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## Nussbaum, UPHEAVALS OF THOUGHT: THE INTELLIGENCE OF THE EMOTIONS

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motivation is, for these emotions, a strong indicator that the emotion itself is absent. If the individual feels it, nevertheless, the feeling is a sham" (p. 330). I find this puzzling. Why can't someone feel mildly indignant over some slight, yet remain unmotivated to act, perhaps because of resignation or forbearance? I would say that such indignation is mildly felt, yet genuine – not a sham.

Readers can judge for themselves the merits of Roberts' positions. Let me conclude with a final observation. I found several of his examples to be politically charged and, at times, offensive. For example, in discussing anger, he tells a (presumably imaginary) story about a colleague suggesting that Roberts be given last choice of upper division courses because Roberts is "... nothing but a middle-aged white protestant male ..." (p. 60). A woman's unusual rage at a man is explained by reference to her monthly menstrual cycle – this is supposed to illustrate that emotions presuppose a background of normal neurochemical functioning (see p. 134). Horror is illustrated by asking the reader to consider "A wastebasket of human fetuses, some whole and some in parts ..." (p. 202). He continues: "... it is even more horrifying if one of them is still moving" (p. 202). Perhaps I am being too sensitive about these examples (my monthly cycle?), but their content distracts the reader from Roberts' main points, which could easily have been made using other cases. To me, these illustrations mar an otherwise impressive philosophical contribution.

*Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of the Emotions* by Martha C. Nussbaum. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001. 751 pages, inc. index. \$39.95, cloth.

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"Is that what grief is, then?" I said, "A malfunction?"<sup>1</sup>

*Upheavals of Thought* is as long and varied as a Russian novel. Fortunately, one does not have to read it straight through for fear of losing track of the characters. Fruitfully, I took up the assignment of this review at the same time that I picked up David Lodge's novel, *Thinks...*, in which a female novelist, Helen Reed, is dealing, as Professor Nussbaum while writing her book, with that emotion—"so excessive, so disproportionate to any possible evolutionary payoff" (Lodge, 69)—we pin down in the five letters of grief. Helen Reed faces her grief against a former philosopher entirely transformed into an adulterous director of an AI institute. Martha Nussbaum faces hers in the company of the Stoics and Proust, Joyce and Whitman, and against Plato, Dante, Augustine and others. The Lodge novel and the scholarly book make the reader consider several thought experiments from quite different angles; the novel performs, the scholarly book represents and argues; I ruminate: perhaps the scholarly book performs as well ....

Nussbaum's continuing project is to develop and implement what she calls a "cognitive/evaluative" theory of the emotions (3), a theory which, "accompanied by a flexible notion of intentionality" (129) will show how

emotions “involve judgments ... in which [we appraise] an external object ... [and] we acknowledge our own neediness” (19), fragility, and vulnerability. More specifically, Nussbaum wishes to exhibit and implement the explanatory value of the thesis that an emotion is “identical with the acceptance of a proposition that is both evaluative and eudaimonistic” (41). “The real, full recognition [of the event] ... *is* the [emotional] upheaval” (45). Since her theory of the emotions is based in a nonlinguistic account of cognition, I wonder what will count as judgment (and assent or acceptance)—or more exactly what won’t count as such; this is particularly problematic given the admission that there are both non-self-conscious and non-conscious emotions (126). Which of these, then, are or involve judgments: A bat chasing night moths? An ameba fleeing the light on a microscope slide? A thermostat turning on the heat when it is cold? Since what she means by cognition is “nothing more than ‘concerned with receiving and processing information’” (23), it seems she must allow all of these have cognitive function; perhaps, then, they also all have emotions? And then, she adds, “even the best translation [of a judgment into a linguistically formulated cognitive appraisal] an observer can make will involve some degree of distortion” (127); but how could this distortion be seen, noted, or cognitively appraised? Let us not speak of that.

Her account, the explanation (including its relation to animals), extenuation (into the social and political life) and illustration of which occupy the first two parts of the book (about 450 pages), she calls neo-Stoic. That label seems to me to be dependent upon a single (and that much modified) agreement with the Stoic position that emotions just are value judgments. Her view seems to be much more in agreement with Aristotle, though Aristotle is not, to my mind, so absolutely unarguably cognitivist as the Stoics were or Nussbaum wishes to be. It is tempting to write a review merely on these classicist retoolings, about which Nussbaum is always worth consulting and frequently insightful or provoking, or perhaps on the issues, already adumbrated, which it raises in philosophy of mind. Both those reviews would be for different journals.

The general underlying idea, that the emotions are, “in effect, acknowledgments of neediness and lack of self-sufficiency” (22), would be agreed upon by every philosopher in history, though they would differ widely in their philosophies of mind, in their accounts of judgment and in how the ‘acknowledgment’ of neediness is effected. However, this basic underlying agreement allows Nussbaum, in Part III, to compare the stories several artists and philosophers seem to hold about the structure of, and relation of several other passions to, that master passion and acknowledgment of our insufficiency called love. The remainder of this review will center on that last 250 pages, which take their lessons from Plato, Spinoza, Proust, Augustine, Dante, Emily Bronte, Mahler, Whitman and Joyce.

The book Professor Nussbaum has been wanting to write for some time is on love; Part III of the present book includes more, and broader, investigation for that book than she has previously published. Naturally, she must go back to Plato in order to set up her way through the problem, which is “to examine the cures that have been proposed [for the dangers of erotic love], to see if they really do the trick of giving us love’s energy and

wonder without its [ethical] danger" (461). It is not accidental that the opening tones of this section of her book repeat the romantic love at first sight scene of Proust's Marcel and Albertine on the beach, or that she uses Albertine, irregularly, as an evaluator of the various "recurrent attempt[s] to reform or educate erotic love" (469). One may, throughout this concluding section, wish for more regularity and specificity of terms on the one hand, and offer conflicting readings of her 'characters' (Plato, Augustine, Dante, et al.) on the other. At times these problems overlap.

For example, after a quote from Kant's (pre-critical) *Lectures on Ethics* Nussbaum points out that while he uses the term "sexual love" it seems more accurate to say that he retains both sexual desire (accompanied by shame) and human love, eliminating sexual *love* completely from the well-lived ethical life" (464, italics original). But it seems that Kant is, even in the short quote given, being very exact: "*taken by itself and for itself* [sexual love] is nothing more than appetite. *Taken by itself* it is a degradation of human nature.... Sexual desire is at the root of it" (463, italics mine). In contrast to the implication of Nussbaum's footnote (463n), Kant's later critical distinction between the practical and the pathological does not, it seems to me, discount strong emotion of itself, for respect and love of justice might be so strong as even to overcome the fear of death; the moral issue for Kant is about the root of the passion—is it the freedom of reason, or the interest provoked by the lyre-like hips (and the desmesnes that there adjacent lie)? The difficulty that must be faced here (in Kant and in the book at large) is the question of the connection between substantive (love) and adjectives (sexual, human). Kant is very clear about how he means to keep these distinctions. It may be that Nussbaum's neo-Stoic *point d'appui* will disallow Kant's distinction at the source, but in any case a book on love needs to fix the issue.

Nussbaum thinks it "plausible to say that erotic love is inseparable from some type of sexual desire, meaning by that some kind of desire for intercourse and other bodily acts. This desire need not be conscious, and need not take the form of an actual plan or project" (476). Though such inseparability is contested by a boatload of Christian writers and Socrates (though not Aristophanes), she holds that "erotic love cannot be the love it is without sexual desire" (476). Such a view need not be an entirely 'from the bottom up' (with double entendre) view of the human being—if other forms of love are admitted, but it is certainly in accord with modern Freudian inversions of Diotima's (or Augustine's, or Dante's) more divine view. One might, for the sake of a common starting point, accept Nussbaum's "definition of love" as "a particular kind of awareness of an object, as tremendously wonderful and salient, and as deeply needed by the self" (477) and then distinguish the kinds of awareness, salience and need in order to distinguish, say, erotic love from what Kant calls practical love, or sexual love from parental love, or any of these from the child's love for the parent or any man's for God. It seems likely, under that definition, that certain sorts of salience and need imply the project of possession, perhaps even jealous possession; other sorts of awareness and salience require something else entirely. About such distinctions Nussbaum is, unfortunately, vague.

If one accepts such a Nussbaumian definition of love and the concomitant way of making the distinctions among loves, then I think it would be surprising to discover that very many of the sorts of love there are meet Nussbaum's normative criteria of supporting "general social compassion" (479) and "mak[ing] room for and support[ing] reciprocal relationships of concern" (480). Most would "recognize and make central the fact that human beings are individuals" (480). On the other hand, it seems one of her complaints against Plato, namely, that the object of his eros has "a certain highly general homogeneity" (487), meets those first two normative criteria quite well. Indeed, it seems her complaint would apply to any view (e.g. Kant's) which will require love to support general social compassion. If one stipulates that erotic love cannot be the love it is without sexual desire, for instance, one should not be surprised to discover that *as erotic* it is *sans merci*; that it is not an "embracing unconditionality" (499), but is (in its own understanding) "illiberally perfectionist" insofar as it cherishes its objects in accord with their perceived capacity to provoke or answer sexual desire. To say, then, that "Platonic thinkers repudiate compassion" or lack "respect for the dignity and separateness of others" (527), seems less accurate than to say that eros (understood as Nussbaum defines it) does.

Of course, to say such a thing of eros is to come closer to the Kantian position that taken by itself eros does degrade the person. One might avoid this problem with a more generous (or divine) idea of eros, as Plato and Augustine do. Under such a view it will be true that the story of "this life is not erotic union, but erotic longing, distance, incompleteness" (545), but for some reason this version of neediness and fragility seems excessive to Nussbaum. Alternatively, one might temper eros by yoking it together with a horse of a different color, as Plato in the *Phaedrus* and Kant do. Nussbaum also thinks that the Augustinian ascent requires one who has been in love to blind herself "to that person's beauty and power,...close off his access to your feelings through habit and memory, and the memory of habit, and the habit of remembering" (545). But it seems more adequate to understand Augustine's conversion as being from an eros he forges for himself in the cauldron of Carthage (following after his own flesh) and so one in which he deceives himself about what precisely the beauty and power of the other person is, to an eros for that One for whom he was created in whom only the true beauty of all other things and persons can be truly seen. This is not an ascent in which the Christian becomes "radically isolated in her confessional zeal, retreating from the world to be totally alone with God" (550). Nor is the equality Augustine sees merely "an equality of abjectness, sinfulness, and need. In our common descent from Adam, that is to say, in our original sinfulness, is the foundation of our fellowship" (550). Augustine prays not to be purged of affection, or memory, or nature, but to be purged in these (e.g. *Confessions* 4.11.17, 4.12.18); our equality cannot be measured in sin (for sin is a lack), but is in our original creation as *imago dei* (e.g., *De Trinitate* 12 and 14).

I shall close with a few comments about the ascent which "in some ways" is "the most completely satisfying of all" to Nussbaum, which she finds in Mahler. If the emotions just are judgments both evaluative and eudaimonistic, then Mahler's music, as "the creation of a totality of emo-

tional expression" (615) must be carrying us along on a stream of such judgments. While Nussbaum does not agree with Deryck Cooke that music is so language-like that propositions can be formed of it, she does find it necessary, in explicating Mahler's ascent, to make considerable reference to his three "programs" for the Second Symphony, as well as to personal and social occurrences during the time of its composing. While telling a story *about* a piece of music does require some kind of representationalism, just as telling the story about an emotion does, it does not seem particularly helpful to understand the *music itself* as representational, or to think one is understanding it better as music to be able to tell such a story. If we consider Cooke's analogy, the language of music seems to be (unfortunately for Cooke) all syntax, no semantic. So Nussbaum's suggestion (against all of Mahler's revised programs) that the symphony is exploring "the contrast between the expression of the self in society and its purer and richer expression through solitary personal striving" for which "it is crucial for it to contain not only the sardonic and grotesque account of society that the third movement will provide, but also a reminder of society at its best—...the first movement" (623), gives us a clear and cleverly wrought set of representations to consider along with the music, but that the music is about this intentional history in any way seems simply an outrageous claim. I very much enjoyed Walt Disney's original version of "Fantasia"—but the title is telling, and true. Any number of dreams might go along with this music, but such particularity of intention is fantastic. If the point of Mahler's ode and the music were to "depict the movements, the very being, of the striving heart as ends in themselves" (637), something which "glorifies striving rather than promising the static possession of an object" (638), one would be tempted to ask of it "striving for what?" But as it is music, one does not respond to it as if it were a thesis or a judgment. Perhaps the emotions it elicits are otherwise also.

## NOTES

1. Lodge, David, *Thinks . . .* (New York: Viking-Penguin, 2001), Pp. 69.

*Faith and Narrative*, edited by Keith Yandell. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 288. \$52.00.

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Narrative is among the hottest topics in continental philosophy, ethics, literary theory, biblical studies, theology and any number of areas of humanistic concern. The claims of narrativists run from the near-obvious (for example, history is best understood in a narrative context) to the highly controversial (the Biblical narrative clearly shows a God who forgets, gets angry and depends on human agents to accomplish God's purposes), to the outlandish (the self is a narration). We find narrative everywhere these days (everywhere, that is, except in analytic philosophy which has not paid