

From Faint Mood to Strong Emotion: Merging Heidegger and Sartre?

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Abstract This paper contrasts Sartre’s account of emotion with Heidegger’s account of *Befindlichkeit* and ‘mood’ (*Stimmung*). Sartre’s account of emotion is a strong one: emotions occur only when a more neutral and colourless ‘pragmatic attitude’ is frustrated or breaks down. In this manner, emotion has to be acutely felt in and through the body, which also means that there are many circumstances and states in which we do not undergo any emotion at all. In fact, Sartre’s ‘pragmatic attitude’ is precisely the mode in which we simply go about our business in an emotionless manner. This raises the question as to whether Sartre’s stark opposition between emotional and non-emotional experiences actually holds. I believe Heidegger’s account of *Befindlichkeit* and its moods are key in this regard, in that it can be used to nuance the Sartrean account. Indeed, Heidegger famously states that *Dasein* is never unattuned. In fact, precisely because of the ontological structure of *Befindlichkeit*, the world always already matters to us in one way or another, with moods being one of our primary ways of experiencing what matters and why. This discussion therefore aims to yield an account whereby faint moods (Heidegger) and strong emotions (Sartre) form two poles of the same dynamic. To use a metaphor, moods are the tectonic plates that make the various emotional shakes and quakes possible in any given situation. Finally, I finish with some possible remaining tensions between the two thinkers, as well as a way to look for a possible solution.

Keywords *Befindlichkeit* · Emotion · Heidegger · Mood · Pragmatic attitude · Sartre

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Introduction

This paper contrasts Sartre's account of emotion with Heidegger's account of *Befindlichkeit*¹ and 'mood' (*Stimmung*), in order to see to what degree these concepts may be compatible. To achieve this aim, three main steps are required: first I will give a brief summary of Sartre's account of emotion; I will then briefly summarise the crucial concepts from Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*²; finally, I will highlight the benefits, but also the remaining tensions involved, when considering a possible 'merger' between these two theories. I hope such a comparison will lead to interesting discussions regarding the relationship between mood and emotion.

To already give a hint, Jean-Paul Sartre's account of emotion is a strong one: emotions occur only when a more neutral and colourless 'pragmatic attitude' is frustrated or breaks down. In this manner, emotion has to be acutely felt in and through the 'lived-body' (i.e. *Leib*), which also means that there are many circumstances and states in which we do not undergo any emotion at all. In fact, Sartre's pragmatic attitude is precisely the state in which we simply go about our business in an emotionless, step-by-step manner.

This raises the question as to whether Sartre's stark opposition between emotional and non-emotional experiences actually holds. I believe Heidegger's account of *Befindlichkeit* and its moods are key in this regard, in that it can be used to nuance the Sartrean account. Indeed, although Heidegger's concept of *Zuhandenheit* comes very close to Sartre's own pragmatic attitude, Heidegger also famously states that *Dasein* is never unattuned. In fact, precisely because of the ontological structure of *Befindlichkeit*, the world always already matters to us in one way or another, with moods and emotions being one of our primary ways of experiencing what matters and why.

This discussion therefore aims to yield an account whereby faint moods (Heidegger) and strong emotions (Sartre) form two poles of one and the same dynamic. To use a metaphor, moods are the 'tectonic plates' that make the various emotional shakes and quakes possible in any given situation. In this manner, I conclude that the two concepts are not only compatible, but are in fact complementary, for understanding the complexity of our emotive lives. Having said this, I will nevertheless highlight some possible remaining tensions, including Sartre's insistence that Heidegger projects moods into experience too much; as well as indicate the relatively under-explicated element regarding how our *values* are always involved in our emotive lives; and finally, I finish with a possible answer regarding the question as to whether we are ever without mood.

¹ I am not going to attempt a translation of this term; I will just use the German.

² The appearance of the *Schwarze Hefte* leaves Heidegger scholars with a choice: either Heidegger's anti-Semitism, as found in those pages, corrupts the whole corpus; or there are certain works or concepts that can be read and used without fear of any explicit or hidden anti-Semitism. Obviously I support the latter option, whereby, in what follows, Heidegger's discourse on *Befindlichkeit* and moods applies to a basic structure of *Dasein as such*, and thereby has absolutely no ties with Heidegger's anti-Semitism in his later years and words. In fact, I would go even as far to claim that the Heidegger of *Being and Time* may be used *against* Heidegger the anti-Semite; the latter, for me, is no clearer example of someone falling victim to the dominant and thoughtless forces of 'the they' (*das Man*) of his time; Heidegger's anti-Semitism of the 1930s onwards is an example of his inability to think for himself, thereby falling into the 'inauthenticity' (*Uneigentlichkeit*) of the ravings of Nazi Germany.

I believe this paper has a number of contributions. First of all, it gives an account of Sartrean emotion that is conceptually rich and intriguing. Secondly, it will show how and why emotion necessarily relates to, and is conditioned by, our moods and values. Finally, it outlines some persistent tensions that must be considered and discussed for any philosophical anthropology that wishes to detail the nuances and significance of our emotive lives.

Sartrean Emotion: a Brief Account

In order to understand Sartre's account of emotion, it is first of all important to understand his crucial distinction between pre-reflective and reflective consciousness. Combatting overly cerebral psychological accounts, Sartre emphasises the primacy of pre-reflective consciousness in the sense that consciousness is always already engaged with the world and its objects in a non-reflective manner. This means reflection is always a secondary moment that follows such a primordial pre-reflective engagement. Indeed, it is a grand reproach of Sartre that many thinkers 'superimpose' 'a reflective structure [...] that is thoughtlessly claimed to be unconscious' (Sartre [1936] 2004: 18) onto—or even “beneath”—the spontaneous, pre-reflective level. This, Sartre says, is a completely unwarranted move when one looks to basic—i.e. phenomenological—experience, wherein there are always spontaneous actions that can *then*, in a second moment—and in a second moment *only*—be reflected upon.

Sartre's own example to prove this point is how one experiences the spontaneous desire to aid a friend. In such instances 'I feel pity for Peter and I come to his aid. For my consciousness, one thing alone exists at that moment: Peter-having-to-be-aided. This quality of 'having-to-be-aided' is to be found in Peter. It acts on me like a force' (ibid.). At this level, then, there is an 'intuitive grasp of a disagreeable quality of an object' (ibid.), which means the more explicit whys and wherefores only come *after* such spontaneous feelings and desires.

Coupled with this most basic, pre-reflective engagement with the world is what Sartre characterises as a general 'pragmatic intuition of the determinism of the world' (Sartre [1938] 2002/2009³: 39/77). We may characterise this as Sartre's concept of the *pragmatic attitude*. Put simply, this attitude is a base-mode of (adult) consciousness that is in action when clear, causal steps are required and are carried out in order to attain a certain end (e.g. making a cup of coffee).

Emotion, for Sartre, is a 'transformation of the world' (STE/ETE: 39/79) wherein the standard pragmatic attitude is frustrated, blurred, or even breaks down. Indeed, emotion is experienced as so many spontaneous psychophysical 'incantations' (a palpitating heart; a shaking fist; a joyous smile) precisely because it is, for Sartre, essentially *ineffectual*: emotion for Sartre does 'not really to act upon the object as it is, by the interpolation of particular means' (STE/ETE: 41/81); actually, 'during emotion, it is the body which, directed by consciousness, changes its relationship with the world so that the world should change its qualities' (STE/ETE: 41/81–82).

³ Hereafter I will use the *sigla* 'STE/ETE' for referencing this work.

To explicate further: emotion does not, properly speaking, enact efficient, causal change.⁴ On the contrary emotion acts on the world in a ‘magical’ (i.e. non-deterministic) manner whereby emotive qualities (exciting, stupid, beautiful), which do not originally belong to the objects, get incanted, *through* the psychophysical disturbances, into the objects themselves (an *exciting* chase; a *stupid* computer; a *beautiful* landscape), thereby bewitching us.

In order to further explicate this theory, take a very simple example: running for—and missing—a bus. Perhaps you have been late a few too many times at work and are therefore on your last warning. This accentuates the need to catch the bus. You sprint and shout but the bus pulls off and disappears around the corner. This is a fact. You have missed the bus. However: due to the need to be on time for work and thus keep your job (which you also need and want), this failure on your part becomes too much. You become enraged, shaking your fist at the bus as it disappears, shouting and cursing. And when it has gone around the corner your rage does not just disappear; the whole world has become hateful because of this ‘stupid bus’ (which, of course, cannot actually be ‘stupid’, it being a bus). Even this lamp-post next to you becomes stupid and irksome, and so you kick it in frustration. This hurts, fuelling your rage even more, until finally the pain in your foot makes you sit down and you start to breathe. Only now do you reflect upon what has just happened. Your toe starts to hurt so much that you think you may have broken it. This fact makes you feel angry, sad, and stupid all at once. You feel like crying, feel sorry for yourself; but this time you control (i.e. reflect upon) such urges a bit better while you look for a new bus to take you to a hospital.

Here, a simple factual event (a bus driving off) has gone so much against your wishes that you cannot merely accept it as other people—or you in other circumstances—would. Indeed, in a less tense mood it would not have bothered you so much (‘Oh well, I’ll get the next one...’). However, in this particular instance your project of making it to work on time had a weight and meaning for you that made catching the bus a very important moment in your day. Missing it is therefore quite intolerable, and although one could just as spontaneously blame (i.e. be angry at) oneself for not leaving enough time to catch it, in this particular manifestation the anger was so strong that it spontaneously flew out as so many shouts and gestures that assigned emotive qualities (e.g. ‘stupid’) to the detested object (disappearing bus), as well as to the surrounding area (lamp-post etc.) in general. Indeed, in such fits of emotion the whole world becomes hateful, and unless one regains control such actions as kicking a lamp-post can have yet more factual consequences (broken toe), which are yet more worldly difficulties that must also be met with either more emotion (crying), or a return to the pragmatic mode (looking for a new bus to the hospital).

Thus, in emotion, consciousness seizes the world and its objects (bus, lamp-post) in new ways because the cooler, calmer way of apprehending the world has broken down or been suspended. All of this is pre-reflective, moreover, precisely because it is a spontaneous engagement with the world that actually makes the world itself, *through*

⁴ One might argue that striking someone in anger, or running away in fear, both enact efficient causal change, and in a sense they do. This does not destroy Sartre’s theory, however, because the pragmatic attitude is almost never completely eradicated (except in cases of complete emotional breakdown), but often merely blurred with emotive qualities that preclude the possibility of acting more pragmatically (i.e. talking instead of hitting; standing one’s ground instead of running away—or even running away *without* fear, because for Sartre real fear is normally paralysing).

bodily incantations (shouting; shaking a fist; kicking), hateful and annoying. In this way, emotion no longer accepts the brute facts of the world as determined causal processes, but on the contrary transforms the world and its objects by assigning the latter with new emotive qualities that do not *actually* belong to them ('stupid' bus).

Indeed, for Sartre this theory of emotion always involves *magic*⁵ at its heart: 'all emotion comes back to the constitution of a magical world, by making use of our bodies as instruments of incantation. In every case the problem is different, and the conduct is different. To grasp the signification and the finality, one would have to know and analyse each particular situation'⁶ (STE/ETE: 47–48/93). This must also be the case, therefore, with the more 'positive' emotions, such as joy.⁷ Indeed, Sartre is aware of a possible objection that the positive emotions do not confront a difficulty in the world. However, for Sartre they *do*, although this 'difficultly' is a rather queer one. In joy, for example, the difficulty is not manifested as irksome or hateful; it is more about the structure and nature of the world as a causal, successive state of affairs that cannot actually be captured all at once, *except through* emotions such as joy. What does this mean? Take, for example, receiving good exam results. At bottom, in front of you, are only a list of numbers (or letters). That is all. And yet these numbers have such significance for you that you can literally dance with glee. Here, therefore, is an instantaneous, magical release of all the gruelling effort that has gone into studying; a release of all the worrying and obsessing before and after each exam; and it is an equally gleeful anticipation of the celebrations that will be carried out tonight with one's friends and beyond. In this manner, joy is manifested as jumping, skipping, smiling and the like because it is consciousness's spontaneous way of grasping past efforts and future events that in the present situation are only signified through a list of numbers. Indeed, these numbers, through joy, have a magical significance all of their own: they represent all the efforts and future prospects in plain black and white, and yet consciousness meets such black and white by positively and colourfully overflowing in a manner that cannot be done in a more pragmatic way. In this manner, all the past efforts and pains, all the future prospects and celebrations, which are—causally speaking—impossible to grasp *all at once*, can nevertheless be grasped altogether *as* joy. This makes joy an emotive consciousness that allows one to leap and laugh and clap in a manner that transcends and enchants more mundane states of affairs and objects (numbers on a page).

Moreover, joy also brackets or suspends more pragmatic considerations of what such results will necessitate in the future—more studying, job applications, and the like.

⁵ The issue of Sartrean magic is a highly complex one, and although I cannot say much here, elsewhere I am developing a recognition of four main types of Sartrean 'magic', namely personal reflections (ego), emotions, imaginations, and values, which all share a fundamental underlying structure: consciousness incants qualities into various objects (things in the world; one's own personal reflections; one's own imaginations) to the extent that these objects accrue a power of their own, thereby bewitching that very same consciousness. For brief introduction that focuses on the magic of Sartre's imaginary, please see: O'Shiel 2011.

⁶ Translation modified—« toutes reviennent à constituer un monde magique en utilisant notre corps comme moyen d'incantation. Dans chaque cas le problème est. différent, les conduites sont différentes. Pour en saisir la signification et la finalité, il faudrait connaître et analyser chaque situation particulière ».

⁷ Sartre distinguishes between emotive joy and a merely satisfactory feeling (cf. STE/ETE: 46/90), where the latter lacks the transformative characteristics that all of the main strong emotions (anger, fear, disgust, joy, etc.) contain. In short, joy is an emotion for Sartre, whereas a 'merely satisfactory feeling' is what we will see as a mood in what unfolds.

Indeed, regarding this latter point it is important to note that joy swallows up, in one moment, all that is blissful about one's existence.

Underlying such a dynamic is Sartre's ultimate ontological distinction between being-in-itself and being-for-itself, which was only fully explicated later in 1943 (viz. *Being and Nothingness*). The main conception here is that being-in-itself simply 'is what it is' without any real consideration of conscious qualities such as exciting, stupid, beautiful, and the like. In other words, the in-itself perspective grounds the pragmatic attitude, where all worldly phenomena can be explained in non-emotive, purely matter-of-fact terms.⁸ Counterpoised to this is being-for-itself (viz. consciousness), which never 'is what it is' because it is essentially non-coincidence; because of the law of intentionality (consciousness is always consciousness *of* something) consciousness is always already aware of phenomena that it is not. Consciousness is always already embodied, too, whereby it, through psychophysical 'incantations', magically instils its own emotive qualities onto and into things that do not, from the in-itself perspective, contain such qualities. In this manner, whether emotive experience is centrifugal (me transforming the world—e.g. leaping for joy), or centripetal (the world transforming me—e.g. being frightening by something),⁹ emotive consciousness is a fundamental mode wherein pragmatic considerations take a back seat. In short, it is this mode of consciousness that allows us to spontaneously overflow in all sorts colourful manners, from the highest celebrations to the deepest commiserations.

Sartre's account of emotion is hereby a strong one: emotion has to be acutely felt in and through the body, which also means that there are many circumstances and modes in which we do not undergo any emotion at all. In fact, Sartre's pragmatic attitude is precisely the mode in which we simply go about our business in an emotionless manner. This raises the question as to whether Sartre's stark opposition between emotive and non-emotive experience actually holds. I believe Heidegger's account of *Befindlichkeit* and its moods are key in this regard, in that it can be used to nuance the Sartrean account.

Heidegger on *Befindlichkeit* and Mood

Although Heidegger's concept of *Zuhandenheit* comes quite close to Sartre's own pragmatic attitude, Heidegger also famously states that *Dasein* is never unattuned (Heidegger [1927] 2012/2006¹⁰: 134¹¹). *Dasein*, like Sartrean consciousness, is always already situated in, and engaged with, a world and its objects; but *Dasein* also always already 'finds itself' (*sich befindet*) in some mood or other. This means *Befindlichkeit* is a basic ontological structure of *Dasein*.

An introduction of Heidegger's *Befindlichkeit* as the basic mode of attunement to the world and its beings will provide us with the most fundamental *baseline* of our worldly

⁸ This is what Sartre later calls the 'spirit of seriousness' (« *l'esprit de sérieux* »)—see: Sartre [1943] 2012: 75.

⁹ For an account of how this 'centripetal' aspect of emotion is a precursor to Sartre's more full-blown theory of 'the look' and our 'being-for-others', please see: Richmond 2011.

¹⁰ Hereafter I will use the *sigla* 'BT/SZ' for referencing this work.

¹¹ I will only provide the page numbers of the original German, seeing as these can also be found in the margins of the Macquarrie & Robison translation.

existing,¹² whereupon more pragmatic attitudes on the one hand, and more intense, explicit emotions on the other, then form conceptual poles of this deeper, underlying dynamic that seems to be *always* attuned in one way (e.g. pragmatically) or another (e.g. passionately). Finally, because *Befindlichkeit* and its concrete manifestations (i.e. moods, attunements—*Stimmungen*) make things *matter to us in general*, introducing Heidegger's concept will also help us further anchor value as essentially at work in our emotive experiences.

It is not easy to talk about *Befindlichkeit* and *Stimmung* separately. Heidegger himself initially deals with them together in his well-known ¶29 of *Sein und Zeit*, even though the heading refers only to *Befindlichkeit*. There is, though, a reason for their virtual inseparability: *Befindlichkeit* is the ontological, existential structure that makes the ontical, 'existenziell' manifestation of *Stimmung* possible as such. In other words, there are always ontological structures that provide the conditions of possibility for their more worldly 'concretions' (cf. Slaby 2015). In this manner, *Befindlichkeit* and *Stimmung* are of a piece, two sides of the same conceptual coin. Nevertheless, looking closely to ¶29, one can still outline Heidegger's three 'ontologically essential characteristic[s]' ('ontologischen Wesencharakter'—BT/SZ: 136) of *Befindlichkeit* first, and then proceed to more general comments and consequences regarding such a structure's concrete manifestation as mood and attunement (*Stimmung*).

Heidegger delineates two 'equiprimordial constitutive ways' ('gleichursprünglichen konstitutiven Weisen'—BT/SZ: 133) 'of being the "there"' (ibid.), namely *Befindlichkeit* and 'understanding' (*Verstehen*). These are 'determined through' ('bestimmt durch'—ibid.) a third equiprimordial structure, 'discourse' (*Rede*). In general, 'being the there' highlights the essential fact that *Dasein* is *always already (t)here (Da)*. In other terms, *Dasein* is *always already situated*¹³; it is always already *disclosed (erschlossen)* to (its own) being-in-the-world. Such fundamental disclosedness (*Erschlossenheit*) is only possible because of the structures of *Befindlichkeit*, *Verstehen*, and *Rede*, these being the three equiprimordial ways in and through which *Dasein* is given over—or discloses itself—to its own being-in-the-world.

Regarding the 'existential constitution of the there', there are three essential, ontological characteristics that delineate this structure. First of all, *Befindlichkeit* 'disclose[s] *Dasein* in its thrownness [*Geworfenheit*], and—first of all and for the most part—in the manner of an evasive turning-away'¹⁴ (BT/SZ: 136). The disclosedness of *Befindlichkeit* thus means *Dasein* is always already 'thrown'; it is always already in the world in a manner that it has to be its being and its facticity in a transitive sense (cf. Visker [2004] 2008: 222–223). As thrown, *Dasein* is 'not its own origin, and [is] always situated in a certain setting' (id.: 222). Such a predicament is not easy, and one

¹² In Bollnow's ([1941] 2009: 21) terms: 'unterste Schicht des seelischen Lebens'.

¹³ Here we may see where Sartre's technical concept of 'the situation' comes from, with both his and Heidegger's notion heavily indebted to Husserl's own conception of the 'lived-body' (*der Leib*) as essentially containing a 'zero-point of the Here and Now' (cf. Husserl 1952: 158–159) that also essentially contains an inherent 'I can'. This is closely related to Heidegger's own notion of *Verstehen*, as well as Sartre's notion of possibility as an intrinsic structure of the *pour-soi* (cf. Sartre [1943] 2012: 132–139). Thus, although Heidegger does not explicitly mention any 'lived-body' here, one can see how it already implicitly figures, which is not insignificant when considering that Sartrean emotion is explicitly bodily—and so Heideggerian attunement would be also.

¹⁴ Translation modified – 'erschließt das Dasein in seiner Geworfenheit und zunächst und zumeist in der Weise der ausweichenden Abkehr'.

(*man*) is most likely to *try* and flee such thrownness through ‘fallenness’ (*Verfallenheit*), by being absorbed into ‘the they’ (*das Man*). In this latter structure, one simply ‘finds oneself’ (*sich befindet*) as the next person does, thus letting one’s own (*eigen*) individual existence be gobbled up by the general thrownness of the average person, whereby one has the same moods and attunements as everyone else.¹⁵

The second essential characteristic of *Befindlichkeit* is that it is a ‘basic existential type of *equiprimordial disclosedness* of the world, being-there-with, and existence, because such disclosedness is essentially being-in-the-world itself’¹⁶ (SZ: 137). This second characteristic does not seem to add much to what has already been said, except maybe to highlight that one always already finds oneself surrounded by others (*Mitdasein*) too, as well as the fact that *Dasein*, as always being-in-the-world ‘as a whole’ (BT/SZ: 137), necessarily entails that world, as well as its and one’s own existence as essentially situated in it, and as perpetually finding oneself to be so situated.

The third characteristic of *Befindlichkeit* is more interesting for my purposes: in *Befindlichkeit* there ‘*existentially lies a disclosive dependence upon the world, out of which we can encounter something that matters*’¹⁷ (BT/SZ: 137–138). Here it is clear that we are nothing without the world; the very fact that we are always already given over to it and always already find ourselves in it means that any sense of mattering is utterly dependent upon that world and its beings.

Such being Heidegger’s technical vocabulary, let me briefly turn to Baugh’s (1989) article in order to translate such Heideggerian language into some more accessible and basic points, before we then show how such a structure always manifests itself as *Stimmung*.

Befindlichkeit, states Baugh, is ‘the implicit awareness of oneself that goes along with one’s awareness of one’s world’ (id.: 125). This emphasises how such a basic structure already imbues tonalities of orientation; of implicit finding-of-oneself; and yes, of mood and attunement. This thus adds ‘colour’ to the rather colourless Sartrean pragmatic attitude. In mentioning ‘colour’, however, some scholars exhibit a general wariness of using such a metaphor for *Befindlichkeit* (cf. id.: 126; Ratcliffe 2008: 47–48); a wariness that wishes to guard against some “prior”, “subjective” experience that is “then” coloured by mood and attunement. However, I believe that it is one thing to say this, and another to say that *Befindlichkeit* reveals the world as *always already* coloured¹⁸ (grey is a colour too—an indifferent mood). Therefore, just as the eye, by its very nature, allows one to perceive colour, so too does *Befindlichkeit*, because of its very ontological structure, disclose the world as mattering for us in so many different *Stimmungen*—in so many different colourings (including grey, transparent, and the like). In short, the world is never without emotional colourings, *precisely because of Befindlichkeit*. For indeed, *Befindlichkeit* explains how there is always a ‘sense of

¹⁵ Think, for example, of the rather uniform characteristics and aspirations of the modern-day business ‘rat-race’, where even one’s wardrobe (suits) belongs to the power of *das Man*.

¹⁶ My translation—,existenziale Grundart der *gleichursprünglichen Erschlossenheit* von Welt, *Mitdasein* und Existenz, weil diese selbst wesenhaft In-der-Welt-sein ist.’

¹⁷ Translation modified—,liegt existenzial eine erschließende Angewiesenheit auf Welt, aus der her *Angehendes begegnen kann*’.

¹⁸ Cf. Bollnow [1941] 2009: 22: ‚[Die Stimmungen] sind Zuständlichkeiten, Färbungen des gesamten menschlichen Daseins’.

oneself as being oriented¹⁹ towards beings in a certain way that is implicit in how one encounters those beings’ (Baugh 1989: 125), whereby such basic situatedness is a *dynamic*—and is one, moreover, that always brings a pre-reflective²⁰ sense or ‘awareness of “how one is doing” or of one’s basic disposition’ (id.: 126) along with it, in its very structure.

Such a basic disposition is, however, highly variable on the ontical—or concrete—level. For indeed, there are so many moods and attunements that they often defy any strict characterisation. Generally speaking however, the notion of attunement is important for two broad—but by no means rigorous—categories: one can be attuned well²¹ and find oneself so in good or even calm moods; and one may say that bad moods (*Verstimmungen*—cf. BT/SZ: 136–137) are a sign of something out of tune, a kind of clash or tension within the very implicit awareness of being *in* that particular mood itself (cf. Bollnow [1941] 2009: 25–26). This ‘in’ is important, for it highlights that fact that one is always *in* one mood or another (BT/SZ: 134), as well as hinting that Heidegger’s *Stimmung* seeks to outline a basic phenomenon that *precedes* any more explicit subject-object partition,²² as one finds with more explicit emotions (‘I hate you!’). Of course, one can reflect upon one’s moods—but the point here for Heidegger is that they are always already there; one always finds oneself in a certain mood or other, and they must be presupposed in general before one can sharpen in on any possible objects or emotions *within* or *arising out of* those moods. Thus, moods and their attunements are the very *baseline* of our worldly being; they are something we are never without, and they can encapsulate—albeit often rather vaguely—a great deal.

Final Remarks: from Faint Mood to Strong Emotion—and Back Again?

Heidegger’s account does indeed encapsulate a lot. So much so, in fact, that he finds any mention of ‘emotion’ superfluous. Indeed, standard emotions (e.g. fear) become mere ‘modes’ of a pervasive *Befindlichkeit* for Heidegger (cf. BN/SZ: 140). Does this then render emotion completely superfluous? In other words, can Sartre still contribute something that has become all-too-diffuse in Heidegger? I believe there is a beneficial middle path that is not, however, without residual problems and questions.

First of all, I believe Heidegger’s account of *Befindlichkeit* and its moods may help us *ground* Sartrean emotion a bit more comprehensively. Regarding *Befindlichkeit*, I may now claim that such a structure could be seen as underlying *both* the pragmatic attitude as well as our general emotive being. This is because the pragmatic attitude can now be reconceived as simply *a* mode of finding oneself in the world with a certain attitude or attunement; it is a mood, and quite a dominant one. Emotion can then still be when such attunement is frustrated or breaks down—indeed emotion can in fact be the

¹⁹ Ratcliffe (2008) takes this basic ‘background’ orientation of *Befindlichkeit* and its moods and turns it into a whole new category of feeling—‘existential feeling’.

²⁰ Which one can always then reflect upon (‘God I’m in such a rotten mood today!’).

²¹ An interesting extension of this would be to investigate *resonance* in reference to moods, both with regard to others, love, and friendship (e.g. laughter); as well as with regard to other human phenomena (think of, for instance, the resonance (and often the good mood created) when listening to a favourite piece of music).

²² ‚Die Stimmung überfällt. Sie kommt weder von »Außen« noch von »Innen«, sondern steigt als Weise des In-der-Welt-seins aus diesem selbst auf.‘—SZ: 136.

more explicit spikes and shocks of our more diffuse attunements. This hereby creates a dynamic wherein mood is a baseline—or the tectonic plates—*out of which* emotions arise and break through. Such shakes and quakes—or in strong passion, earthquakes—can do much to unsettle or even completely destabilise a given mood (e.g. receiving a piece of bad news); and yet, on the other hand some emotions only seem possible—or at least more likely—when one is already in a certain mood (e.g. anger out of a bad mood). In this manner, worldly events can *put one in* another mood *through* an emotion (‘God, that news has put me in such a terrible mood!’); and some emotions only arise *out of* certain moods (‘You know I wouldn’t normally have shouted; it’s just I’ve been so grumpy lately!’). In fact, along with emotions being more pointed (they more often than not have a specific object), as well as being in the explicit foreground of more background orientations (viz. moods), I would also claim that emotions arising out of related moods are stronger than these latter by their very nature, precisely because they are object-specific, bodily upheavals. In this manner, not all moods are ‘faint’, but moods are always fainter—i.e. more diffuse—than the corresponding emotions that arise therefrom, in the sense that one can be in a strong, rotten mood, but the anger arising therefrom will be even stronger; and one can be in an incredibly anxious mood, but an anxiety attack therefrom will be even more shattering. In this way, it is a *relative* dynamic *between* faint mood and strong emotion in the sense that strong moods do indeed exist, but then the emotions arising out of them would be even more pointed and intense precisely because they are formatted more by specific objects, as well as by more explicit bodily disturbances.²³

From this perspective, one is always *in* some mood or other, from the faintest and most indifferent to the highly happy or highly irritable. Such moods greatly condition the possible emotions one is prone to, which means these latter must be viewed as more intense crescendos or shocks of a more general baseline. Of course, certain events can change one’s mood—and yet here I would claim that such a change is nearly always felt *through* spikes and shifts that are explicitly felt, which is to say emotively.

Here, then, we may resituate the Sartrean picture: one has moods, of which the pragmatic attitude is often a quite dominant one; but one also has worldly, often very object-specific emotions that live out *upheavals* and *revolutions* in one’s mood. Here it is no longer simply a case of a presupposed pragmatic attitude getting frustrated in emotion; there are a whole host of moods and attunements that defy clear enumeration, with the more general dynamic needing to be conceived as a variable attuned baseline that can range from very faint and indifferent moods where very emotionless tasks are enacted quite automatically, to toxic or jubilant ones where emotions and affective thoughts will come to take centre-stage.

Conditioning this dynamic, too, would be our *values*. Indeed, *Befindlichkeit* discloses the world and its beings as *mattering*. This picture may explain why certain people seem to have certain predominant moods and emotions, because their values often have quite fixed and enduring positions in their character (habits and personality-traits). For instance, many people will become annoyed, happy, disgusted, and the like in quite regular patterns. Such patterns, I believe, are due to the force that our values play in our lives. Indeed, great revolutions in character, although not unheard of, may be seen as a reconfiguration of one’s values based on some emotive upheavals due to

²³ I would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers who helped me arrive at this point.

one's general disattunement. Upheaval or not, however, we see that what one values is already 'out there' in the world because of a primordial *Befindlichkeit* that always already finds itself attuned to some situation or other in a given mood or other. In fact, I would even go as far as to claim that it is in our moods and emotions that our values are lived out most immediately and richly; one need only reflect upon one's dominant moods and emotions in order to start articulating what matters to you and why.²⁴

Ultimately I may say that this piece combines the nuanced, 'fine-grained'²⁵ Heideggerian account of mood with Sartre's own fine-grained account of emotion, which then make up two poles of one essential live dynamic. And indeed, just like *Zuhandenheit* and *Alltäglichkeit* can pervade a whole host of moods in various manners in Heidegger, so too can Sartrean emotion be more or less pervaded by elements of pragmatism—with the crucial difference that moods are background, unspecific, and physiologically mute counterparts to their more explicit, pointed, and felt cousins (*viz.* emotions). And the two poles constantly condition each other in a never-ending dynamic that can be as complex as human reality itself.

There is a lingering, Sartrean suspicion, however, whereby to claim everything as a mood is either to impoverish the richness of our emotive experiences; or it is to simply project pseudo-emotive experiences onto actions that are as dry and automatic as can be, and thus do not deserve the appellation neither of emotion nor of mood. This may be discussed further; I personally believe that if we establish a *dynamic* between mood and emotion, then this is a useful working theory that can be nuanced through further discussions and insights.

Thus, although the merger is not perfect (is it ever?), this idea of emotions being phenomenologically stronger than the baseline moods, feelings, and orientations could have great explicative success in the sense that it may show how and why people react emotively in and because of certain moods. Missing from this piece would be an individual's personal reflections upon the matter (cf. O'Shiel 2015). If this were included, then a study of one's emotive being would amount to a tripartite structure of: one's basic and most dominant moods; the more violent emotions experience in, around, and out of these moods; and, finally, the values that such feelings point to, as well as the reflected-upon aspects that we then systematise into a personality (e.g. 'I am an angry person'—cf. *ibid.*).

In this manner, Sartre's and Heidegger's insights are *not* contradictory, but are, in fact, mutually complementary in the sense that Heidegger's focus on moods supplements Sartre's focus on emotion, *and vice-versa*, ultimately showing that mood and emotion are always of a piece. Indeed, ultimately I consider the supposed conflict between the two theories as boiling down to opposite answers to *only one* question: 'Is an indifferent 'mood' a mood at all?' Sartre answers 'no'; Heidegger 'yes'. Be this as it may, the differing answers ultimately only means that Sartre does not consider his 'pragmatic attitude' a 'mood', and Heidegger, as also evident in his concept of *Zuhandenheit* (interpreted here as a basic, pragmatic know-how), would. I hope this paper has shown that whether this attitude is called a 'mood' or not becomes relatively moot when one looks to the *dynamic* between moods and emotions in general.

²⁴ This is a very interesting topic in its own right, and is one that I intend to pursue in a different piece.

²⁵ This insight is thanks to another anonymous reviewer.

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