

Political Emotions

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Introduction

Philosophers, cultural, social and political scientists are increasingly recognizing affectivity as an essential dimension of the political. Affectively charged political rhetoric, political strategies, and the global rise of populist and nationalist movements have contributed to this resurging interest in political affectivity (cf. Cossarini and Vallespín 2019). Yet, when one recent political economy bestseller's title reads *Nervous States: How Feeling Took Over the World* (Davies 2018), anybody who is at all familiar with the history of political philosophy from Plato and Aristotle through Hobbes, Spinoza, Rousseau, Montesquieu and, indeed, Kant, to contemporary postfoundational political theorists is likely to meet such a title with a raised eyebrow. Arguably it is not news that the political is deeply stirred by affect and emotions. But affectivity is not just some by-product of a properly “emotion-proof” (Demertzis 2013) political domain based on rational judgment, deliberation and (self-)interest, as some traditional liberal political theorists have suggested (Hirschman 1977; Holmes 1995)¹. Rather, the political—the realm in which we negotiate our plurality and differences with a view to freedom, power, individual autonomy, collective recognition or our forms of living-together—is essentially affective. In this respect, ‘the political’ must be distinguished from policy-making or ‘real politics’, where affectivity and emotions are typically also involved, but often just contingently so (cf. Slaby and Bens 2019). The political is affective because it fundamentally deals with what *matters* to us, what we value, fear or desire, or what *concerns* us—us as a polity. Conversely, the affective is always political, since emotions are not just subjective affairs but are governed by “feeling rules” (Hochschild 1983) and are modulated by shared or conflicting values. Hence, emotions always involve the negotiation of what, how, and with (or against) whom we *ought* to feel.

¹ See critically of this tradition Okin 1989; Walzer 2004; Hall 2005; Kingston 2011, and most recently Ginsborg and Labate 2019.

In the wake of the ‘affective turn’, political affect and emotions have been widely investigated in various research fields. Within cultural studies, there has been a special emphasis on gender, the ‘politics of affect,’ and power (Ahmed 2004; Thrift 2008; Butler 2009; Bargetz 2015). Political theorists have focused on the ambivalent role of emotions in liberal democracies, and on ‘hostile’ emotions and sentiments such as disgust, resentment, or hatred in the context of political tensions, nationalism, genocide, or transitional and post-conflict retributive justice processes (Hutchinson and Bleiker 2008; Hoggett and Thompson 2012; Crociani-Windland and Hoggett 2012; Demertzis 2013; Mihai 2016; Brudholm and Lang 2018). Political psychologists have targeted, for instance, the role of affects in voters’ behaviour, political judgment, campaigning, or in the context of (post-)war conflicts (Marcus 2002; Redlawsk 2006; Neuman et al. 2007; Åhäll and Gregory 2015). Sociologists addressed political emotions in activism and social and protest movements (Goodwin et al. 2001; Flam and King 2005; Jasper 2018), and social psychologists have investigated different affective and political reactions to in-group and out-group members based on emotional group identification (Clarke et al. 2006; Halperin 2016).

In philosophy, some have drawn on the work of the French philosopher Deleuze and on historical resources in Spinoza and Bergson for analyzing the “socio-somatic” (Protevi 2009), dynamic, and relational nature of political affect (Massumi 2015; Protevi 2014; Lordon 2016; Slaby 2017). Others have reassessed ancient Greek and further historical sources (Koziak 2000; Sokolon 2003; Hall 2005; Kingston and Ferry 2008) or aimed at bridging political philosophy or psychology with contemporary philosophy of emotions (Solomon 1995; Nussbaum 2013; Mohrmann 2015; Romano 2018).

This wide-ranging discussion can be broadly sorted into approaches that focus on emotions, and those that focus on affect. While emotions are usually construed as mental states with specific intentional contents or directed at specific affectively significant targets—for example fear, anger, shame, hatred, envy or indignation—affect is an ontologically broader and less specific category. This is especially so in the Spinoza- and Deleuze-inspired perspective prevalent in recent cultural studies and parts of continental philosophy. Within this context, affect is seen as a dynamic relationality between organic and non-organic bodies, comprising an ontological layer of reality prior to and formative of intentionally directed emotions (see Slaby and Mühlhoff 2019). Not surprisingly, these two approaches have rather little in common. In order to prevent confusion, and not least because there is a significant lacuna of philosophical discussions about the political nature of emotions, in the present chapter we focus on the political character of just these, leaving considerations about affect aside.²

² For an analysis of ‘political affect’ in a perspective indebted to Spinoza, Deleuze and Foucault, see Slaby and Bens 2019, which is effectively a sister article to the present one. Another recent alternative that is in many respects congenial to our account is Bens et al. 2019.

With regard to political emotions, there are several important issues that remain controversial and little understood: In what sense exactly is the political essentially tied to emotions? And what makes emotions political? Is it their public expression and recognition? Is it their reference to a political community and the sharedness of the concerns? How and by whom are political emotions felt? What is their normative function, and can they be appropriate or inappropriate? Are forms of antagonisms—along with their orientation to commonality—built into the very heart of political emotions *qua* political, as anti-liberal political theorists in the tradition of Carl Schmitt (1932) or post-foundational democracy theorists (Mouffe 2013; cf. Mihai 2014) claim?

To address these issues, we elaborate the conceptual preconditions that must be fulfilled such that the qualifier ‘political’ can be applied to emotions in the first place (sect. 1). We then sketch a multi-dimensional approach to political emotions³ and employ the concept of ‘collective affective intentionality’ as an explicative framework. We argue that political emotions in the robust sense constitute a subclass of collective emotions—collective emotions that disclose a shared concern of political import, claim public recognition and affectively and normatively modulate the emotional life of the members of a polity (sect. 2). Finally, we demonstrate how political emotions essentially contain an orientation towards—often contested or ‘agonistic’—forms of communalization (sect. 3).

1. Emotions and the Political: Preliminaries

In this section, we provide a provisional sketch of the relationship between emotions and the political. In order to approach political emotions, we start out from a construal of emotions as repeatable sequences of embodied relations—relations both among actors and between actors and environment. Most generally, what qualifies social relations as emotional is their systematic relatedness to *what matters*—to individuals as well as to collectives. As engagements with matters of concern emotional compartments inevitably raise questions with regard to what has—or should have—significance and what might or *should* be done about it. This lends emotions a complex normative dimension (see sect. 2.2).

Against this background, it is relatively easy to see that the political is non-contingently interlinked with emotions. No matter whether the political is understood in terms of formative power relations (Saar 2013), or in terms of the formation of collectives (see sect. 2), or in terms of human freedom (Arendt 1961) and contingency (Marchart 2007), or as antagonistic relations between collectives or social formations (Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Mouffe 2013)—emotions loom large in its affairs. Think of

³ Emotions in the sense employed here encompass both episodic (e.g., occurrent fear) and dispositional affective states, and in particular sentiments (e.g., hatred). We refrain here from discussions of the political moods, emotional climates or atmospheres; but as should become clear, they too can be integrated into our framework.

the aversive sentiments in an open political conflict, or of the enthusiasm accompanying political sea changes, or the fear, envy and resentment directed at powerful or wealthy factions in divided societies, hatred in intergroup and ethnic conflicts or feelings of solidarity within social movements. Likewise, consider the public outrage in response to manifest social injustice, or the “collective joy” (Ehrenreich 2007) that energizes grass-root political initiatives, or the tricks and techniques of emotional modulation employed strategically by expert politicians. But pointing to such cases is certainly not enough to see how ‘the political’ is essentially affective or how emotions can be counted as political emotions properly speaking.

We cannot revisit the debate about the nature of ‘the political’ in contradistinction to institutionalized ‘real politics’, as it has been conducted especially in French Theory informed political philosophy in recent decades (Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy 1997; Marchart 2007). Instead, we circle in on an interrelated cluster of issues that we deem central for determining the affective nature of the political and the political nature of political emotions (regardless of whether these issues might also be manifest in concrete political practices and institutions).

For a start, consider Hannah Arendt’s dictum that “freedom is the *raison d’être* of politics” (Arendt 1961, 146)⁴: Only beings who are not confined to natural necessity and thus capable of self-determination, however limited, have both the capacity and the need for politics. Accordingly, the political, for Arendt, is the dimension pertaining to the active determination of that which is not already determined for human collectives. The political is a collective engagement with contingency—a matter of *shaping the world* in certain ways.

The partial freedom from necessity that Arendt highlights implies a further key dimension of the political: the possibility, but also the need, to form alliances—to *act in concert*, as Arendt (1958) puts it—and also the all-too acute possibility of conflict and antagonism resulting from free beings encountering one another. Another crucial aspect is implied by Arendt’s general characterization: political concerns are only those that make some (implicit or explicit) claim to public recognition, where these claims are typically, but *pace* Arendt (1958) not necessarily, explicitly raised in a public sphere. Freedom, contingency, collectivity, antagonism and publicity—these are five different yet constitutively interlinked ‘names’ of the political.

Unsurprisingly, there are many rivaling accounts of the nature of the political. But the most foundational quarrel is the one between Arendt’s associative paradigm, where the political is at base a matter of commonality, collectivity or collective action, and the dissociative paradigm forcefully articulated by Carl Schmitt (1932; cf. Marchart 2007). For Schmitt, the essence of the political lies in the possibility to draw and enact the distinction between friend and enemy—i.e., association by dissociation. Accordingly, Schmitt defines the political in terms of the instituting power of the ever-

⁴ On Arendt’s otherwise critical and indeed deflationary account of the role of emotions for the political, esp. in Arendt 1961, see Mohrmann in this volume.

lurking possibility of, and indeed the preparedness and ability to, engage in conflict or war.

Regardless of which side one takes in the debate between Arendtians and Schmittians, what matters presently is just the broad contours of an understanding of the political shared by both camps. On the level of analysis needed for studying the general structure of political emotions, alliance, antagonism, contingency and (bounded) freedom operate *together* as a tension-riddled constellation that is characteristic of the political, whatever its particular manifestations.

2. Political Emotions: Collectivity and Normativity

Consider the following examples for political emotions: anger of state-employees in the face of cutting paid lunch-breaks, leading to nation-wide strikes; indignation of an affluent downtown apartment owner on behalf of precarious creative industry workers and low-income families in the neighborhood, who are forced to move due to steeply rising rents; resentment and feelings of powerlessness or hatred on the part of minorities over failed retributive justice in the wake of ethnic cleansing they have suffered; or a still simmering but growing hope for a future when humanity would come to terms with its failings and reverse climate change. What, if anything, do these emotions and sentiments, with such saliently different affective and political impact, power-relations and political stakes, have in common? And what makes them political in the first place?

In this section, we propose to answer these questions by first considering the intentional structure of political emotions, i.e., what philosophers of emotion call affective intentionality (Slaby 2008). Next, we will zero in on the distinctive and complex normative structure of political emotions.

2.1 *The Collective Affective Intentionality Account of Political Emotions*

Affective intentionality refers to the evaluative world-orientation of emotions, their capacity to disclose the world in light of specific concerns. The key point of the concept is that the *intentional* evaluation of objects, persons and events is intrinsically linked to their *affective* import for the subjects of those evaluations. Intentional evaluation and affective import are not two separate components of emotions. Rather, emotions are “feelings-towards” (Goldie 2000), or “felt evaluations” (Helm 2001). Moreover, the concerns, in the light of which felt evaluations gain their affective weight so as to *matter*, holistically hang together. They form more or less coherent patterns that constitute the overall emotional orientations of the subjects (cf. Helm in this volume).

Particularly relevant for our purpose is that some recent phenomenologically inspired work applies the concept of affective intentionality to collectives, and suggests a *collective affective intentionality* (CAI) account (Schmid 2009; Guerrero Sánchez 2016;

Thonhauser 2018; see Guerrero Sánchez in this volume). Now, we suggest applying the CAI account to political emotions. Applying CAI to political emotions means taking their affective phenomenology seriously: political emotions are not mere cognitive appraisals or evaluations of import in the service of political judgment. Rather, they have an experiential dimension and are felt in certain ways.

CAI is the disposition of a group to *jointly* disclose situations or events in light of more or less unified patterns of *shared* concerns. Notice that this disposition is not actualized by groups as such, but by *individual members'* “feeling-towards together” (Guerrero Sánchez 2016). Hence, CAI requires no emergent or supra-individual subject as the bearer of collective emotions. On the other hand, collective emotions are not reducible to some loose affective interaction between members either. Specifically, collective emotions are neither reducible to what psychologists call ‘social appraisal’, nor to communicative sharing of emotional information (Michael 2011). Similarly, collective emotions cannot be construed in terms of the “synchronous convergence” of individuals’ emotions towards the same target (von Scheve and Ismer 2013), a mere affective resonance between individuals or so-called emotional contagion (Hatfield et al. 2014).

In applying the CAI account to political emotions, we argue that robustly political emotions too must be *jointly felt*. That is to say, they are not merely based on affective interactions between citizens either, but on affectively shared evaluations that disclose concerns of political import. According to our proposal, there are three necessary and in conjunction sufficient requirements for members of a community to affectively share political concerns in this robust sense⁵:

(1) The members’ emotions have a *double affective-intentional focus*: (a) a focus on the *same matter of political import*, and (b) a *background focus on the political community itself*.

(2) Members implicitly or explicitly *claim public recognition* of the emotions and their import for the polity.

(3) There are certain *reciprocal* relations between the community’s emotional outlook and that of the members: The very shared nature of political emotions must feed into the individuals’ *felt experience*, or their affective concern for the polity, and it must have *normative* impact on their *emotion regulation*, their political *motivation* and *comportment* and on the *appropriateness* of their emotions. Thus, there will be an affective and normative *integration* of the members’ emotions.

The initial consideration underlying (1) is that emotions cannot be properly shared unless the respective members acknowledge their sharedness. Note that this acknowledgment need not occur via any *direct*, let alone *mutual*, awareness of each other’s emotions. Members of a political community often lack direct bodily or communicative interaction, and typically, the acknowledgement involves symbolic,

⁵ For similar requirements for collective emotions, see Szanto 2015, 201; León et al. forthcoming. Notice that in sect. 2.2, we sketch an account that can accommodate politically focused emotions that need not fulfill all these robust—and arguably demanding—requirements.

ritualistic or discursive forms of mediation. Moreover, the subjects of such shared *political* emotions must not only acknowledge the sharedness of their concerns, but also the import of those concerns for the community. The ‘double aspect’ of the affective intentionality of political emotions in sketched in (1) is meant to capture this.⁶ As part of their affective focus, political emotions thus involve the concern for a group and *its* felt evaluative outlook. The key idea, then, is that in political emotions, individuals overtly or tacitly pay “reverence” (Helm 2017) to the emotional outlook of their (actual or projected) political community. Thus, members not only reinforce this outlook but also co-constitute it as *theirs*—as their *jointly* felt evaluation.

Concerning (2), we argue that it is this very sharedness that makes political emotions *publicly recognizable* in a way that non-political emotions are not.⁷ To be sure, a fan-crowd at a football match vociferously cheering for their team is also readily recognizable publicly. However, there is a significant difference between a sports fan crowd and a political protest group: As shared concerns of import for the political community, political emotions must also always involve a *claim* to public recognition. In addition to recognizing their manifest concerns, this is also a claim for others to recognize these concerns as being of import for the community at stake. We take this to be an ontologically foundational claim: One need not *publicly* express or enact this claim for recognition to transpire.

As we have just seen, the community whose political concerns are at stake must figure among the emotion-constitutive concerns. Now, the community ‘at stake’ may already be constituted and united by some shared political concerns, or it may be a community ‘in the making’. In the latter case, the community’s evaluative outlook is not yet settled even if engaged individuals might emphatically endorse it. To be sure, emotions not only facilitate a sense of belonging to a putative or given community but also a community’s constitution as a community of a concern. Furthermore, political emotions shape individuals’ socio-affective relations to certain political communities, and may eventually modulate their political and social identity, even if they are not actual members of those communities. Consider a white-collar employee who, in feelings of solidarity, comes to share the concerns of working class citizens and engages in related activism. She may thus incorporate those working class concerns into her social identity without ever belonging to the working class.

⁶ This double-aspect intentionality account for shared emotions was first suggested by phenomenologists such as Scheler (1913/1926) and Stein (1922); cf. Szanto 2018.

⁷ Closest to the mark is the conceptualization of “public passions” by Kingston. Kingston convincingly argues that what makes an emotion public and hence distinguishes it as a political emotion, are three features: “its quality as shared, its focus or object of concern acknowledged as something that has impact on the life of everyone in the political community, and the importance attached to that concern.” (Kingston 2010, 46) She markedly distinguishes this account from construals of political emotions, according to which “emotions relevant to politics are a collection of essentially idiosyncratic responses to matters of public importance and may vary considerably within a given population,” (ibid.) (a view she attributes to Hall (2005), Koziak (2000) and Sokolon (2003)). Cf. also Berezin’s (2002) notion of political “communities of feeling”, that she borrows from Scheler (1913/1926), which, however, is actually a much looser notion than Scheler’s (and also than Kingston’s “public passions”).

Now, before outlining the various affective and normative relations of reciprocity (3) in the next two subsections, we need to further specify the affective-intentional structure of political emotions. Following affective-intentional accounts of emotions, we must first distinguish the *target* of an emotion from its *focus*. The target of an emotion is the object eliciting the emotional reaction; its focus is the object of import, or the background feature of the object that makes the emotion's evaluation of the target intelligible (Helm 2001, 2017; Slaby 2008). Say, the target of my anger is the finance minister's decision to lower corporate taxes, while its focus is the state of the tax-dependent medical care system. The target of political emotions may involve quite different kinds of objects: political events or policies, politicians, discursive elites, majority or minority groups, individual proxies or representatives of groups, etc. Often, in certain antagonistic political emotions, the target is a diffuse or overgeneralized object: think of Ressentiment directed at '*the establishment*', distrust borne towards '*the media*', or hatred in the face of 'hordes of refugees'. In such cases, the negatively evaluated properties (e.g., greed, exploitation) are transposed from individuals to groups or to some unspecified 'Other', or individuals are treated as stereotypical proxies of groups (cf. Szanto forthcoming).

The target on its own, however, will not suffice to render an emotion political, even if it qualifies as a political object in some relevant sense.⁸ Our point is not only that, for instance, my repulsion of the Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro as a despicable human being is insufficient to render my repulsion political. Moreover, even my repulsion of him as a homophobe will not suffice for it to count as a political emotion properly speaking, as long as homophobia is only of my *individual* concern. Instead, we suggest that for the emotion to have *political* import, it must also have a *background focus*, namely a concern for the actual, putative or imaginary political *community*. But above and beyond their general background focus, political emotions always have *specific* concerns as their focus as well.

It is worth noting that target and focus do not always overlap. Political discourse often aims precisely at driving them apart. Consider the hatred of refugees. Typically, that hatred is not focused on individual refugees, but nor is its focus on heterogeneous refugee-groups. Rather, the focus tends to be on the putatively endangered ethnic or cultural homogeneity of the host country, some readily invoked 'Judeo-Christian' tradition, or an allegedly unambiguous Western liberal Enlightenment heritage (cf. Mishra 2016). Thus, in some cases, such as intergroup hatred, the focus of political emotions is "blurred" and the intentional object of the emotions is "overgeneralized" (Szanto forthcoming). As Scheler's classic-phenomenological study (1912/1919) demonstrates, this feature of an indeterminate focus is also distinctive of Ressentiment.

⁸ In this respect we disagree with Protevi, who "define[s] collective political emotion as collective emotion within a political context such that a political event or issue is the target, but not necessarily the focus, of the emotion. (...) Thus, a group of people could be angry about the inflation they expect to come from a particular government policy, but the focus of those fears might be individual retirement plans of the angry people." (Protevi 2014, 327).

According to Scheler, Ressentiment is characterized by an unfocused intentionality “radiating” in all directions (Scheler 1912/1919, 60). Instead of making the concerns of the emoter salient, the affective focus of Ressentiment is uninformative of what really matters to the emoters.⁹

In other cases, though, political emotions will have a clear focus. In such cases, they will also have clear *epistemic* functions and contribute to so-called ‘political sophistication’, or the capacity and attempts to integrate complex and often diffuse political information (Schreiber 2007; Miller 2011). Paradigmatic examples here are emotions that drive political movements, such as anger, moral outrage or indignation (e.g., the Spanish and Greek *Indignants*). Such emotions will alert or capture the attention of oneself, one’s peers, or third parties to the underlying political concerns at stake, and facilitate critical reappraisal of the information upon which the evaluation is based (Romano 2018; cf. Brady 2013).

2.2 Towards a Multi-Dimensional Taxonomy

We have seen that, for an emotion to count as political in the robust sense of a CAI-type political emotion, it is not enough that *individuals* have certain affective reactions towards political issues. Nor is it sufficient that they simply *interact* or *group-identify* with other political subjects and actors who have the same or similar emotional reactions. Rather, we have argued that what renders emotions political in the robust sense is a *jointly felt* evaluative outlook that involves a number of requirements: an acknowledgment of the sharedness of concern and import for the political community, a concern for the community itself, a claim for the public recognition of the former, and a reciprocal modulation and integration of individuals’ emotional experiences.

To be sure, this is a demanding model. However, notice our emphasis on ‘robustness’ here. To accommodate emotions that are not shared in the robust sense of the CAI model, but which do still have a political focus, we propose a multi-dimensional account. Consider, for example, an individual’s fear of social *déclassement* due to certain socio-economic and political developments; that fear may modulate one’s voting behaviour without, however, resulting in any robustly shared sense of belonging to a class or political group. Contrast this to emotions jointly expressed in a political movement or with the motivational power for even existentially dangerous political action that feelings of solidarity in certain protest movements might generate. Accounting for such differences also helps clarify the flexibility of behaviour among voters who are not politically organized or who do not group-identify with any political organization or class—a phenomenon evidenced by the current erosion of established parties across Western democracies.

⁹ Note that Ressentiment in Scheler’s (and Nietzsche’s) technical sense is altogether different from resentment; see more on both below.

Accordingly, we need to differentiate not just between individual and shared political emotions but also among different levels of emotional sharing and their distinct socio-psychological mechanisms (see Salmela 2014; Salmela and Nagatsu 2016; cf. Barsade and Knight 2015). At the minimum, we can distinguish the following levels:

(a) *Weakly shared* political emotions; at this level, sharedness is based on social appraisal or on the socio-communicative sharing of information. An individual's emotional appraisal of a political fact or event is influenced and modulated by relevant others' appraisals (Rimé 2007; cf. Michael 2011), as for example when individuals' xenophobic fears are reinforced by polarized peer-discussions. Incidentally, these mechanisms are partly responsible for so-called 'emotional enclaves' (see sect. 2.3), especially if they are amplified by social or mass media.

(b) *Group-based* political emotions; here, political emotions are based on individuals' self-categorization as members of a political community and their concomitant group-identification (cf. Smith et al. 2007). In addition to their appraisal of certain political facts or events, such emotions also re-evaluate one's relation to the (putative) group, and typically serve as "amplifier" of the emotion (Halperin 2016). Think of feeling guilt, shame, or indignation 'in the name of' one's group.

(c) Finally, we have more or less diachronically robust, public, and properly speaking *collective* political emotions. These are precisely based on a *shared* and *jointly felt evaluation* of the target in light of the community's concerns.

Let us emphasize that only (c) requires the existence of an *actual* community and an actual interaction between members. Such interaction can take place either in physical co-presence or, more typically, in variously mediated (e.g., by social media), in shared *public* spaces, or in the so-called 'social imaginary' (Taylor 2004). But emotions still qualify as political as long as the individuals' affective focus involves reference to a public space of shared concerns—even if those individuals ultimately turn out to be political Robinson Crusoes and the allegedly *social* imaginary nothing but an imaginary space.

In contrast, we can dub emotions that only have a politically relevant focus but are otherwise in no relevant sense of (a) to (c) related to a political community as such, *politically focused emotions*. According to our account, however, these are not 'political emotions' properly speaking. Consider somebody who is angry in the face of a policy reform of employment laws that affect her working-hours, but who doesn't have any solidarity with similarly affected employees.

Coming back to the reciprocity requirement above (3), notice that differences in the robustness of sharing correspond not just to the mentioned behavioral or motivational differences (voting, joining social movements, etc.) but also to certain *phenomenological* and *normative* differences in the participants' affective and political life. Consider, for example, how the fact that I share my indignation about a political event with others modulates the very felt quality of my emotion. This different phenomenology has much to do with accompanying feelings of solidarity (cf. Müller in

this volume). Such feelings of solidarity will, in turn, have certain motivational and normative functions. Most obviously, they will reinforce political identification and might motivate members to join a political movement. Mere individual group-identification will not have the same effects.

Collective political emotions often also express, or indeed co-constitute, a sense of the breaching of shared values. And, as moral address, such emotions do more than simply target the disruptors of the normative order. They are also directed at one's own community or at third parties, whom they may address as witnesses of the violation and as implicit benefactors or potential agents of restorative justice (cf. Brudholm 2008; Mihai 2016; MacLachlan 2010; Salmela and von Scheve 2018). Consider, for example, indigenous Canadians' resentment towards the forefathers of non-indigenous citizens regarding a forced schooling policy (cf. MacLachlan 2010): the resentment is not primarily directed at the forefathers themselves but at their contemporary successors or current quasi-colonial conditions, while also focusing fellow indigenous citizens' collective memory or shared vulnerability. Thereby, these emotions (re-)establish or (re-)enforce sympathy or solidarity with, and among, say, the oppressed. But often the inverse will also happen, as when groups refuse to recognize grounds for such collective or proxy resentment and instead bear resentment towards the 'resenters.' Think, for instance, of overtly or covertly misogynistic anti-'MeToo' repercussions, or of anti-Semitic refusals of the 'remembrance culture'.

2.3 *The Normativity of Political Emotions*

Phenomenological differences between the above-sketched types of political emotions are intimately tied to differences regarding their normative dimensions. In particular, different types of political emotions correlate to differences in normative power and to the pressure they place upon individuals regarding *what* and *how* they *ought* to feel (together), and how they ought to express, voice and enact certain emotions.

Concerning their normative *power*, collective indignation or resentment, for example, are surely more powerful emotions for restorative claims of justice than interpersonal emotions or the 'private' resentment of individuals towards certain groups. Concerning their different normative *pressures*, consider the difference between personal and collective commitment to feel something. For instance, if I sincerely share my anger with my 'fellow-travellers', and am thus committed to the emotion's shared focus, it will not be quite appropriate to only half-heartedly join demonstrations, and even less appropriate to ridicule in private my fellow-travellers for their naïve behaviour. On pain of feeling excluded or being in fact excluded from the community, I will rather have to regulate, monitor, express and enact my emotions accordingly.

In more general terms, there are three interrelated but distinct normative issues regarding political emotions:

(i) The first has to do with their normative *capacity* and *function* vis-à-vis political concerns. Emotions clearly have not just an epistemic but also a normative function. For example, they voice or testify to moral breaches or reclaim moral or social norms. The paradigm emotions usually invoked here belong to the class of moral emotions that Strawson (1962) famously labeled ‘reactive attitudes’, and in particular, resentment, contempt, indignation, moral outrage or anger (e.g., Rawls 1971; Nussbaum 2016), and shame (Tarnopolsky 2010; Locke 2016). Moreover, many have argued that emotions help establish and maintain attachments to otherwise abstract liberal or democratic political values, such as equality, fairness or justice (Nussbaum 2013; Walzer 2005; Hall 2005; Kingston 2011). Others have claimed that they constitute a sense of justice and contribute to its cultivation (Solomon 1993). Ever since ancient Greek discussions of political emotions, and in particular Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, whenever philosophers or political theorists discuss the normative dimension of political emotions, it is usually only these normative functions they have in view. However, there are two equally important normative dimensions, albeit normative in a different sense.

(ii) As we have seen, collective affective intentionality puts certain normative pressures on individuals’ emotional regulation and expression, and indeed on the very way they (ought to) feel. These norms are particularly powerful in political contexts. But they do not exert their normative powers so much by individuals’ “joint commitment to feel” “as one body”. According to such a joint commitment account of collective emotions, suggested by Gilbert (2002, 2014), members retain the right to “rebuke” each other for unilateral affective deviance. But the norms at issue work more subtly and indeed more effectively: namely by means of internalized “feeling rules” (Hochschild 1983) or what Hochschild (2016) calls “deep stories”, viz. narratives that we are told and re-tell ourselves about how, given our political identifications and allegiances, we *ought* to feel about certain socio-cultural or political issues. And when such norms and internalized narratives sediment themselves abidingly, they constitute what has recently been described as “emotional habitus” or “emotional culture” (Barsade and Knight 2015; Illouz 2007).

Habitualized emotion norms guide and police appropriateness of emotions with regard to the display, suppression, or duration, of the emotion. They also apply to the perceived appropriateness of specific *types of emotions* vis-à-vis specific emotional *targets*, which is coded within particular political communities (‘We are not *complainers* like those welfare-benefit recipients’; ‘*War-refugees* don’t deserve compassion, they are traitors and should rather fight for their freedom, as we have’; ‘These are *liberal* sympathies, not *ours*’; cf. Hochschild 2016). As Hochschild arrestingly puts it, what often happens here is that “people are segregating themselves into different emotionally toned enclaves—anger here, hopefulness and trust there” (2016, 6). In more positive terms, such norms affectively integrate individuals’ affective concerns into the broader network of the political community’s concerns, and thus they (re-)align individuals around a shared emotional perspective.

(iii) Finally, there is another central, but so far largely ignored¹⁰, dimension to the normative appropriateness of political emotions. This dimension is best conceived of in terms of emotions' so-called "fittingness". As a number of analytic philosophers of emotions have convincingly argued, fittingness is orthogonal to the moral appropriateness of emotions, but also to any instrumental or prudential consideration (Helm 2001; de Sousa 1987; D'Arms and Jacobson 2010; Salmela 2014). Fittingness is not a question of which emotions are, as it were, good, or when it is right to feel or express them. Nor is the issue which emotions are conducive to certain political goals. Rather, what is at stake is whether an emotion is fitting in the sense that its intentional object actually has the evaluative features that the respective emotion discloses to the emoter. Fittingness thus does not appeal to objective evaluative properties, and it is neutral to value-realism.¹¹ As such, the concept allows us to ask whether an emotion's focus picks out *those* evaluative properties that really *matter to the emoters themselves*.

To illustrate, consider again Ressentiment, a sentiment that has been repeatedly identified as a driving emotional mechanisms of right-wing populism (in contrast to resentment as a form of shared moral anger fuelling left-wing populism; cf. Salmela & von Scheve 2018). Ressentiment is precisely an emotional mechanism that renders certain emotions—primarily envy and shame—unfitting in the above sense. Imagine somebody who has fully internalized the values of a success-oriented individualistic society, and envies the success of others. He feels powerless, fears that he cannot keep pace, and is ashamed in the face of these insufficiencies. Facilitated by the repression mechanism characteristic of Ressentiment, he eventually comes to conceive of the desired values (success, wealth, etc.) in a self-deceptive fashion as something undesirable ('success only corrupts') or as based on reprehensible values (e.g., greediness). Thus, in a process of "transvaluations of values" (Nietzsche 1887), desirable values that one finds oneself powerless to attain are reassessed as non-desirable or reprehensible. This is a clear case of an inappropriate relation between an emotion and its focus, since the sentiment discloses *subjectively* 'false' values to the emoter. Accordingly, Scheler (1912/1919) views Ressentiment as an "illusion of evaluative feeling"¹². As we shall see in the next section, such subjectively unfitting or

¹⁰ Incidentally, this dimension of collective or political emotions has been duly appreciated in the early phenomenological tradition and, in particular, by Scheler (1912/1919; cf. Schloßberger in this volume), Voigtländer (1920; cf. Vendrell Ferran in this volume), Stein (1922; cf. Szanto 2015; Thonhauser 2018) and Kolnai (1935; cf. Vendrell Ferran in this volume). Arguably, this is because of their value-realistic credentials.

¹¹ On the relation of fittingness and value realism, see D'Arm and Jacobson's brief discussion (2010) and Salmela 2014.

¹² To be sure, one has to be careful and exercise thorough conceptual, normative and political self-reflection when engaging in such a 'critique of political emotion'. MacLachlan aptly formulates the central worry here, when writing about the appropriateness of resentment: "dividing angers as either 'reasonable' or 'unreasonable' will tend, almost inevitably, to dismiss the angers of the most vulnerable: those least likely to have their needs and interests represented in a dominant social and moral framework." (MacLachlan 2010, 428)

self-deceptive affective mechanisms will only be reinforced on the collective level, leading to ever-fortified emotional enclaves.

3. Collectivity, the Political and the “Agonistic” Dialectic

Our provisional result is that robustly political emotions affectively and normatively align individuals around a shared emotional perspective and, at the same time, exclude, vitiate or even aim to eliminate those not endorsing that perspective. Moreover, we have argued that the distinctive feature of political emotions is a concern for the (real or imagined) polity. This polity is part of the manifest content of the overall emotional outlook, and variously modulates individuals’ emotional experience and behaviour. Viewed thus, a certain *striving for communalization* as such forms a fundamental concern of political emotions.

However, this needs to be immediately qualified: surely, not all types of communities are grounded in a *political* concern. As we have seen, concerns are only political if they recognize the possibility, as well as the need, to form alliances in the face of finite and contested resources; ultimately, they thus have individual and collective freedom in view. Moreover, recall that concerns only qualify as political in the proper sense if they make some claim for public recognition. Accordingly, a family or a circle of friends or a team at one’s workplace will not, under normal circumstances, qualify to ground an allegiance or antagonism (or both) that carries political weight.

In this section, we aim to show how in the striving for communalization, there is always an element of *both* allegiance and antagonism involved, no matter whether communalization assumes directly associative or dissociative forms. We suggest that political emotions essentially involve a certain “agonistic” dialectic of allegiance and antagonism (Mouffe 2013). Simply put, our suggestion is that both sharedness and antagonism are built into the very heart of political emotions. Shared emotional outlooks will always involve some who do *not* share them: those who do not wish to partake, those who are excluded from partaking, or those who are negatively evaluated by it. But there are different aspects of this still very general claim. To determine which form of ‘agonism’ applies, one must look case by case at concrete instantiations of political emotions. We cannot provide any such contextual analysis here; instead, in accordance with our multi-dimensional model, we shall sketch a rough-and-ready taxonomy of possible manifestations of agonistic communalization, which in actual scenarios typically intermesh:

(i) There are manifestations of directly *associative* communalization. These may come in the form of group-identification, the aspiration for group inclusion, or alliance-formation, in the sense of the CAI-account. This will vary according to the level and type of affective sharing outlined above. Finally, directly associative communalization may also involve utopian hope, revolutionary ‘enthusiasm’ (Mohrmann 2015), or the anticipation of imagined political communities to come (Nancy 1991; Agamben 1993).

(ii) On the other hand, the political arena is also characterized by outright affective antagonism in the form of hostile emotions (hatred, distrust, resentment, indignation, moral outrage or disgust, etc.) or more subtle ‘anti-pathetic’ emotions (e.g., envy, lack of sympathy, refusal of compassion, etc.). Direct manifestations of such *dissociative* communalization will involve some element of outgroup demarcation, which may or may not eventually lead to intergroup conflict or violence (e.g., derogative or ridiculing discourse targeting minorities or power groups).

What we wish to stress is that an essential characteristic of the political emerges not only in such direct forms of inclusive alliances (i) or exclusive antagonism (ii), but also in indirect forms of ‘agonism’: alliances for self-empowerment and what might be called ‘negative solidarity’ (cf. Arendt 1951, 315). This brings us to two further manifestations of contested political community.

(iii) Consider instrumental, agonistic alliances of self-empowerment. Political alliances are often not so much formed on the basis of affects, emotions or values *in concordance*, but precisely when there is no such accord, or even in instances of outright evaluative conflict. Here, one affectively allies oneself with those one considers as fundamentally Others—i.e., those whose overall evaluative outlook is different from one’s own—if such an alliance serves or facilitates one’s own thriving or power-status. Indeed, the distinctive force of political affectivity often manifests itself precisely where it cuts across more or less superficial alliances, bridging *conflicting* values or interests. By doing so, political affectivity not only reinforces the respective parties’ room for manoeuvre and control over the other group or third parties but, more importantly, what might be called their ‘affective power’. A curious example here are alliances between staunchly environmentalist and anti-environmentalist fractions within the Tea Party movement. These two fractions do not share concrete core political interests. Yet, they do share a whole range of affectively binding and mutually empowering background sentiments, such as a deep distrust towards the government, religious devotion, or Ressentiment in the face of affirmative action (see Hochschild 2016).

(iv) Finally, consider hostile emotions that manifest agonistic forms of communalization or involve a certain ‘negative dialectic’ leading to forms of ‘false solidarity’. For example, a number of phenomenologists have pointed out that racial or religious hatred not only creates outgroup demarcation but, ironically, facilitates feelings of solidarity which indeed co-constitutes allegiance to one’s ingroup (Sartre 1944; Kolnai 1935, 1998; Ahmed 2004; Szanto forthcoming; cf. also Schmid in this volume). There are two dialectically opposed affective orientations here. The first is a ‘positive’ affective binding that attaches individuals to their ingroup (the ‘community of haters’), or an “alignment” between the I and the We (Ahmed 2014, 51). Just as importantly, the second orientation entails an antagonistic affective attachment to the target: here the haters (We) negatively “attach” themselves to the hated ones (Them). In that sense, one can say that haters ‘need’ a stereotypically created Other for their very self-constitution as a community of haters (cf. above, and Sartre 1944). A somewhat similar mechanism

can be seen in collective forms of Ressentiment. In order to facilitate repression of negative self-focused or social emotions (shame, feelings of powerlessness), individuals align themselves with their initially powerless ingroup and collectively transform negative emotions into ones that are ‘positive’ (e.g., national pride) or into purportedly moral or power-conducive antagonistic ones (e.g., Ressentiment, feelings of superiority, hatred). The solidarity here is ‘false’ since the concern for one’s own community is solely based on a devaluation of others (as in hatred), and more importantly, because of its (self-)deceptively invoked—and hence ‘false’—values (as in Ressentiment). This self-deceptive affective mechanism is often reinforced at the collective level, leading to a sort of “spiralling” (Szanto 2017) that eventually strengthens the formation of isolated affective enclaves. To be sure, the collaborative transformation of negatively valenced self-regarding emotions into positive ones is not restricted to cases of *false* solidarity, as for instance the Gay Pride movements show.

To avoid any misunderstanding, none of the above agonistic orientations are meant to establish any necessary connection between ingroup solidarity and outgroup hostility (consider, for instance, differences between patriotic and nationalistic forms of allegiances; cf. Li and Brewer 2004). Rather, what this taxonomy aims to show is that different forms of agonism are generally at work on the ontologically foundational baseline of political emotions.

Conclusion

At all its levels, the political intersects with power. We have suggested that the affective drive behind the political, however, is not so much concrete political power-dynamics themselves as contested commonality. Such contested commonality entails dialectics of antagonism, allegiance and relations of power, long before they manifest themselves in concrete institutional power-struggles. This perspective should also allow for a theory of political emotions that cuts across the reductive dichotomy between the Arendtian associative and the Schmittian dissociative traditions of conceptualizing the political.

As an alternative, we have argued that what makes emotions political is their shared or jointly felt evaluative outlook. This involves an acknowledgment of the import of the focus of the emotions for the political community, and claims to their public recognition. Moreover, this shared evaluative outlook variously modulates individuals’ emotional experiences. Ultimately, emotions partly constitute that politics *matters*, disclose *what* matters—and that it matters to ‘me’, to ‘us’, and to ‘them’ often differently and conflictingly. In this sense, then, political affectivity, in general, and antagonistic political emotions in particular, go directly to the onto-political heart of ‘real politics’.

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