CALL FOR PAPERS

Special Issue “Empathy, Shared Emotions, and Social Identity”

Topoi: An International Review of Philosophy

Guest Editors:

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I. RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Recent years have witnessed a rapidly growing body of work in philosophy, developmental and social psychology, and the neurosciences on interpersonal processes such as empathy, shared emotions, and group identification. However, apart from a small body of work in the social neurosciences, little attention has been paid to conceptually clarifying how these different processes might inform one another. There are at least two questions worthy of focused investigation:

(i.) To what extent, if any, does empathy—understood broadly as our ability to experience and understand the mental life of others—enable emotional sharing, or the emergence and maintenance of certain forms of social or group identity?

(ii.) Conversely, how, and to what extent, does one’s social identity, group membership, or shared emotions affect, modulate, or even bias empathic understanding at the interpersonal or intergroup level?

Although recent work on social cognition in philosophy and the cognitive sciences has focused on related issues—including, for example, the current ‘interactive turn’ in social cognition research, as well as work on collective intentionality and joint agency, and collective emotions—these questions remain underexplored. This oversight is a significant lacuna, in that these debates largely ignore the rich body of work in social psychology on social and group identification and in-group/out-group divides.

Against this background, the aim of this special issue is to pioneer the first systematic attempt to bridge these hitherto largely isolated currents in philosophical and psychological research on interpersonal, intra- and intergroup relations.

We invite papers from philosophers, cognitive scientists or social psychologist that may (but are not limited to) address the following sets of research questions:
In what sense do intersubjective engagements entail what developmental psychologists have called ‘identifying-with’ others. In particular, what is the relation between empathy and affective sharing? Is the former identical with or, rather, enabling the latter?

Do more complex forms of social identification (e.g., group or social identification) require the prior existence of basic forms of empathy or other interpersonal processes (e.g., joint attention or imitation)?

Conversely, how, if at all, might joint agency or group membership enhance empathic capacities? For example, it has been suggested that individuals may be better empathizers, or ‘mindreaders’ if they engage in collaborative or joint agency. Some have even suggested that individuals may not only engage in reciprocal but even perform genuinely collective forms of empathy, i.e., empathize with others jointly, or as a group. Finally, one may inquire whether individuals who share emotions may be collectively, or as a group, targets of empathy?

Does empathy enable or facilitate social identification, and to what extent does it modulate group or social identity? Conversely, how and to what extent do social identification, group membership or shared emotions affect empathy, or differentiate empathic responses along members/non-members or in-/out-group divides? What role do shared emotions play in these processes? To what extent are certain emotions socially (co-)constituted, shaped or modulated by our social identity?

Practical Informations:

The SI will consist of invited contributors (including, among others: Thomas Fuchs (Heidelberg), Shaun Gallagher (Memphis), Elisabeth Pacherie (Paris), Jan Slaby (Berlin), Deborah Tollefesen (Memphis), Dan Zahavi (Copenhagen)), and a few slots available for selected submitted papers.

All papers will be subject to double-blind peer-review. Submissions for this issue should be made through Topoi Editorial Manager (http://www.editorialmanager.com/topo/default.asp), selecting “SI: ‘Empathy, Shared Emotions, and Social Identity’ (Ed. Szanto & Krueger)” as the article type.

Please save your manuscript in one of the formats supported by the system (Word, RTF, etc.), which does NOT include PDF. Formatting instructions for submissions can be found at: http://www.springer.com/philosophy/journal/11245 (click ‘Information for Guest Editors and Authors’ on the right).

Papers must be written in English and should not exceed 8,000 words including notes and bibliography. Each submission should also include a title page containing contact details, a brief abstract and list of keywords for indexing purposes.
The Deadline for Submission is **Sept. 26, 2016.**

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