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DÉMUTH, ANDREJ - DÉMUTHOVÁ, SLÁVKA (EDS.): A CONCEPTUAL AND SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF THE QUALITATIVE DOMAINS OF AESTHETIC AND MORAL EMOTIONS: AN INTRODUCTION. PETER LANG, 2023 / Marián Ruňanin

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"A Conceptual and Semantic Analysis of the Qualitative Domains of Aesthetic and Moral Emotions" by Andrej Demuth and Slávka Demuthová explores the crucial intersection of aesthetic and moral emotions. Understanding these emotions is vital for grasping human psychology and social behaviour, as they shape personal experiences and influence societal norms and ethics. Scholars like Immanuel Kant and Martha Nussbaum have emphasised the role of aesthetics in moral judgement, highlighting how sensory experiences inform our sense of right and wrong. This book's exploration of the semantics and etymology of terms related to aesthetics and moral emotions enhances our understanding of how language shapes emotional experiences and provides historical insights into evolving perceptions of beauty and disgust. This study has significant implications for legal research, where morality, ethics, and justice are influenced by emotional and aesthetic judgements. By examining these judgements, legal scholars can better understand biases, interpret laws more fairly, and develop frameworks that resonate with the complexities of human psychology, enriching both legal theory and practice.

In the introduction of the book, Andrej Demuth and Slávka Demuthová aim to define emotions and explore moral and aesthetic emotions, highlighting their importance in human perception (2023, p. 9). They present emotions as internal states modulated by neuromodulators and expressed through stereotypical behaviours, akin to instincts. Moral emotions are affective states linked to ethical evaluations, while aesthetic

emotions accompany the perception and evaluation of objects or phenomena, focusing on feelings of interest or pleasure. Although the authors provide high-quality definitions, they do not explain why these specific definitions were chosen. Nevertheless, these definitions represent an important contribution to the investigation of this scientific area, which is a significant positive of this study. They emphasise the need to analyse emotions through various methods, including etymological studies, natural language usage, statistical analysis of connotations, semantic differentials, and conceptual analysis within theology and philosophy (Demuth and Demuthová, 2023). These methods are applied by the individual authors in the subsequent chapters of the book.

In the second chapter, Slávka Demuthová, Yasin Keceli, and Andrej Demuth analyse the concept of beauty from an etymological, grammatical, and contextual point of view, pointing out the vagueness of this concept and its different understandings depending on time, religious, or cultural aspects (2023, p. 41). The authors draw attention to the need for a more nuanced analysis of the concept of beauty, considering the aesthetic concepts and dimensions that saturate this concept in different cultural and linguistic contexts (Demuthová, Keceli and Demuth, 2023). In the chapter "The Possibilities of Studying Connotations of the Term 'Beauty' in a Natural Language," Slávka Demuthová continues the analysis of beauty by examining its connotations in natural language (2023, p. 59). The chapter highlights the complexity, subjectivity, and multidimensional nature of the term "beauty", emphasising the importance of studying it within natural language to capture its meanings effectively. Demuthová reviews various methods, from single-dimensional approaches like frequency and content analysis to sophisticated multidimensional techniques that provide comprehensive views by incorporating multiple features. The text explores computational approaches such as latent semantic analysis and computational semantic models, which aid in visualising and mapping the semantic space of "beauty", analysing large textual corpora, and identifying language patterns. These advanced techniques offer deeper insights and facilitate accurate semantic representations. The chapter underscores the challenges and opportunities in studying abstract concepts like beauty, advocating for combining various analytical methods to capture their full complexity. Using real data and examples, the author demonstrates the practical applicability of these methods, enriching the analysis and providing a holistic view of how beauty is perceived and understood in natural language (Demuthová, 2023). Overall, the chapter presents a high-quality analysis of beauty's connotations, exemplifying high-quality scholarly work in this field.

The chapter "Considering the Emotion of Disgust in the Context of Terminology" by Renáta Kišoňová examines the multifaceted nature of disgust, including its evolutionary, biological, and social contexts (2023, p. 83). It highlights disgust's role as a protective mechanism against disease and its influence on social and moral behaviour. Through literary works like Sartre's "Nausea" and Han Kang's "The Vegetarian," the text illustrates how disgust relates to existential and societal issues. Research on visual and sensory triggers of disgust is discussed, along with its impact on perception, behaviour, and moral judgements. The chapter offers a comprehensive view of disgust's relevance to human psychology and social interactions (Kišoňová, 2023). This chapter presents a less extensive etymological and semantic analysis than the previous chapters, which is not necessarily a drawback, as it allows for a concise analysis of this concept. However, while the selection of three works for analysis is good, it would be more appropriate to explain why these particular works were chosen.

The chapter "Spiritual and Theological Discernment of Good and Evil" by Lubomír Batka provides an in-depth analysis of discerning between good and evil, highlighting its importance in spirituality, morality, legality, and theology (2023, p. 103). It associates

good with attributes like wholeness and progress, and evil with negativity and destruction, emphasising discernment's role in making moral and healthy choices. The chapter explores discernment in legal, moral, and metaphysical realms, each with its own standards, such as the Bible in Protestant theology. It delves into Biblical teachings on true and false prophets, stressing spiritual experiences and referencing historical figures like Augustine and Martin Luther, who shaped spiritual discernment practices. The text discusses Augustine's analyses of sin and evil and Luther's emphasis on faith and the priesthood of all believers, highlighting the necessity of grace and faith in theological discernment. It examines discernment in daily Christian life, focusing on inner reflection, prayer, and aligning one's will with divine guidance, underscoring the process of *metanoia* (change of thinking). The chapter integrates historical, theological, and practical perspectives on discernment, emphasising continuous spiritual growth and its practical implications for individual and communal Christian living (Batka, 2023). However, the text may be dense and complex for readers without a strong theological background, and the focus on historical figures might overshadow contemporary perspectives. Despite lacking a conclusion, the chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the spiritual and theological understanding of good and evil, fitting well into the book as a whole.

The last chapter, "The Relevance of Legal Intuitionism and Selected Moral Emotions in Legal Thinking and Decision-Making Processes," by Olexij M. Meteňkanyč represents the most interesting part for lawyers. In this chapter, the author explores legal intuitionism, explaining its development in legal philosophy and characterising the works of important legal philosophers such as Posner and Hutcheson (2023, p. 121). The concluding chapter highlights the significance of intuitive and emotional decision-making in law, challenging the traditional focus on rationality. It shows how intuition influences judges' decisions and suggests that legal education should integrate insights from psychology and sociology. The author emphasises the need for a balance between rational and emotional aspects of legal thinking and the role of moral emotions like anger in shaping justice (Meteňkanyč, 2023, p. 156-157). This chapter successfully combines insights from psychology, sociology, and law, providing a comprehensive perspective on legal decision-making. It challenges the traditional overemphasis on rationality, advocating for a balanced view that includes intuition and emotions (Meteňkanyč, 2023). The practical implications for judges and legal education are relevant and forward-thinking, aiming to develop well-rounded legal professionals. The discussion on moral emotions like anger adds depth, recognising their impact on legal processes.

In general, the book contains extensive and innovative studies on the issue of emotions, which need more attention from legal theorists as well. One of the standout features of this work is its interdisciplinary approach. By integrating insights from psychology, philosophy, linguistics, and legal theory, the authors provide a holistic view that is essential for the multifaceted nature of legal practice. For instance, the exploration of disgust in both literary and contemporary contexts offers a profound understanding of how emotions influence moral judgments and social interactions, which are crucial in cases involving, for example, moral turpitude or social deviance. Overall, "A Conceptual and Semantic Analysis of the Qualitative Domains of Aesthetic and Moral Emotions" is a significant contribution to the legal field. Its interdisciplinary approach, detailed semantic analysis, and practical implications make it an indispensable resource for legal scholars, practitioners, and anyone interested in the intersection of law, emotion, and ethics. The insights provided by Demuth and Demuthová and other authors not only enhance our understanding of human emotions but also pave the way for a more empathetic, nuanced, and effective legal system. It is also necessary to highlight the fact that the team of the Department of Theory of Law and Philosophy of Law of the Faculty of Law

of Comenius University Bratislava participated in the book, which is unique for Slovak law faculties. Legal scholars from departments devoted to legal theory, jurisprudence, and philosophy of law should also place more emphasis on an external, scholarly view of law.

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