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WELCOME

Prof. Henry Peter, Head of the Geneva Centre for Philanthropy

PANEL

Prof. David Sander, Head of CISA (Swiss Center in Affective Sciences), University of Geneva

Dr. Emma Tieffenbach, lecturer in Philosophy of Philanthropy, Academic fellow of the Geneva Centre for Philanthropy

Prof. Giuseppe Ugazio, Assistant Professor, Edmond de Rothschild Foundations Chair in behavioural philanthropy

Prof. Florian Cova, Laureat FNS Eccellenza Professorial Fellowship 2018 in philosophy, Faculty of Humanities and CISA, University of Geneva

Q&A

Moderated by **Prof. David Sander**

CONCLUSION

Prof. David Sander

UPDATE

Mrs. Laetitia Gill, Executive Director of the Geneva Centre for Philanthropy

WELCOME - Prof. Henry Peter

“Honored” and “delighted” are the words chosen by Professor Henry Peter to introduce this Philanthropy Lunch, welcoming the numerous participants and emphasizing the quality of the panel.

Prof. Peter highlights that today's debate on “ Why do people give ?” will be discussed from a multidisciplinary perspective, in line with the spirit of the Geneva Centre for Philanthropy (GCP): in the view of the Centre, Philanthropy needs to be studied not only from a financial and economical standpoint, as it is often done, but also from the perspective of Psychology to Philosophy, from Neuroscience, to Behavioural Economics, etc.).

He then introduces Professor David Sander, head of the Swiss Centre for Affective Sciences (CISA), Director of the E3 laboratory (on the elicitation & expression of Emotions) and full professor of Psychology of the University of Geneva, who will moderate this Lunch discussion.

PANEL

To follow up, Prof. Sander shares how extremely happy he is to be moderating this panel, and presents the speakers and today's issue by adding that this subject had been left as an open question during the previous Philanthropy event (held last 10 December) at Campus Biotech. Thus, to answer this question, the GCP and the CISA, decided in this day to bring together three experts, with expertise on this topic.

First, Prof. Giuseppe Ugazio, assistant professor, Edmond de Rothschild Foundations in behavioural philanthropy. Using experimental methods in Neural and Behavioral Science, his research focuses on understanding the decision mechanisms underlying social decision-making and moral values. He holds two doctorates in Philosophy and in Neuroeconomics from the University of Zurich.

Second, Prof. Florian Cova, assistant professor in the Swiss Centre for Affective Sciences in the University of Geneva. By mixing Philosophy and Psychology, his research focuses essentially on moral and aesthetic judgment. Previously, he studied at the ENS ("Ecole Normale Supérieure") and in the EHESS ("Haute Ecole en Sciences Sociales") in Paris and holds a doctorate in Philosophy.

Finally, Dr. Emma Tieffenbach, lecturer on moral philosophy, philosophy of Mind, and philosophy of economics at the university of Geneva. Her research combines four different fields: History, Economics, Philosophy and Social Sciences. She holds a doctorate in Philosophy.

Prof. Giuseppe Ugazio: Moral and Financial Values in the Brain

According to Professor Ugazio, to understand why do people give, we need to understand what are the underlying motivations of philanthropy; in other words, where and how does our brain represent these motivations, whether they are moral or financial/material preferences? How do both influence behavior? How these two interact at the moment of making an altruistic decision? More specifically, are moral and material motives equivalent?

To illustrate this point to the audience, he takes the example of organs donations combining moral (ex. save someone else life) and/or financial motives (ex. could I receive money for the latter donation). This trade-off between material costs and moral values is emblematic of altruistic decisions, and by analyzing behavior some findings suggested that these two typed of value are not equivalent. Indeed, it seems that certain types of values (such as the value of a human life) are represented by different processes in the brain compared to material values (such as the value of money). For instance, it was found that adding a monetary incentive to a moral decision, such as accepting to host in one's community some toxic waste (Frey & Jegen (2000)), lead to the opposite effect one may expect: people were less willing to incur the cost when monetary incentives were present compared to when the decision relied solely on moral grounds.

To go further, Prof. Ugazio and his team, through a neuroscientific imaging technic (fMRI) determined which areas representing the values of financial or human lives.

First of all, they investigated the value of money by using delay discounting tasks (smaller sooner reward vs. larger later reward). In agreement with previous literature, they found activation in the Medial Prefrontal Cortex and in the Ventral Striatum. On the other hand, concerning the value of the human life, by looking at the neural correlates of moral dilemmas, they found activation in a different region that is the Temporal Parietal Junction, known to be involved in social evaluation and social interaction but not in any type of value computation, thus this opens up some very interesting axes of research for the future.

To sum up his presentation, Prof. Ugazio highlights why it is important to study this topic by giving us three implications in the present and next research:

1. First, targeting individual differences in sensitivity to different types of incentives (trade off of moral and financial values).
2. Then, studying how to complement different kinds of incentives, in order to avoid having the opposite effect (cf. Frey & Jegen, 2000)

3. Finally, in Philanthropy, as well as in Sustainable Finance, anticipating and avoiding crowding-out effects.

As a conclusion, he thanks the audience, his colleagues and also the Geneva finance research institute, the Geneva Centre for Philanthropy and the Edmond de Rothschild foundations.

Prof. Florian Cova: Transcending the self? Positive emotions & Philanthropic behavior

According to Professor Cova, thanks to several experimental evidences, it is undeniable that emotions play a major role in motivating Altruistic and Philanthropic behaviors. However, research has so far focused mainly on one particular kind of philanthropy: Nonprofit organization to help people in need, with an emphasis on pity and empathy (i.e. negative reactions to the suffering of these people). So, Prof. Cova insists on the fact that we need to go beyond charity and negative emotions in order to advance research in this field, in order to understand the motivations behind a wide variety of philanthropy organism dedicated to other causes such as promoting art, culture, science, protecting nature, etc. that are not related to negative emotions. The main goal of his project is to explore all the donation behaviors by focusing this time on the positive values, ideals and transcendent emotions such as **Gratitude** (Reaction to act of kindness directed towards the self, that has been shown to induce a motivation to help the person who helped you but also to help other persons, as a spillover effect), **Elevation** (Reaction to act of moral virtue which induces a motivation to become a better person, and thus to help others), **Awe** (Reaction to objects greater than us such as mountains, astronomy, etc. and, most importantly, **“Being moved”** (the central emotion of his presentation) to understand how these positive emotions can lead to less selfish behavior and more donation behaviors. Being moved has only been recently studied in Geneva, thus there exist only a few of studies on it. This positive emotion would be elicited by core, important values, accompanied by a warm feeling in the heart, a lump in the throat, tears (≠ sadness), and a motivation to focus on what really matter to us (such as heroic actions, natural landscapes, art, sportsman who reach victory after a lot of efforts, etc.).

Furthermore, prior studies suggest that what moves us depends on our own personal values. So, the Prof. Cova and his team, investigated in their study, if the emotion of “being moved” could be a predictor of donations to specific charities. Their hypothesis is that what you are moved by, will predict what you give to. To do so, they created a scale which measure how being moved you are (general items: I often feel moved; I often shed tears of joy; etc.), including also five specific sub-scales (about social, moral, nature, art, effort and perseverance content) in order to measure people’s tendency of being moved by different topics. Participants were also interrogated on their real-life behaviors about how much and to who they gave. So, this project has opened a brilliant reflection on understanding of why people give and how positive emotions plays a role in donations behaviors. Indeed, it highlights the fact that philanthropic behaviors are not only based on negative content but could also be led by positive ideals, positive view of the future world.

Dr. Emma Tieffenbach: Warm glow Altruism

Dr. Tieffenbach starts her talk with inspiring testimonies and pledges from well-known movements (i.e. “Giving What We Can”, “Giving Gladly” by Julia Wise or “Effective Altruism” with Toby Hord), and activists’ quotes from William MacAskill, and Henry Spira, the “warm glow” tone was set.

Indeed, there is one thing that donors express is pleasure of giving, even those who declare having a rational approach to charity in optimizing the welfare return of every dollar (see. EA movement) succumbed to the pleasure to give. This is defined as the “helper’s high”, aka the “warm glow of giving” i.e. that « giving feels good ».

However, we know well that giving does not always feel good. The paradox here, is that this philanthropic behavior includes at the same time feelings of frustration, regret, loss, sacrifice (evoked by some) at the same time as feelings of happiness felt during the donation.

Thus, during her speech, the Dr. Tieffenbach, helps us understanding: what are the insight from the Science of Giving? And do we consider the “Warm glow Altruism” as the goal or a side-effect of philanthropic behaviors?

First of all, Dr. Tieffenbach, sums up in five rules the contributions of the science of giving. The purpose of this analysis is to identify the circumstances in which giving does feel good, due to the fact that for the last twenty years, the hypothesis that people give in order to feel good has attracted a lot of attention.

So, according to the literature, spending money on others would be more rewarding when:

1. The choice to give is voluntary (increased brain activity in reward circuits. Cutler, 2019)
2. One believes that one is making a difference (Aknin, 2013).
3. It is given to charity that is near one's heart (Berman et al. 2018; Breeze 2010).
4. One can identify the recipient of one's donations specifically rather than statistically (Small and Loewenstein, 2003, 2007; Fethersonhaugh et al. 2007).
5. Multiply good feeling episodes by giving often and to several organizations (Null, 2011).

Secondly, another crucial aspect about the Warm-glow whether the warm glow is the reason why people give or just a side effect. Are donors motivated by the prospect of doing good to others or by the desire to feel better about themselves? If donors had not cared at all for the welfare of their beneficiaries, how could they derive any pleasure from having made these donations? The very fact that donors feel satisfaction from giving may show that they have a pre-existing desire for something other than their own pleasure. It is important to investigate the latter point, because this would allow us to get an answer to the question "Why do people give?", to determine if the "Warm-glow feeling" should be used as a rule of thumb in fund-raising and to argue about "does warm-glow donors deserve less praise than other kind of donors?".

To conclude, Dr. Tieffenbach underlines the fact that there are numerous practical (see. Nudging) and empirical knowledge accumulated about the "Warm glow Altruism", however the phenomenon remains largely unknown.

Q&A

During this panel discussion moderated by Prof. Sander, these three experts discuss about the importance of values and emotions in Philanthropy. First of all, they discuss about, do we always give because it feels good? Are emotions the only motivators? As a necessary condition, if we don't have emotions, will we give? In others words, do we need emotions?

To this, Prof. Ugazio answers that he does not see emotions as a necessary component, because there are many situations in which we just want to help due to moral duty, it is required to do so, emotions have rather a role to increase the desire to help.

As for, Prof. Cova, similarly, he thinks that we do not need to be moved to give. Values by themselves could lead to behaviors, if we care about human life, we will give to help some people in need. Emotions could potentialize these values and translate them in a more concrete manifestation.

According to Dr. Tieffenbach, someone without any values (relating to life, justice, environment, etc.) would not give. But she underlines the importance of studying and accessing these values.

With regard to the public, the questions are as follows:

- From Mr. Firoz Ladak, CEO of the Edmond de Rothschild Foundations, are values the first factors taking into account by foundations? Prof. Ugazio replies that yes, his main timeline is how could we do good, and then precise the most common values and functions of foundations (similarly to NGO).
- From Henry Peter, Head of the Geneva Centre for Philanthropy, where would you place the moral "duty" to give compared to the place of notions and drivers presented today? Prof. Sander, answers that it's a very important question considering the role of values in donations but are there specific value to push us to act? Such, the social responsibility.

Others questions:

- Do we study this topic to better “manipulate” the givers through campaigns? Ethical point answered by Prof. Cova, he said that indeed on a side effect, we might learn how could we manipulate donators but it's clearly not the first goal.
- What are the functions of being a philanthropist across societies and cultures? Prof. Ugazio replies that one of his next purpose is to conduct a study on this.
- What about guilt and self-interest in the strategic campaign? Prof. Cova answers that guilt it is an emotion studying in Geneva, essentially in sustainable behavior. And this emotion could clearly be a main driver in Philanthropy. Moreover, Dr. Tieffenbach adds that the “US queen of Philanthropy, Agnes Gund, often says that “Guilt” having greatly encouraged her to improve and fight racial discrimination in the American judicial system.
- How to transform people in better donors? Prof. Cova answers that working on empathy to make people more altruistic appears like a good option. Nethertheless, Prof. Ugazio recommends, in order to not restricting ourselves to a single point of view to promote diversity, for instance while one could propose to increase empathy there are reasons to think such an approach could back-fired, as illustrated by the book “Against Empathy: The case for rational compassion” by Paul Bloom.

CONCLUSION

Prof. Sander comes to the conclusion that there are several empirical studies in Philanthropy on the interesting role of values, of some specific positive emotions, and of the warm-glow effect. The notion of moral duty and social responsibilities also appears as subjects of primary interest in the coming years. So, according to Prof. Sander, there are many reasons to give, but it seems that there is also a natural way to give when we feel concerned about the causes.

Mrs. Laetitia Gill, Executive Director of the Geneva Centre for Philanthropy, concludes in thanking the panel and guests, and in highlighting the role and current activities of the Geneva Centre for Philanthropy: Teaching, Research and Publications, and next events to come. www.unige.ch/philanthropie