

Sin On-yi

Abstract

Perceptual theories of emotions hold that emotions are analogous to perceptions. A branch of this approach thinks that just as perceptions give us access to the descriptive aspects of reality, emotions give us access to the evaluative properties of objects. According to the “capture and consumption” model, emotions make salient otherwise unnoticed evaluative aspects of an object. However, scepticism as to the epistemic credential of emotions has gained currency recently. In particular, Monteleone (2017) argues that emotions have, essentially, non-cognitive functions, and therefore are systematically prone to distorting one’s evaluative judgments. Emphasizing the centrality of emotions in moral perception, Confucianism might see resonance in evaluative perceptualism about emotions. In this paper, I will first explore to what extent the Mencian view about moral sentiments can be assimilated to evaluative perceptualism. I will then develop a Mencian response to Monteleone’s challenge.