Evolution and selfishness

(This paper is not a paper; in other words, not even a draft. It is a compilation of different themes I have been thinking of during the last months. Being a compilation, the different "chapters" are not coherent. When I made changes in some chapters, these changes would have entailed that I change the content in other chapters too. But I have not had the time to do so. There are therefore all sorts of incongruences and unnecessary repetitions. I hope that the text can still function as a basis for a discussion.)

Introduction

First of all I want to make some programmatic points; points that I think have a philosophical motivation though I can not get into those motivations in the present paper. - I do not see how one could say that animals lack every aspect of what is meant by moral understanding. Further, I do not think that moral understanding appeared in its completeness at some point of time in a mysterious way and that it is "conceptually impossible" to say anything about this appearance because we, supposedly, cannot bridge the gap between having and not having moral concepts. I am, however, critical of the current accounts of moral evolution and I do think that the problems in these accounts are connected to what I take to be a problematic, logocentric idea about conceptuality. In evolutionary psychology (EP) this view involves, very abstractly put, that moral evolution is seen as an evolution of computational abilities in the brain. (Logocentrism is of course a matter of degree and it stretches its tentacles well into philosophies that profess to criticise logocentrism. How far I will address this issue is uncertain at this stage.)

What logocentrism misses is a fact that is as certain as it is unscientific, namely that life is first of all a manifestation of a desire to live. This desire is not identical with the desire of sexual reproduction, though the latter certainly is an extension of the former. The fact that genes reproduce themselves; try to produce ever more intense forms of life, is another aspect of the desire to live. In short, whatever mechanisms we find in the organisms under study, we must remind ourselves of the fact that they are all aspects of the desire to live. What I say here is not the same as Nietzsche's idea of life as will to power, for I
would not equate the desire to live with power. Nietzsche's idea is closer to some aspects of EP, though I am not going to deal with this question.

No distinction between different forms of selfishness are made here. I hope that the reason for this will become clear by and by. To speak about evolutionary, psychological and moral selfishness is misleading in the sense that the concept of selfishness is important only in its moral sense. Reproductive efficiency or psychological motivation are, to the extent they make sense, irrelevant to a moral outlook (and here I anticipate the outcome of the forthcoming discussion). Evolutionary and psychological selfishness could without loss of meaning be replaced by other concepts.

There appear to be some difficulties with establishing contact between moral thinking and EP. For instance, moral philosophers might point to cases of moral behaviour where the descriptions and definitions of EP do not apply. However, an evolutionary psychologist who accepted such conceptual remarks would not necessarily have any troubles with them. She could say simply that the instances of moral behaviour described in the examples are not adaptive, i.e. cannot be understood in terms of natural selection. Thus, it seems as if moral philosophers who wish to discuss EP must discuss cases that are taken to be adaptive. This, however, might also be a problem. In a recent conference presentation, Jack Vromen claimed that evolutionary selfishness has no connection to what he called psychological selfishness (Vromen 2009). If Vromen is right, this would seem to imply generally, that concepts relevant to evolution do not have moral implications. I do have some sympathy for Vromen's claim, but if evolutionary psychologists really want to accept Vromen's thesis, they will have to accept a rather awkward outcome: that EP has no connection to morals and that it therefore cannot achieve a goal which according to some evolutionary psychologists is essential, namely to show that a "universal moral grammar underlies our judgements of right and wrong". (Hauser 2007, p. xvi.) It is not clear to me what Vromen's intention is, but if it is to say that when evolutionary psychologists speak about selfishness, this should not be confused with its moral (or, as he would say, psychological) meaning, then he would have to acknowledge the broader consequence, namely that EP is irrelevant to moral psychology. I will, however, assume that giving an account of moral behaviour is part of the EP
project and that the somewhat perplexing uses of "selfish" that occur in EP are connected to this ambition. If EP is to succeed with this project, there must be some point of contact between moral understanding and behaviour that has been subject to natural selection. It seems, that the way this point of contact has so far been understood from the perspective of EP, has been confused. One can find tendencies that are in keeping with Hauser's explicitly stated aim to give an account of morality and tendencies to take a distance to moral issues and understand concepts such as co-operation, reciprocity, altruism and selfishness in a purely economic way (cost versus gain of individual fitness).

Given this, it is not all that easy to know how the common ground, if there is such a thing, between moral understanding (I will speak about moral understanding rather than moral behaviour unless there is a particular reason to do otherwise) and evolutionary accounts should be characterised. This difficulty cannot be referred only to philosophers who, as the story often goes (ref*), fail to understand the theoretical intentions of evolutionary psychologists, but also to the latter who in their theoretical preoccupations do not realise that what they are talking about does not connect to moral understanding. Many scientists (and philosophers too) seem to take it for granted that language consists essentially of more or less stable, general and successful theoretical concepts. If one subscribes to this Quinean view of language, the fact that EP-accounts do not meet with moral understanding seems unproblematic, for moral issues are perhaps taken to be "proximal causes" (causes in the close environment) as against "ultimate causes" (causes that are under the pressure of natural selection) that need not be part of psychological motivation. More generally, scientific concepts are seen as neutral bearers of meanings that are purely logical in nature. For instance, "guilt" is thus understood as a concept that simply refers to the feeling that people "have" when they have performed a "forbidden action". The feeling is like an alarm lamp that is "triggered" by the recognition that it is forbidden, the concept guilt is like a name that refers to the alarm lamp-forbiddenness connection.

This monophonic view is simply wrong, but it is, for several reasons, not easy to show why this is so. Put abstractly, the difficulty is, on the one hand, to manage to make its proponents to take a step back and not take for granted
those things they are prone to take for granted and, secondly, to realise how language is interwoven with the way things appear to us at all and, finally, to see how moral understanding concerns issues that are difficult to face and admit - for instance in the way forgiveness is difficult. Another side of this moral difficulty is that there is a whole system of avoidance in our language. Often words have repressed meanings that are not part of their ordinary use. This is easier to see when one contemplates the "odd" aspects of foreign cultures - such as the taboo-character of "honour" in some cultures - but it is important to realise that one's own culture is no different even if the taboos may differ. The importance of this remark is that it undercuts a central thesis in EP, namely that ordinary language is rather simple because it does not have access to the unconscious thought processes that "make" ordinary language and thinking to what they are. Once we uncover these deep and hidden thought processes we might, so it is claimed in EP, view morals in an entirely new way.

By showing the importance of a dynamic concept of the unconscious we also point to the fact that the moral views a person tends to adopt are exposed to the pressure of not wanting to acknowledge their true meaning. Peoples' views succumb to different degrees to that pressure. Thus, every time some morally related concept is given an important role in scientific theory, there is the risk that the concept is more or less morally biased or, to make a slightly different point; that it is ideological. Ideology is perceptible in the very delicate role that political theories, feminist ideas, collective ideas, religion, morals. etc. have in EP. Yet, these issues are easier than moral issues and this is just because they are ideological, i.e., common. The underlying moral problems are the really hard ones that are systematically repressed on the social level. This is because they are about the I-you relationship which is the "hardest" relationship there is. However, I will get into this issue of repression only at a later stage (not in this paper/chapter). For now, I will try to establish a common ground between EP and moral philosophy by discussing the account Marc D. Hauser gives in his *Moral Minds-How nature Designed Our Universal Sense of Right and Wrong* (2007). Hauser's theory is suitable just because it quite explicitly states that the aim of EP is to explain moral behaviour.
**A pure selfishness?**

One of the most important discussions in EP concerns the meaning and role of selfishness, its connection to altruism and co-operation and its assumed role as fundament of moral behaviour. My main point in this chapter is that selfishness cannot be assumed to be a foundation for all moral behaviour and that caring for others cannot be an extension of selfishness. This is because what we mean with selfishness is precisely something that fails to take account of other’s needs. On the other hand, when we characterise an action as selfish, we do not claim that it is completely or purely selfish, whatever that is, but that it is reproachably selfish. In other words, in the conceptual sense, "selfishness" means roughly "to ignore the other" but this conceptual meaning does not involve that the actual action in the context where "selfish" is used would be purely selfish. Thus, even when we blame a person for being kind to a child only because it reminds her of her own child, we do not allege her attitude is purely selfish. The drawing of the analogy between the foreign child and one's own child presupposes something that is not selfish. - I will elaborate these points in different ways below, since I think it is important that we do not smuggle in something that is not selfish under the concept of selfishness.

In everyday talk we would call it selfish if a person cares for somebody else's child only because it reminds the person of her own children. This does not, however, involve any idea of pure selfishness. It only means that according to our everyday understanding a person should care *more* about other's children than just seeing them as extensions of her own. Still, one can say that the very impulse to see the analogy between one's own children and other children is a non-selfish impulse. Only, according to our normal standards this is not thought to be enough. One could go even further and say that if a person cares about her own child this involves a non-selfish aspect and this is so even if she would care for the child only because she thinks of it as an extension of herself. For even in this case the person displays an understanding that cannot be understood in terms of the concept of pure
selfishness. In other words, we do not find any pure concept of selfishness in our moral vocabulary even if we can extract such a concept from our ordinary use. When we characterise an action as selfish, and this is so even when we say "He was completely ruthless!", we do not mean that the action completely lacks consideration for the other, but that it lacks such consideration to an unacceptable degree. This is of some importance.

Consider the following idea: "What we must understand is how a selfish core can sometimes, maybe often, develop into deep regard and respect for others." (Hauser 2006, p. 274.) Since Hauser wants to explain the evolution of morals, he must assume that selfishness does not contain any regard for other persons, but that it can, due to growing intelligence, develop into a regard for others; into morality. This means that he cannot use the usual, moral concept but must start from a notion of pure selfishness - a notion the meaning of which is unclear. This notion, whatever else it is, must not contain what it sets out to explain and yet it cannot be identical with empirical phenomena that are simply unconnected to moral issues. "Pure selfishness" must in other words contain something that is not moral but that could conceivably transform itself to something moral. I will try to see if one could make sense of that idea.

A good candidate is the very strong, benevolent feelings that people have towards their own offspring. Could this, first of all, be viewed as a total lack of regard for others? Secondly, is there something in it that could still conceivably develop into moral understanding? We immediately run into difficulties here. The person who cares only for her offspring does care for another person. Why should we call this pure selfishness? And if we do, how should we characterise a person who does not even care for her own offspring? Is it not the latter who is perhaps "purely" selfish? Or perhaps we can find other forms of ruthlessness that are even more selfish? - It is not important for me to try to follow this path any longer.

Now, of course, a person who does not take care of her offspring will probably not pass on her genes. That simply cannot, an evolutionary biologist would probably say, be to the self-interest of any individual (ref.*?). Here it is taken for granted that disseminating one's genes is a criterion for self-interest and selfishness. But let us keep these concepts apart and discuss only selfishness for the moment.
The fact that creatures who desert or eat their offspring will, most often, not spread their genes (I ignore that certain species in fact do eat their offspring) does not prove that taking care of the offspring must be selfish. The underlying idea here is that being selfish is positively advantageous to the individual while regarding others, usually called altruism, is by default costly. In moral terms this idea is unsustainable for it is simply an instance of corrupt thinking.¹ If we are to use such a fishy concept in EP, there must be very good reasons for doing that. These are precisely what I find lacking. Not only is there nothing that forces us to say that caring for one's offspring is selfish but, it is, on the contrary, impossible to make that idea intelligible (for remember; the fact that in ordinary talk we reproach and characterise as selfish a person who cares only for her own offspring, does not entail that caring about one's offspring is purely selfish). Perhaps at this point a distinction between selfishness and self-interest would be in order. This is because we seem to face different ways of describing what is beneficial to an individual or a group.

The concept of self-interest is often used as a synonym for selfishness. I think that this is a mistake. You could not substitute selfish interest for own interest in the sentence "It is to your own interest not to be selfish." One could however say "It serves your selfish goals better if you are not selfish all the time" but this means something else. The latter sentence is strategic while the first one is moral. The moral sentence tries to make a person see that she looses something important in life if she is selfish. Of course we also use "self-interest" in a way where it means roughly the same as "selfish", but it can also be used in ways where it has a different meaning. One could say that speaking about the interests of a person cannot be identified with any particular moral attitude (such as being selfish) that the person might have. If I talk about what I think is to my interest, I might do well to listen to others, to be self-critical, to reflect and weigh different possibilities, etc. I might not see my own interests very well - perhaps not even if someone else points them out to me. In short, to speak about self-interest, and interest generally, is to speak

¹ In moral philosophy there are similarly confused ideas. Self-love has been taken to be a concern for oneself while love for others (in the Kantian sense of practical love) has been identified with moral undertstanding. Self-love has usually not been equated with selfishness because it has been thought that an appropriate amount of self-love is commendable. See for instance Kant *. 
in a broad way about what might in different respects be good for an individual or a group. Self-interest is not the same as the agents own thoughts about and attitudes to her self-interest. If we speak about the self-interest of an organism we do not speak about the actual urges and capabilities of the organism. It would be to the self-interest of the Giant Pandas to eat something else besides bamboo. To adopt the perspective of interests is to adopt a particular or general perspective of flourishing of an individual or group. Therefore, to speak about interests does not coincide with evolutionary facts. The Giant Panda, in fact, eats almost exclusively bamboo. The concept of interest is part of our trying to make sense of evolutionary processes: "How could it be beneficial for the Giant Panda to have specialised to feed on bamboo?" If we did not adopt this moral aspect of the flourishing of species and organisms we could not find out very much about them.

The inherent moral meaning in "self-interest" makes the concept unsuitable for accounting for the evolution of morals. It already contains what is supposed to be explained. In this sense "self-interest" is, or should be, uninteresting from the point of view of EP. If, again, we use it as a synonym to selfishness, it must be the concept of pure selfishness. Otherwise what EP wants to explain is once again already presupposed.

"Selfishness" is a concept that we use in order to attach attention to a certain moral attitude in the agent. What attitude? First of all, "selfish" usually does not contain any assessment about the efficiency or adequacy of the moral attitude. The selfish action is one where an individual wants something for herself in a morally deplorable way, but the concept of selfishness does not involve the idea that the selfish action is good for the agent. There are basically two ways a selfish action can be bad for the agent. Firstly, being selfish might make others hostile and suspicious so it may not pay off. This is of course the perspective of EP. Secondly, even if the selfish action achieves its goals, it may be unhappy for the agent. Moral reflection, in fact, is an effort to be clear about the way selfishness is unfortunate also for the agent. When Socrates says that it is better to suffer than to do injustice (ref.*) he points out something that Polus in the end agrees with (at least in terms of argument) even if he scorned the idea in the beginning.
In the first case, there is no moral reflection about what is good and bad for the agent. Instead, common ideas are taken for granted and other peoples' reactions to the common ideas are calculated with. This might give a correct result in a non-moral sense: One should not perform selfish actions that cause so much anger that they do not pay off. This is the perspective of both EP and Polus. Socrates does not accept this perspective. He wants to show that Polus has in a sense from the start accepted Socrates claim. What prevents Polus from realising this, is that, instead of reflecting on moral issues, he has simply adopted certain common opinions about morals. The ideology of these opinions may at first sight appear to be to the advantage of the agent ("the more power over others one can have, the better") but on reflection they are not. Though I do not think that Socrates, and Plato, manage to give the best possible account of the way ethics is to the self-interest of the individual, I think that their basic point is sound: morals is good for you. This point has been obscured in later moral philosophy, perhaps due to an over-emphasis on some unfortunate sides in Kant's ethics. In modern moral philosophy the idea that something is to the self-interest of an individual has been taken to involve that it is selfish. Moral understanding is, again, taken to be precisely unselfish. To be moral means here that an individual limits her will in relationship to other persons. To let one's will rage without limit would, in this view, be to maximise individual interests while to restrict this will is, in this view, an expression of moral understanding precisely because one, on the relevant occasions, places another person's interests before one's own. To be moral according to the contemporary conception of morals is, by and large, to be altruistic.

I think that one has the right to question this view about what the point of morals (I do not say "the reason to be moral") could be. What does it means to say that occasionally I must limit my will while on other occasions it is allowable, or even commendable, that I struggle to enforce my will as far as possible? Are the limitations, allowances and commendations part of an outlook that tries to establish social equilibrium? This would seem to collapse into the unreflected ideas of Polus and EP. To mention a different view, it could also be said that being moral is simply about acknowledging the meaning of our moral concepts: To be tolerant means, first of all, that one
accepts habits and forms of thinking that are different from one's own and, secondly, that one realises in what sense this is a moral recognition. But, as already Nietzsche made completely clear, our common moral concepts are frequently morally corrupt from the start ("tolerance" being one example) or then concepts are distorted in a corrupt way in our ordinary discourse (for instance "honesty" is often in all secrecy identified with gullibility, "loyalty" with lack of an own point of view, etc.). How can one judge which concepts and interpretations that are corrupt and which are not? I shall not deal with this issue here, but I hope it is clear that we are swimming in deep waters here.

The idea that morals is about altruism presupposes the idea that selfishness is the most advantageous option for the agent and that the moral option is somehow "higher" and transcendent in relationship to that "natural attitude". Thus contemporary moral philosophy, EP, and Polos all agree, that in terms of personal advantage, selfishness is the self-evident option and that moral action involves that one puts aside one's own benefit which is taken to be the object of the selfish attitude. The difference between deontic moral philosophers (or, more generally; conceptually oriented moral philosophers) and the rest is that the former think it is a "naturalistic fallacy" to ask why one should put aside one's own advantage for the advantage of others. This, however, is problematic as I indicated in the previous paragraph. Socrates and Plato showed that the question "what is good for me?" is a very difficult one. It is a question that does not even become addressed if one takes common ideas about morals - such as the idea that selfishness is to one's best self-interest - as given facts. This was the problem of Polos and this, I claim, is the problem of EP. At the deepest level the problem concerns the barely scrutinised assumption that the question "what is good for me?" is egoistic in character. This makes it impossible to ever make the relationship to the other intelligible. Philosophy has for hundreds of years struggled with trying to make sense of the existence of "other minds" and now EP is repeating this confused formula.

The question "what is good for me?" is, however, misleading and in a typically Platonic sense. Plato's concern was the virtue of the wise man, which is a self-centred perspective. Still, he also emphasised the question "what is
good?" and I think that when one thinks about this question more patiently, one will find out that what is good, is good for both you and me. The idea of altruism is as mistaken as the idea of selfishness. To reveal how this shows itself in EP will, however, take quite a few pages; this being the first round.

**Strong reciprocity and regarding others**

How, then, should one describe the fact that genes aim at reproducing themselves; is this a case of selfishness or self-interest? I would say neither. The gene simply creates mutations that under different forms of evolutionary pressure, mainly adaptive, aim at securing its own dissemination. But there is no aim here in the sense that there is no agent that has aims here. To speak about self-interest presupposes a capacity to evaluate different options, which is why I am reluctant to speak about self-interest in connection to animals. However, an organism could, at least in cases where it takes care of the offspring, be said to act in an unselfish way. This is because I think it is hard to make sense of animal behaviour without thinking that they care for their offspring. To care for someone else means that one adopts a non-selfish attitude to that individual.

Hauser (89-90) confuses our everyday moral notion of selfishness with pure selfishness. Without recognising it, he needs the latter notion in order not to presuppose prove what he wants to prove. But as I have tried to show, pure selfishness gets us nowhere. Hauser tries to create an impression of evolving morality by saying that reciprocal altruism is, as it were "still", selfish (I scratch your back if you scratch mine) though, as it were "already" other-regarding, while strong reciprocity is "already" altruistic. The difference turns out to be only that the former is directly selfish while the latter involves cooperation and is therefore indirectly selfish. Those who co-operate have, according to Hauser, “most at stake” and “the greatest interest” in cooperation (p. 90). Contrary to what Hauser seems to assume, this does not differ in any important sense from direct selfishness. Hauser's idea of strong reciprocity seems to be an instance of the strategic selfishness I sketched out above.
If we assume that organisms are selfish and that selfishness must be understood as "pure selfishness", then we see that strong reciprocity does not take us anywhere in moral terms. The same is obviously true about cooperation; it is not by itself moral. Murderers can co-operate. However, our everyday talk does not take any stand as to the question whether or not every form of co-operation would have to contain some degree of moral understanding. Whatever the case, from the point of view of EP one must nevertheless presuppose a completely amoral form of co-operation. Otherwise moral understanding is, once again, simply presupposed. Alternatively, it would have to be shown how co-operation necessarily includes moral understanding. This amounts to showing that the evolution of co-operation coincides with the evolution of moral understanding. I do not see how this could be.

The idea behind strong reciprocity is that it somehow takes us beyond selfishness to the moral domains: "Whereas we inherited a largely selfish nature from our ancestors, we also evolved a uniquely human psychology that predisposes us toward a different form of altruistic behavior: strong reciprocity." (Hauser 2007, p. 89.) (I will consider Hauser's curious specification "largely selfish", as a insignificant mistake.) The form of altruistic behaviour that Hauser contrasts with strong reciprocity is reciprocal altruism. Reciprocal altruism is selfish in a way that strong reciprocity, supposedly, is not. But, as I have shown, strong reciprocity takes us nowhere in moral terms. The scheme that Hauser, and EP in general, is working with seems clear: (i) simple selfishness, (ii) organisms recognise that other organisms can be immediately useful (reciprocal altruism), (iii) organisms realise that other organisms can, even if being costly immediately, be helpful in the long run (strong reciprocity), (iv) organisms develop systems of punishment in order to enhance co-operation and prevent free-riders (the first stage of morality). The idea seems to be that there is an increasing other-regarding tendency in this scheme and that this tendency forms the backbone of moral evolution. (The similarities between EP and Westermarck's ideas are obvious but I will come to that later on.) But what should one make of the notion of increasing other-regarding tendency? What does an increase in regarding other organisms consist in? How can one make sense of "increasing
regard for the other" in evolutionary terms? In terms of moral understanding we can conceive of degrees of caring for the other. We can think of a terrible disregard for the other, of ordinary kindness and of an uncompromising love for the other, just to mention three possibilities. Actually, I do not think that love can be understood in relative terms, but the fact that it can appear to be relative, loving more and loving less, is a problem internal to moral understanding. What I cannot see is how the idea of different degrees of caring for the other could have any meaning in terms of evolution.

Natural selection involves that a certain feature of the organism is exposed to a cost-benefit pressure. There is something about nutrition or reproduction that is costly. If this problem is solved it will lead to a reproductive benefit. It is generally acknowledged in evolutionary theory that co-operation can reduce costs and favour the reproduction of individual genes. But, as seen, co-operation does not by itself involve moral understanding. In fact, it is easy to picture such a change in circumstances, that competition rather than co-operation pays off in reproductive terms. When described in terms of EP-theory, what happens here has, of course, got nothing to do with morals. It is, in fact, impossible to imagine any evolutionary change that could have moral implications, i.e.: changes that would, qua their evolutionary character, involve morally relevant changes in regarding other organisms. The reason for this is more than clear: EP can, insofar as it depends on natural selection, account only for features that increase inclusive fitness (the ability to promote not only own offspring but genetically kindred individuals). This means that as soon as EP involves itself in accounts that do not rely on natural selection, it becomes unscientific and speculative. To claim for instance that human beings favour members of the family because it is an effect of kin selection (promoting genetically close individuals), is simply speculation.

It seems to me that the way I criticise EP, there is no need to consider the distinction between ultimate and proximal explanations. I shall say a little about why I think this is the case. So far, my criticism has addressed ultimate explanations, explanations that attempt to answer the question why a certain behaviour exists in the first place. "Why is there co-operation? - Because it increases inclusive fitness." Proximal explanations are for instance about the way co-operation functions so it would seem that the possible common
ground between EP and moral understanding is to be found here. But should not proximal explanations be equally strict when it comes to evolutionary functioning? This means that though proximal explanations are different from ultimate explanations, the former must be an elucidation of the latter and vice versa. Thus, a proximal explanation is an account of a mechanism that is taken to be efficient in terms of natural selection. The way the other is regarded in proximal explanations is, unsurprisingly, no different from the way the other is regarded in ultimate explanations. That is: the other is regarded as an entity that can, depending on the situation, be a competitor, someone who can be directly beneficial and someone who can be indirectly beneficial. The difference between ultimate and proximal explanations is that the latter involve, at some level, the intentions of an agent while this need not, and often cannot, be the case with ultimate explanations. Nevertheless, proximal explanations can only be about behaviour that gives fitness benefits. This has got nothing to do with morals.

The clan-members of a clan that has co-operated with another clan may make the correct decision from an EP-standpoint if they take advantage of a situation and annihilate the other clan. And even if such actions would not give the expected fitness benefits they would of course only be irrelevant, or dysfunctional from the point of view of EP. EP does not deal with morals. This may not be a surprising conclusion for moral philosophers, but I wanted to show some aspects of the concepts of selfishness, co-operation, reciprocity and the way they enter the explanatory space of EP. The next question I shall address is the one concerning altruism and what it means to regard others.

So far we have not really made contact with the concept of regarding others; not, that is, with any concept of a kind that would really amount to regarding others in a moral sense. Both reciprocal altruism and strong reciprocity are selfish from a moral point of view. The moral point of view does not, true, contain any absolutification of selfishness in these cases. The necessity for this absolutification arose because EP - at least if it is of a Hauserian kind - aims at explaining how morals evolves from selfishness. Given this, we had to make sure that moral meaning was not from the start smuggled into what was called selfishness. Our next move will be to see how
one could understand the moral concept of regarding others and how it relates to non-moral ways of relating to another person.

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References


Plato "Gorgias" *
