

## ABSTRACT

The aim of the present thesis is to work out, in a systematic manner and in as clear and accurate terms as possible, an answer to the question: *what is emotion?* Many answers to this question have already been proposed, but, as I endeavor to show, none of them are adequate. The available theories either fail to recognize what sort of “thing” emotion is and therefore miss the mark completely, or they determine this accurately, albeit not explicitly, but then reduce emotion to some other phenomenon within the same domain, such as perception, thought or motivation. In contrast, I endeavor to show, firstly, that emotion is a *mental phenomenon*, and not, say, an experiential state, a brain process, or a complex event that involves the entire organism; secondly, that emotion is a mental phenomenon *sui generis*, that is, a mental phenomenon that has its own unique nature and role and is, as such, irreducible to any other mental phenomenon; and, finally, what exactly emotion, as a mental phenomenon *sui generis*, is as far as its specific nature is concerned. As such, I work out a complex and systematic account of the nature of emotion.