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Being moved by a way the world is not

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Abstract At the end of Lecture 3 of *The Empirical Stance*, Bas van Fraassen suggests that we see the change of view involved in scientific revolutions as being, at least in part, *emotional*. In this paper, I explore one plausible way of cashing out this suggestion. Someone's emotional approval of a description of the world, I argue, thereby shows that she takes herself to have reason to take that description seriously. This is true even if she is convinced—as a scientific community is when it considers alternative theories—that this description is false, that it is not the way the world is.

Keywords Bas van Fraassen · Scientific theory-commitment · Thomas Kuhn · Emotions

1 van Fraassen on radical belief change

'Science', Bas van Fraassen writes in *The Empirical Stance*, 'is a paradigm of rational inquiry' [63].[1] Like all of us, however, van Fraassen has inherited—from Thomas Kuhn and others—a picture of science in which it is periodically disrupted by radical, discontinuous changes in theory-commitment. The features of such changes—the differences in the ways that the prior and posterior communities proceed—generate potent epistemic concerns. Not only will the theory held by the posterior community contradict that of the prior community, but the posterior community may employ terms of reference and description that differ from those utilized by the prior community, and—perhaps most worryingly—the posterior community may follow epistemic procedures that differ from those of the prior community. In sum, it may be that members

[1] van Fraassen (2002). All page numbers in the text are to this book.

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of the earlier and later communities use not only different concepts to grasp the bit of the world being examined, but also different norms for guiding and judging their own behavior. The challenge that van Fraassen sets himself in Lectures 3 and 4 of *The Empirical Stance* is that of showing that this Kuhnian picture does not entail that scientific revolutions are irrational.

Van Fraassen's approach to this problem involves showing that, from the point of view of both the prior community *and* that of the posterior community, the change was a good one to make. In the face of a possible lack of continuity in epistemic evaluation across scientific revolutions, this is a reasonable line of attack, for if successful, then van Fraassen will have shown that both communities have the resources for offering a *rationalizing explanation* of the moves they made in the revolution. A rationalizing explanation of a decision or belief works by showing that it was, from the agent's perspective, an appropriate one for her to undertake. Portraying the prior and posterior communities' views as rationalizing allows van Fraassen to go at least some distance toward relieving Kuhnian-inspired anxiety about whether science is a trustworthy source for our picture of the world. Van Fraassen seeks to reclaim the resources for scientific communities to tell us how and why they see their revolutionary changes to be (or to have been) rational. If scientific communities can give us a story about why the theory change that they are undertaking (or have undertaken) is (or was) a good one to make, then we should be more comfortable trusting the findings and testimony of that community than we would in the absence of such stories.

My concern in this paper will be with the prior view, with finding an answer to van Fraassen's question, 'Is there any *rational* way I could come to entertain, seriously, the belief that things are some way I now classify as absurd?' [73]. It is significant that van Fraassen asks whether we can rationally *come to entertain* the belief that the world is some way different from what we think it is, rather than, say, *come to believe* that it is this way. A community's conversion to an alternative view may have a number of stages, including: taking it to be a serious option, pursuing or exploring its details, hypothesizing or working with it, accepting it, and believing it. The aim is to show that, from the prior community's view, the explanation for the various stages in a particular transition are rationalizing. It may be that each of these stages is to be explained differently, and it may be that different considerations figure in different stages. Indeed, I find it likely that the consideration that I explore in this paper is involved in the earlier, rather than the later, stages of revolution.

Van Fraassen suggests that in rationalizing the prior community's view of its situation, we may need to make reference to the emotions of the individuals making up the community; an explanation *and* rationalization of the prior view of the transition may involve the community members' affective responses to the theory or theories before them. In this paper, I will explore one way of spelling out that suggestion.

The problem before us is, as van Fraassen himself recognizes, generalizable beyond scientific revolutions, as there are going to be cases of what I will call 'radical belief change' outside of science as well as inside. What counts as a radical belief change for a particular believer wholly depends upon her and her belief system. If she only trusts modern Western medicine, then coming to trust homeopathy or acupuncture may involve a radical belief change. If she is a meat-eater, for example, then it may be that conversion to vegetarianism would involve a radical belief change about non-

human animals. The example of radical belief change that I discuss in Sects. 3 and 4 is nonscientific, but I will attempt in the final section to show how the suggestion I make in the light of this example carries over to science.

2 Emotions and the prior view

What needs explaining is the prior community's changing view of an alternative theory: coming to understand it, then to see it as possible, then to see it as plausible, and so on. Van Fraassen's suggestion is that some stage or stages in this transformation involves emotions. When I experience an emotion in a certain situation, he begins, my attitudes towards the situation change. He writes that 'the assessment of various outcomes as satisfactory or disastrous changes …', and that 'what seems possible or probable, impossible or improbable is no longer the same' [106]. Coming to have an emotion towards a situation can lead one to assess it differently, with respect to one's evaluation of both the probability and the desirability of the occurrence of certain outcomes. As a consequence, this change affects what we choose to do: 'What appears to us as satisfactory by way of action [including theory-change] is entirely determined by these factors. Change those factors and what is satisfactory or acceptable to us changes' [106–107]. Of course, such changes in attitude *can* occur solely in response to evidence, but this—as Kuhn and others have taught us—may not be the situation of the agent facing radical belief change.

> If this change is not rationally compelled by the evidence ... we must note that it is a typical role of emotion to precipitate (or even mainly consist in) such a subjective transformation [107].

In short, van Fraassen's suggestion in the final pages of Lecture 3 is that the prior community's change is, at least in part, emotional.

Van Fraassen shows us how emotions can be part of a rationalizing explanation of a theory-change, by making explicit that in experiencing an emotional response the prior community's view of its options transforms. The community's assessment of it and its evaluation of the outcomes of adopting it has undergone a modification such that conversion seems, *to the members of the community at that time*, to be an appropriate change to make. Van Fraassen suggests that the community simply came—in the midst of or in the guise of an emotional change—to see their situation and outcomes in a way that made theory-change (begin to) seem appropriate.

Van Fraassen recognizes that 'The sober and dispassionate view of all this will not be exactly favorable' [107]. But this is both unavoidable and unproblematic. The change of view that one undergoes in coming to feel an emotion towards an alternative view may not be accessible to someone who does not feel the same emotion. This, in itself, does not make the change any less rational; on the contrary, it seems likely that there are particular routes of justified access to the world that are not assessable via certain other ways. This is familiar from perception: the ability of my perceptual experience to justify my belief that p is in no way lessened by my inability to offer an equally strong justification of that belief in, say, textbook prose. It may be that the only way in which you can gain the justification that I have for p is either by accepting my

testimonial assurance—simply trusting me—or by getting yourself into a situation in which you will have a perceptual experience like the one that I have had.

What, however, is absent from van Fraassen's picture is an account of why the rest of us should *trust* the prior community when it undergoes such an emotional transformation. The same point can also be shown from the point of view of the prior community itself, for van Fraassen's story gives the prior community no way of *reflectively* endorsing their change of view—which came about under the influence of the emotions—as trustworthy. Van Fraassen's account does not tell us how the prior community can say something like, 'The emotions that I am feeling towards this new theory reveal that I have *reason* to take it seriously, to take steps towards developing, exploring, and perhaps accepting it.'

What would van Fraassen's attitude towards this deficiency be? I suspect that he will respond that such a story may well be had, but that we need to do more work in finding out what it would be. As he writes,

> The question of how we can view those revolutionary changes in our epistemic life, while endorsing them and yet maintaining our commitment to manage our opinion rationally … has now become a question about how to view the role of emotion … in the epistemic enterprise as a whole [108].

While I have no idea whether van Fraassen will be sympathetic to what I say here, I see this paper as an attempt to fill out his picture. I will suggest that a particular emotion—one which embodies or indicates an approving response to representations—can play an epistemically rich role in radical belief change.

3 Poetry and description, imagination, and emotion

Before radical belief change, we are in a situation in which we have one theory of the world which we are said to believe or to which we are committed, and one or more alternative theories before us that we do not believe. Consideration of the latter involves, among other things, *imagining* the world to be a certain way. Imagining a theory to be true is a matter of 'trying it on', of temporarily taking the world to be as the theory describes it to be. An imaginer can, of course, have emotional responses to her imaginings. She can be angered or saddened by them, feel satisfied or unsettled by them, be horrified or emboldened by them. Here we enter into the realm of the spectatorship of art. In viewing many examples of art, we are invited to imagine the world being some way, and we may have strong emotional responses to this imagining. We are all familiar with the phenomenon of our emotional responses to imagined worlds playing a central role in our spectatorship of films, plays, dances, novels, short stories, and poems, and we are well-versed with the practice of making reference to emotions in our discussions of such artworks.

Accordingly, I take it to be appropriate for me to introduce into this discussion an example of an artwork that invites an emotional response to an alternative description of the world. I have chosen a poem that leads me to imagine the world's being a way that I would have to undergo a radical belief change in order to believe in. As we saw above, one person's radical belief change will not be another's, and so any example I

choose will not represent a radical alternative for all of my readers. My belief in the non-existence of a supernatural or transcendent being is more or less entrenched, and, as I see it, my coming to believe in the existence of such a being would amount to a radical belief change; it would be a deeply transformative and significant event in my life. Accordingly, the example I use here is that of a poem portraying the world as having been created by and filled with a transcendent being.

William Everson (1912–1994) was a self-proclaimed disciple of the pantheist poet Robinson Jeffers. Everson describes his experience of first reading Jeffers in 1934:

> For the first time I knew there is a God, and I knew where I was going to find Him—before my very eyes, as He is bodied forth in prime Nature. … I saw that He was intensely, incredibly alive in my own region.[2]

Everson's poetry was, thereafter, deeply influenced by this revelation, an influence that evolved through his conversion to Catholicism in 1949 and his entrance into the Dominican Order 2 years later. For almost 20 years, until he divested himself of the Dominican robes, Everson wrote poetry under the name Brother Antoninus, much of it exploring the presence of God in the natural world.

Early in this period (1950), Everson wrote 'A Canticle to the Waterbirds', a poem with which he began many of his public readings in the 1960s. The entire poem is addressed, in the second person, to the birds that inhabit the Pacific Northwest of the United States, the area in which Everson spent most of his life. In the first two verses of the poem (there are eight in total), he eloquently but *secularly* describes the waterbirds and their behavior, e.g., as 'Grading down on your belted wings from the upper lights of sunset'. The next two verses are as follows:

> For you hold the heart of His mighty fastnesses,
> And shape the life of His indeterminate realms.
> You are everywhere on the lonesome shores of His wide creation.
> You keep seclusion where no man may go, giving Him praise;
> Nor may a woman come to lift like your cleaving flight her clear contralto song
> To honor the spindrift gifts of His soft abundance.
> You sanctify His hermitage rocks where no holy priest may kneel to adore, nor holy nun assist;
> And where His true communion-keepers are not enabled to enter.
>
> And well may you say His praises, birds, for your ways
> Are verved with the secret skills of His inclinations,
> And your habits plaited and rare with the subdued elaboration of His intricate craft;
> Your days intent with the direct astuteness needful for His outworking,
> And your nights alive with the dense repose of His infinite sleep.
> You are His secretive charges and you serve His secretive ends,
> In His clouded, mist-conditioned stations, in His murk,
> Obscure in your matted nestings, immured in His limitless ranges.

[2] Everson (2003, p. 235).

He makes you penetrate through dark interstitial joinings of His thicketed kingdoms,
And keep your concourse in the deeps of His shadowed world.[3]

In contrast to the first and second verses of the poem, these two verses give us a description of the birds *in their relation to God*. In the third verse, Everson describes the waterbirds' behavior as a praising of God, a praising in places humans cannot go and in ways that no human could replicate, and in the fourth verse Everson describes the waterbirds' behavior as manifestations of God's own personality.

Everson is offering us a view of a part of the natural world. He is inviting us to see the waterbirds and their behavior as being imbued with God, as being properly described in terms of its relation to God. Although I am by no means an expert, I am familiar with the behavior of fresh- and saltwater birds and their environments. The images that Everson evokes in me derive from fairly clear memories of my own observations and admirations of waterbirds in their natural settings. Yet I do not believe in a transcendent being, and so I believe that it is inaccurate for Everson to describe waterbirds and their behavior in the way he does. As a consequence, Everson's poem amounts to an invitation for me to imagine waterbirds as being other than the way in which I take them to be.

Nevertheless, I am deeply moved by this poem, by Everson's description of the world. I have read it many times, and I continue to take pleasure in doing so; I have shared it with many friends. Its author, I believe, deserves praise and admiration for his accomplishment, and I have been led by this poem to read a good deal more of his work. This pleasure and admiration are features of me and my psychological state. However, it also seems to me that my response may suggest something about my epistemic status towards the view of the world that Everson displays.

4 Being moved by a way the world is not

My emotional response to 'A Canticle to the Waterbirds' is, in part, a response to Everson's rich, evocative language and to his own obvious celebratory passion for the world. However, the larger part of my experience is a response to my own imagining of the world as Everson sees it; I am moved by *what* the poem is leading me to imagine. Everson is inviting me to see one part of the world in a certain way, and my passionate, approving response is an indication of his success in doing so.

As I indicated in the previous section, part of what Everson is aiming for in this poem is to describe or portray the world in a certain way. He is offering us a description of the world, a carefully chosen and eloquently expressed description, but a description nonetheless. The notions of description and portrayal also apply to works of art that *create* places, persons, or events; at one extreme we have works of fantasy, with their detailed descriptions of new creatures inhabiting new geographical areas. One could read Everson's poem this way, but to do so would be a clear betrayal of the poem

[3] Everson (2003, p. 44).

as Everson wrote it. 'A Canticle to the Waterbirds' is a declaration of the way *this* world is.

As a reader of this poem, I never lose sight of the thought that *I am being presented with a description of the world*, and my emotional response to the poem is a response to it as such. I am not only responding to its internal or formal features—its language, its flow, its economy, its sound, its meter, its metaphors, its visual aspects in imagination or on the page. These are important and essential features of this poem, but we respond to art like this *qua* representation; we respond to it *as* a portrayal of the world.

What is more, in my case I am fully aware that in reading 'A Canticle to the Waterbirds' I am being made privy to a view of the world radically different from my own. Thus, my emotional response to Everson's poem is a response to my 'trying on' a view of the world that contradicts the way I believe it to be. As such, from the point of view of an unbeliever like myself, Everson's poem is analogous to how an alternative theory looks to a prior scientific community. In both cases, we are given alternative views of the world we think we know.

Recent work on the emotions has made it clear that in feeling an emotion one often reveals one's evaluation of the emotion's object. Our emotions reveal our evaluations of their intentional objects. That this is so is strongly suggested by examples. The surprising extent of Jones's *grief* over the loss of a pet reveals how valuable the pet was to Jones. Jones's *resentment*, *indignation*, and other kinds of *anger* reveal Jones's evaluation of his own or someone else's integrity or entitlements. Indeed, Robert Gordon divides a long list of emotions into the 'positive' (e.g., 'is proud', 'is grateful') and the 'negative' (e.g., 'is embarrassed', 'regrets').[4] The appropriateness—in principle at least—of Gordon's division is a manifestation of the fact that many emotions either themselves express a positive or negative evaluation of something (e.g. 'is disgusted', 'loves') or are a kind of response to the positive or negative status of something of value (e.g., 'is delighted', 'is disappointed'). In expressing an emotion towards some state of affairs, these examples show, we express an evaluation of that state of affairs.

In accepting this feature of emotions, I am not endorsing an 'evaluative' or 'appraisal' *theory* of the emotions; I have no 'theory of the emotions' in hand. Nor am I endorsing either an account of the evaluational element involved in emotions or an account of the relationship between emotions and evaluations. Rather, I take this general insight—that when someone experiences an emotion towards an object, we are often able to learn how she appraises that object—to be one that all work on the emotions must respect.

In the light of this, it should come as no surprise that the emotions we feel in response to an artwork can themselves be evaluations of that artwork. Our assessment of artworks often *takes the form of* or *is revealed by* some kind of emotional response to the work as a whole: pleasure, gratification, awe, anger, disgust, boredom, bewilderment. It is an indication of this that we sometimes praise a piece *by* reporting that it moved us deeply and thoughtfully in some way or another, cashing out our evaluation by describing our emotional response. This report conveys an evaluation that

[4] Gordon (1987, p. 28).

was already in place in the felt response to the artwork. My emotional response *itself*, before my report of it, reveals my positive or negative appraisal of the artwork.

This applies as much to poetry as it does to any other artwork. Even though, as we have seen, Everson's poem is a description, it is a description whose intention is to generate feelings. Its purpose, we might say, is to *move by description*. Everson no doubt set out to move his readers, and one measure of the success of the poem is its ability to achieve that purpose. That said, however, Everson's intentions in this regard are by and large beside the point; even if he did *not* have the intention to incite any emotion in his reader, the fact remains that the poem's raising certain positive emotions—pleasure, enthusiasm, awe—in virtue of its description is a sign of the poem's achievement. My positive emotional response to Everson's poem reveals my positive appraisal of it, regardless of his intentions.

It is here, finally, that we get to the suggestion of this paper: to see Everson's poem as successful, as my emotional response reveals that I do, involves my *seeing its portrayal of the world as successful*, for its ability to move me is inseparable from its function as portrayal. It moves me *by describing*. Given my atheism, I am moved by the poem's *re*-describing a part of the world for me. My passion is aroused by Everson's alternative rendering of a part of the world with which I am familiar. In being so moved, I am expressing my positive evaluation of this alternative description of the world.

What kind of positive evaluation is this? At a bare minimum, my response to Everson's view suggests that it is *possibly true*, for it is clear that I have understood it enough to conceive of it. But my emotional response to the poem reveals more than this; it indicates that I see it as meeting some of the norms that govern portrayals. There is an enormous range of such norms. Portrayals should be *true*, they should be *known*, they should be *justified* or *warranted* or *likely to be true*, they should be *empirically adequate*. There are also the *pragmatic* norms of a particular community, the norms governing when and how something should be stated. The norms dictating poetic form, for example, will be among the latter, and I have no doubt that part of my evaluation of Everson's poem is with respect to pragmatic norms. However, since I am not wholly responding to the poem *qua* an entry in the history or community of poetry, my response suggests that I take the poem to be a successful portrayal in the sense of meeting some epistemic norms. What precisely those norms are is a question I must leave for later work.

Nonetheless, the fact that my epistemic status is changed or revealed by my response to Everson's poem is manifested in at least two significant ways. First, it seems that, after being so moved by 'A Canticle to the Waterbirds', I should have more respect for those who adhere to this worldview. My being so moved makes it appropriate for me to see such believers with a certain amount of reverence with regard to their worldview. It would certainly be at odds with this response for me to express a *dismissive* attitude towards the religious believer (as, say, Richard Dawkins does in some of his work). A dismissive attitude would be in serious tension with my approving response of Everson's depiction of God's presence in the world. This tension reveals that my having been moved has shown me to have reason to take this worldview seriously.

A second way in which the change in my epistemic status is revealed is germane to van Fraassen's concern to *rationalize* scientific theory change. We can imagine

that, subsequent to reading this poem, I proceed through several steps to a radical belief change, ending with belief in a transcendental being. How would my having been moved by this poem fit into my overall story of this conversion? We would not be remiss in treating it as *justifying* later stages. Upon being asked about how my conversion proceeded, I might say, 'Early on in the process, I was deeply moved by a poem, and that led me to further explore the worldview.' In saying such, I am reporting a sequence of events in which *my being moved* leads to *my further exploring this worldview*; the first event is said to explain the second. But if the *being moved* warrants the *further exploration*—rather than *merely* causing or motivating it—then it would appear that my being moved by the poem amounts to what I take to be a kind of epistemic insight. And it seems to me that this is exactly the kind of explanation that I will take myself to be giving: my further exploration was spurred on *and* made appropriate by my approving emotional response to Everson's poem. My being moved would, in this case, have rationalized my subsequent pursuit.

At this point, it may be objected that my being moved by Everson's poem is an expression of my *desire* for the worldview there expressed. If so, then it would be this desire—and not any epistemic insight—that would lead to further exploration that I happened to undertake. As far as I can see, however, I have no such desire for a world with a transcendent being. If there were a God, I would want to know about it, and I would want to take the appropriate attitudes—belief, humility, love, gratitude, etc.—towards him. That conditional desire, though, is distinct from the desire for God to exist; the latter I do not have. Nor do I want any of the benefits that are claimed to exist in a world with God—an assurance of ultimate justice, for example, or of immortality. I would like for my life to be meaningful, but I am not convinced that God is either necessary or sufficient for such meaning to be present.

Even if—unbeknownst to me—I do desire God's existence, this would not by itself establish that it is at work in my response to this poem. It is clearly possible for someone to be moved by a description of the world that is in no way desirable. Literature that conveys a disturbing view of the world absent of meaning, for example, can move us in a way that Everson's poem does, in a way that shows that description of the world to be in some way appropriate. Hamlet's bleak, desperate monologues, avow a world without purpose or meaning, and we are moved even though we are repulsed by the world he describes;[5] nonetheless, it seems to me that our being moved to pity Hamlet is dependent upon our recognition of the *appropriateness* of the worldview he is expressing. The same is true of Camus's utilization of the myth of Sisyphus; Camus's scepticism about the meaning of life is worrying precisely because his descriptions of the absence of meaning in this world seem fitting.

Finally, it may be objected that my enthusiastic response to Everson's poem shows, quite simply, that I find it *beautiful*, and that without a defense of a correlation between beautiful theories and true theories, my argument will come to naught. This objection correctly points to something of epistemic importance—namely, *reliability*—that my argument has left out. My aim has been to establish that (at least some) emotions reveal an agent's epistemic evaluation, and that such emotions can thus substantiate

[5] Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for this example.

epistemic pursuit of their objects. As my finding Everson's poem to be beautiful indicates my evaluation of it as a *good portrayal*, it follows that my subsequent epistemic pursuit of this worldview would be, at least *prima facie*, epistemically responsible. I have not, however, established that there is any objective correlation between *theories that meet our epistemic approval* (*recognized via* their *beauty*) and *theories that are true*. If it were to turn out that there can be no such correlation, then, contrary to what I have argued, it would not be responsible for me to pursue Everson's worldview. But in the absence of such a finding, it remains true that being moved by an alternative worldview can rationalize steps towards its acceptance.

5 Being moved by an alternative scientific theory

Even if the above is correct—that Everson's poem reveals that I have reason to take seriously a view of the world permeated with a transcendent being—can the same occur within a scientific community on the verge of revolution? While it is not likely that a *poetic* manifestation of alternative theories will be available to affect emotions in the way Everson's poem affects mine, many of the conditions that lead to my response to Everson's view *are* likely to be replicated within the scientific context. If I am a member of a scientific community in Kuhnian crisis, I will be exposed to alternative portrayals of a part of the world with which I am familiar. I will not believe all of those portrayals, but it is certainly possible that some of the ones that I do not believe will affect me emotionally; emotions will be running high in a scientific community in crisis, and many of those emotions will be directed towards alternative theories.

We saw above that one of the shortcomings of van Fraassen's account of the role of emotions is that it does not show how the community going into a radical theory change can appeal to emotions to rationalize its shifting view of the alternative theory. Can the account defended in the previous section fare any better? The fact that my account was drawn from our responses to poetry suggests that we should look to aesthetic judgments to find an answer to this question. Alexander Nehamas has outlined a theory of the normativity of aesthetic judgment, in which the main feature of a beautiful thing is that it is a thing that will add value to our lives from personal interaction with it. 'The judgment of beauty,' he writes

> is a guess, a suspicion, a dim awareness that there is more in the work that it would be valuable to learn. To find something beautiful is to believe that making it a larger part of our life is worthwhile, that our life will be better if we spend part of it with that work.[6]

Importantly, he adds, this value will only be added to your life if 'you come to see for yourself. … it will never be yours unless you work it out for yourself, directly interacting with the work.' Putting these two points together, the claim is that when I say that 'ϕ is beautiful', I am claiming that the lives of some people 'would be made more worthwhile' by their own engagement with ϕ. While I do not want to defend Nehamas's account of aesthetic judgment here, I do think that this may be a good

[6] Nehamas (2000). This view of aesthetic judgment goes back at least to Hume's 'Of the Standard of Taste'.

model for understanding the kind of account that the members of a prior scientific community might give for the radical theory change that they are undergoing.

We can imagine a member of a prior scientific community, who like Nehamas's viewer of beauty has had a more or less private emotional experience in the face of an alternative theory, an experience analogous to mine in reading Everson's poem. The scientist takes this emotional response to reveal that she has reason to take seriously this alternative theory. She sees herself as having arrived at an epistemic position that cannot be wholly 'shared' in prose; she recognizes that she cannot convey (this aspect of) her defense of her position in, say, a journal article. 'In order to have access to my reason for pursuing this theoretical transition', she will say to a colleague or layperson, 'you must experience the alternative as I have, and pay attention to your affective responses to it.' Her defense amounts to a kind of *emotional prediction*: given the right conditions, she will say, you are likely to respond to this theory as I did, with emotions that express your praise of it. 'If you get yourself into the right situation,' she will say, 'with the right sort of background knowledge, you will have an emotional response to this theory that indicates its descriptive appropriateness, and you will see why it is worth pursuing further.'

In line with van Fraassen's suggestive comments in *The Empirical Stance*, I have explored an epistemically significant role for emotions in a prior community's recognition of suitable alternative theories, in which role it can warrant at least part of the transition to theoretical conversion. I have also suggested that, if modeled upon a certain view of aesthetic judgment, this view has the resources to play a role in the public defense of a theory. That defense cannot be shared with an audience without the latter's own engagement with the theory itself. Rather, the prior community's defense amounts to a kind of prediction that its audience's own engagement with the theory would likely result in an emotional recognition of its appropriateness. In this way, I have given the prior community the resources to explain its own emotionally appraising experiences, to see them as epistemically significant, and to predict that similar experiences can be had by those with similar background and in similar contexts. This picture predicts that it will not be easy for the non-specialist to appreciate the reasons the prior community has for taking an alternative theory seriously, but we should never have expected the sharing of reasons between specialists and non-specialists to be a simple matter.

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