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P. M. S. HACKER ON EMOTIONS, PASSIONS, AND HUMAN NATURE*

Abstract. The paper is a discussion of P. M. S. Hacker, *The Passions: A Study of Human Nature* (2018). After a general presentation of the book I mostly focus on its first part, which deals with categories and concepts essential to the philosophy of the emotions. Next I pass on to two subsequent parts of the book devoted to particular emotions. After a brief overview I say more, by way of exemplification, on the chapter on love. I end with a final assessment.

Keywords: P. M. S. Hacker, Passions, Emotions, Human Nature.

This is an important book on emotions, one of the best I know, written by an outstanding authority on the philosophy of Wittgenstein[1]. To date it has not been – as far as I know – discussed at all; and even more curiously it still remains – as far as I am aware – disregarded by legions of philosophers of the emotions[2]. The book is the third of what since then has happily been completed as a tetralogy[3] devoted to Hacker's enquiry into human nature. The book's main body is divided into three almost equally long parts (each ca 130 pages) preceded by *Preface* and *Acknowledgments* and followed by an *Appendix* and *Index*. The book has no conclusion unless a half–page *Envoi* (p. 392) may be

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[1] Hacker published some 12 books on Wittgenstein and is currently an honorary professor at the Institute of Neurology at University College, London.

[2] A proviso: in this paper I may be doing more than it is usual to find in a comment. This is because Hacker's book is of the kind that I have been intending to write myself but I will not anymore for reasons I pass over. I hope that my enthusiasm will not distort my judgment in what follows.

[3] Vol. 1. *Human Nature: The Categorial Framework* (2007), vol. 2. *The Intellectual Powers: A Study of Human Nature* (2013) & vol. 4. *The Moral Powers: A Study of Human Nature* (2021).

taken as such[1]. There is no separate list of references[2]. With its 472 p. it is a quite long work; but because of its structure, divisions, helpful tables, lists, and diagrams[3], it is easy and pleasant to read. The first part is about the category emotion and theories of emotions, while the second and the third deal with particular emotions.

A characteristic feature of the book is that it contains much more clarification than argument proper. Hacker overviews a good number of issues, throws light on what is essential, and explains the sources of confusion in the current debate. He takes great trouble in putting into order what results from the current plethora of ideas in the philosophy of the emotions. More precisely he advances:

i) a conceptual ordering of the categories used in philosophical debate about the emotions[4]. This is welcome insofar as many times disagreements in the philosophy of the emotions have come from conceptual ambiguities. Hacker shows and explains when and why this occurs;

ii) clarifications by way of openness and avoidance of dogmatism. He shows how various approaches seem contradictory only because they privilege different points of view. Better than accepting some and rejecting others is to adopt an all–embracing perspective. This is because it may be said about many theories that they are right and that they are wrong, or better that they are partly right and partly wrong[5].

As for experiments, Hacker is cautious in referring to them insofar as they cope with only one kind or one aspect of affectivity[6]. Furthermore, Hacker uses some categories that usually fall outside traditional Anglo–Saxon philosophy[7]. Finally, he refers to names, in my view important, which are frequently neglected in emotion research (e.g. Pascal, Schopenhauer, S. Kierkegaard, Max Scheler, Nicolai Hartmann). This also makes his book valuable since he masters

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[1] It is reasonable to think so since Hacker concludes it as follows: *This, however, is a tale for another book, which will examine human nature and its relationship to the good of man; human character, personality, and temperament and their relationship to good and evil; the nature of happiness and of a good human life; and the place of death in human life* (p. 392). While in his *Preface* Hacker was unconfident of completing the last part of his tetralogy (see p. xvi), it has now been completed.

[2] Full references are given in footnotes, but not always, e.g. Stoics (pp. 115–116). All subsequent references when only the pagination is given are to: P. M. S. Hacker, *The Passions: A Study of Human Nature*.

[3] And the titles of paragraphs, which seems to be much of practice in 19th century, extremely helpful, now abandoned.

[4] See pp. xi–xii: *Clarity about the concepts of the emotions is not only a contribution to the better understanding of human nature* [...] *this book is not aimed solely at philosophers, who are concerned with the conceptual problems examined here. It is also aimed at psychologists and cognitive neuroscientists, whose conceptual confusions and unclarities are subjected to detailed analysis* [...].

[5] See e.g. C. A. Mace, *Emotions and the Category of Passivity*, pp. 141–142, J. Prinz, *Which Emotions are Basic?*, p. 86 & R. Zaborowski, *Nicolai Hartmann's Approach to Affectivity ...* , p. 170.

[6] See p. 38: [...] *no amount of experimental psychology or neuroscience can explain and illuminate the role the manifold emotions* actually *play in the life of any given individual human being* [...].

[7] E.g. *a work of/a study* in philosophical anthropology (of Kantian origin; Hacker is aware that it *is not common in Anglo–Saxon philosophy*) (p. xv), *axiology*, *a non–formal*, *material* (when introducing it (p. 8) Hacker uses inverted commas (*'material'*), but then goes on without them, e.g. p. 10 etc.), *existential decision* (after Sartre).

and recognizes what are often referred to, and contrasted, as analytic and continental traditions.

Preface (pp. xi–xvi) opens with a generous claim that human passions have been studied since the pre–Socratics[1]. Hacker displays his strong theses: emotions are an intrinsic part of human condition and, therefore, any research in human nature has to analyze them seriously. Before we are given any systemic distinctions (see p. 6), Hacker uses *passions*, *emotions* and *feelings* interchangeably. He also – from the very first paragraph – makes the following clear:

i) people are guided by emotions – but often, not always;

ii) emotions guide people towards (and are connected with) the good on one occasion and the bad on another occasion (which opposes both those who believe emotions to have always or mostly a negative role, and those who believe them to have always or mainly a positive role);

iii) people's ability to control emotions, to manifest them, and to be motivated by them is constitutive of their character;

iv) human emotions are typically supported by reasons – if not, they are either pathological (feeling jealous while being aware that one's partner is faithful or being angry for no reason) or absurd when the agent does not understand their grammar (e.g. when one claims to be proud of *someone or something with whom or which* one's sense of identity is [not] entwined (p. 141) or thinks of a friendship as not being reciprocated).

Hacker makes it clear also that his topic is exclusively human emotions, i.e. emotions as they appear in human communities, human cultures and, above all, are possible thanks to the mastery of language[2]. Anyone who has doubts about the accuracy and justifiability of such a divide should consider second–order emotions as well as emotions with objects in the past or in the future, or with abstract and universal objects, all of them unknown in non–human animals. The reader is finally informed that Hacker will draw abundantly on Western literature. First, poets and writers are, he says, [t]*he deepest students of the role of the emotions in human life*. Secondly, his limiting himself to Western culture is determined *partly through ignorance* [of Eastern literature]*, and partly because the conceptions of individual emotions that* [he] *chose to examine are conceptions manifest in Western culture, problematized in Western philosophy, and described and articulated in the literature of the West* (p. xiii).

Part I (*Sketching the Landscape*, pp. 1–128) contains four chapters. Chapter 1 (*The Place of the Emotions among the Passions*) is a tour de force insofar as Hacker takes into consideration all emotion–related or emotion–involving categories, viz. emotions, feelings, passions, affections, sentiments, appetites,

[1] Who normally are not considered for having an interest in the human passions. Even – a bit bizarrely – Hacker seems to do so: in the first sentence of ch. 4 (see p. 83) the earliest philosopher he mentions is Plato. For the defence of this position see R. Zaborowski, *Sur le sentiment chez les Présocratiques*. See also R. Zaborowski, *Les sentiments chez les Préplatoniciens et les modernes ...* .

[2] This is not to deny that some emotions are, or are more than others, rooted *in our animal nature* (p. 235). This is the case of anger, *one of the most common of human emotions* (p. 232). In such case, *it is not surprising that human languages have a rich vocabulary to express, report, describe, and evaluate the various manifestations and expressions of anger* (p. 235).

obsessions, urges, attitudes, agitations, moods, dispositional states, temperament, and character. He takes time elucidating their interdependence. *Feelings* is the most general category, and includes disparate phenomena (physical sensations, tactile perceptions, cogitative feelings, attitudes, which include sentiments, subjective axiological judgments, and emotional attitudes)[1]. In traditional parlance feelings were passions of the soul, a category including appetites (natural and acquired), obsessions, felt desires (urges, cravings, and impulses), agitations, and affections (moods and emotions) (see p. 6: Figure 1.1.). Hacker discusses all these terms with a special focus on feelings as affections, i.e. agitations, moods, and emotions. He remarks that affections often occur in blends, and that they evolve one into another, e.g. emotion into mood and vice versa, one emotion into another, etc. This is to say that affections are dynamic. For this reason, they are often better *qualified by 'may be' and 'for the most part'* (p. 14)[2]. While agitations are short–term, moods may be genuinely durable. Hacker's discussion of moods is more detailed. He considers not only the question of their having or not having objects, but also their relation to temperament and character (moods' names are sometimes names of temperaments, e.g. cheerful, melancholic) as well as their reasons and causes. Even richer is the discussion of emotions. They can be classified in various ways. Typically they include these: fear, anger, gratitude, resentment, hatred, indignation, envy, jealousy, pity, compassion, grief, hope, excitement, pride, shame, humiliation, regret, remorse, guilt, and love.

Hacker does not provide a definition of emotion but characterizes it instead as a non–voluntary response to what is perceived, known, or believed to be important (see p. 24). What is perceived, known or believed as indifferent or – if I understand it correctly – what is not perceived or known or believed at all so that it is non–existent for the agent, and a fortiori indifferent and unimportant and hence not cared about, does not give rise to an emotion[3]. Although Hacker alludes to the axiological dimension of emotion he does not analyze this dimension in detail. Hence the exact relation between a value and emotion from the formal point of view remains unclear. Instead Hacker lists seven features which distinguish emotions from appetites (e.g. emotions have formal objects and a cognitive dimension), and he distinguishes emotions in view of their duration (temporary (momentary and episodic), and persistent (enduring)[4]).

[1] A reader might like to know how the classification that follows would obtain in other language, given that discourse about emotions is not exclusive to English. The only remark Hacker makes in this regard is this: *It should be noted that not all languages share such a ramifying and heterogeneous notion of feelings* (p. 4, n. 1).

[2] ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ (*for the most part*) is an Aristotelian qualification. See his *Ethica Eudemia* 1220b13 (mentioned by Hacker p. 24, n. 17).

[3] And conversely: *Not to care about something is to be indifferent to it* (p. 25). This is in this sense, I think, that Stoics theorized about *apatheia*: leaving aside all what is indifferent for becoming virtuous.

[4] Hacker's claim that [p]ersistent *emotions lack*[ing] *'genuine duration'* (p. 31) are not states reminds Scheler's that purely psychic and spiritual feelings are not states. See M. Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics ...* , pp. 342–343. Hacker refers to Scheler's magistral work later, i.e. p. 152, n. 2. See also R. Zaborowski, *Max Scheler's model of stratified affectivity ...* & R. Zaborowski, *Affectivity in Its Relation to Memory*.

Hacker's remarks about the misleading expression *feeling an emotion*, which *inclines us to ascribe a false quasi–substantiality to what is felt when we feel an emotion* (p. 33), redirects the discourse on emotion onto the right track. As it happens, emotions are often analyzed in the abstract or in isolation, as if they were like chemical elements, whereas they are rather indissociable from one another[1], from other mental phenomena (see e.g. p. 35: *compositional complexity*) and from the subject and his life (see e.g. p. 35: *contextual or narrative complexity*). This point is all the more important because it is rare to meet this kind of contextualization in emotion handbooks and monographs, let alone in papers. Rather, these distinctions are often neither discussed nor explained, but taken for granted as if they were obvious or unimportant while in fact they are not. This is why, as Hacker is right to suggest, a substantial part of disagreement between philosophers constitutes or derives from conceptual confusion.

In Chapter 2 (*The Analytic of the Emotions I*) the reader is confronted with the following topics: representation of emotions, the language of emotion, expressions and manifestations of emotions, and, very briefly, emotions' relation with cognition and will. First, Hacker touches upon his claim that literature is the best source for the study of affect. In his view, literary authors are *the greatest students of human emotions, who attain the deepest insights by depiction of the particular* (p. 38)[2]. Though Hacker does not say this explicitly, I take it that he has in mind only eminent poets, dramatists, and novelists; this may be inferred from his examples (Greek tragedy, Shakespeare, Proust, and the like). If, however, one wondered what makes an author count as eminent, a clue may be provided by a paraphrase of Chesterton: a good writer is one who represents his hero's, not his own, emotions[3]. Hacker also alludes to visual arts and music, but without going into detail about how it is that they represent emotion. He simply states that artists present emotion also in art, provoking it in the audience.

Then Hacker moves on to how we speak about emotions, i.e. the grammar of emotion words and the intentionality of the emotions. He insists on the misleading character of abstract nouns, and argues for replacing them by verbal, adjectival, and adverbial formations because these do not reify the emotions and do not refashion emotions into causal agents[4]. Avoiding the dichotomy of inner vs outer is a corollary of Hacker's strong thesis that [h]*uman beings* [...] *are*

[1] See R. Zaborowski, *Revisiting Mixed Feelings*.

[2] Obviously, this is why Hacker begins with Homer. Hacker's claim about poets' and writers' profound study of the emotions may remind one of Harold Macmillan's answer to a young politician whom he took not to have experienced emotion and to want to get at least some idea of what it feels like: *I suggest you read a good novel.* (I take this from: P. Goldie, *The Emotions: A Philosophical Exploration*, p. 19.)

[3] Originally G. K. Chesterton, *Heretics*, p. 107, said: *A good novel tells us the truth about its hero; but a bad novel tells us the truth about its author.*

[4] For more on that see pp. 74–77 where Hacker expands on four misunderstandings: reification of faculties, deformation of the faculty of reason (which should not be restricted to deductive reasoning only), confusing the relationship between reason, reasoning, and reasons, and dichotomizing reason and passions as, respectively, always right and always wrong. In consequence, contrasting *cold* reason with *hot* passion is a caricature of human being's abilities.

neither a psycho–physical unity of mind and body, nor a cerebral–somatic synthesis of brain and body (p. 42; see also p. 409: *we are not a unity of mind and body, nor are we a psycho–physical unity. We are human beings, a distinctive, and uniquely language–using, animal species.*[1]). The subject of emotion is the human being as a whole and emotions belong to human beings, not to their minds or their brains[2]. Hence it is better to replace such poor and misleading expressions as *'*[a]*nger clouds judgement'* (not being of the same kind as *'LSD causes hallucinations'*, p. 42) with accurate description of the facts, in this case that, when angry, people are inclined to misjudgment. This would be a correct way of expressing the fact, and by expressing it correctly we place ourselves in a better position to view the phenomena correctly.

Next, after distinguishing between various accusatives of emotion verbs (object–accusatives, nominalization–accusatives, and infinitive–accusatives), and making some remarks about the learning of emotion words, Hacker addresses the question of the manifestation and the expression of emotions. Both differ from neural/physiological and somatic associations. The first includes facial, vocal, gestural and postural manifestations, the second utterances and actions (provided they are emotionally motivated). Hacker cautions against identifying the relation between the expression or manifestation of an emotion and the emotion expressed or manifested in terms of a *sign*. Expression or manifestation is rather the form an emotion takes or may take. Accordingly, an emotion is misascribed when an expression or manifestation of it is misinterpreted. For instance, not only may one weep from sorrow *or* from joy, but also one may pretend to feel what one does not feel[3]. As for facial expressions, we should be aware that they are particularly difficult to understand: biological and anthropological facts as well as their context are at issue, not to speak about conventions, culture, and social modifications as well as their further determinants. Since *feeling an emotion is not a form of behaviour*, it is often the case that one can *feign an emotion one does not feel and feel an emotion one does not exhibit* (p. 56, see also pp. 124–125)[4].

Finally, Hacker considers the partly voluntary (and partly non–voluntary) character of manifestations and expressions of emotions, their authenticity, spontaneity and sincerity[5]. He also reiterates that the object of an emotion has

[1] In a similar vein when writing on love: *if it is a state at all, then it is a* state of a human being, *of a person* (p. 299, but p. 303: love *is not a mental state* nor *a state of a person*) and: *Like other emotions* [...] [i]*t is an attribute of human beings as wholes* (p. 304).

[2] This is again remindful of Aristotle, *De anima* 408b12–15 (quoted by Hacker on p. 87).

[3] Hacker says that [o]*ne cannot deceitfully* manifest *an emotion, only deceitfully* mimic *being angry, affectionate, or sorrowful* (pp. 50–51). Alas, Hacker does not consider actors' skills in this respect. He is certainly right that [t]*he love one shows* is *the love one feels – one cannot show love and not feel it; one can only pretend to show love that one does not feel* (p. 51). But more could have been said about the difference between manifesting love and pretending to love, and how evident the divide is.

[4] Note that one may weep from no emotion at all as when cutting an onion. Or remember Charles I of England who wore two shirts on the day of his execution in January, so that any trembling because of cold would not be misperceived as a trembling through fear.

[5] See R. Zaborowski, *Is the Control of Emotion Possible?*

to correspond to the formal characteristics of this emotion. For instance a guilt persisting *despite one's knowing that it is groundless (e.g. survivor guilt)* (p. 57) is irrational or pathological (also p. 79: *pathological cases*). Hacker ends this chapter with a claim that, without being themselves faculties, emotions engage with a number of faculties (e.g. axiological judgement, and reproductive and cogitative imagination).

Chapter 3 (*The Analytic of the Emotions II*) starts with a claim that the understanding of the emotions of others is not conditioned by having felt them. Rather than by analogy, they are known by apprehending another's behaviour in a context which makes it intelligible. However, a misunderstanding of the context and, as a result, a misinterpretation of an emotion are possible. But from the fact that emotions and their manifestations are opaque and sometimes even constitutionally indeterminate one should not infer that there is no possibility of complete certainty in other cases. One cannot be helped by looking into one's *foro interno* since doing so would not dissipate emotions' constitutional uncertainty which is, as such, a *part of the human condition* (pp. 62–63)[1]. This is why human life is replete with mutual misunderstandings that may happen to have regrettable consequences that make human life even more tragic. Hacker expands on the relation between emotions, their self–ascription and self–knowledge. He is rather optimistic about people's capacity to comprehend what they feel, although he acknowledges uncertainty in borderline cases and ignorance in the case of self–deception[2].

Hacker is sensitive to *large differences between different emotions* that thwart generalization. A similar awareness proves promising insofar as in current research the conceptual diversity of various emotions is often either obliterated or used as an argument against emotion's being a natural kind[3]. Next, Hacker argues for emotions' potential rationality and reasonableness, which enable us to say that they should be felt – as Aristotle excellently tells us – for right reasons, at right occasions and to the right degree, and directed at right objects. Consequently, emotion is out of place when it is inappropriate in its object, reason, intensity, manner of expression or manifestation, occasion when it is expressed or manifested, its duration, character, motivational force, motivation of action, or its arising at all (if it be better avoided). For instance, as remarked by Aristotle, emotion is inappropriate not only when it is too strong but also when it is too weak. Any disproportionality is a mark of unreasonableness and any gross disproportionality is a mark of irrationality. But since emotions and their manifestations are, partly at least[4], controllable, they are subject to an education that is feasible given *an open heart* and *a critical mind* (p. 74).

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[1] Hacker rightly notes that an agent *is not* an authority *on his own anger* (p. 252) – I think this could be extended to all emotions. And he adds: *the idea of first–person 'authority' is a philosophical myth or misnommer*.

[2] I believe it is optimistic because common life and therapeutical practice show a recurrent misnaming of emotions.

[3] For example P. E. Griffiths, *What Emotions Really Are* ... & M. S. Brady, *Emotion. The Basics*.

[4] See R. Zaborowski, *Is the Control of Emotion Possible?*

Lastly, Hacker turns to the place of emotions in human life. Apart from emotions shared with animals, humans are equipped with more plastic forms of emotional response, not only expressed in behaviour but also communicated in language. Hacker applies the qualification *negative* to emotions but in a slightly different sense than previously. While before (see p. 22) it was a matter of *prefer*[ring] *not to be subjected to them*, now by *negative* he means not only emotions *that one would prefer not to feel* (p. 79) but also *emotions which are deleterious and detrimental to human felicity*[1] (p. 79)[2]. These are, first of all, excessive or deficient feelings[3].

The chapter ends with a section on Aristotle's doctrine of the mean. For Aristotle emotions often considered as negative, e.g. anger, are not negative as such but only if they are too strong or – equally – too weak. This, in turn, means that in some kind of situations appropriate emotions are the correct response[4]. The reason why emotions are deemed negative time and again is that for an emotion there is only one way of being right and many ways of being wrong. Hacker agrees with Aristotle's statement that emotions' intelligibility is better conceived through their history and occasion and that they, in turn, make *intelligible the agent's subsequent thoughts, feelings, and action* (p. 82).

The last chapter of this Part (*The Dialectic of the Emotions*) opens with two observations regarding the history of the philosophy of the emotions. First Hacker recognizes that it starts with Plato and Aristotle, Epicureans and Stoics[5]. Second, he points to a striking remark made by Descartes at the beginning of his *The Passions of the Soul* disparaging the views of his predecessors on emotions[6]. In what follows Hacker presents and analyzes Descartes' account of the emotions, and compares it with Aristotle's. Aristotle is important insofar as

[1] This may not be correct. Hacker himself gives the example of shame – unpleasant but which is *a corollary of having, and having internalized, standards of moral and social behaviour* (p. 173).

[2] These are not the only senses of *negative*. See R. Zaborowski, *On So–Called Negative Emotions*.

[3] Compare Plato, *Phaedo* 83b8. See R. Zaborowski, *On the Relevance of Plato's View on Affectivity …* .

[4] Hacker goes too far in saying that *all emotions come in triplets of excess, deficiency, and propriety* (p. 81). Aristotle is clear that not οὐδὲ πᾶν πάθος τὴν μεσότητα (*Ethica Nicomachea* 1107a9). One of examples is φθόνος (ill–will/malice/envy/jealousy). Hence he makes an error, at least in Aristotle's eyes, when positing a mean for jealousy (see p. 228), unless he takes jealousy to be totally different from φθόνος in this regard (see p. 194: *Neither* phthonos *nor* zelos *means the same as 'jealousy', although either, in certain contexts, can be so translated*).

[5] It is hard to appreciate the role of Plato. Hacker refers to him almost never in the first part but this remark modifies the picture (more is said on Plato in *Appendix*, pp. 406–410: *Plato on love*). It would be interesting to learn more about it since the role of Plato in the history of emotions is variously assessed. See R. Zaborowski, *Some remarks on Plato on emotions*. On another occasions (p. 259, also p. 77) Hacker subscribes, as is often the case, to the inaccurate reading of Plato's model of the charioteer. See also R. Zaborowski, *Two Neglected Details in Plato's Chariot Allegory* & R. Zaborowski, *Plato's* Phaedrus *253e5–255a1 Revisited*. Also, one may wonder why among Stoics there are only Latin names. Earlier, p. 79, Hacker approaches the annoying question of *apatheia* and *eupatheia* in the Stoics (see also p. 115). But he does not explain how a freedom from passions on the one hand and *feelings of joy, generosity, and affection* (p. 79) on the other can be reconciled otherwise than by saying that *not even the Stoics* [...] *thought that all passions were evil*. See R. Zaborowski, *Clément d'Alexandrie et Origène sur les émotions …* , pp. 263–267 & R. Zaborowski, *On So–Called Negative Emotions*, p. 144.

[6] Descartes' claim is unfair and unjust, and *contemptuous* (p. 84). To mention one point: in his conclusion Descartes arrives at a much similar position to Aristotle's, to wit *metropatheia* view, i.e. that [...] *they* [i.e. passions] *are all intrinsically good, and that all we have to avoid is their misuse or their excess* [...] (*The Passions of the Soul*, art. 211, transl. Bennett). See also R. Zaborowski, *On So–Called Negative Emotions*, p. 145.

he avoids a category mistake (mereological fallacy) of reifying mind or soul as a seat of emotions. Aristotle in *De anima* said that this is not the soul that *pities, learns or thinks but the man with his soul* (p. 87)[1]. There follow comparisons with Aquinas and Augustine (who, like Descartes, was a victim of the mereological fallacy), and critical discussion of Descartes' view as lacking coherence and overlooking the intentionality of emotions. This last neglect impeded the distinctions between the cause of an emotion and its object[2]. Next come Locke and Hume, who presupposed the intelligibility of a private language, a conception to which, as may be expected, Hacker is hostile. He gives three arguments against a possibility of private ostensive definition, but I am not certain if it is at all (or similarly) applicable at all levels of analysis. The category emotion and the category of genera of emotion, say fear, love or joy, are two different things and an individual occurrence of a feeling is yet a third one, even more distinct, especially if it is agreed that two occurrences may be rarely experienced identically. For instance, while confusion in using the category of emotion and the category of a genus of emotion is a domain of theorists and is due to different conceptual approaches (i.e. what is meant by emotion as family name (i.e. emotion and not thought for instance), or fear as genus as distinguished from love as genus or joy as genus), a permanent difficulty in *interpret*[ing] *each other's emotions and emotional responses* (p. 63) stems from [t]*he constitutional indeterminacy of the emotions, of their depth and authenticity* (p. 62). I am not certain either if Hacker is not too optimistic when stating that [w]*e know how to use such* [i.e. 'angry', 'jealous', 'grateful'] *words correctly* [...] (p. 95)[3]. I would think this is questionable since we constantly witness misunderstandings in common speech and in academic discourse where there is no agreement as to which way of using an emotion word is the correct one.

There follows a discussion of the James – Lange theory. Although this is not purely intellectualist, and takes into account somatic perturbations and agitations, it has several flaws; among others, it does not work for persistent emotions, it confuses the cause and the object of an emotion, and it puts too much stress on bodily and visceral changes which may not by accompanied by an emotion[4]. Then Damasio's 'somatic marker theory' is criticized because it fails to grasp the category of emotion properly. In particular, it misidentifies, or too strongly identifies, somatic changes with emotion. This is a mistake because, on the one hand, there are changes (e.g. sea–sickness) which are not emotions and, on the other, there are emotions without perturbations (e.g. love of an abstract value). Next Hacker analyzes Darwin's and Ekman's evolutionary

[1] Hacker is, generally, Aristotelian in spirit. See e.g. p. 256: *Aristotle sapiently insisted that it is not the* psuchē *that feels emotions, but the human being as a whole*. Aristotle is the most referred philosopher in the book.

[2] E.g. while the cause of fear is a noise, its objects is what is associated with or provoked by this noise, e.g. an aggressor.

[3] See R. Zaborowski, *Can language deal with emotions?*

[4] As Hacker says, [w]*e may grant James that a purely intellectualist account of the emotions is inadequate. But it does not follow that the remedy to this defect is to identify the emotions with the 'perception' of bodily changes* (p. 103).

account. Since it restricts emotions to momentary and very short–term emotional perturbations, it omits the slowly evolving emotions that are distinctive of human beings[1].

Finally and most importantly, Hacker tackles the issue of basic emotions. This is a 14–page section worth reading separately for itself. Hacker starts with the Stoics – which may not be the best option, all the more because his preferred author is Cicero[2] – and their two pairs of emotions directed at present or future good and present or future evil. Next Hacker mentions Augustine and, to a larger extent, Aquinas[3]. He mentions also early modern philosophers (Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza and Locke), and then contemporary scientists and psychologists, to show that they adopt *different sets of basic emotions according to their concerns and the research methods available to them* (p. 119). It is interesting to see that the range of number of basic emotions in psychologists does not differ from that given by philosophers (min. 3 in Spinoza and max. 11 in Aquinas). Hacker considers the question of the number of basic emotions unsolvable as long as there is no consensus on what an emotion is. Moreover, there is a conceptual obstacle to determining what are basic emotions insofar as *basic* is *a relative rather than absolute notion* (p. 122)[4]. In consequence, Hacker regards the issue of basic emotions futile. According to him, supposing that all emotions may be reduced to a subset of emotions is naive because there are several ways to proceed. For instance developmental, evolutionary, and cognitive psychologists understand *basic emotions* differently[5].

Part II (*Human, All Too Human*, pp. 129–264 with ch. 5–9) and *Part III* (*The Savings Graces: Love, Friendship, and Sympathy*, pp. 265–392, ch. 10–12) are about particular emotions, in Hacker's words: *a selection of individual emotions* (p. xiv). The selection is the following: pride, arrogance, and humility (ch. 5), shame, embarrassment, and guilt (ch. 6), envy (ch. 7), jealousy (ch. 8)[6], and anger (ch. 9), then love (ch. 10), friendship (ch. 11), and sympathy and empathy (p. 12). Certainly a choice was unavoidable. But to say that [i]*t was guided partly by philosophical considerations, and partly by my own puzzle-*

[1] Ekman's move of classifying long–lasting emotions as emotional attitudes and emotional plots is brightly discussed by Hacker on pp. 114–115.

[2] This is particularly unfortunate insofar as – Hacker is aware of it – *Cicero translated the Greek* pathos *as* perturbatio (p. 115, n. 30) and – which is even worse – [h]*e held that the Greek* pathos *signified distemper or disease*, which is a mistranslation in this context. Remember that in what precedes Hacker has more than once objected to reducing emotions to perturbations.

[3] Hacker relies on P. King's two papers (*Aquinas on Emotions* (2012) & *Emotions is Medieval Thought* (2009)) rather than on R. Miner's monograph *Thomas Aquinas on the Passions* (2009).

[4] I am not sure if this is always correct. As for emotions, *basic* is referred to what is not reducible to other/s emotions. See Hacker, p. 189: *Both* [i.e. envy and jealousy] *are* complex blends *of further emotions*. Yet on the other hand, it is true that if we consider emotions by genera, say, joy, sorrow, fear, etc., it may be hard to determine which species of joy, sorrow and fear, if any, is basic for the whole genus. See R. Zaborowski, *Feeling or Thought – Both or Neither?*

[5] But if emotions are too complex and if *there are manifold senses in which an emotion may be deemed to be basic or non–basic* (p. 128), one may wonder if they form a natural class and/or what the category emotion applies to.

[6] Nothing is said on compersion. See R. de Sousa, *How to Think Yourself Out of Jealousy*.

ment and curiosity (p. xiv) may seem to be a rather weak rationale. What is the kind of philosophical consideration to leave out, say, joy or fear, while including empathy which [f]*or most part* [...] *is not an emotion at all* (p. 388, see also p. 392: *empathy is not an emotion but a form of understanding*; see also p. 345: *friendship is a relationship, not an emotion*)? Be it as it is, it is impossible to present and analyze here all the rich material Hacker conveys in these two Parts. I think it is safe to say that any of his eight chapters could be discussed at length in a separate paper. I would especially wish to comment on friendship, and to discuss Hacker's claim that *friendship may wax and wane* (p. 330)[1]. In addressing the particular emotions he selected, Hacker draws on classic authors (most often on Homer, Greek tragedy, J. Austen, Dante, Dickens, Dostoevsky, G. Eliot, V. Hugo, W. Somerset Maugham, Proust, Shakespeare, Tolstoy, A. Trollope[2]), and also on iconography and, in some chapters, on music (for the full list see *Index* (pp. 438–451)). All these chapters discuss the following issues: conceptual intricacy and distinctions of vocabulary, temporal dimension of a particular emotion, its motivational force and its evaluation by various authors, connective analysis, objects of a particular emotion, its forms and varieties (e.g. being ashamed of vs being ashamed for, feeling shame vs feeling ashamed, etc.), expression and manifestation of a particular emotion. All chapters have no concluding section with most important ideas taken together as resulting from the chapter.

By way of exemplification of how these chapters of Hacker could be discussed, I will go into ch. 10 (*Love*). I have chosen it because it is the longest (almost 60 pages long, to which a 44–page long *Appendix*, also on *Love*, may be added, plus several passages in ch. 11 on *Friendship* where Hacker compares love and friendship and also speaks about *friendship–love*). I pick it also because it deals with a phenomenon that is both controversial and one of the most important for our humanity[3]. Further, presenting Hacker's discussion of love is important for assess Hacker's overall approach to affectivity, for the reason that love is unknown in non–human animals even if [t]*he manifold phenomena of love* [...] *are rooted in biological features of human beings* [...] *grow out of these biological grounds* (p. 267). Accordingly, studying love is, in Hacker's eyes, particularly useful in order to grasp human nature because love is what distinguishes human beings from other animals.

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[1] Generally, I think, Hacker lowers requirements for friendship and he speaks of cases which are friendship but only nominally or derivatively, say such as an attachment, attraction or acquaintanceship. He ridicules *allos ego* paradigm of friendship (see p. 350) and he laments that genuine (in Aristotle: *primary* (ἁπλῶς)) friendship is singularly rare (see pp. 346–347, p. 352). But this is needless; for since it is permanent, it *happens* to be rare (the point remarked by Socrates at e.g. Plato's *Lysis* 212a4–6), even if rarity is not *a conceptual or grammatical feature of friendship* (p. 345).

[2] T. Mann's is quoted only *Felix Krull* which may be a pity given how much of his work (e.g. *The Transposed Heads*) is centred on friendship analyzed in a way which would have, it seems to me, raised some objections to Hacker's analysis of friendship.

[3] See e.g. p. 319: *Given that loving another person can be transformative and life–enhancing, it is natural that we should see it as the most important of human emotions.* Earlier, p. 22, Hacker identified love as *paradigmatic in one sense,* [...] *atypical in another*.

The first thing to remark is that it is not clear why love, friendship and sympathy are treated in three separate chapters unlike, say, shame, embarrassment and guilt (ch. 6). Is the affinity between the former greater than between the latter? Yet in the chapter on friendship the theme of love is recurrent (e.g. pp. 329–330 & pp. 334–335). Consequently, the division into chapters should not be taken here as corresponding to genera of emotions.

Hacker recognizes that there are different forms, conceptions, and ways of thinking about love. Not all of them *are equally conducive to human flourishing and felicity* [...] *no one of them is* uniquely *superior to all others* (p. 267). Importantly, Hacker does not construct his own definition of love but instead belittles existing definitions as unsatisfactory: [t]*here is no analytic definition of love that captures in its net the use of the word* (p. 269). For instance, love cannot be defined as *steady will for the good of the person loved* (p. 269) because such a definition does not include love for God. This exemplifies, as it seems to me, that here, and even more in his subsequent examples, Hacker is too inclusive. Is love for God love in the sense of emotion/passion indeed? Or is it rather a way of speaking while instead it is an attitude and engagement? Does a young child really *love* his parents, or do we rather use this term to cover the whole of his sentiments towards his parents of which the most important are probably dependence and gratefulness? And so on and so forth[1]. From the examples that Hacker adduces, it is patent that he accepts too uncritically[2] any case in which the occurring experience is called *love*[3], as if he were forgetting that the subject may not be an authority on how best to label her experience. This produces a large panorama of love that covers cases that it is hard to place under the umbrella of a single term. This looks, to some extent and in some sections, more of a socio–cultural approach to what is called *love* than of a philosophical enquiry into the essence of love.

Yet this is only a superficial aspect of the chapter. Hacker enriches it with a number of acute and philosophically important claims. The crucial one is that love is an attribute of rational and language–using beings who conceive of it *as* imposing moral demands *upon those bound by ties of love* (pp. 272–273). These features certainly narrow an otherwise too inclusive concept of love, for they rule out some objects as potential objects of love (gods, parents (by young child)) as well as sexual desire. As for love of nature, landscape and the like, *love* probably stands for an admiration of whatever it may be. There are a number of phenomena that may and in fact often are taken for love. These are

[1] See p. 276: [...] *it is entirely natural to speak of loving things to which one is thus attracted or attached, for one values them, does not wish to part with them, and takes care of them*.

[2] I do not see why Catullus' *I hate and I love you* (see p. 283) should be evidence of the co–occurrence of love and hatred rather than of a poetic way of speaking by Catullus. If it be the former, it should be revealed how this is possible. Hacker simply asserts that [a]*s has already been noted* (sic)*, it is perfectly possible both to love and to hate the same person at the same time* (p. 293). See R. Zaborowski, *Revisiting Mixed Feelings*, pp. 214–215.

[3] Descartes observes that not only *a good father's* [passion] [who] *regards them* [i.e. his children] *as other* himself*s, and seeks their good as he does his own, or even more assiduously* but equally *a brutish man's* [passion] *for a woman he wants to rape* (*The Passions of the Soul*, art. 82, transl. Bennett) is called *love*.

attraction, attachment, care, reverence, wanting, admiration, strong liking, idealization.

According to Hacker what is central to all forms of loving is *the subjective* importance *(i) of the object of love, and (ii) of one's loving it* (p. 276). I think that the latter may explain why the object of love is not replaceable, e.g. a beautiful person by even a more beautiful person. I suppose that at the very beginning of the love story it should and would, in point of fact, be replaceable if all love is directed at is the beauty. Imagine two persons similar or identical with the only difference being that one is the more beautiful. But then in the middle of the love story what matters a lot is the second factor: one's loving and its history. This is all the more true if, as Hacker remarks, love develops. The more its history is complex the more, it seems, it gets intertwined with the value of the object loved[1].

Love's intricate nature is manifest in that, on the one hand, it is a passion (p. 299: *not an action*) and as such cannot be initiated or stopped at will, and, on the other, it *is not a state that one passively enjoys*. [...] *It has to be sustained, fostered, and cultivated by expression, action, and attention* (p. 287, see also p. 330: [...] *it is not wholly beyond one's control* [...] *One may stifle one's nascent feelings and avoid any further engagement* and p. 322: [Love] *is in the hands of the lovers*). If so, love is an active affective phenomenon, unlike being loved, which is a passive one[2].

Hacker denies that any formal object of love may be given, especially if we suppose that, as Plato stated, *the formal object of ideal love is the Idea of Beauty* (p. 309). He argues that ugly persons may happen to be loved (see p. 409) and, inversely, one could add, there are beautiful persons who happen to be not loved. But I wonder if ugly persons are loved qua ugly. It may be that they are loved for another reason, or else may not be considered by their lovers to be ugly. In any case, if Hacker is right, then either love is not an emotion (since it is not accountable for in terms of its formal object) or the thesis that emotions are characterizable by their formal object is false.

Another important point made by Hacker is that exclusivity and possessiveness in love are correctly understood not as an actual possession but as a commitment (see pp. 320–321). When Hacker avers that [i]*t is life–enhancing in depth rather than in intensity.* [...] *it puts down roots that grow deeper as time goes by* (p. 322), the correlation seems correctly grasped. Yet it would be interesting to identify when it *is* transformative and life–enhancing.

In *Appendix* (*Moments in the History of Love*, pp. 393–437) Hacker sketches the history of love in six moments of Western civilization. He does so because the concepts and conceptions of love, unlike of other emotions, of one moment would be unintelligible to people living at another moment. These incompatible moments are: (i) the Old Testament, (ii) Ancient Greece with a

[1] See Hacker, pp. 315–316: *It is, after all, with* this *person and with no one else, that one will trace a (partly) common autobiographical route through the world, the memories of which cement the relationship.*

[2] See R. Zaborowski, *Is Affectivity Passive or Active?*

focus on Plato, (iii) early imperial Rome, (iv) early Christianity, (v) the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, (vi) Romanticism.

It is only in the last section of the *Appendix* that the reader is presented with two major distinctions that are often absent in the philosophy of the emotions:

i) in a rather implicit manner, between spontaneity and reflection (see p. 433)[1], which, I would like to think, correspond to a distinction between feeling/emotion and thought[2];

ii) more explicitly, a distinction between intensity and depth, already earlier mentioned (see p. 304: *depth* [...] *manifold levels of the personality of the lover*, also p. 332, p. 345), now with a stress put on their being confused (see p. 436)[3].

Finally, Hacker makes a distinction between loving another person and *the* value *of loving another person* (p. 436). It is the latter, not the former, that transcends time because *that value, like all absolute value, is atemporal*.

This discussion, as I can only regret, does not do justice to all the ideas and subtleties Hacker sets out in his book. He is to be praised for an approach that is at once comprehensive[4] and illuminating[5]. He is an opponent of reductionism (e.g. p. 128), and seems instead to suppose that it is better to make too many distinctions than too few. For instance, he includes not only short– but also long–term phenomena in his analysis. Next, he has a great respect for the history of philosophy: he turns again and again to those philosophers who are authors of important treatises or chapters on the emotions – Aristotle, Aquinas, Descartes, Hobbes, and Spinoza. Finally, he admits that although passions are a part of human nature, all people are not equally gifted in this respect[6]. All in all, Hacker's book is both a balsam for anyone who is lost in the jungle of a still increasing philosophical literature on the emotions, and a good – though not elementary – start for anyone in need of a clear and informative introduction to the philosophy of emotion. In a word, it is a must–read.

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[1] See R. Zaborowski, *On Time as a Factor Differentiating Feeling and Thought*.

[2] I think this may be inferred insofar as it is preceded by a distinction between emotions and reason. See R. Zaborowski, *Feeling–Thought Linkage and its Forms* ... & R. Zaborowski, *Feeling or Thought – Both or Neither?*

[3] See M. Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics* ... , pp. 330–332. See also R. Zaborowski, *Max Scheler's model of stratified affectivity* ... , R. Zaborowski, *Investigating Affectivity* ... & R. Zaborowski, *Affectivity in Its Relation to Memory*.

[4] For a similarly comprehensive approach see J. Hillman, *Emotion. A Comprehensive Phenomenology of Theories and Their Meaning for Therapy* – published more than 50 years ago and written from psychological rather than philosophical position – and Antonio Malo's *Antropologia dell'affettività* – more recent and with a similar structure and similar anthropological approach.

[5] One point about which I feel unsatisfied is a strange lack of any mention of a hierarchy of strata within the affective world. I say *strange* because Hacker uses the categories of depth and of levels which, in my view, presuppose a hierarchical approach. See M. Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics* ... . See also R. Zaborowski, *Max Scheler's model of stratified affectivity* ... , R. Zaborowski, *Investigating Affectivity* ... & R. Zaborowski, *How Can a Concept of Hierarchy Help to Classify Emotions?*

[6] This admission is explicit in what Hacker says on love: *Many people do not know how to love. It is not given to all to love well, for not all have the gift* (p. 300). But, I think that he would say the same about sensibility generally and other emotions as well.

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