Marcos Engelken-Jorge
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Politics and Emotions

The Obama Phenomenon

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Politics & Emotions: An Overview

Marcos Engelken-Jorge

This book is a joint effort aimed at advancing our understanding on the role of emotions in politics. Traditionally, politics in democratic societies has been conceived of as a matter of power and competing interests. Emotion, for its part, has been largely disregarded or conceived as a threat to a rational and well-ordered society. In the last decades, however, this dominant hyperrationalist liberal viewpoint has been challenged. A number of scholars have started to consider the role of emotions in political behaviour, political mobilization, political judgement and decision-making, political communication, et cetera. Even some normative political theorists have included emotions in their research agenda and challenged, also from within the field of normative political theory, the dominant hyperrationalist liberal perspective. In this regard, this book is not path-breaking. It attempts simply to contribute to advance our understanding of the complex and multidimensional role played by emotions in politics. Nowadays, emotions are not simply ignored, as they used to be, by political scientists and political sociologists. However, after years of research, many of the conundrums revolving around the topic of politics and emotions remain unsolved. In addition, research has contributed to raising new questions. This book aims at clarifying some of them and posing new ones which should lead future research.

The book is divided into three sections. The first approaches the issue of politics and emotions from a theoretical perspective, while the second focuses on a series of methodological questions. The selection of essays composing these two sections and that following is far from exhaustive – this would be an impossible task. The essays have been selected to provide the reader with a sense of the plurality of approaches available to politics and emotions, the cutting-edge debates in this area of research and the possibilities, and also limitations, associated to each theoretical and methodological approach. Due to their nature, the essays that compose the first two sections of this volume do not rely heavily, or do not rely at all, on the case-study selected for this book; namely, the Obama phenomenon. In contrast, the essays that compose the third, and longest, section discus this case-study more thoroughly. By focusing on a single case, they do not only contribute to clarify the Obama phenomenon, which merits attention in its own right, but they illustrate empirically how emotions, approached from different angles, can enrich political analysis. This combination

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of a single empirical case and different theoretical and methodological approaches has an additional virtue on which we should insist. The varied perspectives adopted by the authors of this book overlap to a certain extent, but they also diverge, even conflict, in many aspects. Some authors prefer a more individualistic methodology, while others opt for a contextual analysis of emotions. Some scholars adopt a quantitative approach to politics and emotions, while others favour a qualitative one or resort to ad hoc proxy indicators. The work of some contributors shows the salutary effects of certain emotions on politics, while other essays reveal the ambiguous and complex effects emotions can have. These divergences, and to some extent also contradictions, not only highlight the difficulties faced by political scientists and political sociologists as they consider emotions, but they also illustrate – as mentioned before – the benefits and limits of the different approaches adopted in this book.

In the introductory chapter, we first consider the somewhat exaggerated, though absolutely not false claim that emotions have been marginalized in Western intellectual tradition. This sets the context for our joint effort to the study of politics and emotions. We then deliver some notes on the main controversies that surround the concept of emotion, focusing in particular on those more relevant to political scientists and sociologists. The third section gives a brief review of the main areas of research in which the consideration of emotions has been particularly productive. Succinct methodological notes are provided on how to approach the study of emotions. Finally, the fifth section gives a summaring review of the main contents and structure of this book.

Have emotions been marginalized in Western Tradition?

Most accounts about the traditional marginalization of emotions or the naïveté of the West about emotions are, at best, exaggerations. This is the thesis of Michael Neblo (2003), which he maintains convincingly. Not only does he argue that some authors (for instance, Damasio 1994; Marcus *et al.* 2000) have unhelpfully overstated the alleged marginalization of emotions in our Western philosophical tradition, but contends, moreover, that the new research on emotions is merely articulating insights already advanced by Western tradition. In other words, modern political philosophers for example, used to start their accounts with what they purported to be the human nature and, thus, with the consideration of passion and emotion. This is the case of major scholars such as Machiavelli, Hobbes, Spinoza or Tocqueville (cf. Arteta 2003: 50-51; Patapan & Sikkenga 2008), whose works do not display this categorically and consistently negative vision of emotions that some claim is typical of the West. How-

ever, this does not imply that the relation of our intellectual tradition to emotions has been unproblematic.

Liberalism, for instance, has marginalized emotion in two ways, as contended by Cheryl Hall (2002: 732-726). In one way, classic liberalism has given a place to emotions, though in order to argue for them being banned from the political realm. Classic liberalism did not conceive human beings as rational subjects oriented by self-interest, but rather as irrational beings moved by irrational desires. Hence, public institutions – so goes the argument of classic liberalism – were supposed to hinder the arousal of passions, transforming them into interests, which were thought of, in turn, as including the positive aspects of both passion and reason.

In a second way, emotion has been marginalized by contemporary liberalism by simply disregarding passion. Its conception of human beings as seeking their own self-interest and reduction of reason to instrumentality, tend to exclude practical questions, i.e. moral ones, from the horizon of consideration. Thus, emotions have been simply relegated to the private realm. As Nancy Rosenblum (cited in Hall 2002: 735) asserts: "Liberalism has difficulty assigning a place to the family, for example, or patriotism, or the politics of personal leadership – except to warn against it." In other words, passion has been chiefly conceived of by contemporary liberalism as a threat that promotes instability, violence and injustice (Hall 2002: 736-738).

A similar vision is also maintained by David Ost (2004: 230-233), for instance, though he draws the marginalization of emotion in the Western tradition back to the reason/emotion dualism propagated during the Enlightenment and to the association of emotion with superstition. This dualism, according to Ost, also triggered the association of reason with the realm of power, in particular with the institutionalized exercise of power, and emotion "with the underlings" (Ost 2004: 231). Incidentally, this explains why emotions were considered until the 1960s "a key – for some, *the* key – to understanding virtually all political action that occurred outside familiar political institutions." (Goodwin *et al.* 2001: 2) In fact, mass psychology thought of social movements and masses as irrational phenomena triggered by exacerbated and irrational passions (for instance, Le Bon 1895; Blumer 1939).

In the second half of the 20th century, behaviourism contributed to the exclusion of emotions from the allegedly legitimate field of inquiry of the social sciences. Emotions were conceived of as insufficiently tangible and not subjectable to quantification (Ost 2004: 233; Calhoun 2001: 46). In this regard, the lack of methodological rigour with which some authors, especially within the field of cultural studies, initially approached the analysis of emotion also contributed to this widespread perception (Calhoun *op. cit.*).

Notwithstanding what has been called *marginalization* of emotions in Western tradition, social sciences like sociology have considered emotions and their contribution to social and political analysis. Scholars such as Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Simmel, Pareto and Cooley, have all paid attention to emotions. However, as Jonathan Turner puts it, "early sociology was not devoid of a concern for emotions, but perhaps with the exception of Cooley, these concerns were secondary, implicit, and under-theorized." (Turner 2009: 340) Nevertheless, over the last three decades, sociologists have tried to correct this drawback, and nowadays dramaturgical and cultural theories of emotions, ritual theories, symbolic interactionist theories, structural theories, exchange theories, et cetera, are trying to make sense of emotions and their imbrications with social reality (cf. Turner & Stets 2005: 23 ff.; Turner 2009).

Another interesting discipline to be considered is philosophical psychology (Calhoun & Solomon 1984). Sensation theories, like the one developed by Hume, have been interested in highlighting how people experience their emotions. Psychological theories (e.g. William James) have focused on the psychological basis of emotional experience. Behavioural theories (Darwin, but also Dewey or psychological behaviourists like Watson, Skinner or Ryle) have concentrated on observable emotional behaviour – arguing interestingly that if a person can make mistakes about his/her emotions or be unaware of them, but an external observer can identify them, then the behaviour must be the primary thing of an emotion. Evaluative theories (Brentano, Scheler, Sartre or Solomon), in turn, have maintained straightforwardly that emotions are chiefly evaluations, that is, that they are epistemologically important mental phenomena and, although they can sometimes lead us astray, they do not do so on principle. Finally, cognitive theories (e.g. Bedford) have been interested in how people name and speak of emotions and the logical restrictions governing the use of terms referring to them.

As we will see, all these theories highlight different aspects which we should consider in the next section. For the moment, however, suffice it to conclude from this very broad and oversimplified account that the importance attributed to emotions in the Western tradition, as well as the conceptions that the major scholars have advanced of them, are less clear than what is commonly assumed. Furthermore, the status attributed to emotions varies depending on the discipline and the period of time considered. On the whole, it is true that emotions have been somewhat disregarded, in particular in the field of political science. This provides one good reason for bringing together this book. However, it also gives a grounding for the initial chapter, written by Ramón Maiz (this volume), which offers a nuanced and, as we see it, also very necessary account of the roles played by emotions in the fields of political science and

political theory, as well as adjacent disciplines (especially sociology and epistemology).

Controversies Revolving around the Concept of Emotion

We should turn now to the concept of emotion. More precisely, what exactly is an emotion? How can we define it? We have already seen from the above broad review of philosophical-psychological theories of emotion that behaviours, feelings, evaluations or, more broadly speaking, cognitive components, as well as linguistic rules and social conventions, may contribute to the definition of emotions. Similarly, Turner and Stets (2005: 9-10) cite the following elements as constitutive of emotions: "the biological activation of key body systems," "cultural definitions and constraints on what emotions should be experienced and expressed," "the application of linguistic labels (…) to internal sensations," "the overt expression of emotions through facial, voice, and paralinguistic moves," and "perceptions and appraisals of situational objects or events." All these elements, as both authors acknowledge, interact in complex ways, and none of them can be said to have a privileged role in the definition of emotions. Usually the definitions of emotions vary depending on which aspects a researcher finds more relevant (Turner 2009: 341).

We think this is a legitimate way of approaching the definition of emotions. As political scientists and sociologists, it is not emotions *per se* that we need to define. Rather, what we are interested in is in reaching a definition of emotion that is useful *for political analysis*. This means that we may be interested in more parsimonious concepts, which should be, however, complex enough for rigorous analytical work, though not more complex than strictly necessary. This is not to prejudge the potential interest of any of the aforementioned aspects claimed to be constitutive of emotions. Rather, we are suggesting that, in this context, we should only consider those elements of emotions relevant to political analysis.

For Aurelio Arteta (2003: 49), for example, it is sufficient to consider just three aspects of emotions: their valence, that is to say, whether they are positive or negative emotions; their cognitive components, and their motivational force. Martha Nussbaum, in turn, advances a far more complex concept of emotion than Arteta, but argues contrary to conventional wisdom that bodily processes need not be considered in the definition of emotions, mainly because they do not make any difference.

> "We should certainly grant that all human experiences are embodied, and thus realized in some kind of material process. In that sense human emotions are all bodily

> processes. But the question is, are there any bodily states or processes that are constantly correlated with our experiences of emotion, in such a way that we will want to put that particular bodily state into the definition of a given emotion-type?" (Nussbaum 2001: 58)

Considering the plasticity of the human organism, Nussbaum answers this question in a negative way (Nussbaum 2001: 58-59).

In line with the argument so far, this section will be devoted to the discussion of several aspects of emotion that are relevant to political analysis. Since they are also controversial and this is just an introduction chapter, we will refrain from advancing a fully-fledged definition of emotion. Instead, we will simply introduce the main issues and arguments that structure the debate on emotion and political analysis.

The first question to be considered is whether emotions can be differentiated from other adjacent phenomena, such as moods or feelings. In this regard, Chesire Calhoun and Robert Solomon (1984: 23) warn against considering emotions as "a set of homogeneous phenomena." There are, for instance, calm and violent emotions, as well as episodic and more dispositional ones. However, for many scholars it has been useful to distinguish emotions, albeit heterogeneous, from other similar phenomena with which they tend to be (mistakenly?) conflated. For instance, emotions have been distinguished from moods. Both are supposed to constitute "amorphous states," but the former are directed to specific objects, while the latter are claimed to lack any specific referent (McDermott 2004: 692). Appetite is another close notion. Appetite has been said to refer to "'blind' cravings or desires that operate largely at the most fundamental bodily level" (Hall 2002: 729). Feelings, in turn, allude to "emotional states about which a person is consciously aware" (Turner & Stets 2005: 286). Since there are unconscious emotions, and they can be useful for political analysis, emotions need to be differentiated from feelings.

However, as Nussbaum (2001: 129 ff.) acknowledges after distinguishing between "bodily appetites," "emotions," and "moods," it can be very difficult to differentiate between these phenomena, especially between certain emotions and moods. "One may feel generally fearful, and that will be an emotion with a vague object, if its content is that some (vague) danger is viewed as impending. It will be a mood to the extent that even that type of highly general or vague object is absent." Nevertheless, she contends that this should not be seen as a problem, "for what would be a problem in an account of emotion would be an excessive rigidity or definitional dogmatism." (Nussbaum 2001: 133)

Surely, such an argument can be regarded as a mere excuse for a deficiency in Nussbaum's account of emotions. However, her claim is not without merit. The usefulness of such a theoretical account that refrains from making

"boundaries seem unrealistically sharp or rigid" (*Ibid.*) can be seen, for example, in Connolly's analysis of the "evangelical-capitalist resonance machine" (Connolly 2005). His main argument is that the alliance in the United States between "cowboy capitalism" and "evangelical Christianity" rests upon shared spiritual dispositions that create a common ethos, which is in turn amplified by the media politics of resonance. "Ethos" and "spiritual dispositions" are some of his key analytical concepts, into which emotions, moods, desires, judgements and so on are conflated. In one passage of his essay, for instance, he argues that the ethos of the evangelical-capitalist political movement in the US is energized by a sort of "existential resentment" (Connolly 2005: 878). This is a resentment that can whirl "in a larger complex, producing a hurricane out of heretofore loosely associated elements" (*Ibid.*), which comprise emotions, desires, drives, beliefs, feelings, patterns of perception, et cetera. This is just but one example of the usefulness of keeping the conceptual boundaries between emotions and other close phenomena porous and fluid. Similarly, Verhulst and Lizotte (this volume) advise us not to overemphasize the differences between moods and emotions, since both emotions and moods may have the same implications for certain politically-relevant phenomena.

Some scholars go beyond this point. The "Lacanian-left", for example, is a label that refers to authors such as Slavoj Žižek (1989), Jason Glynos (2001), Glyn Daly (1999; 2009) or Yannis Stavrakakis (1999; 2005). They do not speak of "emotion" but of "enjoyment", defined as a sort of "existential electricity" (Daly 1999: 227). Similarly, Patricia Clough (2008) prefers not to speak of "emotion" but "affect." Both the Lacanians and Clough are referring to a kind of pre-symbolic emotional or affective energy, focusing not so much on stable, more or less discernible, emotional states but on concealed, malleable and shifting aspects of subjectivity. By violating the conceptual boundaries between emotions, moods, feelings and so on, and focusing on aspects that purportedly underlie them (thus highlighting implicitly their common origin and somehow their porosity), these authors have managed to explain compellingly the motivational components of political change and the resistance that it usually encounters (e.g. Glynos & Howarth 2007) – though not without analytical drawbacks (cf. Engelken-Jorge 2011).

In short, what conceptual framework should be privileged over the rest in the analysis of politics is not a settled question. While some authors prefer to keep (allegedly) different emotional phenomena apart and to draw clear-cut distinctions between them, others favour alternative and less rigid conceptual frameworks. Both conceptual strategies can be said to have advantages but also deficiencies. The perils are, on the one hand, excessive conceptual rigidity and, on the other, lack of analytical rigour.

A second controversy which merits consideration refers to how to classify emotions. It is not clear at all how many emotions can be identified or which of them are relevant to political analysis. One common way of tackling this issue is to classify emotions according to a typology, which offers a door for introducing emotions into discourse in a parsimonious fashion. The most common of these typologies, which can be traced back to classic authors, for example Hobbes (cf. chapter 6 of the *Leviathan*) or Spinoza (cf. 2009: 134-5), is the grouping of emotions into positive and negative valences, on the assumption that these "positive" and "negative" emotions are related to a fundamental approach-avoidance behavioural system in the human being (Turner & Stets 2005: 11).

Recently, however, it has been argued that political analysis has to move beyond this conceptualization (cf. Huddy *et al.* 2007). In this regard, political psychologists have shown that two different negative emotions can trigger dissimilar effects. Anger tends to promote action and to underestimate the risks associated to a particular situation, while anxiety fails to trigger action and tends to promote the overestimation of risks (cf. Huddy *et al.* 2007). Consequently, scholars have argued for other theories to substitute the prevalent valence-based approach; for instance, appraisal theories or what Huddy *et al.* call the "functional neuroscience perspective" that either posits a model of emotion-specific influences or a more differentiated set of emotional and behavioural responses than the valence-based approach (Huddy *et al.* 2007; Lerner & Keltner 2000; Lazarus 2001). Nevertheless, research focusing on discrete emotions is not without problems either, as argued by Verhulst and Lizotte (this volume).

Another way of dealing with the complexity of emotions and the plurality of effects that emotions can trigger is to identify and focus on *political* emotions, i.e. typically political emotions. For some authors, anger is the central political emotion, in line with Schmitt's (1932) definition of the political. Ost (2004), for example, makes a case for this thesis. Though implicitly, this argument can also be found in the work of other authors such as Laclau & Mouffe (1985; see also Laclau 2005; Mouffe 2005 and the critique of Laclau & Mouffe's position in Barnett 2004). Other scholars, in contrast, extend the list of emotions or passions that can be considered typically political and include, among others, the following: *libido dominandi*, fear, greed, envy, resentment, compassion and indignation (cf. Arteta 2003: 53-62).

In short, it is still controversial what is the best strategy for integrating emotions into political analysis. Traditionally, emotions have been grouped into positive and negative valences, though the deficiencies of such a typology have been shown recently. Other scholars, however, prefer to adopt a more fine-grained approach, and either focus on specific emotions or on more differenti-

ated sets of emotions. Still others concentrate solely on one or a few emotions that can be said to be typically political.

There is a third aspect that we should consider; namely, to what extent are emotions and their political effects related to personality traits and/or to a specific situation. To begin with, it seems obvious that the identification of any emotion requires the consideration of its context. This is an old and, to a great extent, uncontroversial idea (cf., for instance, Spinoza 2009). If we move beyond this idea, namely that the context is relevant for the identification of an emotion, it seems obvious that some personality traits can make people more or less prone to experience certain emotions. This is the case, for instance, advanced by Civettini (this volume). He speaks of "high and low hope individuals" and claims that hope is both a "dispositional trait" and an "emotional state." Indeed he does not disregard certain contextual factors, but argues that focusing on the individuals might help understand why *some* individuals are politically more active than others. Yet for other scholars it is "unhelpful to associate emotions primarily with the individual rather than with the social and cultural." (Goodwin et al. 2001: 11) Gould (this volume) makes a case for this thesis. In her chapter, devoted also to the analysis of the political effects of hope, she shows how important the context and the discourse triggering this emotion can be. The *same* emotion, namely hope, has had very different consequences with Bill Clinton and with Barack Obama, and she traces back these differences to both the context of hope and the political discourse that promoted the feeling.

In summary, it remains controversial to what extent individual traits or contextual aspects are relevant to an understanding of the political effects of emotions, i.e. whether we should pay the same attention to both aspects or, on the contrary, if it would be more fruitful to concentrate more on one aspect than on another. Possibly, the answer to this question will depend on the political phenomenon under research. In any case, research programmes such as the one proposed by Civettini (this volume), or lucid analyses, such as the one by Gould (this volume), should contribute to solving this puzzle.

Finally, a fourth question merits discussion; namely, the cultural variation of emotions. Nussbaum (2001: 152-157), for instance, speaks of "intersocietal differences in the emotional life", which is due to the following factors: the physical conditions (to the extent that they influence certain cultural patterns), the metaphysical, religious and cosmological beliefs held by a social group, certain social practices (of child rearing, for example), language and the way emotions are labelled and distinguished from each other, and certain social norms that determine what is valuable in a society and how people (or just men, or just women) should behave. These factors are said to influence the behavioural manifestations associated to emotions, the objects that are deemed appro-

priate for a particular emotion, as well as the emotional taxonomies and the judgements about the worth of a particular emotion, which, in turn, affect the experience itself of this emotion (cf. Nussbaum 2001: 157-165).

Calhoun (2001), in contrast, goes a bit further. Acknowledging this inter-societal variation of emotions, but also recognizing that there are always intra-societal variations, i.e. that the way emotions are displayed in a society varies over time and that there are also differences among individuals, he speaks of "emotional habitus." That is to say, the inculcation in individuals of "a sense of how to act, how to play the game ["of relating emotions to each other, and of relating emotions to cognition and perception"], that is never altogether conscious or purely reducible to rules." (Calhoun 2001: 53)

To tackle this issue, namely, the inter- and intra-societal variation of emotions or, in short, their cultural variation, some scholars have distinguished between primary and secondary or higher-order emotions. Happiness, fear, anger or sadness are primary emotions, while secondary or higher-order emotions are usually conceived of as combinations of these primary emotions or as emotions that are less natural and more socially constructed. Yet both the distinction between primary and secondary emotions and the number and categories of emotions that belong to each group are still unsettled questions (cf. Turner & Stets 2005: 10-13; Turner 2009: 342; Goodwin et al. 2001: 13).

Altogether, the challenges faced by political scientists and political sociologists, in order to integrate emotion into political analysis, are nothing short of formidable. There is still no clear definition of what an emotion is; neither do we know what the most useful conceptual framework is to integrate emotion into political analysis – not to mention other conundrums pertaining to the role played by contextual, cultural and individual elements in emotions and their political effects.

Areas of Research

The consideration of emotions has been particularly fruitful for certain areas of research within the disciplines of political science and political sociology. Emotion has advanced our understanding of cognitive processes and the mechanisms that influence political judgement, as well as decision making. It has helped understand certain aspects of political participation and political behaviour. Furthermore, it has provided some insights into the nature of the social bond and of social cohesion. Besides, some scholars have resorted to emotions in order to explain certain dynamics of the public space and to advance some insights into how best to cope with some of the challenges appearing in the public space.

Debates on political socialization have also pointed out the importance of the education of emotions – an issue, on the other hand, closely related to debates on restorative justice. Studies on political communication and rhetoric have also relied on the analysis of emotions. Last but not least, normative political theory has also benefited from the consideration of emotions. Though very briefly, let us consider these areas of research in turn.

Emotion has been studied at different phases of the decision-making process. Research has analysed emotion during and after decision-making, anticipated emotions and memories of past emotions (McDermott 2004 reviews the most relevant literature). However, better known examples of research at the intersection of emotion, cognition and decision making are the work of Marcus *et al.* and research on the influence of emotion on information processing. According to Marcus *et al.* (1993; 2000), both anxiety and enthusiasm greatly determine political judgement. While anxiety triggers political learning and stimulates attention toward new information, enthusiasm fosters political engagement and influences candidate preferences. Besides, emotion might, though not necessarily (Turner 2009: 342), generate self-re-productive cognitive processes (cf. Endert 2006). In this regard, the literature known as "motivated reasoning" documents the variety of ways in which people who are strongly committed to a given view interpret evidence to support their view. People fail to consider evidence that disconfirms their view, or reject its validity, and accept evidence as valid if it confirms their view (cf. Mendelberg 2002: 168). Furthermore, an emotional state or a mood can affect the reasoning style; for instance, by generating recurring ideas and images in a subject's mind or by causing her or him to consider a great number of diverse aspects but to consider them superficially (Damasio 1994: 146 ff.). Moreover, it can influence the evaluation of possible outcomes resulting from a course of action; for example, by overestimating the odds of positive outcomes when in a positive mood or the probabilities of negative results when in a negative mood (McDermott 2004: 696). In summary, it is out of doubt that affective states influence directly and indirectly political judgment, as well as the depth of information processing (Verhulst & Lizotte this volume).

That emotion can motivate and guide social and political behaviour is also a well-known thesis (Arteta 2003: 49; Hall 2002: 739-41; Turner & Stets 2005: 290). However, it would be even more interesting to be able to specify the mechanisms that rule this motivational force. The compilation by Goodwin *et al.* (2000) provides important insights into the effects of emotions on political mobilization and collective political behaviour. As stated above, Marcus *et al.* (1993; 2000) maintain that enthusiasm fosters active campaign involvement. Civettini (this volume) advances an interesting distinction between "prospective

emotion" and "current state emotion", arguing that the former holds the key to understanding action-oriented political behaviour. Gould (this volume), for her part, shows that the effects of hope on political behaviour depend on context, as well as on the discourse that triggered hope in the first place.

It has also been claimed that emotion holds the key to understanding the nature of the social bond and for promoting social cohesion (Hall 2002: 739-41; Markell 2000). For Ahmed, for example, collectives materialize "as an effect of intensification of feelings," which are, in turn, influenced by "histories that stick," i.e. by "associations that are already in place" (Ahmed 2004: 39). Markell (2000), relying on Habermas' notion of "constitutional patriotism", clarifies the structural ambivalence of the dynamics of affect that promote social cohesion – in other words, the identification with a common entity. The chapter of Escobar (this volume) provides important insights into a kind of social relationship that is somewhat cognitive in nature, but not reducible to *logos*. His underlying thesis is that emotions propel certain dynamics of their own that help to understand a symbolic, although not strictly linguistic, form of communication (hence, a kind of social bond).

Emotion has also played a role in identifying the dynamics of the public space and in clarifying how best to cope with the challenges appearing in this public space. Both Wettergren and Sandry (this volume) highlight the essential ambivalence of emotion. For a political leader, attracting the support of parts of the population also implies gaining the attention of many detractors. Similarly, Mouffe (2002; 2005) insists on this essential ambivalence of emotional dynamics. For her, the ambivalence of politics, which is due to the "passions" involved in politics, implies from a normative viewpoint an agonistic conception of democracy and, thus, an acknowledgement of the conflictive nature of politics, which cannot be managed by resorting to deliberation or to sheer market procedures. Connolly (2005: 881-884) maintains that the adequate management of public emotions, which appear in his account in the form of "existential dispositions", first require their explicit recognition and then the promotion of alternative "modes of spirituality" – not their exclusion to the private realm. Regarding the former aspect, i.e. the recognition of the emotions that are already in place in the public realm, Markell (2000) advances that the study of public emotions should provide more realistic expectations about how we can, and to what extent, cope with certain challenges appearing in the public place. This is a question, moreover, which has been explicitly addressed by some Lacanian political theorists (Glynos 2001; Glynos & Howarth 2007; Stavrakakis 1999). Escobar and Wettergren (this volume) also tackle this issue. Their analyses clarify certain symbolic strategies that deal with the complexity and ambiguity of some public emotions, which are managed by the "versatility" or – in Laclauian terms

(Laclau 1994; 2005b: 91 ff.) – "emptiness" of certain symbolic signifiers; in particular, Obama himself.

Debates on political socialization have also benefited from the consideration of emotion. Classical authors, such as Plato or Aristotle, already considered the importance of the education of emotions. As Ben-Ze'ev puts it (1995: 198), for Plato, for instance, "a sound education consists in training people to find pleasure and pain in the right objects". Contemporary authors working in the neo-Aristotelian tradition (e.g. Nussbaum), but also other scholars outside this tradition (e.g. Rorty), have considered the literary education of emotions as a fundamental strategy for achieving virtuous citizens (cf. Straßenberger 2006; Rorty 1989). The premise of this argument is usually that emotions carry a cognitive component of their own, usually, though not always, of a special kind (Nussbaum 2001: 67). "Emotions typically have a connection to imagination, and to the concrete picturing of events in imagination, that differentiate them from others, more abstract judgemental states." (Nussbaum 2001: 65) That is to say, emotions manage to generate more vivid and texture-rich judgements.

This idea of educating citizens is also somehow at the heart of debates on restorative justice (see, for instance, the special issue dedicated by the *European Journal of Social Theory* [2008, vol. 11, num. 3] to this topic). The main concern underlying this area of research is how to build or re-establish "a sense of shared humanity, a political community based on equality of respect, and shared civic trust" after a violent conflict – a task that "requires victims, perpetrators and beneficiaries to undergo an emotional catharsis and transformation that cannot be achieved through conventional criminal and civil laws and practices." (Ure 2008: 285) Close to this area of research, Yanay's work (2002) shows that hatred can be turned into a positive mode of attachment once its ambivalence is acknowledged.

The study of political communication has also benefited from considering emotions. Informal logic, for example, distinguishes between an "emotional system [of argumentation]" and "the deliberate, intellectual system", each being preferable depending on the circumstances (Ben-Ze'ev 1995: 198). From a normative viewpoint, both emotional argument and deliberative, intellectual argument are to be conceived of similarly, according to Michael A. Gilbert (2004). In other words, both are governed by certain rules, and it is the adequacy of a statement, be it emotional or logical, to these rules that determines its acceptability – not the emotional or the logical nature of the statement *per se*. As Gilbert (2004: 261) puts it:

> "There certainly are rules for emotional argument. They are similar to the rules for logical argument, and include such factors as veracity, non-exaggeration, justification of evidence, avoidance of bias, consideration of alternatives, and so on. Emo-