

Creditions, Biases and Reflection

Abstract:

Dual models of cognition are becoming a prevailing standard in attempt to represent and understand the functioning of the human mind. Basically these models distinguish between intuitive, spontaneous, and fast thinking, on one side; and reflective, controlled, and slow forms of reasoning, on the other. Since the seventies, the research program of Kahneman and Tverski, *Heuristics and Biases*, has tried to identify biases that hinder a right perception and judgement about reality. Even if some consensus has been reached about the traits of these two 'systems' or 'types' of human cognition, their origins, evolution and reach, the discussion goes on regarding other fuzzier aspects, like the current functionality of each type, and the normative aspects about which type should be more useful in which condition. The credition's program could benefit from taking stock of these developments. Indeed, some steps have been given in the field of 'cognitive science of religion', where that distinction has been a building block.

Unfortunately, the application of dual schemes in the cognitive study of religion has focused almost only in the intuitive side of this complex process. It's time to look at the whole way humans build and use beliefs from a more accurate perspective. To this end, integrating the model of credition with the studies of how biases and reflection interact could enrich our toolbox and provide a better guide into this dynamic process. Probably distinctions between first-order and second order thinking, or meta-cognition could be helpful. In that context, the role of emotions and culture – especially specialized cultures – helps to better understand how creditions move between both levels: the intuitive and the reflective.

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