both the assumption of responsibility for one’s own experience and the criteria of social acceptability and recognition that society imposes upon individuals (422).² The chapter deals further with the distinction between joy in ordinary sense (rejoicing) and deep joy. According to Summa, their difference cannot be established with reference to degrees of intensity but must be traced back to the meaningfulness of a specific content for a person’s life as well as to its specific temporality (420).

Every handbook inevitably entails a kind of performative contradiction. It aspires to cover all topics and authors of a particular discipline, but inevitably ends up making thematic choices. The editors of this handbook show a keen awareness of this general issue and declare to have excluded “some little discussed or almost unknown

² For a thorough examination of the phenomenon of happiness specifically in Husserl along the lines of Summa’s interpretation, see Cavallaro & Heffernan 2019.

but still important figures and their work” (20) such as the Munich phenomenologists and Pfänder-students Willy Haas, Karl Konstantin Löwenstein-Freudenberg, and Paul Kananow, but also more renowned figures such as Nicolai Hartmann, Hans Reiner, José Ortega y Gasset, Helmuth Plessner, Stephan Strasser, Michel Henry, Paul Ricœur, and Agnes Heller.

Some affective phenomena as well are only partly covered in the handbook “for reasons of space” (22). The ones mentioned by the editors are feelings of agency (Kananow), courage (Hartmann), laughing and crying (Plessner), feelings of powerlessness, frustration, malicious joy (*Schadenfreude*), feelings of belonging and exclusion, surprise, and curiosity. Another group of affective phenomena not mentioned by the editors, which receives little attention in the handbook but has attracted growing interest among phenomenologists in recent years, are the so-called fictional emotions.³

In sum, this handbook marks in every respect a notable achievement. On the one hand, it serves as an excellent guide for both graduate students and mature researchers; on the other hand, it points to new directions of inquiry that will surely be taken up by the next generation of scholars working on the phenomenology of emotion. Additionally, it should not be read merely as a snapshot of historical and current accounts of the phenomenology of affective experience, but as a genuine contribution to the trans- and interdisciplinary body of emotion research.

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³ In his chapter “Art and Emotion” Noël Carroll considers how artworks elicit emotions merely from the perspective of a phenomenological aesthetics, and without even mentioning the concept of fictional emotions. Instead, the problem of whether fictional emotions are genuine affective phenomena, and if so, what kind, is a recurrent theme in the following literature: Cavallaro 2019; Ferencz-Flatz, 2022a, 2022b; Rozzoni, 2022; Summa, 2019; Vendrell Ferran, 2022.

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