What Not to Make of Recalcitrant Emotions

Raamy Majeed
University of Cambridge
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ABSTRACT: Recalcitrant emotions are emotions that conflict with your evaluative judgements, e.g. fearing flying despite judging it to be safe. Brady (2009), as well as D'Arms and Jacobson (2003), argue that these emotions raise a challenge for a theory of emotion: for any such theory to be adequate, it must be capable of explaining the sense in which subjects that have them are being irrational. This paper aims to raise scepticism with this endeavour of using the irrationality shrouding recalcitrant episodes to inform a theory of emotion. I explain (i) how 'recalcitrant emotions' pick out at least two phenomena, which come apart, and (ii) that there are different epistemic norms relevant to assessing whether, and if so how, subjects undergoing recalcitrant bouts are being irrational. I argue that these factors result in differing accounts of the precise way these emotions make their bearers irrational, which in turn frustrates present efforts to adjudicate whether a given theory of emotion successfully meets this challenge.

KEYWORDS: recalcitrant emotions; irrational emotions; rationality; epistemic norms

Recalcitrant emotions, according to D'Arms and Jacobson, are emotions that exist "despite the agent's making a judgment that is in tension with it" (2003: 129). For example, you fear Fido, your neighbour's dog, which you judge to be harmless. The phenomenon of emotional recalcitrance is said to raise a challenge for a theory of emotion. Drawing on the work of Greenspan (1981) and Helm (2001), Brady argues that this is "to explain the sense in which recalcitrant emotions involve *rational* conflict or tension" (2009: 413).

Meeting this challenge is regarded as being crucial for emotion research. This is because it is used, e.g. by D'Arms and Jacobson, as well as Brady, as an adequacy condition on a theory of emotion. Brady, for instance, argues as follows:

> For we have an intuitive sense that there is something wrong, from the standpoint of rationality. When fear persists in the face of a subject's judgement that she is in little or no danger. In such a situation, we think that the subject should either stop being afraid, or

> should change her evaluative judgement. If she does not, then it seems as though the subject is violating some *normative* principle governing the relation between emotions and evaluations. A condition of adequacy on a theory of emotion is that it should be capable of capturing such normative principles, and thus capable of explaining just why it is that emotions are irrational when they violate such principles. (Brady 2009: 414).

The point here about norm violations is nuanced. The claim isn't that our theory of emotion should be as such that recalcitrant emotions don't turn out to violate such norms. Rather, it is that recalcitrant emotions do appear to violate them, and any theory of emotion worth its salt should be able to account for the intuition that subjects undergoing recalcitrant emotions are irrational on account of these emotions violating such norms. This paper aims to raise some problems with this way of understanding the nature of emotions.

In what follows, I argue that these problems result from the phenomenon being under-described (§I), and there being different epistemic norms that are violated by recalcitrant episodes (§II). Both of these factors result in differing accounts of the precise way recalcitrant emotions make their bearers irrational, which in turn frustrates any effort to adjudicate whether a given theory of emotion adequately meets the challenge such emotions pose, *viz.* whether it can account for the way recalcitrant emotions make those who undergo them irrational. Note: I don't think these problems are insurmountable. But they are pressing. The second problem, in particular, won't be resolved until we have settled the controversy over which epistemological framework we ought to adopt towards the emotions more generally. The lesson, then, though modest, I think is an important one: as things stand, it is ill-advised to employ the intuition that subjects undergoing recalcitrant emotions are being irrational to inform a theory of emotion.

I.

Recalcitrant emotions were originally employed as a way of objecting to judgementalism: the view that judgements are either constitute of, or at least necessary for, emotions.[1] In brief, if having an emotion requires the relevant judgement, the subject undergoing a recalcitrant emotion must be making contradictory judgements. For example, if subject *S* can only fear an object *x* if she judges that *x* is dangerous, then when *S* undergoes a recalcitrant bout of fear, she simultaneously judges that *x* is dangerous and that it is not. The charge against judgementalism here is that it ends up attributing a radical, and therefore implausible, form of irrationality to subjects undergoing emotional recalcitrance. This in itself isn't a knockdown argument against judgementalism. But

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[1] Proponents of the view include Solomon (1980) and Nussbaum (2001).

critics, e.g. Greenspan, argue that given the choice between allowing for the existence of emotional episodes that aren't grounded in judgements, and judgemental inconsistency which results from denying their existence, we should opt for the former.[2]

Whether judgementalism can adequately meet this objection is orthogonal to the concerns of this paper.[3] But the objection helps highlight my first concern with the employment of recalcitrant emotions to drive a theory of emotion, *viz.* the phenomenon is under-described. Not only do the overwhelming majority of discussions of emotional recalcitrance assume a pre-theoretical familiarity with the phenomenon.[4] But expositions of the phenomenon typically don't extend beyond the conflict definition, e.g. by D'Arms and Jacobson, and a few terse examples, e.g. "Jonas believes firmly that the spider is not dangerous, yet he is terribly frightened. Mary is convinced that she has done nothing wrong, yet she is assailed with crushing guilt" (Deonna and Teroni 2012: 54). This is understandable given that such minimal descriptions suffice for an exposition of Greenspan's charge against judgementalism. The worry is that they mightn't if we are to employ such emotional episodes, especially how they violate epistemic norms, to drive a theory of emotion. Ironically, Greenspan herself proves to be an exception, and provides several detailed examples. The problem, however, is that she discusses two phenomena which, though related, come apart: groundless emotions and emotions that conflict with our judgements.[5]

Groundless emotions aren't emotions that are groundless in any sense whatsoever, but "emotions not grounded in evaluative judgements of their objects" (pg. 165). This is why she sometimes speaks of them as emotions "radically dissociated" from our judgements. There is good empirical evidence to suggest that emotions can be thus dissociated. For instance, the twin-pathway model of emotion generation, which LeDoux (1996) confirms is implemented at the neural level, shows how emotions can be generated in two ways: roughly, via (1) a thalamus-to-amygdala circuit,

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[2] Also see Deonna and Teroni (2012: §5) and Benbaji (2013).

[3] A judgementalist might be explain emotional recalcitrance without positing contradicting judgements, e.g. a subject judges that flying is safe but still feels fear because what he actually fears is not flying itself, but the prospect of flying. This point due to Solomon, is mentioned, though not examined, by D'Arms and Jacobson (pg. 129, fn.6). Also see Grzankowski (2016), who explains how judgementalists can deny attributions of radical irrationality by claiming that subjects endorse conflicting contents under different concepts or different modes of presentation.

[4] E.g. D'Arms and Jacobson describe it as a "familiar psychological phenomenon" (2003: 129).

[5] There are other exceptions, e.g. Rorty (1978) provides in-depth examples when discussing emotional *akrasia*, and Dillon (1997) does likewise in her analysis of self-respect. These examples also run-together groundless emotions with emotions that involve conflict.

which bypasses the cortex, is 'quick and dirty', and occurs without the conscious experience of the stimulus, and (2) a thalamus-to-cortex-to-amygdala circuit, which is slow, and occurs with the conscious experience of the stimulus. Groundless emotions can be accounted for given the existence of circuit (i).[6]

Emotions thus generated, however, need not give rise to any conflict. This is precisely why Griffiths's (1990, 1997) explanation for what he calls 'irrational emotions' doesn't fully account for the contemporary problem of emotional recalcitrance, which involves conflict. Drawing on the work of LeDoux, Griffiths argues that emotions can sometimes be triggered without the cognitive process of belief-fixation that gives rise to judgement. For example,"If, however, only the affect-program system [roughly, circuit (1)] classes the stimulus as a danger, the subject will exhibit the symptoms of fear, but will deny making the judgements which folk theory supposes to be implicit in the emotion" (1990: 191). This explains how emotions can be radically dissociated from judgement, but it doesn't directly speak to any conflict between emotion and judgement.

It is my view that we can, in addition, employ the twin-pathway model to account for how there can be such a conflict. Roughly, such conflict arises when the thalamus-to-amygdala circuit generates an emotion (*sans* an evaluative judgement), which happens to conflict with a judgement the subject already holds.[7] For instance, a subject may hold the prior belief that she is unafraid of snakes, and still have her fear responses elicited when presented with a snake. If these responses are elicited via circuit (1), her response will be rapid; much too rapid for her to have a conscious experience of the stimulus, and thereby make any judgements about what it is, let alone whether it is dangerous. In this instance, we would have a groundless emotion, which also conflicts with an evaluative judgement. Nevertheless, the fact that emotions can be thus generated in the absence of any pre-held judgements that conflict with them also illustrates how emotions can be groundless without involving any conflict.

Similarly, emotions can involve conflict without being groundless. Of course, if judgementalism is true, all emotional episodes, whether they involve conflict or not, will be grounded in judgement. But we needn't be judgementalists to suppose that some emotional episodes can simultaneously be grounded and involve conflict. To clarify, what makes judgementalism implausible isn't that it makes subjects undergoing certain bouts of emotional recalcitrance too

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[6] This model of emotion generation should give judgementalists cause for concern, but they could respond that emotional responses generated via circuit (i) won't legitimately count as emotions because they lack the relevant evaluative judgements, which help individuate them from similar responses.

[7] This provides a causal explanation of the conflict, but it doesn't resolve one of the key controversies shrouding emotional recalcitrance, *viz.* the precise nature of this conflict.

irrational, but that it makes any, and all, cases of emotional recalcitrance cases where subjects are being too irrational. Given that recalcitrant emotions are assumed legion, this makes for widespread irrationality, which is implausible. However, we should be careful not to rule out the possibility of subjects ever being too irrational. Your fear of Fido, for instance, *could* be grounded in a (perhaps unconscious) judgement that Fido is dangerous, as well as being in conflict with your considered conscious judgement that Fido is harmless. Whether or not you think such cases are plausible, they remain possible, and are thereby demonstrative once again of how the two phenomena discussed by Greenspan come apart.

The fact that these phenomena come apart, as well as the fact that they overlap, is significant for the project of using rationality constraints to drive a theory of emotion. This is because it bears on how, including the extent to which, recalcitrant emotions make their bearers irrational. Having an emotion that is groundless is, *prima facie*, less irrational than having an emotion that conflicts with an evaluative judgement, whereas having such an emotion, in turn, is less irrational than having an emotion that is both groundless and in conflict with an evaluative judgement. Moreover, having an emotion that is grounded and in conflict with an evaluative judgement is more irrational than all three instances, and is what gets judgementalists in a bind.

Of course, whether these comparisons are actually true will depend on whether, and if so how, such emotions violate epistemic norms. A detailed exposition of how emotions violate epistemic norms will have to wait until we have an account of what these norms actually are, which is the topic of the next section. But assuming Greenspan's phenomena differ in the degree to which they make subjects irrational, this problematises the project of using rationality constraints to inform a theory of emotion. This problem is best brought out by seeing exactly how the challenge recalcitrant emotions pose for a theory of emotion is presently understood.

As we have seen, recalcitrant emotions have gone from being used as a way of objecting to judgementalism to being independently used as a challenge for theories of emotion more generally; following Brady, this is to explain the sense in which recalcitrant emotions involve *rational* conflict. In this way, the challenge also extends to neo-judgementalist theories of emotion.

Neo-judgementalists take the judgementalist insight that some cognitive component, or something similarly intentional, is necessary to individuate the emotions – something that traditional Jameseans, who take emotions to just consist in non-intentional feelings, struggle with.[8] But they attempt to eschew the irrationality judgementalists attribute to subjects by replacing evaluative judgements with evaluative *thoughts*, *feelings*, *perceptions*, *construals*, and the like, which build in

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[8] Neo-judgementalists include de Sousa (1987), Helm (2001) and Roberts (2001), whereas Jamesians include James (1890/1950), Lang (1922) and Prinz (2004).

intentional contents into emotions. Fearing Fido in such instances would involve entertaining contents that are, in some sense, in tension with the contents of your judgement. You might, for instance, have negative feelings towards Fido, and *ergo* evaluative him negatively, despite judging that he is harmless. However, crucially, in such instances, you don't make contradicting judgements: you don't both judge that Fido is harmless and that he is harmful. Thus, though you might still be undergoing an emotion, which is in a way inappropriate, you aren't being too irrational; you aren't contradicting yourself.

Neo-judgementalism, then, proves to be an improvement on judgementalism, as it avoids judgemental inconsistency and any resultant attributions of radical irrationality. The charge against such theories is the converse of that against judgementalism: they don't factor in enough rational conflict to account for the recalcitrant nature of such emotions. This highlights the fact that the specific version of the challenge that recalcitrant emotions raise is often treated, e.g. by Brady and Helm, as a dilemma:

> Judgementalism is implausible on the grounds that it imputes too much irrationality to those suffering from recalcitrant emotions, whilst simple versions of neojudgementalism are implausible because they fail to impute enough irrationality to subjects of emotional recalcitrance. (Brady 2009: 414)

The dilemma characterizes all theories of emotion as being on a spectrum. At the one extreme, we have judgementalists, who end up making subjects undergoing recalcitrant emotions 'too irrational': subjects are said to make self-contradicting judgements. On the other end, we get anti-judgementalists who don't attribute any conflict to recalcitrant emotions at all. Traditional Jamesians take emotions to be non-intentional bodily feelings, and thereby can't account for any conflict between them and judgements. The problem with these theories, then, is that they can't account for the phenomenon of emotional recalcitrance. According to Brady and Helm, simple neo-judgementalists fall on this side of the spectrum as well, as they don't attribute enough rational conflict to account for the phenomenon. The subsequent literature on recalcitrant emotions can be viewed as one where opposing views are portrayed as falling into the 'too irrational', or 'not irrational enough' sides of the spectrum. Moreover, proponents take their end-goal to be finding the 'sweet spot', where we attribute just the right amount of irrational conflict to account for the phenomenon.

When the challenge posed by recalcitrant emotions is understood in this way, precisely how recalcitrant emotions make subjects undergoing them irrational turns out to be crucial to settle the issue of where on the spectrum a given theory of emotion lands. Since most of the contemporary

philosophical discussion on emotional recalcitrance adheres to D'Arms and Jacobson's definition of recalcitrant emotions as involving a conflict between emotion and judgement, we can leave non-conflict involving groundless emotions discussed by Greenspan aside. But even by doing so, we are still left with the two other phenomena she discusses: conflict-involving emotions that are groundless and those that aren't. These, as we have seen, differ in the degree to which they make subjects irrational. And on account of this, whether a given theory of emotion hits the sweet spot will remain controversial: where the sweet spot is will depend on how we characterise the phenomenon. The lesson, then, is that though recalcitrant emotions are familiar, the phenomenon remains under-described, and crucially, in a way that proves significant for how a given theory of emotion is supposed to meet the challenge they pose.[9]

This problem, though pressing, isn't too damning, as it is to an extent remediable: we can simply say more about what individual recalcitrant emotional episodes consist in, e.g. whether they are groundless, and determine whether a theory of emotions accounts for the resulting irrationality accordingly. The problem, however, highlights two concerns with the overall project. First, because 'recalcitrant emotions' pick out differing phenomena, which differ in the extent to which they make subjects undergoing them irrational, we can't speak about the irrationality of such subjects undergoing emotional recalcitrance *tout court*. Any assessment of whether a given theory of emotion captures the sense in which recalcitrant emotions make their bearers irrational must be assessed on a phenomenon-by-phenomenon basis, i.e. whether the cases, in addition to involving conflict, are groundless or grounded. This isn't how assessments of theories of emotion, *vis-a-vis* recalcitrant emotions, currently proceed.

Second, the whole endeavour of using recalcitrant emotions to drive a theory of emotion is premised on the intuition that recalcitrant emotions make their subjects irrational and the assumption that any such theory should capture this intuition. Insofar as the intuition tracks different phenomena, with differing degrees of irrationality, we see that it can't be very fine-grained in terms of the irrationality with which it imbues subjects undergoing emotional recalcitrance. The intuition, that is, doesn't speak to the precise sense in which recalcitrant bouts make their subjects irrational, or indeed the degree to which they do so. This makes it highly contestable whether the intuition, by itself, can act as a marker for whether a theory of emotion eschews the dilemma. Both

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[9] Note: characterising theories of emotion as being on a spectrum with regards to their attributions of irrationality to the bearers of recalcitrant emotions will make it vague whether any given theory hits the sweet spot. This may be, but the problem addressed here doesn't rest on this vagueness. The problem is that we can't adjudicate whether a given theory attributes the right amount of irrationality to such subjects, or even a plausible amount of it.

concerns, then, prescribe a revision to the current methodology of using recalcitrant emotions to inform a theory of emotion. In the second instance, what we require is an articulation of the relevant epistemic norms that are violated, and a detailed account of how the two (or possibly more) phenomena tracked by 'recalcitrant emotions' violates them. Only then can we have any hope of judging the extent to which recalcitrant emotions make their bearers irrational because they violate certain epistemic norms. In the next section, we see that even doing so mightn't help settle the matter.

II.

As we have seen, articulating a theory of emotion, which captures the intuition that recalcitrant emotions make subjects undergoing them irrational, as they seem to violate certain epistemic norms, is made difficult on account of these emotions themselves being under-described. The charge against such theories is that they make subjects undergoing emotional recalcitrance either too irrational or not rational enough. Nevertheless, since 'recalcitrant emotions' picks out phenomena that come apart, and in ways relevant to how, as well as the degree to which, they make subjects irrational, we are not in a position to adequately adjudicate whether a given theory succumbs to this charge.

Even if this problem could be overcome, say by a more careful description of the cases in question, there is, however, another way in which adjudicating the matter proves difficult; one that can't be easily remedied. This concerns the normative principles, which recalcitrant emotions are supposed to violate. The problem here is not that no such principle is violated, but that there are too many different principles that are plausibly violated, which in turn give differing verdicts on the irrationality shrouding recalcitrant emotions. This has the consequence, once again, of frustrating any effort to adjudicate whether a given theory attributes *enough* irrationality to subjects who have recalcitrant emotions. Furthermore, this is not a problem which can be easily fixed, as it will not go away until we have settled the controversy over which epistemological framework we should adopt towards the emotions more generally.

So far as I can tell, no one has articulated precisely the principles which recalcitrant emotions are supposed to violate. Rather, what we find is an appeal to the intuition that they are violated — which supposedly grounds the intuition that they make their bearers irrational — followed by an exposition of how a given theory of emotion accounts for this irrationality. For instance, Brady speaks of 'epistemic irrationality', "which goes to the heart of our intuition that they violate normative principles governing the relation between emotion and evaluations" (pg. 428). We then find an explanation of how recalcitrant emotions make their bearers irrational, and in a way

that evades the too-irrational-and-non-irrational-enough charge. In brief, Brady assumes that having an emotion inclines one to assent to an evaluative construal of the relevant object or situation. Moreover, he argues that recalcitrant emotions make a subject irrational because they incline one to accept a construal, which one has already determined to be false. Fearing Fido is irrational, for example, because one is inclined to assent to the emotion's construal of Fido as being dangerous despite having already judged this construal to be false. This is supposed to evade the dilemma because the subject undergoing emotional recalcitrance endures some sort of *rational* conflict, but not one that makes her too irrational, e.g. make contradicting judgements.

It is not my intention here to deny that Brady's explanation provides a plausible account of how recalcitrant emotions make their bearers irrational.[10] The point is, such explanations are provided without any articulation of the relevant epistemic principles, let alone a story of how they are violated. Constraints on rationality, which bear on what these principles are, however, have been discussed independently, e.g. by de Sousa (1987). These constraints provide some possible, and crucially distinct, ways emotions make those who undergo them irrational. By way of illustration, consider the following:

(i) Cognitive rationality: a subject is rational in undergoing an emotion if that emotion is adequate to some state of the world it purports to represent.
(ii) Strategic rationality: a subject is rational in undergoing an emotion if that emotion fulfils its function.
(iii) Axiological rationality: a subject is rational in undergoing an emotion if that emotion fits some paradigm scenario.

This list isn't supposed to be exhaustive, but is illustrative of some differing constraints on rationality concerning emotion.[11] It also has implications for how emotions can be irrational. For any given constrain we take to be relevant, we can suppose that having an emotion is irrational when doing so violates that constraint. Consider the following such breaches in rationality.

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[10] See Tappolet (2012: §1.5) for a response.

[11] Another rationality constraint is provided by Brady, *viz.* "to ensure that her emotions and her evaluative beliefs line-up" (2007: 276). I won't discuss this constraint since the fact that it is violated is already clear from the definition of recalcitrant emotions (as emotions that involve a conflict between them and our evaluative beliefs/judgements), and it is assumed, e.g. by Helm and Brady, that this conflict by itself doesn't capture the sense in which recalcitrant emotions make their bearers irrational. On this assumption, what we require is the violation of some further epistemic norms.

In terms of (i), provided all emotions concern an evaluation of an object or situation to which they respond, having a recalcitrant emotion can make a subject irrational in that the evaluation it makes misrepresents the world. For example, fearing Fido makes one irrational because this misrepresents Fido as dangerous when he clearly isn't. A similar point is made by Brady (2013) himself:

> [I]t is irrational to be ashamed of things that one does not judge to be shameful, or to feel guilt when one believes that one has done nothing wrong. And it is irrational to be ashamed or guilty in these circumstances because nothing about the object or event constitutes a good enough reason for shame or guilt" (Brady 2013: 112).

Like (i), the above rationality constraint involves a mind-to-world direction of fit. That is, the emotion, particularly the evaluation it makes, aims to fit the world. What the quote nicely brings out is that, *contra* (i), we needn't make any presuppositions about representation to make this point. The emotion can be said to not fit the world because the object or event that elicits the emotional response doesn't provide sufficient reason for this response.[12] In either case, the emotion can be thought ill fitting, and thus their subjects irrational.

Quite independent of this, adhering to (ii), an emotion can make its bearer irrational if it inhibits its function. What this function exactly is, of course, will be controversial. For de Sousa, the function of emotion, broadly speaking, is to guide us in reasoning. But more specifically, the biological function of emotions is to do something reason can't, *viz.* to determine the salience of features of perception and reasoning. This idea is, perhaps, most simply expressed by evolutionary psychologists Ketelaar and Todd (2001), when they claim that "specific emotions might help to solve the problem of what information to attend to in specific environmental circumstances" (pg. 194).

To elaborate, in any given instance, there is an infinite amount of information we could pay attention to, and we cannot *ipso facto* determine, simply by reasoning, which are actually worthy of consideration. Emotions streamline this process by making certain features salient, and thereby worthy of our consideration.[13] On this account, having an emotion is irrational when doing so inhibits this function, say by making us pay attention to features of the environment that aren't significant. For instance, the function of fear is to draw attention to features of our environment that

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[12] This account of emotions involving justificatory reasons is discussed in more detail in Brady (2007).

[13] Damasio's (2006) Somatic-Marker Hypothesis proposes a similar thesis. Very roughly, somatic states, i.e. feelings about the body that are associated with past experiences, assist deliberation by highlighting some options as either dangerous or favourable, and rapidly eliminating them from subsequent consideration.

may prove dangerous. The recalcitrant bout of fearing Fido thereby makes a subject irrational because she ends up paying too much attention to Fido, who is already known to be harmless.[14]

Independent of these considerations, with regards to (iii), an emotion can also be thought to make their bearer irrational if it doesn't fit the paradigm scenario. Paradigm scenarios are "the historic origins of an individual's experience of and capacity for the emotions involved" (de Sousa 1979: 50). These are a product of both our biology and culture, and consist of the following two aspects:

> [F]irst, a paradigm situation providing the characteristic *objects* of the emotion (where objects can be of various sorts, sometimes more suitably labelled "target," or "occasion") and second, a set of characteristic or "normal" *responses* to the situation. (de Sousa 1979: 55)

With regards to this framework, an emotion can be said to make one irrational if it occurs in a way that doesn't fit the paradigm scenario. This can happen when the emotional response is a reaction to an object that isn't characteristic of objects that elicit emotional responses of this type, e.g. fearing a harmless docile dog, Fido, as opposed to some vicious canine exposing its teeth and barking aggressively. It can also happen when an emotional response exceeds the normal set of responses to a situation. Feeling slightly alarmed, even fearful, at being surprised by a dog that walks into a room would (presumably) constitute a normal response, but feeling abject fear, and remaining to do so wouldn't. Such a response would, hence, make one irrational.

Of the three possible ways emotions can be thought to make their bearers irrational, only (i) has a bearing on the irrationality shrouding recalcitrant emotions, *vis-a-vis* the conflict between emotion and evaluative judgement. But all three might speak to the intuition that recalcitrant emotions make their bearers irrational; as these emotions violate certain epistemic norms. If this is so, crucially, this means that there needn't be *rational* conflict between emotion and judgement to account for the said intuition. We can explain how emotions make their bearers irrational by other means. For instance, the fact the subject fears Fido despite judging that he is harmless tracks this bout of fear as a recalcitrant emotion. However, the fact that this doesn't fit the paradigm scenario, along with the tension we already grant by tracking this as a recalcitrant emotion, explains how undergoing this emotional episode is irrational. Plausibly, this imbues subjects undergoing

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[14] Another form of strategic irrationality is due to Döring, who explains the intuition that recalcitrant emotions make us irrational on grounds that they interfere with "the reasoned pursuit of our goals" (2014: 128). She goes on to argue that, *contra* the intuition, recalcitrant emotions don't actually make us irrational. Rather, what do are the actions they motivate, which go against our goals.

recalcitrant episodes with not too little or not too much irrationality.[15] So, not only are there three independent ways emotions can make subjects irrational, two of these ways don't require for there to be any rational conflict between emotion and judgement.

An added complication concerns the perspective from which we are supposed to assign attributions of irrationality. Attributions of irrationality that concern breaches in (i)-(iii), for instance, are made from a subject-independent perspective, but attributions of irrationality might also be made from the subject's perspective. This needs some exposition. The conflict manifest in recalcitrant emotions concerns not a tension between the evaluative component of an emotion and the way the world is. Rather, it concerns a tension between the evaluative component of an emotion and the way the subject takes the world to be, i.e. her evaluative judgement. This lets us attribute some level of irrationality to the subject, for her representation of the world contains two conflicting representational contents. Moreover, we can make such attributions from a subject-independent perspective. That is, we can describe the subject as being irrational whether she thinks she is or not.

Nevertheless, some explanations of the irrationality concerning recalcitrant emotions centre not on the irrationality we may attribute to the subject, but on the irrationality which the subject attributes to herself. In providing an explanation that very much resembles the above explanation of breaches in the principle of rationality concerning (ii), Brady argues that the mobilisation of our fight-or-flight responses when we have already judged something to be harmless is "at least from S's perspective, a *waste* of her limited motivational resources: it is akin to S's preparing for a race that she sees no need to run" (2009: 427). The same is true of the mobilisation of her cognitive resources, e.g. attending to the stimuli the subject judges to be harmless: "From S's perspective, such focussed attention and increased sensitivity is a pointless waste of limited cognitive resources" (2009: 427).

This opens up even more possibilities with regards to the ways in which recalcitrant emotions can make those who undergo them irrational, and for there to be conflict in such attributions. For example, if a subject *falsely* judges a lion he sees on safari to be tamed and thereby harmless, his fear response towards the lion won't be irrational in terms of say (ii). His response is fulfilling its biological function as it should. Yet, the subject might still take himself to be irrational, as he feels fear despite judgements to the contrary. This once again problematises any effort to judge whether a given theory of emotion attributes enough irrationality to the subject undergoing this bout of recalcitrant fear.

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[15] An added advantage of this explanation is that we are able to provide an account of the irrationality shrouding recalcitrant emotions without any metaphysical additions to what emotions are; or what being in an emotional state consists in.

The situation, of course, is made worse by the fact that all three of the aforementioned ways emotions can be thought to make their bearers irrational can also thought to make them irrational from the subject's perspective. Thus, there are at least six distinct conflicting ways recalcitrant emotions can be thought to concern irrationality: the actual violations in constraints (i)-(iii), and the supposed violations of these constraints from the subject's perspective. The upshot of this is that, as in section §I, whether a given theory of emotion attributes enough irrationality to subjects undergoing emotional recalcitrance will be controversial. But there are two differences. First, in this instance, the controversy results not because of the way we characterise the phenomenon, but because of the epistemic principles that may be violated. Second, this controversy is not easily remedied because which principles are actually relevant for judgements concerning the irrationality of having emotions itself is presently controversial. Which of the constraints (i)-(iii) are actually relevant for judgements of rationality? All of them? Some of them? None of them? The philosophy of emotions is nowhere near to answering these questions. Nevertheless, until we settle this issue of which epistemological framework we ought to adopt with regards to the emotions more generally, we cannot settle the controversy over how irrational having recalcitrant emotions really are.

In summary, recalcitrant emotions are said to raise a challenge for a theory of emotion, *viz.* to explain the precise sense in which subjects undergoing these emotional episodes are being irrational. This paper aimed to raise scepticism with the endeavour of using this challenge to drive a theory of emotion. The arguments provided did not require us to deny the intuition that acts as the basis for this challenge: the intuition that subjects possessing recalcitrant emotions are being irrational, as these emotions seem to violate certain epistemic norms. Instead, it was demonstrated that the irrationality shrouding recalcitrant emotions — whether they make their bearers irrational, how they do so, and the degree of irrationality concerned — is extremely controversial. The controversy results from two factors. First, the phenomenon of emotional recalcitrance is under-described, and it is not clear whether all instances emotional recalcitrance track the same phenomenon. Second, they are too many distinct epistemic norms that may be violated by these phenomena, ones which give differing, and often conflicting, verdicts on the irrationality of those who undergo them. Crucially, the second factor, as we saw, isn't easily remedied. This matters because it means adjudicating whether a given theory of emotion meets the challenge can’t be settled in an unproblematic way, as the precise nature of the challenge in itself is, and will likely remain, controversial. The take home message, then, is this: make of recalcitrant emotions what you will, but as things stand, it is ill-advised to employ the intuition that subjects undergoing emotional recalcitrance are being irrational to inform a theory of emotion.

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