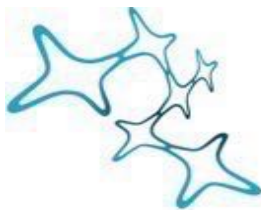


**The Epistemic Value of Emotions.
Inquiries in Politics, Narrative and Ethics**

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“We are acted on, insofar as we are part of Nature, which cannot be conceived through itself, without the others”
(Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part 4 Proposition 2)

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Contents

General Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1	
The Epistemic Value of Emotions in Politics.....	18
Chapter 2	
The Epistemic Value of Emotions in Literary Narrative.....	46
Chapter 3	
Emotional Appeals in Propaganda and Persuasion: Epistemic Differences.....	77
Chapter 4	
I Belong therefore I Am: Immigrants, National Identity and Feeling of Belonging.....	102
Summary and General Conclusion.....	133
Bibliography.....	136
Curriculum Vitae.....	145
List of publications.....	148
Affidavit.....	149
Declaration of author contribution.....	150

General introduction

"Human beings are not only weird animals who construct systems of representation, but also still weirder ones who have emotions about what they have constructed."

(Stenning 2002, 260)

What do emotions tell us? How can they give us any kind of information? Is there any way emotions can help us make sense of things? All these questions concern the epistemic roles of emotions, and have recently become the subject of a disciplinary broad wave of research interest. The growing interest in the topic is not surprising, given the increased awareness of the interrelation between cognition and emotion in the human mind. In the past, higher level cognitive processes were largely studied as separate from affective processes, as if they were immune from their influence, or as if affective components were just a source of noise to be controlled. This division may have come from the traditional conceptual differentiation between reason and passion, with its implicit hierarchical distinction. More recent approaches, however, revealed a dynamic interaction between cognitive and affective variables, between reasoning and feeling, and between subcortical and cortical regions of the brain. In light of this, it appears evident that an appropriate study of cognitive activities cannot avoid examining their emotional components. By the same measures, epistemic processes, such as acquiring knowledge, understanding and reasoning, traditionally labeled as cognitive, cannot be adequately considered in isolation from emotional elements. On the contrary, given the pervasiveness of emotions,

failing to factor them in leaves important aspects of these processes unattended. The work of this thesis is motivated exactly by this perspective. Specifically, in this thesis, I examine from a philosophical viewpoint, how emotions intervene in a few epistemic activities, what are their epistemic roles, and how they perform them. My objective is to show that emotions have an epistemic "value", that is, they can give a positive, distinctive, and even essential contribution to certain epistemic processes within particular contexts.

Since emotions can serve a great variety of epistemic roles and across multiple domains, addressing the epistemic value of emotions within a doctoral dissertation necessarily requires adopting a definite perspective and making a conscious selection. Thus, this thesis focuses on a few of the ways in which emotions can be epistemically valuable, specifically, on their contribution to the acquisition of knowledge, and to the processes of understanding, argumentation and reasoning. Moreover, this contribution is not considered in general terms, but in reference to particular domains, such as the political context, the narrative setting, and specific ethical issues. In the four papers that make up this dissertation, four particular questions about the epistemic value of emotions will be addressed, respectively:

- 1) What kind of knowledge can emotions provide to make citizens more politically sophisticated?
- 2) What part do "feeling" and "inferring" emotions play in the readers' understanding of literary narratives?
- 3) Are the arguments presenting emotional appeals necessarily manipulative, or can they be epistemically beneficial?
- 4) How can the feeling of belonging ground the value of national identity, and how can it affect reasoning about immigration policies?

It should be noted that the four papers, each forming one chapter of this thesis, include introductions of their own. Therefore, this general introduction will be limited to material that is not covered in the individual papers, but that is nevertheless relevant to appreciate the connection between them, and the thesis as a whole.

First, the theoretical landscape of the relation between emotions and epistemology will be introduced (Section 1). Second, it will be explained how this relation can be fruitfully unfolded by examining one feature of emotions, namely their evaluative character

(Section 2), and by showing how this feature grounds the epistemic relevance of emotions (Section 3). Specifically, it will be examined how emotions, in virtue of their evaluative character, can offer an epistemic contribution to the processes of knowledge (Section 3.1), understanding (Section 3.2), argumentation (Section 3.3), and reasoning (Section 3.4). In this connection, the key themes around which the thesis is organized will be presented. Moreover, it will be shown how referring to particular domains, such as the political context, the narrative setting, and specific ethical issues, is instrumental to articulate what the epistemic value of emotions consists in. Finally, a central aspect of this thesis will be highlighted, namely the importance of empirical findings for the formulation of sensible hypotheses about the epistemic value of emotions (Section 4).

1. Emotions and epistemology

The relationship between emotions and epistemology is a key element in the study of the epistemic value of emotions, but it is not directly addressed in this thesis, as it is rather taken for granted. In this section, I will briefly outline the terms of this relationship, to contextualize the work of this thesis in respect to the research that has been previously conducted, and to highlight the research achievements that have made this work possible.

Discussing the relation between emotions and epistemology requires to consider two different perspectives, namely, the place of emotions in epistemology on one side, and the place of epistemology in the philosophy of emotions on the other. I identify the rediscovery of emotions in the fields of neuroscience and cognitive sciences as a decisive factor both for including emotions in epistemology discussions, and for including epistemic considerations in the philosophy of emotions. Studies in these fields have shown that emotions are crucially involved in processes commonly regarded as alien to them, such as reasoning and decision making.¹ Moreover, the results of experiments where participants were presented with deductive reasoning exercises, revealed that emotions do not

¹ Pivotal, in this respect, is the research conducted by Damasio, the most overly cited author in the philosophical (and probably non-philosophical as well) academic literature on emotions.

necessarily impair cognitive performances, but rather, they improve their outcomes under certain conditions.² What epistemology and the philosophy of emotions retained from these studies does not concern directly the specific function of emotions for undertaking certain tasks, but rather their relation to, and interaction with, the cognitive domain. In this connection, the word "cognitive" is not supposed to recall to the so-called "cognitive theories" of emotions, as opposed to non-cognitive theories. Rather, following Debes (2009), emotions can be said to be cognitive in a wide sense because, besides any further characterization, they involve cortical brain states or processes, and therefore they are part of our mental life. The recognition of emotions as part of our mental life, and as interacting with our mental states, is what, I believe, paved the way to the inclusion of emotions in epistemology, and, vice versa, to the inclusion of epistemological considerations in the philosophy of emotions.

As for epistemology, it was traditionally conceived as a normative discipline, exploring the grounds and the validity of knowledge in propositional terms: in this context, since emotions were judged to be particularly fallible, they were not taken into any regard within its realm, except than as deceivers of cognitive functions (Brun and Kuenzle 2008). An important development in epistemology, that opened the way to emotions, is the shift of the central epistemic goal from the static ideal of knowledge to understanding as an activity. Without delving into details beyond the scope of this introduction, what was suggested by a few scholars, is that analyzing the concept of knowledge in itself is idle, and imposes inapplicable standards to people's inquiry; rather, what seem most relevant are the processes through which people strive to understand, and these do not include only propositional components, such as judgments and assertions, but also values, rules, categories and methods (Hookway 1990, Goodman and Elgin 1988, Elgin 1996). This move towards epistemic processes and activities lead to a broader understanding of the area of competence of epistemology, including

² See Blanchette and Richards (2004) for a comprehensive review.

mental states of epistemic agents that were previously disregarded: among them, emotions were included as well.³

As for the philosophy of emotions, cognitive theories and perceptual theories are the ones keener to account for emotions' epistemic characteristics. Both these families of theories conceive of emotions as mental states, but they conceptualize their epistemic features in different terms. Cognitive theories, on one hand, claim that emotions are reducible to, or have constitutive components in propositional attitudes, such as judgments and beliefs. These attitudes are described as evaluative, in the sense that they concern evaluative properties; for example, to feel fear is to judge that something is dangerous (e.g. Solomon 1988, Nussbaum 2004). Similarly, in psychology, beliefs have been claimed to be part of emotions as cognitive kinds of appraisals: according to this view, emotional responses start with the cognitive processing of an event or a situation as relevant to an individual's concerns (e.g. Frijda et al 2000, Clore & Gasper 2000). It is easy to see how, in the cognitive framework, emotions have an inherent epistemic character, as they can give rise to new beliefs and prompt the change of existing ones, by modifying their strength or revising them completely.

Whereas for the cognitive theories, the close relation between emotions and beliefs is what grounds emotions' epistemic properties, perceptual theories ground these properties in the assimilation of emotional responses to perceptual states. Given the central importance of sense perception as a paradigmatic source of belief and contributor to justification, knowledge, and understanding in epistemology, conceiving of emotions as perceptual states has obvious and important implications for the epistemology of emotions (Pelser 2014). Indeed, according to the perceptual theories, just as having a visual experience of a red apple is a defeasible reason to judge that there is a red apple on my desk, in the same way, my experience of guilt is a defeasible reason to judge that I did something wrong (e.g. Tappolet 2016, Döring 2003). The popularity of perceptual theories of emotions has attracted criticism (Salmela 2011, Brady 2013, Deonna and Teroni 2015), but has also prompted further interest in

³ I do not include here examples of the first studies about emotions in epistemology, because it is beyond the scope of the present introduction. An overview can be found in Brun and Kuenzle (2008).

emotions' epistemology. Questions have been raised on the reliability of emotions as a source of justification, and how this reliability depends on the appropriateness of emotions themselves (e.g. Deonna and Teroni 2012). Here, I will not tackle these questions in detail, but I will address two points in relation to them, as they are relevant to frame the work in this thesis. The first point concerns the evaluative dimension of emotions, whereas the second one concerns their epistemic relevance.

2. The evaluative character of emotions

Although different theoretical descriptions of emotions entail different claims about their specific epistemic functions, there is one feature of emotions, namely their evaluative character, that I consider as the most fundamental for characterizing the epistemic relevance of emotions in general. All the major theoretical accounts of emotions acknowledge emotions' evaluative nature. As was previously mentioned, cognitive theories define emotions as judgments with propositional content about their evaluative properties (e.g. to fear something is to judge that something is dangerous), whereas perceptual theories describe emotions as perceptions of evaluative properties (e.g. to fear something is to perceive the dangerousness of something). Moreover, feeling theories (e.g. James 1884; Kriegel 2014) identify emotions with bodily changes as automatic responses to evaluative properties (e.g. to fear something is to undergo the physiological changes associated with fear in response to the dangerousness of something). The evaluative character of emotions is highlighted also by the attitudinal theory (Deonna and Teroni 2015), and by enactivist theories as well (e.g. Ellis 2005, Thompson & Colombetti 2012).

I will not report additional theories here, nor will I go into details about any of these theoretical characterizations of emotion. My simplistic illustration of a few of them is intended only to show how, despite the different theoretical accounts, emotions are generally regarded as signaling some evaluative properties of their objects, i.e. properties that represent the value that some features of those objects have for the agent. Psychological theories of emotions, and, in particular, the so-called "appraisal" theories are based on a similar idea. According to these theories, "emotions are adaptive responses,

which reflect appraisals of features of the environment that are significant for the organism's well-being" (Moors et al. 2013, 119). Leaving aside whether these appraisals have a cognitive nature or not, as different theories propose different solutions, the fundamental claim of these types of theories is that emotions signal what it is in the environment that may affect the agents' concerns, including needs, attachments, values, goals, and in general "anything that an individual cares about" (Moors et al. 2013, 120). In order to explain how the evaluative character of emotions can ground their epistemic relevance, it is essential to clarify how epistemic relevance is defined.

3. What is epistemic relevance?

As mentioned above, developments in epistemology have extended the area of competence of this discipline from the static concept of knowledge to the activity of understanding. The present thesis embraces an even broader conception, including among what counts as epistemically relevant, not only what contributes to knowledge and understanding, but also to reasoning and argumentation. In the following, I will illustrate how the evaluative character of emotions is crucial for their epistemic contribution to these processes.⁴

⁴ The ways in which emotions can be epistemically relevant are not exhausted by my list. There are indeed other important epistemic features of emotions that I do not tackle in this thesis. One of them is for instance, the motivational force of emotions: emotions such as curiosity, interest, surprise can motivate people to learn, but also disappointment or doubt can prompt critical evaluation and further research (e.g. Hookway 2000, Dohrn 2008). Moreover, a growing body of literature has examined the so-called "epistemic emotions", that is, emotions about the subject's own mental capacities and processes (de Sousa 2008, Michaelian and Arango-Muñoz 2014). Among them, there is, for instance, the "feeling of knowing", namely the intellectual satisfaction that motivates the endorsement of an explanation (Gopnik 2000). Along the same lines, psychological studies have detected a "feeling of logicity", by showing a correlation between increased autonomic arousal (measured through skin conductance) and syllogisms in which believability and logical validity conflicted (De Neys, Moyens and Vansteenwegen 2010). These studies, and more generally the studies on the motivational force of emotions and on epistemic emotions, are certainly important, especially for showing the deep intertwining between emotional and cognitive processes. In this thesis, however, I do not tackle them, as I focus on the epistemic contribution of emotions in other terms, namely knowledge, understanding, reasoning and argumentation.

3.1 Knowledge

I intend the epistemic contribution of emotions to knowledge, as their capacity to provide access to beliefs that would be inaccessible otherwise. This topic is addressed in the first chapter of the thesis. In this paper, I argue that emotions are the source of a distinct kind of knowledge, which I call "evaluative knowledge". I define "evaluative knowledge" as the knowledge about evaluative properties of objects, and I argue that, since emotions are evaluative in character, they can offer this kind of knowledge, by disclosing these properties. Discussing the epistemic relevance of emotions as a source of knowledge raises two main issues: first, whether or not the kind of knowledge that emotions provide is reliable, and second, whether it is only accessible through emotions. Since I address both issues in the paper more specifically, here I will only frame the discussion in more general terms.

As for the first issue, the reliability of emotions as a source of knowledge has been doubted, on the ground that emotions easily lead to wishful thinking and self-deception (Frijda and Mesquita 2000 p 55). As noted by Brady (2013), emotions are not sufficient for justifying evaluative beliefs, as they need further reasons or evidence. For instance, if a noise downstairs, in the night scares me, fear alone cannot be accepted as sufficient evidence to believe that I am in danger; rather, further evidence is needed, in order to confirm or deny the accuracy of my initial emotional appraisal. This criticism points out that emotions, by themselves, may lead to distorted and unwarranted beliefs and, therefore, the evaluative knowledge, which they provide, may not be epistemically reliable. I argue that this conclusion can be challenged, by adopting a coherentist account of epistemic justification.

Specifically, drawing from Elgin (2008) and de Sousa (2008), I argue that, although emotions in themselves are not sufficient to ground evaluative knowledge about their objects, emotions can do so together with other coherent epistemic attitudes about those objects. For example, a feeling of repulsion alone is not enough to ground the evaluative judgment that D. J. Trump is dishonest. However, this judgment can be grounded in the feeling together with the beliefs based on further information about his conduct and his felonies.

Under a coherentist theory of justification, the fact that emotions may bring about biased beliefs does not necessarily undermine the role of emotions as conveyers of knowledge, because this content should not merely be accepted on its own, but rather, should be considered in conjunction with non-emotional attitudes (i.e. other beliefs and values). The idea, simply put, is that, the evaluative content suggested by an emotion should be assessed in respect to the agent's values and beliefs, and should be accepted only if it results to be coherent with them. I will talk more extensively about the relationship between emotions and values, as well about its connection to the coherentist account of epistemic justification, in section 3.3.

Having assumed a coherentist account of epistemic justification to ground the reliability of emotions as a source of evaluative knowledge, the second question, as mentioned above, is whether emotions are the only way to access this knowledge. For instance, even if my feeling of repulsion towards D. J. Trump is included among the epistemic attitudes grounding my evaluative judgment of him as dishonest, wouldn't this judgment be the same without it? Drawing from Goldie (2002), I argue that there is a qualitative difference between the evaluative knowledge achieved with and without the contribution of emotions. In the first chapter of the dissertation, I focus in particular on evaluative knowledge in politics. I will briefly summarize my argument in the following.

I argue that an emotional reaction towards a political object not only signals certain evaluative properties of the object, as they could be attributed to it without any emotional involvement, but it signals that the agent personally, with her values and beliefs, is sensitive to these properties. I argue that this distinctive contribution is relevant, not merely in virtue of its content, but because of its inclusion in the integrative process, aimed at assessing coherence, through which the agent's evaluative knowledge is formed. Indeed, by including the emotional component, the values and beliefs that the agent holds in relation to a certain political object, are confronted with their actual import for the agent with respect to the object. As a result, the opinion that the agent forms, is characterized as really invoking, and not just ideologically or superficially reflecting, her values and beliefs. This makes the agent's evaluative knowledge more sophisticated, and it grounds, I claim, the epistemic relevance of emotions as a source of

knowledge in the political context. I will say more about the concept of political sophistication in section 3.4.

3.2 Understanding

In order to discuss the contribution of emotions to understanding, a clarification on the definition of understanding is necessary. Although there is much debate over the nature of understanding in current epistemology, most scholars agree that understanding is basically appreciating connections. Knanvig, for instance, defines understanding as "an internal grasping or appreciation of how the various elements in a body of information are related to each other in terms of explanatory, logical, probabilistic, and other kinds of relations" (Knanvig 2003, 192-193). Likewise, Roberts and Wood (2007, 45) argue that understanding essentially involves "grasping connections" and "fitting things together".

The contribution of emotions to understanding is addressed in the second chapter of the thesis. In this paper, I examine a specific type of understanding, namely the understanding of literary narratives. The narrative mode of understanding has been highlighted as a particularly relevant one, for the human tendency to explain everyday phenomena and other's people actions in a narrative form (Goldie 2004). Following Carroll (2001) and Velleman (2003), I maintain that understanding a narrative consists in grasping a "narrative connection" between the narrated events, that is, to see that these events are meaningfully related to each other, in such a way that they form a narrative. In the paper, I commit to the enactivist theory of emotions proposed by Ralph Ellis (2005), as I argue that this account is the one that can best explain the epistemic contribution of emotions to narrative understanding. However, in order to comprehend the epistemic contribution of emotions to understanding in general, it is not necessary to presuppose an enactivist theory, but only to consider one feature of emotions, that is endorsed by other theories as well, namely, their evaluative character. I will summarize my proposal in the following.

Since understanding consists in grasping connections, I argue that emotions contribute to understanding by contributing to the grasping of connections, and that they can do so in virtue of their evaluative character. Specifically, since emotions are evaluative in

nature, they make salient certain goals or values, and by doing so, they acquire an anticipatory character, because they set a goal/value to be reached, and thus they trace a certain direction. For instance, if an agent feels fear, the direction set by this emotion is (presumably) towards soothing this state: by feeling fear, the goal/value of safety is made salient, and the agent anticipates being safe as the goal or value to be reached. My claim is that the emotional response to a certain event makes the agent process subsequent events in light of the goal that that the emotional response highlights. In the case of fear, the agent processes subsequent events in light of the goal of safety, thus connecting them to the previous event. Since understanding consists in grasping connections, the emotion contributes to the agent's understanding of certain events, by making the agent process them as connected to each other.

3.3 Argumentation

I identify two further ways in which emotions are epistemically relevant, that is, by contributing to the processes of argumentation and reasoning. These processes have been the object of extensive research, and in this thesis, I examine only a few aspects of them. Specifically, I focus on how emotions intervene in evaluative arguments, how they ground the values at the core of these arguments, and on the role that emotions play in reasoning about issues involving this kind of arguments. As will appear, elements that are related to the evaluative character of emotions, and that are key for explaining the contribution of emotions to knowledge and understanding, also explain the contribution of emotions to argumentation and reasoning.

In the third chapter, I analyze the role of emotions in evaluative arguments, and I focus specifically on the evaluative arguments used in politics. As I will refer more extensively to the political domain in the paper, here I will just introduce my view on evaluative arguments in general. I define evaluative arguments as arguments supporting an evaluative conclusion (i.e. a normative statement) by presenting some factual evidence coupled with a goal/value. For instance, given the factual evidence that smoking damages health, if my goal/value is being healthy, then the evaluative conclusion that I shouldn't smoke is supported. Clearly, keeping

stable the factual evidence, the supported conclusion changes, depending on the relevant goal/value. For instance, if my goal is getting sick, then, the evidence that smoking damages health, becomes a reason to smoke.

My claim is that emotional reactions influence evaluative arguments, by making salient certain goals or values over others. I illustrate this by referring to the responses of fear and compassion elicited by certain emotional appeals. For instance, depicting refugees as potential terrorists is an emotional appeal aimed to elicit fear. Fear, as mentioned before in illustrating the evaluative character of emotions, makes one specific goal/value more salient than others, namely, safety: by eliciting fear in relation to immigrants, people are led to worry about their safety. Let's suppose that this salient goal/value is coupled with a certain factual evidence, for instance, about the high number of refugees asking for asylum. Then, the supported evaluative conclusion will be in favor of restrictive immigration policies. Clearly, changing the emotion, will change the salient goal/value, and thus the conclusion. For instance, by depicting refugees as innocent victims, compassion is evoked, which makes salient the goal of solidarity with them. In this way, an appeal to compassion is used to support open border policies.

Although the evaluative character of emotions in general, explains how emotions work within evaluative arguments, I identify a difference in the use of emotions within such arguments. As was pointed out before, the evaluative content suggested by the emotion can be epistemically justified only if it is assessed in respect to the agent's other attitudes, and it results to be coherent with them. When an emotional appeal aims to evoke a certain emotion, it may either promote the assessment and coherent integration of the goal made salient by the emotion or it may not. Such assessment, for instance, is promoted when the emotion evoked is itself "grounded", that is, when reasons for the appropriateness of the emotion to the situation are presented. For instance, the fear in relation to migrants in the appeal mentioned above, might be grounded in actual or in biased and fabricated evidence. Moreover, the value that it makes salient (i.e. safety), might either be assessed with respect to the agent's other values, or not. Further and more detailed examples illustrating this difference between emotional appeals are presented in the paper.

Whereas the argument presented in the third chapter rests on the capacity of emotions to make salient certain goals/values, the argument presented in the fourth chapter rests on their capacity to ground goals/values. "Making salient" is not the same as "grounding". On the one hand, saying that emotions make salient a value means that they make more apparent the importance of something that is important already. On the other hand, saying that emotions ground a value indicates that the emotion is what makes something important, that is, what makes something a value. Whether or not emotions can ground values is a topic of great interest in the philosophy of emotions and in moral philosophy as well. In this thesis, I do not enter this debate. However, in the fourth chapter I examine one specific value, namely the value of national identity, and I argue that it is grounded on a specific emotion, namely the feeling of belonging. My claim is that the valuable character of national identity is due specifically to its capacity of providing people with a feeling of belonging to their national community. In the paper, I examine how the value of national identity is appealed to in arguments favoring restrictive immigration policies. I will say more about this in the next section.

3.4 Reasoning

Given the place of emotions in evaluative arguments, emotions result to be involved in reasoning about issues that involve this kind of arguments. As was illustrated above, evaluative arguments are arguments that support normative conclusions, that is, they are about what should and should not be done, what is and is not preferable. As such, evaluative arguments are typical of discussions about issues with ethical and political relevance. Although emotions inevitably intervene in these discussions, there is a certain resistance to acknowledging their presence as legitimate. This is likely due to the traditional depiction of emotions as partial and irrational, which would make them epistemically unsuitable and even detrimental in discussions about normative questions. Leaving aside the debate on the place of emotions and their epistemic features in ethics in general, as this is not tackled in the thesis, I will discuss their place in politics, as this is relevant to three out of the four dissertation chapters.

Modern liberal theory has promoted a rationalist conception of politics, where normative ideals such as "public reason" (Rawls 1993) and "communicative rationality" (Habermas 1984) regulate the public debate in terms of exchanges based solely on logical principles and rules of evidence. The political theorists following this tradition have been mainly concerned with the improvement of adequate reasoning skills in order to achieve an ideal form of deliberation, disregarding any emotional contribution to it; they considered emotions as irrational and thus as either epistemically irrelevant, or even damaging for the political discourse (Nie, Junn & Stehlik-Barry 1996, Callan 1997). The plausibility of the rationalist position, which maintains the exclusion of emotions from the political domain, has been challenged by the studies showing that emotions are part and parcel of human reasoning, and they are engaged in our deliberative assessments in the political context (Marcus 2010, Redlawsk 2006). In philosophy, liberal rationalism has been dismissed not only as a highly idealistic notion, but also because it disregards the role of emotion in argumentation and public discourse (Benhabib 1992, Young 1996, Hall 2005, Kingston & Ferry 2009, Dowding 2016).

Along the same lines, in this thesis, and specifically in the first and third chapter, I argue for the epistemic relevance of emotions in politics, by appealing to the notion of political sophistication. Political sophistication has been defined in political theory as comprising not only the knowledge about political facts, but also the capacity to link one's political preferences to one's values (Luskin 2002, Schreiber 2007). I call the latter "evaluative knowledge" and, as illustrated above, I argue that emotions can provide a relevant and distinctive contribution to it, thus serving a positive function for the citizen's political sophistication. What my discussion of political sophistication shows is that emotions cannot and should not be excluded from political reasoning; rather, instead of dismissing them as intrinsically interfering with reasoning and knowledge acquisition, the conditions under which emotions offer a valid epistemic contribution should be specified. As illustrated above, I propose to determine these conditions within a coherentist framework of epistemic justification. In the next section, I will explain what I find particularly appealing about this framework.

The fourth chapter of this thesis, as mentioned, is concerned with one peculiar issue, that has both political and ethical relevance, namely immigration. As with other political and ethical issues, concerns about the inclusion of emotions in the public debate on immigration have been expressed, especially because of the dangers of emotional rhetoric. Such rhetoric is believed to distort and trivialize the reality and the complexity of the issue at stake, as well as to obstruct the public's sound judgment. Indeed, research on the persuasive power of emotional messages has shown that they can modify people's attitudes independently of one's rational interests and deliberations (Cassino & Lodge 2007, Huddy & Gunthorsdottir 2000). In this respect, studies on anti-immigrant propaganda have shown its effectiveness in promoting anti-immigrant attitudes, by mobilizing emotions such as anger and fear towards migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees (Brader et al 2008; Hodge 2015; Tazreiter 2015, Lecheler et al 2015).

This thesis puts forward two claims relevant to the role of emotions in reasoning about immigration. The first one, covered in chapter 3, is that the rhetorical use of emotional appeals is not necessarily negative: rather, as illustrated in section 3.3, the epistemic contribution of these appeals depends on whether their integration with further mental attitudes is promoted or not. The second point, addressed in chapter 4 and presented in section 3.3, is that one of the values mostly appealed to in the immigration debate (i.e. national identity) is fundamentally constituted by an emotional component (i.e. the feeling of belonging).

4. Accounting for empirical data

One crucial aspect of this thesis is its attention to empirical data. The philosophical relevance of empirical findings is the object of heated debate in philosophy: here, I will not introduce the debate, but I will outline my position, as this will help to make sense of the approach that characterizes this thesis. I maintain that considering empirical data is not only desirable, but even necessary in order to formulate and test sensible philosophical hypotheses, especially if these hypotheses concern the epistemic relevance of emotions. Indeed, as mentioned above, the very possibility of an epistemology of emotions has been promoted by the scientific studies suggesting a conception

of emotions as mental states. The reason why I find the coherentist model of epistemic justification particularly appealing is specifically its conformity to this conception: since emotions are mental states interacting with other mental states, it seems only reasonable for the content they convey to not be considered in isolation, but rather in connection with that brought about by other mental states as well. The adoption of a coherentist model of epistemic justification is not the only element that takes empirical findings into account within the present thesis.

Considering empirical data, I maintain, is essential for conducting philosophy about phenomena, such as emotions and epistemic processes, that have psychological and behavioral implications, and that, as such, are object of experimental inquiry. Historically, philosophers who studied phenomena of this kind, did not close their eyes to their observable effects. The body of empirical data that is now available constitutes just further evidence, besides what can be ordinarily observed. This is why ignoring these data would be equivalent, for any philosopher, to just close their eyes. In this respect, considering the epistemic value of emotions in relation to specific domains, is what has allowed me to avail this thesis with the consideration of empirical data.

Indeed, scientific studies that investigate the role of emotions in processes such as the acquisition of knowledge, understanding, argumentation and reasoning, are not about the abstract and ideal performance of these processes, but about how these processes are carried out in specific situations. This is why, in the first and in the third chapter, I consider how emotions contribute to the acquisition of knowledge and to argumentation in the political context specifically. This allows me to inform my philosophical hypotheses with empirical studies about, for instance, the contribution of emotions to political sophistication, and with empirical models about the function of emotional appeals. Likewise, in the second chapter, I do not address how emotions affect understanding in general, but rather in relation to literary narrative: this is an area where emotional states are highly involved, and where those states are empirically tested relatively to their effects on text comprehension. Even in the last chapter, empirical findings are reckoned, concerning the

influence of national feelings for the formation of attitudes about immigration.

It is still quite common for philosophers who aim to make their theories about emotions widely applicable, to make only a few purportedly uncontentious assumptions about human emotional dispositions, deliberately avoiding to confront more specific empirical considerations. Furthermore, they tend to devolve the task of worrying about the realizability of their theories on to psychologists and political scientists, and to draw a sharp line between philosophical and empirical issues. In this thesis, I tried to move away from this approach, emphasizing instead the importance of an empirically informed analysis, in order to provide an adequate philosophical examination of the emotions and their epistemic roles.

Chapter 1

The Epistemic Value of Emotions in Politics

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Abstract

In this paper, I consider emotional reactions in response to political facts, and I investigate how they may provide relevant knowledge about those facts. I assess the value of such knowledge, both from an epistemic and a political perspective. Concerning the epistemic part, I argue that, although emotions in themselves are not sufficient to ground evaluative knowledge about political facts, they can do so within a network of further coherent epistemic attitudes about those facts. With regards to the political part, I argue that the contribution of emotions to evaluative knowledge about political facts, is indeed politically valuable. To develop my argument, I first show that an evaluative kind of knowledge is relevant for reaching a sophisticated level of political cognition. Second, I show that emotions contribute distinctively to this kind of knowledge. I conclude that, when emotional experiences towards political events are coupled with an adequate factual knowledge about those events, they can ground a distinctive evaluative knowledge about those events, and such knowledge is relevant both from an epistemic and a political perspective.

Introduction

History is studded with political events that have prompted pervasive emotional reactions. The election of D. J. Trump, Brexit, and the Syrian refugee crisis are just a few contemporary examples. With respect to these sorts of event, studies on the role of emotions in politics have shown interesting results. For example, Marcus and colleagues (2007) found that distinct emotions activate different patterns of information processing and decision making, resulting in major effects on political behaviors and attitudes, such as, to name just a few, voting, candidate evaluation, opinion formation, and political participation. In this paper I will not delve into any of these phenomena in particular, but rather I will examine one epistemic aspect that characterizes the involvement of emotions in the political context. Specifically, I will focus on the kind of knowledge, if any, emotions may provide about the political events evoking them. I will attempt to answer the following question: can emotions towards political events, be the source of any valuable knowledge about those events? I will then attempt to give a positive answer to this question and will structure my answer, as follows.

In the first four sections of this paper, I will discuss some epistemic characteristics of emotions, including emotions towards political events. In Section 1, I attempt to show how emotions may provide knowledge, and I argue that they can do so by generating and modifying beliefs. In section 2, I try to determine what kind of knowledge emotions may provide, and I argue that such knowledge has an evaluative character. In Section 3, I give some examples of criticism concerning the value of emotion as a reliable source of evaluative knowledge. In section 4, I respond to that criticism, by arguing that although emotions in themselves are not sufficient to ground evaluative knowledge about political facts, they can do so

when taken together with other coherent epistemic attitudes about those facts.

In the five sections that follow, I assess the value of the contribution that emotions may provide to evaluative knowledge about political facts. In section 5 I show that evaluative knowledge is relevant in the political context, and I do so by introducing the notion of political sophistication. In section 6, I show that emotions may contribute to the evaluative knowledge about political facts, only if they are coupled with adequate factual knowledge about those facts. In section 7 I present the following problem: what is distinctive about emotion's contribution to evaluative knowledge about political facts? In section 8, I argue that emotions provide a distinctive contribution to evaluative knowledge in general and in section 9 I illustrate how they may contribute distinctively to evaluative knowledge, about political facts specifically.

Before I begin, two premises are in order. First, in this paper I use the expression "political objects" to refer to events, issues, facts, individuals, groups, and entities, in general, which have political relevance. Second, the scope of my discussion is limited to emotions that are integral, and not incidental, to the political context.

I define "incidental", as the emotional reactions that are not related to political objects, but rather which play a role in the political context. A study conducted by Small and Lerner (2008), offers an example of this kind of emotion, revealing that feelings of sadness and anger, arising from events in one's personal life, influence one's preferences concerning public policies on welfare. The effects of emotional appeals in campaign advertisements and political propaganda are further examples of incidental emotion. These kinds of emotional occurrences, triggered either by events unrelated to politics or by rhetorical devices, influence people's attitudes towards political objects, because of the psychological effects that emotions operate on their mental processes. However, since they are not triggered by the political objects themselves, I do not take incidental emotions as pertaining strictly to political objects; I consider them more likely to provide information about their actual source rather than about the political objects at issue.

Therefore, I will not examine incidental emotions in my discussion. Rather, I will focus on the emotions that are "integral" to

political events; that is, on the emotional responses that are genuinely triggered by politically significant matters. Examples of these kinds of emotion are the anger towards the Muslim ban, the fear that Marine Le Pen might win the elections in France, or the joy felt at the recognition of same-sex unions in Italy. Since these emotions are prompted by the political objects directly, they are better suited to providing information about them. But, how can these emotions provide any information about political objects? What kind of knowledge, does this information give rise to? Having clarified my premises, I will now go on to answer these questions in sections 1 and 2, respectively.

1. How can emotions provide any knowledge about political objects?

In order to explain how emotions towards political objects may provide knowledge about them, I will now call on some psychological theories about the interaction between emotions and beliefs. In particular, I will ground the idea that emotions may be a source of knowledge, in the theories claiming that emotions exert an influence on beliefs.

It is a common experience that emotions can give rise to beliefs. For example, if I hear footsteps on the roof at night and they scare me, then I may form the belief that I am in danger; if my girlfriend tells me that she is having dinner with one of her colleagues and I feel jealous, then I may come to believe that she is cheating on me; if I feel overwhelmed by a certain situation, I may believe that such a situation is unsolvable. The fact that an emotional experience often insinuates or results in a belief, reveals the human tendency to take emotions, at least implicitly, as conveyers of information about the world. I argue that emotions towards political objects may function in an analogous way. For instance, disappointment in the election of D. J. Trump, as president of the United States, prompted the belief, in many, that the American voting system is unfair; indignation at the high rates of unemployment in Italy led many to believe that the government is inadequate.

The psychologist, Nico Frijda, has conducted extensive research on the effect of emotions on beliefs. He has claimed that not only can emotions generate new beliefs but they can also change

existing ones, by modifying their strength, or revising them completely (Frijda & Mesquita 2000). Many of the examples that he cites are taken from the political world. For example, he reports that "prior to the NATO bombing of Serbia in the Kosovo war, many Serbians were critical of Milosevich. After its onset, they gave him their enthusiastic support (or so at least it seems), and, foreseeably, became ready for unflinching and long-lasting resistance fed by the conviction of their cause being just" (Frijda & Mesquita 2000, p 49). Frijda highlights that the emotional influences on beliefs about political issues, have crucial consequences for political behavior: for instance, "participation in political violence or, at least, support for violent movements by one's votes, one's budget allocations, or one's emotional support, is facilitated by the firmness of one's beliefs regarding the states of the world motivating those actions, and (...) such firmness of beliefs is fed by the emotions connected to those states of the world" (Frijda, Manstead & Bem 2000 p 4).

Following Frijda, a number of scholars have highlighted the pervasive effects of emotions on beliefs. For example, the so-called "feelings-as-information" theory maintains that people listen to their emotional reactions as a source of information, and this in turn affects their judgments and beliefs (Schwarz 2011). Similarly, Clore and Gasper (2000), showed that beliefs are modified not only to be compatible with external evidence from perceptual experiences but also according to internal evidence, in the form of emotions.

Here, I will not delve in these psychological theories further, but rather I will use them as the basis of the idea that emotions may provide some knowledge about their objects, including the political ones, by generating new beliefs and modifying existing ones, about those objects. I will now turn to a characterization of the knowledge that emotions may provide.

2. What kind of knowledge may emotions provide about political objects?

In the previous section, I showed that emotions may provide some knowledge of their objects, through their effect on the beliefs about those objects. In light of this, and in order to characterize the type of knowledge that these emotions may provide, I will now look into the character of the beliefs that they may generate and influence. In the

following, I will explain why I define such beliefs as evaluative, and why emotions may consequently provide an evaluative kind of knowledge.

All the major theories of emotions in philosophy, attribute some evaluative character to emotions, despite the differences in how they characterize the nature of emotional phenomena and their mode of operation. For example, cognitive theories (e.g. Nussbaum 2004; Solomon 1988), define emotions as judgments with propositional content about their evaluative properties (e.g. to fear something is to judge that something is dangerous); feeling theories (e.g. James 1884; Kriegel 2014) identify emotions with bodily changes as automatic responses to evaluative properties (e.g. to fear something is to undergo the physiological changes associated with fear in response to the dangerousness of something); perceptual theories (e.g. Döring 2003; Prinz 2004) describe emotions as perceptions of evaluative properties (e.g. to fear something is to perceive the dangerousness of something). I will not report additional theories here, nor will I go into details about any of these theoretical characterizations of emotion. My simplistic illustration of a few of them is intended only to show how, despite the different theoretical accounts, emotions are generally regarded as signaling some evaluative properties of their objects, i.e. properties that represent the value that some features of those objects have for the agent. Psychological theories of emotions, and, in particular, the so-called "appraisal" theories are grounded in a similar idea. According to these theories, "emotions are adaptive responses, which reflect appraisals of features of the environment that are significant for the organism's well-being" (Moors et al. 2013 p 119). Leaving aside whether these appraisals have a cognitive nature or not, as different theories propose different solutions, the basic claim of these types of theory is that emotions signal what it is in the environment that may affect the agents' concerns, including needs, attachments, values, goals, and in general "anything that an individual cares about" (Moors et al. 2013 p 120).

What I would like to point out, through my brief sketch of philosophical and psychological accounts of emotion, is the central attribution to emotions of an evaluative aspect; whatever they are and however they work, emotions have some evaluative content, because they make a type of evaluation of their object, by catching what is

valuable about it for the agent. The information that emotions may carry, as I illustrated in the previous section, may contribute to knowledge about a certain object, by giving rise to, or by influencing beliefs about, that object. Given the evaluative content of emotions, I conclude that the beliefs they may affect are evaluative in character; that is, they are beliefs about the value of their objects for the subject. Consequently, emotions may provide evaluative knowledge about their objects.

If the object of an emotion is a political one, then the emotion may contribute to knowledge of such an object, by affecting the evaluative beliefs that we hold about it, and thus may provide evaluative knowledge about that political object. Fear of North Korea's nuclear ambitions may lead to judging the country as dangerous, admiring Justin Trudeau may lead to judging his administration as honest and fair. Both judgments constitute an evaluative form of knowledge, as they both express the value of their object for the subject. In the following section I will consider some of the problems concerning the idea that emotions may provide evaluative knowledge.

3. Criticism of emotion as a reliable source of evaluative knowledge

Although emotions may indeed provide evaluative knowledge about their objects, some criticism has been raised about the epistemic reliability of this type of knowledge. This criticism become even more problematic, when we consider emotions towards political objects. As I illustrated earlier, Frijda highlighted how the influence of emotions on beliefs about political issues may have dramatic effects on political behavior. It follows that if one's knowledge about political objects, which is provided by the effect of emotions on beliefs, is unreliable, this could have serious repercussions within the political context. In the following, I will describe two epistemic difficulties that have been identified, concerning emotions as reliable sources of evaluative knowledge about their objects, and will elucidate how each of these epistemic difficulties applies to evaluative knowledge in the political context.

The first problem is raised by Frijda. Specifically, he identifies two problematic features in the characterization of beliefs affected by emotions. The first is the tendency towards generalization: for

example, a man who was abandoned by a woman may easily take his resentment as evidence of women's dishonesty in general (Frijda & Mesquita 2000 p 55). On the political scene, rage against the Muslims who harassed several women in Köln, on New Year's Eve in 2015, sustained the racist idea in many European citizens', that Muslims are bad and dangerous people in general. The second problematic feature of beliefs affected by emotions is, according to Frijda, their tendency to be felt as true: in the grip of jealousy, one is certain that one's suspicion is justified and that a given sign clearly indicates unfaithfulness (Frijda & Mesquita 2000 p 55). Following the fear engendered by the terroristic attacks in Paris, on the 13th of November 2015, many people in France were convinced that the only viable solution to keep their country safe was to close its borders. In sum, the problem raised by the features that Frijda identified, is that evaluative knowledge, which is gained through the emotions' effects on beliefs, may be distorted and, therefore, not reliable.

The second critique of emotions as reliable sources of evaluative knowledge about their objects is raised by Michael Brady. He argues that emotions are not sufficient for justifying evaluative beliefs, as they need further reasons or evidence to justify the evaluative content they suggest. For instance, if a noise downstairs, in the night scares me, I do not accept my fear alone as sufficient evidence to believe that I am in danger. Rather, I tend to look for further evidence, in order to confirm or deny the accuracy of my initial, emotional appraisal: "[w]e strain our ears to hear other anomalous noises, rack our brains trying to think of possible non-threatening causes for the noise, and so forth. It is unlikely that, in these circumstances, we would regard our feeling of fear as a conclusive reason to judge that we are in danger" (Brady 2011 p 139). Within the political context, I cannot take my antipathy towards a certain candidate as evidence that they are dishonest. Although my feeling of antipathy may push me in that direction, it would be inappropriate to base my belief on that alone; I need more information about their conduct, to reliably ground my judgment. In sum, Brady raises the criticism that emotions are not enough to justify evaluative beliefs, because more evidence is needed from other non-emotional reasons and, thus, emotions alone cannot provide any

reliable evaluative knowledge. In the next section, I will describe a solution to the problems, raised by Frijda and Brady's observations.

4. How emotions can be a reliable source of evaluative knowledge: a coherentist solution

The concerns, put forward by Frijda and Brady, threaten the reliability of evaluative knowledge's being reached through emotional experiences. They show that emotions, by themselves, may lead to distorted and unwarranted beliefs and, therefore, any evaluative knowledge, which they provide, may not be epistemically reliable. I argue that this conclusion can be challenged, by considering a coherentist account of epistemic justification.

According to the coherentist theory of justification, no source of belief is capable of conferring the degree of justification necessary to render a belief justified or rational, apart from coherence with other beliefs and mental states. Some philosophers have used this type of theory as a basis for the justificatory power of emotions. For example, Elgin argues that emotional deliverances (i.e. what emotional experiences may indicate), are initially tenable (i.e. justifiable), because "an agent, in the grip of an emotion, has a tendency to credit its deliverances" (Elgin 1996 p 4). Furthermore, Elgin claims that if emotions only had this initial tenability (i.e. justificatory power), they would have only "a weak and precarious epistemological status" (Elgin 2008 p 34). However, Elgin continues, when emotional deliverances cohere with the content of other beliefs and epistemic commitments, "they integrate into a tenable system of thought" (Elgin 2008 p 34), and they acquire the same degree of tenability as the other beliefs with which they are incorporated. In Elgin's proposed coherentist solution, emotions are not fully reliable by themselves, no matter how compelling an emotional response may seem, ; rather they need collateral supports, and with them all our further epistemic commitments (although to different extents): "no commitment, however firmly held, is fully warranted in isolation" (Elgin 2008 p 34), but "is tenable only if it is integrable into a system of cognitive commitments in reflective equilibrium" (Elgin 2008 p 48).

De Sousa embraced a similar position: "Despite the treachery of our emotional dispositions, emotions in general constitute apprehensions of axiological reality. We tell which is right and which

is wrong much as we test the veracity of perceptual information: by appealing to corroborating evidence" (de Sousa 2004 p 75)

I argue that a coherentist view of justification, as concerns emotional evaluations, seems to be perfectly reasonable, if not the most suitable view, particularly when we consider existing research into the interaction between emotions and beliefs. In the first section of this paper, I outlined how emotions affect beliefs. Studies have also investigated the reverse relationship, revealing that beliefs can affect emotions by modulating their intensity and by changing them completely, through a reinterpretation of the meaning of the stimulus that triggered the emotional response (Ochsner 2005). Generally, the results of studies into the interaction between emotions and beliefs, show that they the two are closely interwoven. The evaluative beliefs, which are suggested by our emotional reactions, are intertwined with our ensuing beliefs and mental states, and because of this, they are necessarily subjected to their contradiction or their support. Consequently, such evaluative beliefs should not be considered in isolation, but rather their reliability should be accounted for in a coherentist way by assessing how the content of such evaluative beliefs is integrated into the network of our further epistemic commitments.

The coherentist explanation of evaluative beliefs also holds for evaluative beliefs about political objects. For example, if D.J. Trump inspires a sense of repulsion in a citizen, this may lead that citizen to endorse the belief, initially, that D.J. Trump is not trustworthy. However, they do not ground their evaluative knowledge about D.J. Trump on the basis of this feeling alone. After reading the news about his felonies and reflecting on D.J. Trump's conduct, they form further beliefs. Since the content of the citizen's emotional appraisal is coherent with those further beliefs, they the use them as the basis of their evaluative knowledge of D.J. Trump as not trustworthy. The content of their initial emotional appraisal alone cannot justify the citizen's evaluative knowledge, but it *can* do that, when combined with other coherent beliefs on the subject.

A coherentist solution, about the justificatory power of emotional experiences, seems to resolve the problems related to Frijda and Brady's earlier observations: evaluative beliefs, brought about by emotions, may be biased and not fully justifiable solely using

emotional experience. However, when those evaluative beliefs are inserted into a net of further beliefs and mental states, their biased character may be mitigated by interaction with these beliefs and mental states for reaching internal coherence. It is the coherence, and not the emotional occurrence alone, that grounds evaluative knowledge. Under a coherentist theory of justification, the fact that emotions may bring about biased beliefs does not necessarily undermine the role of emotions as conveyers of knowledge, because what they reveal should not merely be accepted on its own, but rather should be considered in conjunction with further non-emotional attitudes.

In conclusion, emotions are not sufficient for justifying evaluative beliefs, but this is understandable given the fact that they are inherently connected with other beliefs and mental states. However, although emotions are not sufficient by themselves, they still play a role in the justification of evaluative knowledge. The question remains: how important is the role of emotions in grounding evaluative knowledge, and specifically, evaluative knowledge about political objects? I will try to answer this question in the next five sections. First, I will introduce the concept of political sophistication, in order to show that evaluative knowledge is relevant in the political context.

5. Political sophistication and the relevance of evaluative knowledge in politics

By now, I have argued that, should emotions be able to provide any kind of knowledge, that knowledge is likely to be evaluative in character, that is; knowledge about the value of the object evokes emotion for the agent experiencing the emotion. Although my goal is to assess whether emotions make a relevant contribution to evaluative knowledge about political objects, my discussion would be pointless without showing that evaluative knowledge is relevant from a political point of view in first place, independent of whether emotions contribute to it. I will now introduce the notion of political sophistication, in order to demonstrate that evaluative knowledge is indeed politically relevant.

Political scientists have offered different concepts of political sophistication, and have used various expressions to describe it, such

as "political expertise", "political cognition", "political awareness", "political competence", and "political literacy". In my discussion, I will use these meanings interchangeably, referring to them all as political sophistication. What seems to be the common idea, behind the diverse explanations of this concept, is that political sophistication indexes not only the amount of knowledge held about political facts but also the way in which that knowledge is organized. In this respect, attention to and interest in political issues are considered important traits for political sophistication, as they foster information exposure and consumption, making sophisticates not only more knowledgeable but also more capable of forming connections among political concepts and information (Krosnick 1990 p 4). Political scientists argue that this capacity, in turn, provides sophisticates with a better understanding of political issues and a greater ability to connect their interests and values with concrete matters in politics. This last point, in particular, seems crucial for political sophistication: "[u]here are many reasons to think sophistication important, but perhaps its greatest importance lies in its conditioning of the relationship between values and policy and candidate preferences, which can be expected to be tighter among the more sophisticated" (Luskin 2002 p 220). Schreiber (2007) highlights the same point. Political cognition, he argues, cannot be explained only in terms of the facts that one is able to recall but also concerns a more meaningful knowledge, consisting of the ability to map one's own values onto one's own political opinions and choices: "If you know the name of the Indonesian president, whether he has the power to veto legislation, and whether his party controls the legislature, you do not have sufficient knowledge to assess whether he and his policies will conform to your values" (Schreiber 2007 p 65).

Further studies (Alvarez & Brehm 2002) have shown that one fundamental difference between political novices and political experts is that, although both may be sure of what they value, the first are unsure of how to use those values in political choices. Schreiber explains this discrepancy by adapting Searle's famous Chinese Room Argument: "For a political novice, who has little or no knowledge of national politics, responding to the questions in a political survey might be like being the English speaker in the Chinese room during the first day on the job. Survey respondents, who cannot identify

leading political figures, the policy position of the major parties, or use ideology as a framework for their political thinking, might well be processing meaningless symbols and merely answering questions, rather than revealing preferences (...). However, I contend that, for some people [i.e. political experts], the symbols of politics have meaning and are connected to deeply held values; these people are in the Chinese room and they speak Chinese" (Schreiber 2007 p 64). In his analogy, Schreiber proposes political attitudes as the output of an information processing system such as the Chinese Room. The analogy with Searle's argument is that political novices process political information, in the same way as the English speaker processes Chinese symbols; that is, without proper understanding. Conversely, political experts process political information by attaching a meaning to it, as does the Chinese speaker with Chinese symbols.

Based on the characterization of political sophistication that I have just outlined, I conclude that political sophistication includes not only factual knowledge about political issues but also evaluative knowledge about them; that is, knowledge of how such political issues invoke our values. Having clarified that evaluative knowledge is relevant in the political context, I will now discuss the conditions, under which emotions towards political objects, may contribute to such knowledge.

6. Conditions for the contribution of emotions to the evaluative knowledge about political objects

In the previous section I presented the notion of political sophistication, and I showed that the evaluative type of knowledge is relevant in the political domain. In this section, I will show that emotions' contribution to such knowledge is subject to certain conditions. To do this, I will review some of the research in political psychology, revealing an effect of emotions on the formation of political opinions. In my discussion, I regard political opinions as an expression of evaluative political beliefs and, therefore, I consider the results of these studies to be relevant to my discussion on the role of emotions in evaluative knowledge in politics. In line with the premises I outlined, at the beginning of my discussion, my analysis will be limited to studies that examined emotions that were integral to

political events; that is, emotions generated by those events. Therefore, I will leave aside the studies that investigated the influence of incidental emotions; that is, emotions elicited by stimuli unrelated to politics.

Much research in political psychology has shown that individuals' emotions are an indicator of their political opinions. The types of political opinions investigated varied from candidate evaluation to the evaluation of countries in general, and of specific policies. For example, Marcus (1988), showed that voters' feelings towards candidates mattered significantly for their voting choices; in particular, positive feelings towards a certain candidate, such as feelings of hope, pride, and sympathy, were found to be correlated with a disposition to vote for that candidate. Another study, concerning the effect of integral emotions on political opinions, was conducted by Huddy, Feldman, and Cassese (2007). They examined the effects of angry and fearful attitudes, connected to the 9/11 attacks, on citizens' opinions about support for the Iraq war. Anxiety was found to increase the perceived risk of the war, and to promote an opposition to it; whereas anger was found to minimize perceived risk, and to promote support for the war.

Other research considered the role that information about political issues plays as a variable in mediating the influence of emotions on political opinions about those issues. The aforementioned study by Huddy, Feldman, and Cassese (2007), for example, found that fearful individuals, who had a higher level of political information, were even less likely to support the Iraq war, compared to individuals with a similar attitude, but who had a lower level of information. Among the studies, investigating how non-emotional information conditions the effect of emotion on political opinions, the most relevant to my discussion, are those that consider the role of political sophistication.

As I showed in the previous section, political sophistication comprises both factual knowledge and evaluative knowledge; that is, knowledge about political facts, and knowledge about how those political facts are related to an individual's interests and values, respectively. Some scholars believe that political sophistication conditions the effect of emotion on political opinion. However those same scholars hold different views on how emotions influence the

opinions of more and less sophisticated individuals. For example, Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock (1991), argued that on one hand more sophisticated individuals were less likely to rely on emotions to form their political opinions, whereas less sophisticated individuals were more likely to do so. The results of their study seemed to support their thesis: specifically, less educated people were more likely to rely on their feelings about African Americans in expressing their opinion on racial equality policies, than more educated people were. Conversely, a study conducted by Miller (2011) led him to draw quite different conclusions. He explored the effects of discreet emotions, such as anger, fear, hope, and pride, in forming opinions about presidential voting and Iraq war policy. The results of his study revealed that citizens who were more politically sophisticated were also more emotionally engaged with politics, in such a way that they were more likely to experience emotions towards political objects, and to consider those emotions when forming their political opinions. Similarly, Schreiber has argued that more sophisticated, in comparison to less sophisticated, individuals rely on their affective associations more, in forming their opinions about political figures (Schreiber 2007 pp 56-58).

Although further and more thorough research is clearly needed to explore political sophistication's role in mediating the effect of emotion on political opinion, I believe that one important consideration is called for, as concerns the results of the studies I have already outlined. There is a common belief, and Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock (1991) seem to confirm it, that less sophisticated individuals may use their emotional attitudes as low information heuristics for forming political opinions about issues about which they lack expertise and knowledge. In contrast, more sophisticated individuals rely less on their emotional attitudes, preferring to use their knowledge and expertise to ground their opinions.

However, if less sophisticated individuals lack contextual information and general knowledge about political issues, I wonder whether they can actually engage in any meaningful emotional experiences towards such issues. Specifically, I doubt that the emotional attitudes of less sophisticated individuals are actually integral to those political issues, and I suspect them to be more incidental (e.g. grounded in some general preconceptions or on some

features that are not related to the political characteristics of the issues in question).

In contrast, I believe that the emotions, experienced by individuals who are more knowledgeable about certain political issues, may be more likely to be triggered by the actual political implications of those issues. I believe that this could be a potential explanation for the discrepancies between the findings obtained by Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock (1991) and those obtained by Miller (2011): whereas less sophisticated individuals may rely more on emotions that are unrelated to political issues to form their opinions, more sophisticated individuals may rely more on emotions that are actually related to political issues.

Mine is obviously a speculative claim, requiring further empirical evidence to substantiate it, however, Miller's interpretation of his own findings seems to give it some plausibility. Specifically, Miller argues that the emotions experienced by more sophisticated individuals are determined by their political sophistication itself. He claims that, since sophisticated individuals are more knowledgeable and more interested in politics, they create connections among political data more effectively. This in turn makes them better at relating political data to their own goals, values and concerns. Consequently, and in conformity with the appraisal theory of emotions, they are more likely to experience emotions in relation to political objects: "Being sophisticated about politics implies that one has a greater understanding of political objects and how they connect to each other. If emotion requires the ability to link political objects to individual and group goals, then high sophisticates appear better able to make those linkages" (Miller 2011 p 593). Miller goes on to argue that, in contrast, low sophisticates may not have sufficient understanding of politics to see how political facts connect to their interests, leaving them less capable of making the appraisals that elicit emotion in the political context. This is consistent with my suggestion, as less sophisticated individuals may still experience emotions towards political objects, but their emotions may not be actually related to political objects as such.

My discussion of the studies, which investigated how political sophistication may mediate the influence of emotions on political opinions, seems to shed some light on my original discussion about

the contribution of emotions to evaluative knowledge of political objects. Specifically, I argued that although both more and less sophisticated individuals may experience emotions towards political objects and may use those emotions in their evaluative judgments about political objects, the emotions of less sophisticated individuals are less likely to be informative about the political issues they are directed towards, because of the scarce factual knowledge that less sophisticated individuals hold about those political issues. From this, I conclude that the contribution of emotions to evaluative knowledge about political objects is conditional on the presence of appropriate factual knowledge about those objects. In the rest of this paper, I will define more exactly, what the contribution of emotions consists of and why it is politically relevant.

7. Are emotions truly relevant to the evaluative knowledge about political objects?

In the previous section, I argued that emotions may indeed contribute to evaluative knowledge about political objects, but only if they are coupled with an adequate factual knowledge about those objects. Such a claim seems to be in line with the coherentist account of the justificatory power of emotion, which I illustrated before: emotions may contribute to evaluative knowledge about political objects, but only if they are coherent with an adequate system of non-emotional (i.e. factual) epistemic commitments about those objects.

Clarifying the conditions of emotion's contribution to evaluative knowledge about political objects still does not clarify what this contribution actually consists of. If we suppose that more sophisticated individuals actually use their emotions, towards political objects, to form their evaluative judgments of those objects, then how relevant is the presence of an emotional component to their evaluative judgment? Would their evaluative knowledge about the political object be the same without any emotional contribution?

For example, suppose that I am a fairly politically sophisticated individual; even if I admit that my emotional attitude towards D. J. Trump figures among the mental states that ground my opinion of him as being untrustworthy, is my emotional attitude really relevant to my arriving at such an opinion?

It could be argued that the beliefs that I formed through non-emotional means, by for instance, apprehending and judging facts about his conduct without any emotional reaction to them, could suffice to ground my evaluative knowledge of him as being untrustworthy. Another example might be the case of a middle-class Italian citizen, who is politically sophisticated and, simultaneously, angry at the government, because yet another tax increase was approved for small commercial activities, as part of the government's plan for containing the national budget, leaving the stellar wages of the political class untouched. His anger may be part of his grounds for judging this measure to be unfair, but it is possible that he might have reached the same conclusion, without experiencing any anger, by simply assessing the facts and leaving out all emotional involvement.

This criticism threatens the epistemic role of emotions in providing evaluative knowledge: although emotions may be part of the reasons, justifying such knowledge, their role may not be relevant, as the same evaluative knowledge might be reached without emotions. In order to overcome this criticism, it should be demonstrated that emotions make a distinctive contribution to certain evaluative knowledge and, therefore, without them a relevant aspect of this evaluative knowledge could not be accessed. I will undertake this task in the following two sections. In section 8, I will consider the general evaluative knowledge provided by emotions; in section 9, I will specifically consider the evaluative knowledge that emotions provide about political objects.

8. How emotions are relevant to evaluative knowledge: a solution from Goldie

In order to demonstrate that emotions are relevant to providing a certain evaluative knowledge, including about political objects, I will try to show that there is a qualitative difference between the knowledge achieved with the contribution of emotions and the one achieved without such a contribution, and that the knowledge achieved with emotions is richer than the one without. I will support my claim, by appealing to Peter Goldie's distinction between the emotional and non-emotional apprehension of evaluative content.

Goldie uses the expression "feeling towards" to define a particular way of thinking that is "thinking with feeling" (Goldie 2002 p 19). In "feeling towards", the feeling part (i.e. the emotion) is not merely added to the thought but is an integral part of the content of the thought, because it is what allows us to grasp certain particular properties (i.e. evaluative properties) of the object towards which the thought is directed: "content properly captured, from the personal point of view, is essentially emotion-involving, so that there could not be content captured in that way without the person experiencing the emotion as he does" (Goldie 2002 p 51). Goldie assimilates "feeling towards" with vision: in the same way as colors can only be presented in visual experiences, certain evaluative content can only be presented through an emotional experience (Goldie 2002 p 29).

To clarify this point, Goldie takes the example of a person who believes that ice is dangerous and then, after slipping, comes to fear ice, and to think about the fact that the ice is dangerous with fear. The change, Goldie argues, is not simply the addition of a feeling of fear, but it is also a change in the content of thought: "Coming to think of it [i.e. the danger of ice] in this new way is not to be understood as consisting of thinking of it in the old way, plus some added-on phenomenal ingredient – feeling perhaps; rather, the whole way of experiencing, or being conscious of, the world is new... The difference between thinking of X as Y without feeling and thinking of X as Y with feeling will not just comprise a different attitude towards the same content - a thinking which earlier was without feeling and now is with feeling. The difference also lies in the content, although it might be that this difference cannot be captured in words" (Goldie 2002 p 60). For Goldie, although the emotional and the non-emotional apprehension of the danger of ice both allow the concept of the danger of ice to be understood, only the emotional apprehension allows a complete grasp of the concept, because only an emotional response can adequately catch an evaluative concept such as dangerousness.

To clarify this further, Goldie draws a comparison with color concepts; for example, the concept of the color red: a color-blind person may recognize red things in the world, possibly thanks to a constant companion who points out red things to them. By virtue of this, the color-blind person may have some concept of the color red,

but since they lack the appropriate visual experience, they cannot completely grasp the concept: "This person can have the demonstrative thought 'That ball is red', but that thought will differ in respect of its content from that of a thought also expressed as 'That ball is red' had by a person who is using his normal ability to see colours. So it does not follow from the fact that both thoughts are naturally expressed in the same words that they have the same content; the words used are inadequate to express the difference" (Goldie 2002 p 60).

In the same way as vision is necessary for fully grasping the concept of a color, emotion is necessary for fully grasping an evaluative property: grasping the concept of a color, without seeing it, and grasping an evaluative property, without feeling an emotion, only allows an incomplete grasp of their concepts. Since the concept that is grasped in "thinking with feeling" and in "thinking without feeling" is different, as in one case it is complete and in the other incomplete, then emotional and non-emotional apprehension do not have the same content, despite having the same referent. To employ the concept of the danger of ice, after apprehending it emotionally, in a belief about some state of the world (e.g. that ice is dangerous) gives the belief a different content compared to a belief wherein the mere theoretical concept is employed. Goldie's fundamental claim is that the content of the emotional and of the non-emotional apprehension of the same evaluative property is different, because the concepts employed to think about the evaluative property are different in the two kinds of apprehension.

It is relevant to my discussion, to highlight that the difference in content, advocated by Goldie, should not be understood as a distinction between different objects or events. The same event can be apprehended either emotionally or non-emotionally. Emotional apprehension does not give information about a different object; rather, it provides a different kind of information about it. I suggest illustrating this point, by thinking about the duck-rabbit optical illusion: this figure incorporates both the image of a duck and of a rabbit, but we cannot see them at the same time; we have to look at it in a certain way to see the duck, and in another way to see the rabbit. These two distinct ways of looking at the figure play the same role as emotional and non-emotional apprehension of a certain event:

although the figure is the same one, the way we look at it reveals just one of two distinct images. By analogy, although there is just one event at issue, the emotional and the non-emotional apprehension of it reveal only one aspect of that event respectively, which cannot be revealed through the other aspect of apprehension. Grasping an evaluative property by means of emotion reveals a different content in the sense that it reveals an aspect of it that cannot be disclosed by apprehending that same property in a non-emotional way.

Following Goldie, I claim that the evaluative knowledge achieved with the contribution of an emotional experience and the evaluative knowledge achieved without such a contribution, have different contents, as they allow different grasps of certain evaluative properties. Therefore, the emotional component is relevant to the achievement of a different kind of evaluative knowledge. How does this translate into the political context? What is distinctive about the evaluative information disclosed by emotions towards political objects? How is the contribution of emotions relevant to a certain evaluative knowledge about political objects? In light of the elements that I have discussed up until this point, I will finally provide an answer to these questions.

9. How emotions are relevant to the evaluative knowledge about political objects

Since my discussion is not concerned with evaluative knowledge in general, but rather with evaluative knowledge about political objects, my current objective is to show how the argument I drew from Goldie applies to the political context; that is, to explain how emotions may make a distinctive and relevant contribution to evaluative knowledge about political objects. My claim is, by "feeling towards" political objects, i.e. by "thinking-with-feeling" about the evaluative features of those objects, a different understanding of those features is brought about, and a more sophisticated evaluative knowledge about those objects results from this. Specifically, I argue that by experiencing an emotion towards a political object, its evaluative properties are apprehended in a distinctive way; namely, as directly concerning the subject as an individual and as a political agent. I argue that the personal salience, of the evaluative character of the object, which is disclosed by the emotional component, within the apprehension of

the object, is relevant to the evaluative knowledge of the object, because of the coherent integration of the evaluative information it discloses, within a subject's further (political) attitudes, such as their values and beliefs. I will now elucidate my claim, about the distinctiveness and relevance of the contribution of emotions to evaluative knowledge about political objects, by referring to two different examples.

If I consider the Syrian refugee crisis; I may form an opinion about it based on my (political) values; such as, the value of solidarity among human beings, the value of defending human dignity, and on the basis of facts I have learned, such as the extremely difficult living conditions for the refugees in their home country and the circumstances that gave rise to the Syrian conflict. Given my values and beliefs, which do not depend on my emotional reaction to the Syrian refugee crisis, I may form the evaluative judgment that European countries should adopt reception and integration policies for the refugees. If, in addition to taking into account my non-emotional values and beliefs, I also feel compassion towards the refugees, my evaluative judgment about the policy towards them may be the same, but I argue that my evaluative knowledge will be different. How does the emotional component, which is provided by my feeling of compassion, make my evaluative knowledge different?

In "thinking-without-feeling" about the Syrian refugee crisis, I may make certain evaluative considerations about it, in the same way as, following another example by Goldie, I judge a gorilla that is behind bars at the zoo and without fear, as dangerous. In contrast, "thinking-with-feeling" about the refugees, that is, thinking about their situation with a certain emotional involvement (e.g. with compassion) is like, in Goldie's example, judging the gorilla as dangerous when the cage suddenly opens, that is, with fear. The judgment, "The gorilla is dangerous", and the judgment, "A policy of reception and integration towards refugees is appropriate" are expressed in the same way, both in the emotional and in the non-emotional apprehension of their objects. However, I argue that the evaluative knowledge they reflect is different, because the internal meaning of these evaluative judgments is different in the emotional, and in the non-emotional apprehension of their objects. Specifically, in the first case the gorilla is judged as dangerous in general, while in

the second one it is judged as dangerous for you: "now your way of thinking of the gorilla as dangerous is new; now it is dangerous in an emotionally relevant way for you" (Goldie 2000 p 61). Analogously, feeling compassion indicates that the refugee crisis is an event that matters to you as a person and as a political agent. An emotional reaction towards a political object not only signals certain evaluative properties of the object, as they could be attributed to it without any emotional involvement, but it signals that the agent, specifically, is sensitive to these properties with their feelings, values and beliefs. In sum, I argue that the distinctive contribution of emotions, to the evaluative knowledge about a political object, consists of its disclosing of the personal import of the object for the subject. I will now clarify the relevance of this distinctive contribution.

As I illustrated in sections 4 and 6, the contribution of emotions to evaluative knowledge about a political object is epistemically and politically significant, if it is coherent with an adequate system of non-emotional attitudes towards the object; that is, with the set of values and factual beliefs held by the subject independently from their emotional responses. Given that an adequate set of values and beliefs is present, and that the emotion towards the object is coherent with them, how is the emotional contribution relevant for the evaluative knowledge about the object? In order to answer this, it is important to recall that, as the considerations in sections 4 and 6 suggested, the formation of a certain evaluative knowledge about a political object is grounded in a process of coherent integration of information.

As I highlighted above, using Goldie's example, whereas evaluative information that is based on an agent's non-emotional attitudes, such as values and beliefs, has a general relevance, evaluative information based on an agent's emotions is relevant to the agent, personally.

In integrating emotional and non-emotional information about a political object, in order to reach internal coherence, not only are the evaluative considerations, which are disclosed by the emotions, assessed in respect to the agent's non-emotional attitudes, but also the latter are in turn confronted with the personal evaluative import of the object as disclosed by the emotion. In other words, by including the emotional component in the integrative process of

information, the evaluative information that is based on values and beliefs is connected with the dimension of personal significance, brought up by the emotions. I argue that, by virtue of this connection, evaluative knowledge that integrates the emotional component ends up being more sophisticated than evaluative knowledge that does not integrate it. This is because in the former, as distinct from the latter, the values and beliefs that an agent holds, and may employ in their evaluative judgment, are assessed in respect to their actual import for the agent in relation to the political object.

Recalling Schreiber's formulation, the individuals who are more politically sophisticated are those who process political information by attaching a meaning to it, and by grounding their political opinions in their deeply-held values. In contrast, the less politically sophisticated individuals are those who process political information in a superficial and ideological way, without attaching a meaning to it. Despite holding certain values, they are unable to apply these values to their political opinions; that is, to ground their political opinions properly in their values. I argue that, by integrating the emotional component, in evaluative knowledge about a political object, the agent develops a more sophisticated knowledge, because the latter comes to reflect not only their values and beliefs in general, but the import that they actually hold for them, as a person and as a political agent, in respect to their evaluative judgment of the object.

Recalling my previous example of the Italian citizen, why would the inclusion of his anger, within the processing of evaluative information about government measures, make his evaluative knowledge more sophisticated? Given the coherentist framework for the justificatory power of emotions that I have endorsed, I describe the integration of the anger component, within the processing of information about the government measures, as articulating such processing in the following terms. On one hand, it is assessed on whether the personal significance of the evaluative considerations, which stemmed from the citizen's anger, are coherent with their beliefs and values: "Given what I know (e.g. that the measures damage the middle class proportion of the population, but does not even slightly affect the political class), and given what I value (e.g. social justice), is my anger at the governmental measures justified?". On the other hand, it is assessed on whether the beliefs and the values that

the citizen endorses are really those that matter for them, in their evaluative judgment of the object. "Is my judgment of the government measures, as being unfair, really grounded in what I, as a person and as a political agent, value and believe?" This last passage within the integrative process makes the resulting evaluative knowledge more sophisticated, because it characterizes the citizen's judgment about the measures as truly invoking and not just ideologically or superficially reflecting, their beliefs, as well as their political and personal values.

In sum, I argue that in "feeling towards" a political object, an emotional component introduces distinctive evaluative information, amounting to the personal evaluative import of the political object for the agent. The inclusion of this distinctive emotional element in the process of the coherent integration of evaluative information about the object, makes the resulting evaluative knowledge more politically sophisticated, and herein, I believe, lies the relevance of the epistemic contribution of emotions to evaluative knowledge about political objects.

10. Final remarks

A number of objections may be raised to the claims I have proposed in this paper. For example, I have argued that the evaluative beliefs brought about by emotions may reliably ground some evaluative knowledge, through their integration within a coherent network of further non-emotional beliefs. However, according to a number of psychological studies, such an integration might be problematic. For example, Cassino and Lodge (2007), found that immediate affective reactions drive candidate evaluations, even after individuals are presented with subsequent information. Moreover, Redlawsk (2006) found that when people encounter information that is incongruent with their initial affective apprehensions, they actually recall congruent memories that help to bolster their existing attitudes.

Another objection may concern my claim that the emotions that contribute to an individual's evaluative knowledge about a political object, are those triggered by that object. It could be argued that it is difficult to differentiate those emotions. Specifically, it may be difficult to isolate our apprehension of political objects and the emotions that they elicit, from external emotional influences, such as

those more or less subtly conveyed by the media, and which in turn affect our apprehension of those objects. Moreover, we may be easily mistaken in attributing the cause of an emotion that we experience, to a political event, rather than to a personal one.

Despite recognizing these difficulties, I argue that they may not be as problematic, if we take the role of factual knowledge into account; a point which I emphasized earlier. Specifically, I contest that politically sophisticated individuals, who possess more consistent factual knowledge, may be better at integrating their emotional appraisals into their additional epistemic attitudes, and that they may be better at recognizing which environmental features trigger their emotions. Factual knowledge is crucial to emotions' contribution to evaluative knowledge; however, provided an adequate set of additional non-emotional attitudes is in place, such a contribution may still play the relevant role that I have described.

One further point that I would like to consider briefly, concerns the work of Martha Nussbaum, especially in relation to her recent book "Political Emotions", with the rather suggestive subheading: "Why Love Matters for Justice". Nussbaum's core premise is that the goal of constructing a better society, by relieving poverty, fostering racial justice, and advancing democracy, can only be reached with the contribution of the vast majority of citizens. She argues that, in order to persuade citizens to dedicate their time, resources, and passions towards reaching this goal, it is vital to activate their most powerful positive emotions, especially compassion and love. According to Nussbaum, love, in particular, can motivate and sustain people's cooperation, altruism, and caring within a larger society. In the book, Nussbaum explores the role of public rituals and speeches extensively, as well as the role of the narratives and systems of education that should be constructed, in order to stir people's positive emotions.

Although the scope of this paper prevents me from engaging in a thorough discussion of Nussbaum's ideas; even more so given that it is not my primary interest here to advance any normative proposal, I would like to point out one evident difference between Nussbaum's account of political emotions and the account that I have developed in this paper. I do not dismiss Nussbaum's claim that "All political principles, the good as well as the bad, need emotional support to

ensure their stability over time, and all decent societies need to guard against division and hierarchy by cultivating appropriate sentiments of sympathy and love" (Nussbaum 2013 p 2-3). However, I believe that the latter are not the only emotional instances that may serve a positive function within the political context, and therefore I do not believe that they are the only ones that should be promoted. Emotions with a negative valence, such as anger and fear, may also provide a valuable contribution, when their epistemic dimension is considered. As I have illustrated in the last section of this paper, emotions may contribute to making evaluative knowledge about political objects more sophisticated, and their contribution does not depend on their valence, but rather on their capacity to make the certain evaluative features, of the political objects that trigger them, personally salient. Thus, not only positive emotions but also general emotional engagement with political objects, including negative emotions, may serve a positive function within the political context, and should therefore be promoted. Clearly, as I have repeatedly emphasized throughout my argument, it is fundamental for the epistemic and the political value of such emotional engagement, that the latter is supported by, and integrated within, an adequate set of non-emotional attitudes towards the political objects in question.

Conclusion

The purpose of my paper was to argue in favor of a relevant, epistemic role for emotions within the political context. In order to achieve this, I first showed that emotions can provide an evaluative type of knowledge about political objects, and that such knowledge is epistemically valuable when it is coherent with a set of non-emotional attitudes towards those objects. By introducing the concept of political sophistication, I showed that an evaluative type of knowledge is relevant within the political domain. Following that, I argued that the emotions' contribution to evaluative knowledge about political objects is politically valuable when it is integrated within an adequate set of non-emotional attitudes towards those objects. By referencing Goldie's distinction between the emotional and non-emotional apprehension of evaluative content, I claimed the existence of a qualitative difference between the evaluative knowledge achieved with the contribution of emotions, and the one achieved without such

a contribution. In transposing this difference to the political context, I identified the distinctive character of the evaluative information that is provided by emotions, in the personal import that the evaluative features of such objects bear for the agent.

Finally, I argued that this distinctive contribution is relevant, not merely by virtue of its content, but also because of its inclusion in the integrative process, is aimed at reaching coherence, through which the agent's evaluative knowledge is formed. Specifically, the evaluative knowledge that results from an integrative process, which includes emotions, presents a more politically sophisticated character and herein, I believe, lies the relevance of the epistemic contribution of emotions to the evaluative knowledge about political objects.

Chapter 2

The Epistemic Value of Emotions in Literary Narrative

Abstract

The goal of this paper is to determine how emotions contribute to the understanding of literary narratives. Narrative understanding depends on the connection between the elements within a narrative, but previous philosophical solutions that explain the contribution of emotions to this connection seem to be inadequate. I develop a more plausible account, by drawing insights from empirical literature, and by applying an enactivist account of emotions. I argue that the reader responds to emotional affordances in the text, and that by feeling or inferring emotions, she processes subsequent elements in the narrative in respect to the anticipation afforded by previous elements. I conclude that this is the way in which emotions intervene to connect the elements within a narrative, thus contributing to narrative understanding.

Introduction

When judging the quality of a novel or a short story, people commonly resort to terms with emotional connotations, such as "engaging," "moving," "funny," "disturbing," etc. Emotional elements are conventionally assumed to be part of the appreciation and the aesthetic character of a narrative. What is more controversial is whether emotions have any epistemic function in respect to narratives, that is, whether they play any role in their understanding. Studies conducted in philosophy, literary studies, and, more recently, in psychology and cognitive sciences, have maintained that understanding a narrative is something different than understanding other kinds of texts, such as essays or poems. What is peculiar about narrative understanding, and how it is brought about, are long debated questions. In this paper, I do not intend to provide an exhaustive answer to these questions, but to offer a contribution to the ongoing discussion. Specifically, I will determine what kind of understanding the emotions involved in reading a narrative may provide, and I will explain how they may be able to do so. Before introducing the central concepts of my analysis, a few preliminary notes are in order.

First, I will not try to establish which criteria are sufficient for a text to be a narrative, or how different degrees of "narrativity" may be attributed to a text. My focus will be epistemological rather than metaphysical: instead of inquiring into what a narrative is, I will focus on how the reader understands it. Moreover, by taking into account the results of empirical studies on narrative processing and comprehension, I will consider the experience of the actual reader, rather than considering the reader merely as a hypothetical construct. My second remark concerns the use of the expression "narrative explanation." In this paper, I take the term "narrative explanation" to

refer to the way a narrative presents its elements as connected, and thereby conveys a certain understanding of those elements. However, I do not enter the debate on whether the form of narrative explanation is more or less explanatory than others, as I am not interested in assessing the value of narratives based on their explanatory powers. Finally, I specifically consider the literary kind of narrative typical of novels and short stories. As Lamarque (2004) rightly points out, this is only one particular instance of the more neutral concept of narrative, which also includes, for instance, biographical and historical kinds. I focus on literary narrative, because it is the object of most of the relevant literature on the topic. In addition to this, it is the kind of narrative that involves the most emotional states. Establishing whether or not any of the claims in this paper may be generalized to other types of narrative falls beyond my scope here.

The paper will proceed as follows. In section 1, I clarify the notion of narrative understanding, as depending on the connection between the elements within a narrative. In section 2, I examine how Velleman and other scholars propose to account for the contribution of emotions to this connection, and I explain why I consider each of their solutions inadequate. In order to construct a more suitable account, I look for insights in the empirical literature. In section 3, I identify the on-line emotional states relevant for narrative understanding, and I include among them not only felt emotions, but also inferred ones. In section 4, I consider the role that such states play in understanding a narrative, according to the cognitive model and to Miall's model. By comparing them, I show that both models consider emotions as contributing to narrative understanding in virtue of their capacity to connect previous with subsequent narrative elements. In order to explain how this feature can comprehensively account for the role of both felt and inferred emotions in narrative understanding, I illustrate Ellis' enactivist account of emotions in section 5. In section 6, I apply this account to the case of literary narrative: I argue that literary narratives offer emotional affordances to the reader, making her feel emotions towards the narrative. Moreover, I argue that both felt and inferred emotions are characterized by an implicit intentionality, and because of it, the reader processes upcoming narrative elements in respect to the

anticipation afforded by previous elements. I conclude that this is the way in which emotions intervene to connect the elements within a narrative, therefore contributing to narrative understanding.

1. What is narrative understanding? The initial debate

The terms of the debate over narrative understanding were defined by the philosophers Noël Carroll and David Velleman. They both endorse the idea that understanding a narrative means to see the narrated events as related to each other in a meaningful way, and that the particular way in which they are related is what conveys the understanding of them as forming a narrative. Specifically, Carroll (2001) coined the expression "narrative connection," to indicate that the events presented in a narrative are connected in a distinct way, in comparison to events that are presented as connected in other kinds of texts. The particular connection between the events in a narrative is what conveys, in Velleman's words, a "narrative explanation" (Velleman 2003), that is, an understanding of the events presented as part of a narrative. In the following discussion, I illustrate how Carroll and Velleman hold different conceptions of the nature of the narrative connection, and consequently, of the kind of understanding that it brings about.

According to Carroll (2001), the narrative connection is necessarily causal: narrative events are meaningfully connected to each other only if they are causally related. Carroll does not intend this causal connection in the sense that earlier events necessitate later events, but only in the sense that earlier events are causally relevant conditions for later events. For instance, "[w]e read that a thief enters a bank and robs it; in the next scene, as he exits the bank, he is apprehended by the police whom we subsequently learn have been watching him all along" (Carroll 2001, 122). In this narrative, robbing the bank is causally relevant for the police apprehension, but does not necessarily entail it; rather, robbing the bank is a necessary part of the sufficient cause for the police apprehension. For Carroll, what is distinctive of the narrative connection is a retrospective causal explanation: the events must be related in such a way, that the reader can infer causation, namely, the reader must recognize that earlier events were causally relevant conditions for the occurrence of later events in the story.

Velleman (2003) criticized Carroll's proposal on the ground that it fails to define what is explanatory about the causal connection specifically provided in a narrative form, in comparison to the causal connection provided in other forms, for instance in an argument. According to Velleman, although causality is necessary for a narrative, as a narrative would make no sense without it, it is not the distinctive feature of the narrative connection: understanding the events presented as meaningfully related to each other within a narrative text does not distinctively entail understanding them as causally connected, but as emotionally connected. More precisely, Velleman claims that the specificity of a narrative lies in the organization of the events narrated in such a way that the reader finds their sequence emotionally satisfying: what is distinctive about a narrative is not that it represents how events happen, but how they feel. Velleman presents an example from Aristotle's narration of the following events: Mity's was murdered, and then, the murderer of Mity's was killed by a falling statue of Mity's himself. These events, namely the murder and the death, are apprehended as meaningfully connected within a narrative, not because they are counterfactually dependent, but because the juxtaposition of these events completes what Velleman calls an "emotional cadence" (Velleman 2003, 6) in the audience:

"When a murder is followed by a fitting comeuppance, we feel indignation gratified. Although these events follow no causal sequence, they provide an emotional resolution, and so they have a meaning for the audience, despite lacking any causal connection" (Velleman 2003, 6).

The peculiarity of a narrative connection in comparison to a mere causal one has also been highlighted by authors other than Velleman. In this paper, I do not delve further into the importance of causality for constituting the narrative connection but, following Velleman's critique, I endorse the idea that grasping the causal relations between events does not exhaust the understanding of them as part of a narrative. Given that my objective is not to determine what is peculiar about narrative understanding, I do not try to assess whether emotions, as Velleman claims, are what distinctively and necessarily mark the process of narrative understanding. Instead,

what I do is to determine whether and how emotions can provide any understanding of the narrative that elicits them, and what kind of understanding that is. I will start by discussing the solutions proposed by Velleman and other scholars.

2. Philosophical accounts of emotion and narrative understanding

In this section, I illustrate how Velleman and other scholars have conceived the contribution of emotion to narrative understanding. Specifically, I examine the notions of emotional closure and emotional resonance, as well as the idea that feeling emotions helps understanding by filling gaps in the text, and the idea that emotions foster understanding by forming evaluations. Then, I explain why each of these solutions is problematic, and ultimately unsatisfactory.

2.1 Emotional closure

According to Velleman, narrated events are meaningfully connected because their sequence is emotionally significant, and such significance crucially depends on the presence of a final resolution in the narrative: "the power to initiate and *resolve* [emphasis mine] an emotional cadence ought to endow narrative with its power to render events intelligible" (Velleman 2003, 18). For Velleman, the explanation of narrated events consists in an understanding of them as an "intelligible whole" (Velleman 2003, 1), and this can only be achieved by the presence of a conclusive event, whose emotional significance brings to an end the emotional sequence produced by the preceding events. A classic example of such "emotional closure" is the relief of a happy ending, after the fear occasioned by a cliff-hanger.

Velleman's claim might be questioned. Although narrated events may be connected in an emotionally significant way, as highlighted by Velleman, it does not follow that the emotional sequence they form should be completed, in order for these events to be apprehended as part of a narrative. A typical example is the case of open-ended narratives: the emotions associated with the events in a narrative may convey a narrative connection, without necessarily resolving the climatic feeling that they instantiate. Therefore, regardless of whether or not closure is a necessary element for a

narrative to be such,⁵ reducing the role of emotions for narrative understanding to their capacity to provide closure does not seem appropriate.

2.2 Emotional resonance

As was previously mentioned, for Velleman, the reader understands narrated events as connected in a narrative form because they produce an emotional cadence. He argues that the reader catches such cadence, and consequently the narrative connection, because "it resonates with a familiar emotional pattern" (Velleman 2003, 21):

"Although the audience may have no discursive memory of events such as those of the story, it nevertheless has an experience of *déjà senti*, because its emotional sensibility naturally follows the ups and downs of the story, just as a muscle naturally follows the cycle of tension and release" (Velleman 2003, 19).

According to Velleman, the process of resonance between the emotional sequence of a narrative and our emotional sensibility is made possible because of the "diachronic nature" (Velleman 2003, 14) of emotions themselves, as they presuppose other emotions before and after. Relief and disappointment, for instance, presuppose fear and hope, respectively: relief comes from fear not confirmed by later events, disappointment comes from unfulfilled hope caused by certain events. According to Velleman, long sequences of emotions can be generated because of their presuppositions and consequences: "One emotion often gives way to another: puzzlement to curiosity, curiosity to foreboding, foreboding to horror, horror to grief-or perhaps instead to anger, which gives way to resentment, and so on" (Velleman 2003, 14). Under the assumption of the diachronic nature of emotions, narrated events can be connected to form an emotional sequence, specifically because they convey emotions that are themselves essentially part of a sequence.

Again, Velleman's claim does not seem to be warranted. Within narratives, indeed, a few emotions may appear in conventional sequences, such as those mentioned above. Many

⁵ Carroll (2007), among others, has pointed out that "although closure is a recurring feature of some, even a great many, narratives, closure is not a feature of all narratives, let alone, as some have suggested, a distinctive or essential feature of narrative as such" (Carroll 2007, 2).

others, however, appear within sequences that are only arbitrarily established, as their order, in relation to the events within a narrative, vary greatly.

Moreover, from Velleman's description, it seems that emotional resonance is produced by somehow comparing a representation of the emotional structure of the story with the reader's natural emotional structure. However, Velleman does not clarify what the objects of this comparison actually are, and how the comparison occurs. Overall, it seems that the process of emotional resonance is not sufficiently specified and supported to properly characterize how the narrative connection, and the corresponding narrative understanding, are brought about.

2.3 Feeling emotions as filling gaps

Robinson (2010) noted that a literary narrative is a kind of text characterized by the presence of gaps, and understanding it necessarily entails filling those gaps: "an author relies upon our making inferences all the time as we read, in order to fill in what the text does not explicitly say" (Robinson 2010, 76). According to Robinson, in order to fill those gaps, the reader not only draws causal kinds of inferences, but also relies on her emotional responses. These responses, specifically, fill gaps in the text because they alert the reader to important information about character and plot that is not explicitly asserted in the text: "In *The Ambassadors* Henry James does not say 'Strether is a mildly comic character.' He induces us to laugh (rather quietly!) at Strether" (Robinson 2010, 77). A child, Robinson argues, who does not get the author's irony in "The Ambassadors," may understand the literal meanings of the words, but will not understand the characters and their motivations, and therefore he will not properly understand the narrative. Robinson claims, similar to Velleman, that

"[O]ur emotional experience of a novel is itself a form of understanding, even if it is an inarticulate or relatively inarticulate understanding: if I laugh and cry, shiver, tense, and relax in all the 'right' places, then I have in some sense understood the story" (Robinson 2010, 77)

The presence of gaps in literary narratives has also been highlighted by proponents of an enactivist approach to literature, such as Caracciolo (2012) and Popova (2014). In their accounts, they describe narrative understanding as a "participatory process of sense making," meaning that the reader makes sense of the narrated content, by engaging with it. They claim that the reader's understanding of the narrative emerges from the interaction between the text and the reader's world, that is, her experiences, values, beliefs, and emotions, as triggered by the text. Similarly to Robinson (2010), Popova notes, "[L]iterary texts have more gaps than other forms of communication, hence, require more active participation" (Popova 2014, 10), and it is precisely through "the emotional reactions and the evaluations of the recipients of a story" (Caracciolo 2012, 381) that the understanding of a narrative can take place.

What the accounts proposed by Velleman, Robinson, and the enactivists Caracciolo and Popova have in common is the idea that emotions contribute to the understanding of the narrative in virtue of their being felt by the reader. Whether it is the comeuppance or indignation in respect to the events narrated, the amusement at the irony of a situation, or any other emotion triggered by the text that helps the reader to make sense of it, the common assumption made by these authors is that the way in which these emotional states contribute to connecting the narrated events is through their being felt by the reader.

Leaving aside whether or not feeling an emotion is necessary in order to experience a narrative connection,⁶ it seems that emotions might contribute to the understanding of the narrative, even if they are not properly felt. For instance, certain romantic stories or crime

⁶ Carroll (2007) disputes the idea that understanding a narrative requires feeling emotions. He points out that narratives are not necessarily designed to trigger emotional reactions: "Surely, one may tell an affectless narrative—perhaps one about the collision of a comet with an asteroid in a galaxy far, far away. I see no reason to deny that such a story could be a narrative, even though it arouses no emotion . . . Perhaps, most aesthetic narratives engage the emotions. But there are also literary experiments that strive for a clinical, affectless presentation of events" (Carroll 2007, 14). Moreover, as noted by Henning (2009), even narratives that do have the goal of triggering emotional reactions may fail to do so, but they still retain the status of narratives; as Henning notes, Velleman fails to acknowledge this: in his account, boring narratives cannot even be narratives, because, by failing to elicit any emotions, they cannot establish any narrative cadence, and therefore they cannot form a narrative connection between the narrated events (Henning 2009, 200).

dramas are so predictable that the reader may be perfectly able to detect in which places the climactic tension is supposed to rise or dissolve, without actually feeling any tension or relief. Similarly, it seems plausible for a reader to understand that a certain situation is ironic without being amused by it, and to understand what kind of emotions certain narrative events are supposed to arouse, without being herself aroused by them. To conclude, emotions may intervene in the understanding of a narrative even if they are not felt.

2.4 Emotions as evaluations

What emerges from Velleman's account is that the narrative connection arises from the link between making evaluative sense of the narrated events, and experiencing emotions about them: simply put, as the villain is punished and the hero wins, the reader feels good, and it is in virtue of this that she apprehends the events she is reading about as forming a narrative. Other scholars have followed up on this idea. Among the most prominent, Currie (2006) has argued that our sense of a narrative connection is given by some reason-based dependencies that we attribute to the relation between events in a story. According to Currie, such reason-based dependencies may be grounded in our tendency to see that some events restore the moral balance compromised by previous events, as suggested by Velleman. However, Currie claims, they may also be grounded in other principles, such as, in the thought that the universe is fundamentally ironic, and that therefore it fosters injustice. According to Currie, we attribute to the events in the story a connection that suits the framework we adopt:

"Our affective response to the narrative can influence the extent to which we interpret the events of the story as connected by reason-based relations; this perception, or misperception, of a connection then has further emotional effects on us, and may contribute to our sense that this discourse really is a narrative, rather than something else" (Currie 2006, 315).

It seems that both Velleman and Currie recognize emotions as playing a role in forming a narrative connection, but only in respect to some other elements, such as evaluative judgments or, more

generally, reason-based dependences. In contrast to this position, I argue that such elements are not the vehicles through which emotions contribute to narrative understanding.

Indeed, the emotions that the reader feels with respect to a narrative might influence the formation of evaluative judgments about the narrated events, and, more generally, might foster the instantiation of reason-based dependencies. For example, the novel *The Betrothed* by A. Manzoni (Manzoni 1898), presents "Divine Providence" as the main force governing the world: in light of this, the reader's pity towards the poor Lucia, kept captive by The Unnamed, might inform her evaluative judgment that she should be saved, and this is exactly what the reader expects to happen. A different example is provided by the short stories in *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* by D. F. Wallace (Wallace 2012): given the author's pervasive irony, the pity that the reader might feel towards the unlucky characters is accompanied by amusement, and does not activate her expectation of a moral order to be reestablished, but rather of more adversities to occur, in line with the grotesque and comic tone of the book.

Although emotions might contribute to the reader's construction of a framework, based on her evaluative/reason-based considerations, as shown by the examples above,⁷ I argue that these considerations do not concern the process of narrative understanding. Indeed, the reader might make use of a certain interpretative framework (e.g., by assuming a world ruled by "Divine Providence" or by Murphy's law), in order to make sense of the sequence of events she has read about. By doing so, she engages in the interpretation of the connection between the narrated events; that is, by framing them within a certain interpretative matrix, she sees why it makes sense that a certain event followed another within the narrative (e.g., assuming that the world is ruled by divine providence,

⁷ Whether or not understanding a narrative necessarily involves the construction of an evaluative/reason-based framework is questionable. Many narratives may deliberately lack any elements for an evaluative assessment on the part of the reader, or they may present such elements as so conflicting that any assessment may be problematic. For instance, the author may induce the reader to experience contrasting attitudes towards certain characters, making her unsure whether they should be pitied or punished. An obvious example is given by the so-called "antiheroes" in literature, such as Madame Bovary, in the eponymous novel by G. Flaubert (Flaubert 1981), or Meursault in *The Stranger* by A. Camus (Camus 1954)

it makes sense that Lucia's kidnapping is followed by The Unnamed's repentance, and then by her liberation).

This process of interpretation, however, is not equivalent to narrative understanding. Specifically, narrative understanding, as characterized in section 1, is a more basic process, consisting in the apprehension of the unfolding narrated events as connected in such a way that they form a narrative. Instead, as illustrated above, the interpretation of the connection between narrated events consists in the apprehension of such events as filling a certain interpretative matrix. Therefore, the contribution of emotions to the interpretation of narrated events, on the basis of evaluative/reason-based relations, as specified by Velleman and Currie, is not the epistemic contribution of emotion about which the present paper is concerned.

2.5 Final considerations

As I have illustrated in this section, emotions have been claimed to contribute to the narrative connection, and consequently to narrative understanding, in different ways. All of these interpretations, however, seem problematic. Specifically, the contribution of the reader's emotions to narrative understanding cannot be reduced to the presence of emotional closure; it is not explained by the notion of emotional resonance; it is not exhausted by the felt character of emotions; and finally, it does not seem to depend on the role of emotions in the formation of an evaluative framework.

In light of these criticisms, it is likely that none of the proposed ways are suitable to account for the contribution of emotions to narrative understanding. This, however, does not entail that emotions do not offer such a contribution at all. Rather, I argue that they do, but that a more suitable account is needed to explain what this contribution consists in, and how it is achieved. A fundamental consideration for a proper account of the epistemic function of emotions within narratives is that it is grounded in, or at least, does not contradict, the available empirical data. Before discussing this data more specifically, it is important to clarify what kind of emotions we are talking about.

3. Which emotions are elicited during literary reading?

Given that, as illustrated in section 1, narrative understanding consists in the apprehension of the unfolding narrated events as forming a narrative, the emotional states that are relevant for narrative understanding are the on-line ones: that is, those occurring during comprehension, in the course of reading (Kneepkens and Zwaan 1995). I include among on-line emotional states not only the emotions that the reader feels but also those that she infers, because, as I will show throughout the paper, both are relevant for narrative understanding, and in virtue of the same relevant feature.

Concerning felt emotions, different taxonomies of emotional responses elicited during literary reading have been proposed. One important distinction was pointed out by Miall and Kuiken (2002), who differentiate "narrative feelings," which are experienced by the reader towards specific aspects of the narrative itself, such as events and characters, from "aesthetic feelings," which occur in response to the formal and stylistic components of a text, such as figures of speech and other linguistic features. In the group of narrative feelings, I include the emotions of sympathy and empathy towards narrative characters. In the literature, sympathy is defined as feeling for another in a certain situation, while empathy involves taking the perspective of another, and feeling, as a result, an emotion similar to the one experienced by the other. For instance, when in the novel *My Brilliant Friend* by E. Ferrante (2012), Lila is mistreated by her father, the reader experiences sympathy and feels sorry for her if she considers Lila's situation, while she experiences empathy if she identifies with Lila, and, like her, feels angry towards the father.

One further category of emotional responses elicited during literary reading is given by the so called "remembered emotions" (Cupchik et al 1998): they occur when a situation described in the narrative reminds the reader about a personal situation, and evokes the emotion that the reader experienced in relation to that. For instance, reading about Al playing tennis in *Infinite Jest* by D. F. Wallace (2011) may remind the reader about her difficulties in learning that sport, and may evoke a feeling of unease; alternatively, it may remind the reader about the pleasant afternoons spent playing with her father, evoking a feeling of joy. The kinds of emotions evoked during literary reading cannot be sharply disentangled, as they may

occur simultaneously, and they may interact with each other. For instance, feelings of sympathy and empathy may be driven by personal recollections, and formal aspects of the text may remind the reader about familiar patterns, evoking emotions that are both "aesthetic" and "remembered" (Mar 2011, 826).

Concerning inferred emotions, characters' emotional states may be inferred by the reader if they are not mentioned in the text (i.e., "elaborative inferences", van den Broek 1990). For instance, by reading that the hero turned pale after hearing a voice from the grave, the reader may infer that he felt fear. If the emotional state is mentioned, its connection to the story events may be inferred (i.e., "backwards inferences", van den Broek 1990). For instance, by reading that the hero was ashamed of his actions, and then went to an isolated place, the reader may infer that he hid because he was ashamed.

Besides inferring a character's emotional state, the reader may also infer the mood or tone of the story, which is conveyed by the description of situations, settings, and objects. The description of a dark stormy night, for example, may be detected by the reader as a schema for the attribution of fear; the reunion of two lovers after many vicissitudes may be associated with relief, and so on. As I will later explain more thoroughly, the same narrative event may be a source of both inferred and felt emotions. The expert reader, who is acquainted with certain schemas and topical narrative elements, may be able to detect their emotional significance without really feeling any emotion. In contrast, if the framing of narrative events induces the expert reader to infer suspense, those same events may induce the less expert reader who is not yet so familiar with these narrative schemas, to actually feel suspense. Even the same expert reader, if she was recently robbed, may be more engrossed than usual in the same murder mystery, that seemed to her trivial before. I will return to this issue in section 6. Now, I will proceed to illustrate the studies that analyze specifically how the variety of emotional states elicited, both felt and inferred, during reading are relevant for narrative understanding.

4. Empirical accounts of emotion and narrative understanding

In this section, I present and compare the two most prominent approaches in psychology to the processing and the comprehension of narratives, namely, the cognitive model, and the model proposed by David Miall. Then, I discuss how they may offer valuable insights for developing a comprehensive account of the contribution of emotions to narrative understanding.

4.1 Cognitive models

Within the cognitive framework, understanding a narrative involves constructing not just a verbatim representation of the words, but rather a mental representation of the state of affairs denoted by the text, namely a "situation model" (Van Dijk and Kintsch 1983). In order to convey understanding, the model should be coherent, that is it should present conceptual connections among text elements, explaining why actions, events and states are mentioned within the text (Graesser et al 1994). The construction of such a model requires the reader to integrate information from the text with relevant background knowledge, and to make inferences in order to include information that is not made explicit in the text. In terms of basic comprehension, the most significant narrative inferences are those that maintain the causal coherence of a story, but inferring information about space, time, goals, and motivation is also highly relevant (Graesser et al 1994). Difficulties in the generation of inferences have been found to implicate failures in comprehending narratives (Yuill and Oakhill 1996). The cognitive approach investigates the contribution of emotions to narrative understanding, in terms of how inferring and feeling certain emotional states during reading contributes to the construction of an accurate situation model.

Concerning the inference of emotions, proponents of cognitive models have argued that readers infer emotions from the juxtaposition of the character's actions, goals, and relationships (Gernsbacher et al 1992). In one of the first studies trying to demonstrate that characters' emotions are represented in readers' mental models (Gernsbacher et al 1992), readers were presented with

narratives that implied the emotional state of a character, without explicitly stating it. Each narrative ended with a sentence explicitly mentioning an emotion that either matched or mismatched the emotional state previously implied. For instance, the story about Tom who steals from a cashier and then finds out that his friend has been unjustly accused of the theft, was followed by either a matching final sentence ("It would be weeks before Tom's *guilt* would subside") or a mismatching final sentence ("It would be weeks before Tom's *pride* would subside"). The results showed that readers read the first sentence faster than the second. According to the authors, these results indicate that readers inferred the character's emotional state while reading, including this information in their mental model, as the matching sentence was incorporated in the model more readily than the mismatching one.⁸ Follow-up studies revealed that readers were able to update their representations of the characters' emotional states to fit contextual shifts, and that such representations were kept accessible beyond the local context in order to provide global coherence to the narratives (de Vega et al 1996). Further studies demonstrated that readers made emotional inferences about narrative characters, in a rather automatic way (Gernsbacher et al 1998).

4.2 Miall's model

In contrast to the cognitive approach, Miall did not conceive the contribution of emotions to narrative understanding as providing elements for the construction of an appropriate representation of the narrated content, but rather as the very principle guiding the process

⁸ Another experiment in the same study (Gernsbacher et al 1992), contrasting different emotions with the same valence (e.g., anger and boredom), presented similar results, supporting the idea that the readers' representations of emotional states included more details than just valence. However, the specificity of the emotions inferred during reading was questioned by Gygax and colleagues (2003). They used a similar methodology to Gernsbacher and colleagues (1992): after presenting a narrative implying a target emotion (e.g., boredom), they contrasted the final sentence containing this emotion not only with a sentence containing a mismatching emotion (e.g., excitement), but also with sentences containing a synonymous emotion (e.g., unchallenged), and a similar emotion (e.g., loneliness). They found a significant difference in reading times between matching and mismatching emotions, but no difference between all matching emotions (target, synonym, and similar). From these results, the authors concluded that the readers' representations of characters' emotions were not as specific as previously claimed. Later studies (Gillioz & Gygax 2017) showed that the specificity of emotional inferences depended upon the contextual support from the text.

of understanding. Specifically, Miall (1988a) identifies two levels of understanding of a literary text. The first level concerns those parts of the text providing information about a situation that is readily grasped by the reader. These parts allow the reader to instantiate a schema, based on her pre-existing knowledge of the world. The second level of understanding concerns those parts of the text called "foregrounded features," including, either phonetic (e.g., rhymes and alliterations), syntactic (e.g., the repetition of phrase structures), or semantic (e.g., irony and metaphors) stylistic effects. Foregrounded features disrupt habitual comprehension schemata, as their meaning is ambiguous. In order to resolve the indeterminacy of these parts of the text, Miall argues, the reader resorts to her affective responses, as a principle to guide comprehension (Miall 1989, Miall and Kuiken 1994a, 1994b, 2001).

In a range of experiments with short stories, Miall and Kuiken (1994b) have shown that the extent to which foregrounding is present in the segments of a narrative is a predictor of both reading times, and readers' reports of these segments as affectively more intense. They interpret these findings as indicating that more ambiguous parts of the text require a longer time to read because they require the mobilization of resources other than preexisting schemas, in order to be understood, and that the aroused emotional responses direct the search for meaning. In another study, Miall (2004) focused on a structural unit called "episode"⁹ within literary texts. Readers were presented with a short story, divided into subsequent sections, and they reported greater shifts in feeling when comparing sections that marked divisions between episodes, rather than within an episode. Such feelings included empathy for characters, or feelings due to the plot, such as suspense, curiosity, or surprise. In interpreting this finding, Miall argued that feelings are used by the reader as markers for episodes, and therefore as a vehicle to structure the narrative:

"[F]eeling is able to overcome the limitations of working memory, providing a platform for registering the implications of events as they unfold within an episode. In addition, feeling

⁹ Miall defines an episode in the following terms: "In prose this is likely to consist of a number of sentences taking up half a page or a page, usually demarcated by a coherence in the temporal or spatial setting or both. The most signal feature of the episode, however, is that it offers a thematically distinctive topic requiring a shift in the reader's understanding" (Miall 2004, 112).

registers shifts in significance as one episode takes up, and develops the issues laid out in a previous episode" (Miall 2015, 130).

In the model elaborated by Miall, emotions guide the search for meaning in ambiguous parts of the text, in virtue of their self-referential and anticipatory character. Specifically, according to Miall, emotional responses not only implicate the reader's reference to her own experiences when she relates to characters and situations in a narrative, but they also imply the significance of these experiences for the reader's concerns and goals. In other words, the reader has an emotional response to certain parts of the text, because these parts recall one of her current concerns: "the reader's response to literary narrative may rehearse on a symbolic stage the current concerns of the self" (Miall 1989, 63). Experimental results (e.g., Miall 1988b, 1990) seem to show that readers tend to agree on which parts of the text require a second level of understanding, but they differ in their affective response to these parts, and in their resulting understanding of them. This is due, Miall argues, to the fact that the text evokes different concerns in different readers.

In Miall's model, the self-referential character of affective responses motivates the reader to seek a resolution to the critical implications of the narrative for her own concerns. This kind of motivation is what gives affective responses their second fundamental feature for guiding the understanding of the literary text, that is, their anticipatory character: "Given the indeterminacy of the reader's experience, the reader must develop some representation of the outcome of the narrative to keep the comprehension process on-line (...). In this sense, affect offers a pre-structuring of the meaning of the text as a whole" (Miall 1989, 61-62; emphasis added).

Miall (1988b) has shown that anticipation is common during the reading of narrative, while it is not during the reading of expository prose, and he claims that emotions are exactly the vehicle for the reader to make predictions while reading.

4.3 Insights from the empirical models

By comparing the cognitive model and Miall's model, it becomes possible to gain insight to develop a suitable philosophical account of

the role of emotions for narrative understanding. One of the assumptions that both models seem to share is that the narrative text, by itself, does not offer all the means to be comprehended. Instead, the reader's emotions, or those that the reader infers, intervene to function as a guiding principle, or to supply further information, in order to achieve understanding, and this is because of the text's structural incompleteness or indeterminacy. This assumption echoes the philosophical idea which was illustrated in section 2.3, that literary narratives have gaps, and can be understood by filling those gaps with the emotions felt by the reader. In this respect, the cognitive model seems to accommodate the objection that emotions can contribute to understanding, without being necessarily felt. Indeed, within the cognitive framework, it seems plausible for the reader to get the irony of a situation, or to detect climactic points in a narrative, by making the appropriate inferences from textual cues.

What both models seem to consider important for understanding a narrative is the connection between elements within the text. This idea seems to be consistent with Carroll's and Velleman's conception of a "narrative connection" as conveying a "narrative explanation," which I discussed in section 1. The two models, however, emphasize a different kind of connection between text elements. On the one hand, for the cognitive paradigm, the reader's model of the narrative conveys an understanding of the text, by being coherent: that is, by explaining (inferentially) how the text elements fit within the model in relation to one another. On the other hand, Miall considers narrative understanding to be not just about the representation of the context denoted by the text, but rather about the reader's structuring of the narrated elements as they unfold during the reading process. Despite their differences, both conceptions seem to be based on the assumption that understanding a narrative depends on a certain connection between text elements, and both models consider emotions, either felt (in Miall's model) or inferred (in the cognitive paradigm), as contributing to such a connection.

For the cognitive model, emotions contribute to narrative understanding by affecting the connection between the elements within the model instantiated by the reader: the inferences about emotions that the reader draws help her to gain the information

necessary to meaningfully relate subsequent events in the narrative to each other. For instance, by inferring that a character is ashamed, the reader can understand why he goes into hiding, therefore connecting in a meaningful way the event of hiding with the previous ones. For Miall, the relevant connection for narrative understanding eludes the model, and its instantiation by the reader crucially depends on her emotional responses while reading. For instance, by feeling fear in respect to a certain narrated event, the reader is led to anticipate potentially dangerous outcomes, therefore reading the following events in this light.

In both cases, emotions seem to contribute to narrative understanding by connecting what comes earlier with what comes later, either by coherently relating text elements within the reader's representation, or by connecting subsequent text elements as they unfold during reading. My claim is that the different contributions of emotions to narrative understanding that the two models emphasize, involve both felt and inferred emotions in virtue of the same feature. In order to explain what this feature is, and how it can account in a unitary way for the role of emotions in narrative understanding, I consider the enactivist account of emotions proposed by Ralph Ellis (2005).

5. Ellis' enactivist account of emotions

As is typical of enactivist views, Ellis conceives the agent not as passively hit by environmental stimuli to which it reacts, but as an active organism characterized by ongoing self-organizational activity. In its activity, the organism is geared up to selectively attend to those stimuli offering action affordances¹⁰ that are relevant for its self-organizational purposes. In this framework, emotions are not just responses activated by a particular stimulus, but are part of the organism's self-organizational ongoing activity. Specifically, they are processes that monitor how well the organism is doing in maintaining

¹⁰ Ellis employs the term "affordances" as indicating those elements in the environment to which the organism is geared up to act, that is, those features of the environment that matter for the agent, and that cannot be specified independently from the agent's disposition to act on them. For instance, heights are an affordance, because they afford the action of falling on the part of the agent: in this, they are an environmental feature that matters for the agent, and that the agent recognizes as such, specifically because falling is the action that they afford for her.

its self-organizing balance, and that indicate what to do in order to achieve or maintain such balance. It follows that, according to Ellis, the intentional object of an emotion, that is: "what the emotion is really about, or what causes it, or what the emotion aims primarily to change" (Ellis 2005 p 32) is not a specific object, but the integrity of the organism: "[e]motions aim towards holistic self-organizational purposes, rather than towards specific environmental events" (Ellis 2005 p 32). Although the specific object triggers the emotion, it is not what the emotion "is about." To better clarify this point, it may be useful to contrast Ellis' enactivist account of emotions to other theories of emotions in philosophy.

It is a common assumption across different theories that an emotion is an intentional state, as it is directed at something, and thus it has an intentional object (e.g., I am afraid *of something*, for instance, a dog); such an object is characterized by certain evaluative properties (e.g., dangerous), and experienced as what causes the emotion (e.g., I experience the dangerous dog as causing my fear). Given this common assumption, as illustrated in this simple sketch, differences arise in respect to the vehicle through which the intentional object of the emotion is apprehended.

For instance, according to the version of cognitivism known as "judgmentalism" (e.g., Solomon 1988, Nussbaum 2004), an evaluative judgment (i.e., the thought that the motorist has wronged me) is necessary to determine the intentional referent of my anger. Indeed, in the cognitivist paradigm, the intentional object of my anger cannot be identified through my bodily feelings, as my pounding heartbeat, for instance, could be a sign of anger, as well as of surprise, or of something else. The role of bodily feelings has been reconsidered by other contemporary philosophers, who have defined emotions as "perceptions" (Prinz 2005, Tappolet 2016), and as "felt bodily attitudes" (Deonna & Teroni 2012). According to these theories, the intentional object of the emotion is given by a certain representation, whose content is non-propositional. For instance, for Prinz (2005), emotions are perceptions that represent matters of concern in the organism-environment relationship, and they do so by registering particular patterns of bodily change; for Tappolet (2016), emotions are analogous with sense-perceptual experiences, involving non-conceptual representations of values; Deonna and Teroni (2012)

conceive of emotions as felt bodily attitudes, in which one takes a (bodily) attitude toward a certain object.

The enactivist view proposed by Ellis¹¹ has some similarities and fundamental differences with the accounts of emotions that I have briefly illustrated above. It shares with the cognitivist account the claim that the intentional object of an emotion cannot be identified through its feeling component. However, differently from the cognitivist account, this is not because a cognitive element (i.e., an evaluative judgment) is necessary to identify such an object; instead, in the enactivist view, it is because the real intentional object of an emotion is not something specific, but the complex of the organism's self-organizational purposes. According to the enactivist view, the emotion, as it is felt, only reveals that something is affecting the balance of the organism-environment relationship, and it discloses some general features of this disturbance in terms of action affordances, that is, by signaling that something is affecting the organism's self-organizational activities. In comparison with the perceptualist account, the enactivist view similarly acknowledges the role of the body in feeling an emotion as it reacts to the environment; however, in contrast with the perceptualist account, the enactivist view maintains that emotions are intentional (i.e., that they are about some situation to which they refer) without necessarily being accompanied by any perceptual or interoceptive representation.

The fundamental difference in comparison with the judgmentalist and the perceptualist accounts, is that, according to the enactivist view, the "aboutness" of an emotion cannot result from attributing an object to it, neither by the means of a judgment, nor by associating it with a perceptual or interoceptive content. The reason why neither the content of a thought nor a perceptual representation can exhaust the intentional object of an emotion is that the emotion already has an implicit intentionality: this kind of intentionality is inherent to the emotion itself, and is not about something specific; rather, it "has to do with the aims of self-organization, which are complex, relational, and oriented toward maintaining a pattern of

¹¹ It should be noted that, although for brevity I do not illustrate them here, further views of emotions that resemble the one proposed by Ellis have been advanced by Griffiths and Scarantino (2009), as well as by Thompson and Colombetti (2012). More recently, Shargel and Prinz (2017) have also elaborated an enactivist account of emotions.

self-initiated action, relative to available or potentially available environmental affordances" (Ellis 2005, 8). For instance, an agent may feel anger towards the motorist that cuts her off in traffic, and may judge the motorist as the cause and the intentional object of her anger. Her anger, however, is probably not really about the motorist. Rather, the motorist functions as an affordance, triggering the expression of an emotion, that is already ongoing in the context of achieving the organism's self-organizational purposes, and that "may frequently involve larger life issues, than the trivial but powerfully triggering event of being cut off in traffic" (Ellis 2005, 17). This is why beating up the motorist usually does not result in getting rid of the anger: "[t]he emotion would have been just the same had the motorist not cut me off. It would have found some other occasion to express itself" (Ellis 2005, 35).

Emotions are always felt in relation to the action affordances of objects, "and these will be different depending on the object's relations to the ultimate aim, which is self-organizational and can be realized by a variety of combinations of conditions" (Ellis 2005, 20). A certain emotional response is triggered by a certain environmental stimulus, because the emotion, as an ongoing process, has already disposed the organism to selectively attend to certain affordances. For instance, in the example of the motorist, the anger that is already ongoing may result in bodily adjustments, such as tension and hyper-vigilance, that in turn foster the agent's apprehension of the motorist as triggering her anger. The emotions are already underway before the agent processes the event that is presumed to trigger it, and current objects are used as opportunities to explore and unfold ongoing emotional processes.

According to Ellis, what art does is to specifically offer affordances to the agent's ongoing emotional dynamics, allowing her to explore and explicate her emotions. He takes paintings as an example: "[p]aintings, rather than *causing* us to see and feel certain ways, only *provide us with an opportunity* to do so" (Ellis 2005, 171). Ellis grounds his argument on the enactivist assumption that "[t]he total motivational purposes of our organisms lead us to see according to expectations and motivated interests that precede the presentation of a given stimulus" (Ellis 2005 p 169). In other words, our eyes are already active before encountering any stimulus, and their pattern of activity,

determined by the totality of organism's self-organizational purposes, is what Ellis calls "the dance of the eyes" (Ellis 2005, 177). Artistic paintings not only present visual affordances, but also emotional ones. They catch our attention, specifically because they offer meaningful affordances for the overall motivated pattern of activity of the organism, which is already ongoing:

"In the experience of an emotional response to a work of art, we can see that the relationship between the work and the feeling it evokes is not a direct causal one. Just as with the dance of the eyes, the dance of the emotional life is already ongoing, and the work must speak to that" (Ellis 2005, 177)

Ellis' idea of paintings as offering emotional affordances to the viewer can be applied to the case of literary narrative, and it can be profitably used to conceive the contribution of emotions to narrative understanding.

6. Implicit intentionality and narrative understanding

My proposal comprises two main claims. First, I argue that emotions felt during reading are triggered by elements in the text that function as emotional affordances, in an analogous way to Ellis' proposal for emotions evoked by paintings. Second, I argue that both felt and inferred emotions help to connect elements within the narrative and contribute to narrative understanding because of their implicit intentionality.

According to my first claim, the narrative elements eliciting emotional responses, including, as mentioned in section 3, aesthetic features, episodes, characters, etc., are not the proper cause of emotions in the reader, but merely affordances that trigger in the reader the expression of ongoing emotional processes. For instance, Dumbledore's death, in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* by J. K. Rowling (2005), makes us sad, but is not the *cause* of our sadness; rather, it functions as an affordance that *triggers* our sadness. Very simply put, this narrative episode may elicit an emotional response in the following way: Dumbledore may remind us of some important figures for our life, and we may compare Harry's relationship with him to our relationship with them: thus, as we would be (or have been) saddened by their deaths, we are now saddened by

Dumbledore's death. However, it is not the narrative event itself that causes us to be sad, rather, as we are humans, with affective ties to important figures in our life, we are geared up to respond to the death of those (as they matter for our well-being); therefore, Dumbledore's death saddens us because it is an affordance for an emotional dynamic that is already ours.

Conceiving the emotional responses towards literary narratives as triggered by emotional affordances rather than properly caused by narrative elements seems apt to account for those features of the emotions experienced towards literature that the paradox of fiction has highlighted. Since discussing this issue would require a paper by its own, here I will only put forward a few considerations. The nature of the paradox, as formulated by Radford and Weston (1975), lies in the assumption that to be, for instance, afraid, the agent needs to believe that she is in danger; in the case of fiction, the agent knows that the apparent object of her fear is not real and therefore she is not in danger; yet, she feels fear. The paradox arises because it is assumed that a necessary aspect of the emotion is to be connected with an existing intentional object, perhaps by way of belief or a judgment: Ellis' enactivist approach eliminates this assumption. It should be noted that the paradox remains, even if, rather than a propositional attitude, a perceptual representation of the intentional object of the emotion is assumed. After all, the representation of a fictional lion is hardly similar to the representation of a real one, and yet it may elicit an emotional response.

The enactivist account eliminates this problem, as it recognizes that it is not in virtue of perceiving a narrative event as more similar to reality that such event is more likely to elicit an emotion: language, rhetorical figures, pacing, and other effects do not add to the reality of what they represent; rather, they offer emotional affordances to the reader.

Another advantage offered by the application of Ellis' framework to the case of the emotions elicited by literary reading is that it seems to explain why the same narrative may elicit different emotions in different people, and in the same person at different times. This is because different people, or the same person at different times, are more responsive to certain kinds of emotional affordances rather than others, depending on their status in respect

to the dynamic balance of their organisms. The same romantic novel may elicit different emotional reactions in a person who has just got happily married and someone coming out of a bitter divorce: this is because they have different ongoing emotional dynamics that find their way to be explored through the elements presented in the narrative. What about those narratives that elicit consistent emotional responses? I argue that some threads may be common, as we are all human, and especially within the same cultural contexts, we may share what we value and the way we respond when that is at stake.

I have explained how the reader's *felt* emotional reactions to a narrative can be conceived as responses triggered by emotional affordances in the text. What about the emotions that the reader infers? As shown by the experimental evidence within the cognitive framework, reported in section 4.1, the reader may infer emotions by making the appropriate inferences from textual cues. For instance, reading that Dumbledore is dead may not make me sad, but knowing the kind of relationship that Harry had with him, I can infer that he will be sad because of his death. As I hinted at the end of section 2, the same narrative event may be the source of both felt and inferred kinds of emotion. In light of the enactivist framework that I adopt, I argue that this may happen because the same textual element does not necessarily function as an emotional affordance for the reader, as shown above.¹² However, the reader may still be able to draw inferences about the occurrence of emotional instances within the narrative.

Inferred emotions should be distinguished from what cognitivists refer to as "emotion thoughts," that is, from the propositional attitudes such as beliefs and judgments, that are the sole necessary and sufficient component of emotions in the cognitivist paradigm. In contrast with those, inferred emotions are not the thoughts that the person entertains when she feels what she feels, and they do not involve a propositional-evaluative component. Rather, given that emotions are associated with certain goals, motivations, and behaviors, considering those elements may allow the reader to infer the occurrence of a certain emotion by means of

¹² An interesting hypothesis is that those narratives that we have read and appreciated many times may be as such specifically because, despite knowing them very well, their text elements keep functioning as emotional affordances for us, or maybe they are able to offer us new emotional affordances every time.

inferential reasoning. Although they are brought about by inferential reasoning and not by affordances in the text like felt emotions, inferred emotions, I argue, contribute to narrative understanding in virtue of the same relevant feature. This brings me to my second claim.

As illustrated in the previous section, according to Ellis, emotions are part of the organism's ongoing regulatory processes, and their function is to monitor and promote the organism's dynamic balance. In virtue of this, emotions already set a direction towards which the organism is motivated to move, before signaling whether a certain environmental feature (i.e., affordance) is good or bad for the organism. As such, Ellis claims, emotions have an implicit intentionality because they are directed at the organism's balance before they are consciously associated with any environmental trigger.

I argue that this implicit intentionality characterizes the emotional states elicited by narrative elements, both as inferred and as felt by the reader, and I argue that, because of this implicit intentionality, these emotional states present an anticipatory character. More precisely, I argue that the implicit intentionality of the emotional states elicited during reading gives rise to a certain anticipation, such that the subsequent narrative events are processed as either confirming or disconfirming such an anticipation. Either way, the reader apprehends subsequent events in relation to the intentionality of the feeling presented by previous events. Although the connection between text elements that underlies narrative understanding is differently specified by the cognitive model and by Miall's model, as suggested in section 5, the implicit intentionality of emotions is what allows emotions, both felt and inferred ones, to contribute to the narrative connection in its two different forms. To make this clear, consider the following case:

A narrative passage may function as an affordance for a feeling of grief in the reader because of its aesthetic character, the episode it describes, or other characteristics. The implicit intentionality of this feeling, in relation to the organism's balance, is (presumably) in the direction of soothing this state. Therefore, the reader may anticipate a narrative element that may be able to do so. If the subsequent element that the reader processes does so, then the anticipation is confirmed, otherwise it is not. In any case, the subsequent element is

apprehended by the reader in relation to the implicit intentionality of the feeling afforded by the narrative element that was processed previously. In virtue of this, the emotional affordances in the text provide a connection between the elements within the narrative, and by doing so they contribute to the reader's understanding of them. As illustrated in section 4.2, the anticipatory nature of emotions has been already highlighted by Miall as relevant for narrative understanding. My account is consistent with Miall's model, and adds to it the enactivist idea that the anticipatory character of emotions is rooted in their implicit intentionality.

The case of an inferred emotion is no different, although the narrative connection, and therefore the narrative understanding that the inferred emotion contributes to, is of the kind specified by the cognitive model. This model, as suggested in section 4, supposes that understanding a narrative consists in coherently connecting its elements within a model, by means of inferential reasoning, and emotions are supposed to contribute to narrative understanding by contributing to this kind of connection. For instance, as the reader infers that a character is angry because he has been wronged, she can coherently insert the subsequent narrated events within her model of the narrative, in virtue of the fact that she assumes anger to be associated with certain goals, motivations and behaviors. When she reads that the character punched the wall, this fits within the model, as it is a reaction that is consistent with anger. Although the emotion itself is inferred and the connection to the subsequent elements of the text within the model is also the product of inferential reasoning, such inferences would not be possible if the emotion that was inferred was not assumed to be linked to certain goals, motivations, and behaviors.

This assumption, I argue, is rooted in the implicit intentionality that characterizes emotions. In virtue of its implicit intentionality, an emotion already charts a direction, and certain goals, motivations, and behaviors are associated with that emotion, specifically because they are consistent with this direction. They could not be assumed, and the inferences based on them could not be drawn, if the implicit intentionality of the emotion in question was not implicitly considered by the reader who inferred the emotion.

To summarize, my claim is that both felt and inferred emotions are characterized by an implicit intentionality, as specified by Ellis' enactivist account, and that in virtue of this, they anticipate subsequent elements in the narrative, connecting them with previous ones, thus contributing to narrative understanding.

Conclusion

This novel account of the contribution of emotions to narrative understanding has considerable advantages in comparison with the philosophical solutions that were discussed in section 2. Concerning Velleman's proposal of an "emotional closure," as illustrated in section 2.1, it does not seem plausible that, in order to understand a narrative, the reader must experience a resolving emotion as associated with a conclusive event. What seems more plausible is that regardless of whether the outcome is explicitly stated as achieved or not within the text, the emotion that the reader feels or infers indicates, in virtue of its implicit intentionality, that there is an outcome to be reached, and, by doing so, it contributes to narrative understanding in the way described above. Moreover, this account avoids assuming the diachronic nature of emotions and the process of emotional resonance that, according to Velleman, is based on it. As illustrated in section 2.2, these are unclear and unsubstantiated notions. What seems more plausible is that both responding to emotional affordances and inferring the goals, motivations, and behaviors associated with emotions drive the reader to apprehend the narrated events as following each other, in respect to the anticipations that they imply. Finally, concerning the evaluations made or the reason-based dependencies attributed by the reader in respect to the narrative, as illustrated in section 2.4, this account does not consider emotions as necessarily involved in any of those, in order to contribute to narrative understanding. Their contribution, in fact, precedes the interpretative level, and only concerns either catching affordances or making on-line inferences during the comprehension of a text.

The objections that might be raised against this proposal are certainly numerous. First of all, the enactivist framework itself might be considered flawed. This paper, however, is not the appropriate place to address this problem: here, I assume that Ellis' enactivist

account of emotions is plausible, and I argue that its application to the case of literary narrative offers an appealing solution to account, in a comprehensive way, for the role of emotions in narrative understanding. Further objections might concern the conclusions that I draw from the empirical literature, about the connecting function that both felt and inferred emotions exert. Moreover, the link between such conclusions and my claims on the implicit intentionality of emotions might be considered strained. Although these objections are legitimate, addressing them is material for future work.

This paper is, to my knowledge, the first attempt to link empirical studies on narrative comprehension (both from the cognitivist tradition and from Miall's framework) to an enactivist account of emotions. As such, it puts forward an idea that has not been explored before, and that will necessarily require confrontation and dialogue within the field, to be developed and improved. The goal of this paper was to determine how emotions contribute to the understanding of literary narratives. After clarifying that narrative understanding depends on the connection between the elements within a narrative, I examined the philosophical solutions proposed to account for the contribution of emotions to this connection and I found them all inadequate. In order to construct a more plausible account, I turned to the empirical literature, by identifying first which emotional states are relevant for narrative understanding, and then by examining two psychological models accounting for them. Since both models highlight the capacity of emotions to connect subsequent narrative elements, although in different terms, this led to an account that explains how both the emotions felt and those inferred by the reader can contribute to narrative understanding. In order to achieve this, I drew on Ellis' enactivist account of emotion, and applied it to the case of literary narrative. I claimed that the emotions felt by the reader are triggered by emotional affordances in the text, and that both the emotions felt and those inferred by the reader are characterized by an implicit intentionality. In virtue of this, I have argued that the reader processes subsequent elements within a narrative in respect to the anticipation implied by previous elements. This is, I conclude, the way in which emotions intervene to connect

the elements within a narrative, therefore contributing to narrative understanding.

Chapter 3

Emotional Appeals in Propaganda and Persuasion: Epistemic Differences

Abstract

The traditional view holds that appeals to emotions in politics are harmful, because they exert a manipulative function, by undermining rational reasoning. In this paper, I propose a novel account of emotional appeals: specifically, I distinguish persuasive from propagandistic appeals, and I attribute the manipulative character of the latter to the impact that they have on the agent's emotional processing of political objects. I argue that both kinds of appeals put forward evaluative kinds of arguments, and the emotions that they elicit make salient certain goals/values. However, whereas persuasive appeals promote the assessment and coherent integration of these goals/values with the agent's further values and appropriate beliefs, propagandistic appeals do not do so. In virtue of this epistemic distinction, I argue, persuasive emotional appeals can give a positive contribution to the agent's political sophistication, whereas propagandistic ones can only undermine it.

Introduction

Although many different definitions of propaganda have been proposed, most of them seem to converge in highlighting its manipulative nature. Taylor, for instance, describes propaganda as "the planned use of communications to manipulate words, images, symbols, and ideas that encourage a target audience to think and act *in a manner desired by the source*" (Taylor 2011, 914). The manipulative character of propaganda has been commonly attributed to the disruption of clear reasoning that propagandistic messages promote. This is highlighted, among others, by Marlin, who defines propaganda as "[t]he organized attempt through communication to affect belief or action or inculcate attitudes in a large audience in ways that circumvent or suppress an individual's adequately informed, rational, reflective judgment" (Marlin 2013, 12). Emotional appeals have been included among the most typical propagandistic strategies for manipulating, and they have been generally assumed to perform their manipulative action, by impairing rational thinking: propaganda "attempts to move a recipient to a predetermined point of view by using simple images and slogans that truncate thought by playing on prejudices and emotions" (Pratkanis & Turner 1996, 187). Indeed, the centrality of emotional appeals for the propagandistic character of a political message, is so widely presupposed, that the role of emotions in politics is often reduced to their propagandistic use. Moran, for instance, notably opposes the appeals used in proper communication, with those used in "pseudo-communication", like propaganda, as the first "are directed towards the rational, with an emphasis on a clear relationship between the message and supporting data", while the latter "are directed towards the emotional, with an emphasis on finding emotional connections between the receiver and the message" (Moran 1979, 189).

In this paper, I propose a novel account of the emotional appeals employed in propaganda. My proposal is motivated by two reasons at least. First, by associating emotional appeals in general, without any further specification, with propaganda, the epistemic value of emotions in politics is disregarded. Second, attributing the manipulative effect of emotional appeals uniquely to their supposedly disruptive impact on reasoning, relies on the unwarranted dichotomy, especially in politics, between the rational and the emotional dimension of thinking. In response to these concerns, I draw a distinction between persuasive and propagandistic emotional appeals: I argue that while the former have a positive epistemic function in the political context, the latter have a negative one; moreover, I argue that this is not due to the appeals' impact on the agent's rational processing of political issues, but rather to their impact on the agent's emotional engagement with them.

Before outlining the structure of the paper, two remarks are in order. First, I do not intend to suggest any guidelines to disentangle in general what is propaganda and what persuasion in the political discourse, since this would involve the analysis of many other features, besides their use of emotional appeals. Despite employing similar techniques, propaganda and persuasion have been described in the literature as different forms of communication, because of their intended effects on the receiver of the message. Specifically, as argued by Melissen (2005), while persuasion aims at "broadening the audience's perspectives and opening their minds, (...) propaganda strives to narrow and preferably close them" (Melissen 2005, 18). Similarly, Pratkanis and Turner (1996) argue that persuasion fosters thoughtful deliberation, while propaganda hinders it. A widespread claim among propaganda scholars is that the difference between propaganda and persuasion, as characterized above, is due to the fact that, differently from persuasion, "[p]ropaganda closes off debate by bypassing the rational will" (Stanley 2015, 48). Although propaganda may indeed hinder rational deliberation, in this paper I do not focus on this kind of manipulation. Rather, I focus on the manipulation of the agent's emotional processing of political objects: I argue that this kind of manipulation characterizes propagandistic emotional appeals and differentiates them from persuasive ones.

My second remark concerns what is the communicative ideal of a liberal democratic society, as I take this kind of society as the "political context" in the paper. Modern liberal theory has promoted a rationalist conception of politics, where normative ideals such as "public reason" (Rawls 1993) and "communicative rationality" (Habermas 1984) regulate the public debate in terms of exchanges solely based on logical principles and rules of evidence. The political theorists following this tradition have been mainly concerned with the improvement of adequate reasoning skills in order to achieve an ideal form of deliberation, disregarding any emotional contribution to it; they considered emotions as irrational and thus as either epistemically irrelevant, or even damaging for the political discourse (Nie, Junn & Stehlik-Barry 1996, Callan 1997). The plausibility of the rationalist position, which maintains the exclusion of emotions from the political domain, has been challenged by the studies showing that emotions are part and parcel of human reasoning, and that they are engaged in our deliberative assessments in the political context (Marcus 2010, Redlawsk 2006). In philosophy, liberal rationalism has been dismissed not only as a highly idealistic notion, but also because it disregards the role of emotion in argumentation and public discourse (Benhabib 1992, Young 1996, Kingston & Ferry 2009). As Dowding (2016) puts it: "Given that emotion is always part and parcel of our reasoning process, and given acknowledgement that our emotions ought to be engaged in our deliberative assessments, we cannot always assume that we are being manipulated simply because our emotions are engaged" (Dowding 2016, 9). What is crucial, thus, is to determine when emotions are manipulative, and when they are not. This is exactly the objective of this paper. I will proceed as follows.

In the first section, I will define what I take to be emotional appeals, and I will describe both propagandistic and persuasive ones as advancing evaluative kinds of arguments. In the second section, I will explain how the emotional responses elicited by emotional appeals intervene in the arguments that such appeals put forward, that is, by making certain goals/values salient. In the third section, I will list the criteria that I adopt to determine whether an emotion is legitimately used within an evaluative argument; in the fourth section, I will argue that this is the case when the goal/value that the emotion

makes salient is coherently integrated with the agent's further values and appropriate beliefs. In the fifth section, I will argue that the epistemic distinction between persuasive and propagandistic emotional appeals is that the first use emotions legitimately, while the latter do not, and I will present a few relevant examples. Finally, in the sixth section, I will explain how the process of coherent integration previously illustrated is relevant for political sophistication, and thus how persuasive and propagandistic emotional appeals provide a positive and negative contribution respectively to the individual's political sophistication.

1. Emotional appeals and evaluative arguments

I define "emotional appeal" in the political discourse as the elicitation of an emotional response through the presentation of information relative to a political object (i.e. an issue, character or event with political relevance) in order to support a certain evaluative claim. For instance, the 1964 political advertisement, known as the "Daisy Girl", featured a nuclear explosion, aimed at prompting voters to show up to the polls and vote for Lyndon Johnson. In this case, presenting a threatening event as imminent is intended to elicit fear (i.e. emotional response); and presenting it as avoidable only by voting for Johnson (i.e. information), aims to convey the message that voting for Johnson is the best option, namely, that you should vote for Johnson (i.e. evaluative claim).

As for the first component, that is, the emotional response, emotional appeals may take various forms based on how they elicit it.¹³ For instance, a message might contain an explicit emotional expression (e.g. "More employment, more *joy* for the Italians!"), an emotionally connotated term (e.g. "Stop the Muslims' *invasion*"), or it might present a situation evoking a certain emotion (e.g. the nuclear explosion of the Daisy Girl ad). Moreover, emotions might be

¹³ My list of the ways in which emotions are communicated, is drawn, at least in part, from Koschut (2018). There are certainly other ways in which a political message might evoke an emotion, but I do not mention them here, as it is not my intention to review all of them, but only to use some of them as illustrative examples of the components of emotional appeals. Moreover, I do not delve into the processes through which emotional reactions might be triggered by the different kinds of appeals presented in political messages, as I simply assume that emotional appeals, by definition, are intended to evoke emotional reactions, despite being more or less successful in their intent.

triggered by the presentation of metaphors, analogies, and comparisons, that depict political actors and relations as calling for certain emotional reactions. An example is the campaign poster of the right-wing Swiss People's Party (SVP) in favor of the prioritization of Swiss workers over foreign commuters: the poster was supposed to elicit anger in Swiss citizens, as it depicted cartoon rats dressed as an Italian worker, a Roma thief, and an Italian former finance minister nibbling at a piece of Swiss cheese (Fig 1). The second element of an emotional appeal, namely, the information presented, is a descriptive claim, that is, a statement about some state of the world (e.g. "In Germany, Merkel welcomed hundreds of thousands of refugees"), or about some factual relations (e.g. "Voting for Johnson will ward off the use of the atomic bomb"). Usually, in propagandistic messages, the information presented is oversimplified, biased, and, in some cases, even false. The last component of an emotional appeal, namely, the evaluative claim, is a normative kind of statement: it is about what should, or should not, be done; what is, and is not, desirable (e.g. "You should vote for this candidate", "This policy is more desirable than another").

Since emotional appeals are employed with the aim of convincing the audience to endorse some claim, and specifically an evaluative kind of claim, I consider it useful to conceptualize emotional appeals in argumentative terms, although the arguments they put forward might not be clearly structured, and their components plainly formulated.¹⁴ Specifically, I consider both propagandistic and persuasive emotional appeals as evaluative kind of arguments. In order to define what I take to be an evaluative argument, I will first distinguish it from the factual one. On the one hand, a factual argument is an argument that advances a *descriptive* kind of claim: as such it can be supported only by the relevant factual evidence. For instance, the claim that immigrants are a burden for the economy of Switzerland, can gain support only if numbers are provided showing that the country's financial resources are negatively impacted by the presence of immigrants. On the other hand, an

¹⁴ Although the notion of argument has been defined by some scholars in narrow terms, as exclusively written discourse in which all premises are explicit, in this paper, I follow the broader definition proposed by Lunsford et al (1999), who call argument anything expressing a point of view, or by Toulmin (2003), who defines an argument as a claim on our attention and belief.

evaluative argument is an argument that advances an *evaluative* kind of claim: as such, it cannot be supported solely by the relevant factual evidence, but this evidence must be coupled with a certain goal or value.¹⁵ In order to make this clear, I will first turn to a simple non-political example, leaving the political ones for the next section.

The factual evidence that smoking damages health can support the evaluative claim that you should stop smoking, only if it is coupled with the assumption that health is valuable/that being healthy is your goal. For instance, if someone's goal is to get sick, then the factual evidence that smoke damages health is not a reason for her to stop smoking, but rather, to do the opposite. An evaluative claim cannot be supported either by a factual premise alone or by a goal/value alone. Rather, once the goal/value is set, the support of the evaluative claim, that is, whether a certain action should be performed to achieve the goal/value, is contingent upon the relevant factual evidence. For instance, simply desiring to be healthy would not be a reason to stop smoking, if it was not proven that smoking damages health; indeed, if the factual evidence was that smoking improves health, desiring to be healthy would be a reason to smoke.

In this section, I have first characterized emotional appeals as comprising three elements, namely an emotional reaction, some factual claim, and an evaluative claim. Then, I have argued that since emotional appeals support evaluative claims, they can be conceptualized as evaluative kind of arguments; I have characterized evaluative arguments as involving a normative conclusion, supported by both facts and goals/values. In the next section, I will illustrate how the emotional reactions elicited by emotional appeals intervene in the evaluative arguments that such appeals put forward.

2. The role of emotions in evaluative arguments

I claim that the function that emotions perform within evaluative arguments is to make certain goals/values salient, and in this way, they affect the support for the evaluative conclusion. Different theories of emotions can explain how emotions make certain goals or values salient. Here I do not commit to any of these theories in particular. The basic idea is that emotions are adaptive responses,

¹⁵ An analogous distinction between factual and normative propositions in rhetoric has been proposed by Scarantino (2008).

which reflect appraisals of features of the environment, which are significant for the organism's well-being (Moors et al. 2013, 119); as such, emotions signal what in the environment may affect the agents' concerns, including needs, attachments, values, goals, and in general "anything that an individual cares about" (Moors et al. 2013, 120).¹⁶ For instance, feeling fear signals "being in danger", which in turn makes salient "being safe" as the goal to be reached. What does this have to do with emotional appeals and the evaluative arguments that they put forward? I will illustrate my proposal in the following.

As I have illustrated above, evaluative arguments comprise an evaluative conclusion, whose support depends both on the presentation of certain factual evidence and on the assumption of a goal/value. My claim is that the emotion elicited by an emotional appeal affects the evaluative argument by making a certain goal/value salient, therefore affecting the support of the evaluative conclusion. Most of the contemporary public discourse against immigration offers an example to my claim. The evaluative conclusion that this kind of discourse supports is the appropriateness of restrictive immigration policies. The factual evidence presented in support of it mostly involves imprecise or inflated data about the number of admitted immigrants and about the crimes that they committed. For example, Trump declared that "Numerous foreign-born individuals have been convicted or implicated in terrorism-related crimes since September 11 2001, including foreign nationals who entered the United States after receiving visitor, student, or employment visas, or who entered through the United States refugee resettlement program".¹⁷ As for the goal/value presented, it is usually made salient through the use of classic fear appeals. For instance, Trump has repeatedly referred to Mexican immigrants as "rapists", "animals" or "criminals".¹⁸ These negatively connotated words and phrases are designed to trigger fear in the audience, and to make them worry about their safety. The fear appeal, in other words, makes safety the goal/value on the basis of

¹⁶ Here I illustrate the capacity of emotions to indicate goals/values in the terms offered by the "appraisal theory" of emotions, because of their simplicity, although I do not commit to this theory in particular.

¹⁷ On Trump's "factual" statements about immigrants, see <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/how-risky-is-it-really/201702/paranoia-about-immigrants-the-danger-fear>

¹⁸ On Trump's terminology to describe immigrants, see <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/17/us/trump-animals-ms-13-gangs.html>.

which the evaluative claim (i.e. restrictive immigration policies) is supported.

As the example about smoking has shown, changing the salient goal/value changes the supported evaluative conclusion. For instance, while fear appeals might be used to support restrictive immigration policies, appeals to compassion might be used to support open border policies. By eliciting compassion in the audience (e.g. through the picture of the drowned Syrian toddler, Alan Kurdi Fig 2) solidarity among human beings and the importance of human lives are brought forward as the salient goals/values, thus supporting policies that comply with those.

The idea that emotional appeals intervene within evaluative arguments by making salient certain goals/values seems to be confirmed by the empirical models on the impact of emotion on persuasion, such as the one proposed by Miceli et al (2011).¹⁹ In their view, a general principle of any form of persuasion is that of "goal hooking": in order to persuade, the sender of the message acts on some goal of the receiver of the message, suggesting a means-end relationship between the intention that the sender wants to induce on the receiver, and the receiver's goal; in this sense, the intention is "hooked" to the goal. In this respect, the "hook" that emotions provide, is particularly powerful, because, given their strong motivating power, the goals that emotions signal, have a high priority. Poggi (2005) suggests the following example:

"A tells his electorate B: If you vote for me, I'll create one million new jobs (let us call it a UG, a utilitarian goal), a very valuable goal in fact, from a rational point of view. But suppose A adds: If you vote for me, I'll fight for your freedom (let us call it a EG, an emotional goal). Now, freedom is not simply a very important goal, it is a value -- a goal to which emotions are attached since it is not only a contingent goal in life, but one of the goals we usually all have at any given time of our lives. Thus, if A had hooked his proposed goal (...) (vote for me) only to UG he would have reached an average goal value. By

¹⁹ To avoid confusion, it should be noted that in Miceli et al (2011), the term "persuasion" does not refer to a particular form of public discourse, as it does in this paper in contrast with propaganda, but it refers, more generally, to the kind of discourse aimed to convince an audience about something.

hooking it to EG, however, he can reach a much higher value" (Poggi 2005, 315).

In this section, I have explained how the emotions elicited by emotional appeals intervene in evaluative arguments, that is, by making certain goals/values salient. This characterizes the emotions elicited by both persuasive and propagandistic kind of appeals. What distinguishes them, then? I will try to answer this question in the rest of the paper.

3. Criteria to assess the argumentative use of emotions

As was mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the traditional view holds that the use of emotions in argumentation is necessarily inappropriate, as emotions are assumed to subvert rational reasoning. Against this view, Walton (2007) has argued that the elements presented in an argument should be evaluated on the basis of the purpose of that kind of argument. Therefore, in the case of propaganda, since it is a type of discourse that aims at convincing the audience to accept a particular conclusion, the use of emotions is appropriate, as it contributes to this purpose. Walton's approach does not seem satisfactory, in order to distinguish persuasive from propagandistic emotional appeals. As I have mentioned above, both persuasion and propaganda present evaluative kinds of arguments, and the emotions elicited through their appeals both contribute to the evaluative conclusion of the argument, by making certain goals/values salient. Therefore, following Walton's approach, both kinds of appeal would be appropriate in the same way. However, this is not the case. Despite their similarities, persuasion and propaganda are different kinds of discourse, and the emotional appeals that they present, despite performing the same role within the argument, are different. In order to clarify what this difference amounts to, I will move from Walton's framework, which focuses on the effect of emotional appeals on the purpose of the argument, to other approaches, which focus, instead, on the inherent argumentative dimension of emotional appeals.

Established that the arguments constructed through the use of emotional appeals are evaluative in character, I argue that propagandistic arguments make use of emotions in an illegitimate

way, while persuasive arguments make use of emotions in a legitimate way. How is the legitimacy assessed in this respect? In order to answer this question, I turn to the paradigm offered by Gilbert (2004). Gilbert is one of the few scholars, who has provided a theoretical account on the argumentative use of emotions. Specifically, he has argued that the use of emotions in arguments can be assessed on the basis of the same criteria that are employed to evaluate the soundness of the premises within arguments that do not involve emotions, namely acceptability, relevance, and adequacy. Although I retain the criteria identified by Gilbert, I propose a different interpretation of their significance.

As for the first one, Gilbert observes that non-emotional premises are considered to be acceptable when they are true, or when they meet the standards of the field in which the argument is deployed; emotions, however, are not factual, and therefore cannot be true or false, but require their standards of evaluation, which Gilbert identifies in their being genuine or fake. Identifying the acceptability requirement with the authenticity of emotions does not seem effective. Regardless of whether the proponent of an emotional appeal might genuinely feel the emotion that the appeal is intended to trigger, such emotion might still be exaggerated or unfounded,²⁰ resulting therefore to be much less than acceptable. Moreover, assessing the authenticity of an emotional reaction is problematic, and can be done (sometimes with great uncertainty), only by the person concerned, that is, by the proponent of the emotional appeal.

As for the relevance requirement, Gilbert emphasizes that it is highly dependent on context, both in the case of emotional and of logical arguments, but he does not mention any general principle to disentangle relevant from non-relevant emotional premises. Instead, he contrasts two examples. The first one is about deciding over whether he should go to a conference on his wedding anniversary: in this case, his wife's sadness if he goes, is a relevant factor to be considered. The second example is about deciding over whether he should give a passing grade to a student who did not pass the course: in this case, the student's distress if he doesn't, is not a relevant factor

²⁰ To be fair, "non-exaggeration" and "justification of evidence" are also mentioned by Gilbert as requirements for an emotion to be acceptable within an argument (Gilbert 2004, 16), but he does not explain how these features relate to the "veracity" of the emotion, namely, its being genuine or fake.

to be considered. These examples try to appeal to our intuitions, but they do not really succeed in pinpointing what is it that actually makes an emotion relevant or not within an argument. Why is the wife's sadness relevant but the student's distress is not? What does this really depend on?

The relevance condition is specifically what, according to Govier (2013), emotions fail to meet: emotionally charged language, she argues, is often employed "to take the place of evidence" (2013, 59), "to distract us from the relevant reasons or--worse yet--from the fact that no relevant reasons are given" (Govier 2013, 171). She takes the case of the appeal to pity (i.e. "ad misericordiam"): according to Govier, although charitable appeals may be constructive and helpful, as they draw attention to the suffering of others, still, in themselves do not provide reasons for action or beliefs. She considers the case of the appeal to fear (i.e. "ad baculum") as similar. For instance, trotting out the fear of eternal damnation in order to convince you to believe in god, does not provide relevant reasons for believing, but only calls on fearful consequences to manipulate you into accepting the claim. However, Govier argues, "[t]here is a difference between logically irrelevant appeals to fear (seeking to intimidate by manipulating attitudes) and logically relevant warnings that an action may have negative consequences" (Govier 2013, 171). For example, when the doctor tells the patient that, should he continue smoking, his chances of lung cancer will increase, in this case, "that consequence provides a relevant reason for not smoking. A warning is not an appeal to fear, threat, or attempt to intimidate" (Govier 2013 p. 171). The examples offered by Govier, like those offered by Gilbert, are not clarificatory. What is the difference between a warning about eternal damnation and one about cancer? As I might consider the dangers of smoke with no fear, but only as a relevant consequence of my smoking behavior, I might consider the dangers of going to hell with no fear, but only as a relevant consequence of my not believing in god. Likewise, I might be afraid of damnation as I might be afraid of cancer. How is the fear of cancer a less relevant reason to stop smoking than a fearless consideration of the dangers of smoking?

Finally, the adequacy condition, Gilbert argues, is about whether an acceptable and relevant premise is sufficient for warranting a claim, and he maintains that a premise, being it either

emotional or not, is adequate if it is "enough to convince the participants that, given their beliefs, values, goals, and criteria for argumentation, that the claim has been warranted" (Gilbert 2004 p 259). Gilbert's claim, as he himself admits, is circular, and does not offer a clear explanation of what the argumentative adequacy of emotions amounts to.

Given the critiques that I have raised above, how should the conditions of acceptability, relevance and adequacy be understood, in the case of emotions within evaluative arguments? I will illustrate my proposal in the following section.

4. How emotions can satisfy the argumentative criteria

As was illustrated in section 1, an evaluative claim can be supported by a factual claim in conjunction with a goal/value. I argue that the emotion making salient a certain goal/value, is legitimately employed within the argument, if it is acceptable, relevant, and adequate, and whether or not the emotion meets these conditions, depends on how the goal/value that it makes salient is processed.

First, in order for an emotion to be acceptable within an evaluative argument, the goal/value that it makes salient should be assessed in respect to appropriate beliefs. For instance, the word "invasion" referred to the migratory movements towards Europe instills fear, making safety salient. However, if considered in respect to the agent's factual knowledge in forms of beliefs (e.g. "the actual numbers of immigrants is not that high"), fear does not seem justified, and its goal/value, does not result to be the most significant. Clearly, it is important that the factual knowledge, in respect to which the emotion and its goal/value is assessed, is appropriate, that is, accurate and complete.

As for the relevance criteria, I argue that an emotion is argumentatively relevant if the goal/value that it makes salient is weighed against the agent's further values concerning the issue at stake. The reason why, in Gilbert's examples, the wife's sadness is relevant, but the student's distress is not, seems to be that the love towards the wife is assessed as more important than being present at a conference, and the student's momentary wellbeing is assessed as less important than the professor's work ethic. Similarly, in Govier's examples, it seems that the reason why the fear appeal to believe in

god is not relevant is that, the goal of salvation that it makes salient is assessed in respect to the conviction that supposing the existence of a supernatural being with no physical proof is irrational. Therefore, the agent rejects such appeal as irrelevant. Conversely, the reason why the warning about smoking is relevant is that the goal of health that it makes salient is assessed in respect to the knowledge of the available scientific data about the dangers of smoke. Therefore, the agent embraces such appeal as relevant.

Finally, I argue that an emotion is argumentatively adequate if the goal/value that it makes salient, being assessed in respect to the agents' further values and appropriate beliefs, results to be coherent with them. The climate scientist James Hansen, for instance, used the following analogy in his 2010 Ted Talk: "400,000 Hiroshima atomic bomb explosions per day, 365 days per year that is how much extra energy Earth is now gaining each day due to human-emitted greenhouse gasses". Such fear appeal might seem excessive, and therefore illegitimately used in an evaluative argument aimed at raising awareness about this issue. However, if the appeal is assessed in respect to the pertinent data (e.g. "Unabated emissions of anthropogenic greenhouse gases, primarily from the burning of fossil fuels, are likely to have irreversible consequences")²¹ and to the agent's further values on the matter (e.g. "As an inhabitant of this planet, I have the duty to preserve it"), a fearful reaction does not seem undue and the goal that it makes salient (i.e. the necessity to reduce greenhouse gasses) should be legitimately considered in evaluative arguments about the topic.²²

What emerges from my characterization of the criteria of acceptability, relevance, and adequacy, is that what counts for an emotion to meet them, is the coherent integration of the goal/value that it makes salient with the agent's further values and appropriate beliefs. This process of coherent integration seems to account for the factors that are commonly considered as important for determining the legitimate use of emotions in arguments, such as, as Gilbert lists

²¹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate. *Climate Change 2007: The Scientific Basis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2007.

²² My analysis of the appropriateness of fear appeals in evaluative arguments about climate change does not imply that eliciting fear is the best strategy to effectively engage people in acting against global warming. Indeed, this does not seem to be the case (O'Neill et al 2009).

them, "veracity, non-exaggeration, justification of evidence, avoidance of bias, consideration of alternatives, and so on" (Gilbert 2004, p. 16). Moreover, my proposal seems to accommodate the important suggestion, put forward by Brinton (1988), that emotions are not irrelevant in an argument, if they are provided reasons for, that is, if their appropriateness is justified on the basis of certain "grounds". Specifically, it seems reasonable to locate these grounds precisely in the further values and appropriate beliefs that the agent should consider in the assessment of the goal/value that the emotion makes salient.

5. The epistemic difference between persuasive and propagandistic emotional appeals

In the last two sections, I have argued that an emotion is legitimately used in an evaluative argument, if it is acceptable, relevant and appropriate, and that, in order to meet these conditions, the goal/value that it makes salient should be coherently integrated with the agent's further values and appropriate beliefs. Having established this, my claim is that the difference between persuasive and propagandistic emotional appeals lies specifically in the fact that the former ones use emotions legitimately, while the latter do not. One objection against my proposal could be that the process of coherent integration that I have illustrated, seems to concern the agent as processing the message rather than message itself, and therefore it might be difficult to objectively differentiate persuasive from propagandistic emotional appeals on the basis of it. Although this is certainly true, I argue that persuasive and propagandistic appeals can still be distinguished on the basis of whether they *promote* or not such processing. I will try to clarify my proposal through a few examples.

The coherent integration of the goal/value that an emotion makes salient is hindered when the emotional appeal presents inappropriate factual evidence in support of the evaluative claim that it puts forward. An example is provided by the front page of an Italian newspaper (Fig 3) with the headline: "Criminal state", presenting two contrasting pictures: on one side, the victims of an earthquake in central Italy hosted in a gym, and on the other side, a group of immigrants in front of a three stars hotel. By highlighting the difference in treatment, the purpose of the appeal was to elicit anger,

and to direct the latter against immigrants and against the government who welcomed them: the goal/value made salient by anger was to rectify the injustice, thus supporting a negative evaluation of immigrants, as well as of the government. The factual situation depicted, however, was clearly oversimplified: the difference in the accommodation of earthquake victims and refugees did not reflect a preferential treatment of the first over the latter, but only logistical necessities. The appeal did not promote the assessment of the goal/value made salient by the emotion in respect to the appropriate evidence, because it omitted relevant facts, grounding the anger solely on the oversimplified contrast between two pictures.

Another typical propagandistic emotional appeal is given by what Stevenson (1938) calls "persuasive definitions". Persuasive definitions make use of emotionally charged notions to describe the meaning of a term, in order to engender a favorable or unfavorable attitude towards the definiendum. They are commonly regarded as fallacies because, by giving the impression to simply define something, they actually affirm its value. Hurley (2015) offers some examples of opposing pairs of persuasive definitions:

'Abortion' means the ruthless murdering of innocent children.

'Abortion' means a safe and established surgical procedure whereby a woman is relieved of an unwanted burden.

'Liberal' means a drippy-eyed do-gooder obsessed with giving away other people's money.

'Liberal' means a genuine humanitarian committed to the goals of adequate housing and health care and of equal opportunity for all of our citizens" (Hurley 2015 p 101)

According to the framework that I have illustrated above, the emotional appeals expressed through persuasive definitions make an illegitimate argumentative use of emotions, and are therefore propagandistic, because of the following. By masking the value-laden content associated with the emotion as part of the definition of the term, they hinder the processing of such content for what it actually

is on the part of the receiver of the message. More precisely, persuasive definitions induce the agent to treat the emotion and the goal/value that it makes salient as they were facts, therefore skipping its assessment in respect to her further beliefs and values, and its coherent integration with them.

Further examples of propagandistic emotional appeals are those that play on what Huddy and Gunthorsdottir (2000) call "simple transfer of affect". Such appeals function by pairing an affect-laden object (e.g. an American flag) to an object that arouses little or no emotional response (e.g. a political candidate). For instance, as illustrated by Huddy and Sears (1995), the agent's attitude towards a neutral political subject, such as bilingual education, can be influenced through its association with a more affect-laden symbol, such as illegal immigrants; in this way, extant negative feelings towards illegal immigrants are transferred to bilingual education programs. By using this technique, Huddy and Gunthorsdottir (2000) observe, the emotion elicited through the affect-laden object "exerts its influence independently of any argument advanced for or against a particular cause, policy, or candidate, and [...] works independently of one's rational interests and deliberations" (Huddy & Gunthorsdottir 2000, 748). Indeed, if considered within the framework that I outline in this paper, the mere transfer of affective connotation from one object to another is propagandistic because the emotion elicited and the goal made salient are not meant to undergo any scrutiny (e.g. any assessment in respect to further values and beliefs) before being attributed to the neutral object, but only result from the association, imposed by the sender of the message, of one object to the other.

The previous examples were illustrative of what I consider propagandistic emotional appeals, according to the framework that I have proposed. I will now provide a couple of examples of persuasive emotional appeals as well. I identify the first one in 2013 Obama's speech for gun vote control in Connecticut,²³ when he cried in

²³ "Every single year, more than 30,000 Americans have their lives cut short by guns -- 30,000. Suicides. Domestic violence. Gang shootouts. Accidents. Hundreds of thousands of Americans have lost brothers and sisters, or buried their own children. Many have had to learn to live with a disability, or learned to live without the love of their life. (...) Now, I want to be absolutely clear at the start -- and I've said this over and over again, this also becomes routine, there is a ritual about this whole thing that I have to do -- I believe in the Second Amendment. (...) But I also

recalling gunshot victims and their families. I will try to analyze Obama's emotional appeal by detecting its argumentative components, according to my framework. The evaluative claim made by Obama was the appropriateness of a vote in Congress on gun control measures. The factual assumption that he made was that the current gun regulation is underlying the accidents causing so much pain to the families of the school shooting victims. The sadness that he expressed was intended to make salient the goal of avoiding such pain. It is significant that Obama did not argue for the approval of a particular measure, but only for the opportunity of a vote. The pain and the sadness were not used to argue for stricter gun control laws directly, but were aimed at showing how a number of American citizens are negatively affected by the current regulations. In this way, sadness was not intended to be a conclusive reason for stricter gun control laws, thus avoiding its concurrent considerations with further concerns, but as an element to be factored in when thinking about the current regulations. Further considerations might be, for instance, that the US is a democracy, and laws are supposed to safeguard the citizens and to receive approval by them. The sadness expressed by Obama highlighted that the families involved in the shootings were not among such citizens and, given the considerations above, they deserved to have a say.

I find another example of persuasive emotional appeal in 1964 Malcom X' speech for racial justice in Michigan,²⁴ when he expressed

believe that we can find ways to reduce gun violence consistent with the Second Amendment. (...) We have to tell Congress it's time to strengthen school safety and help people struggling with mental health problems get the treatment they need before it's too late. Let's do that for our kids and for our communities. Now, I know that some of these proposals inspire more debate than others, but each of them has the support of the majority of the American people. All of them are common sense. All of them deserve a vote. All of them deserve a vote". Obama B. (2013) Hartford, Connecticut. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ijFPMrptrwE>

²⁴ "We must know what part politics play in our lives. And until we become politically mature we will always be misled, lead astray, or deceived or maneuvered into supporting someone politically who doesn't have the good of our community at heart (...). [W]e will have to carry on a program, a political program, of re-education to open our people's eyes, make us become more politically conscious, politically mature, and then whenever we get ready to cast our ballot that ballot, will be cast for a man of the community who has the good of the community of heart (...). [W]e're trapped, trapped, double-trapped, triple-rapped. Anywhere we go we find that we' re trapped. And every kind of solution that someone comes up with is just another trap. (...)1964 looks like it might be the year of the ballot or the bullet. Why (...)? Because Negroes have listened to the trickery, and the lies, and the false

anger in denouncing black Americans' lack of economic and political opportunities. I will try, as I did above, to frame Malcom X' emotional appeal within my account. The evaluative claim made by Malcom X was the necessity of self-empowerment and the achievement of greater political awareness by the black community. The factual assumption was that, by these means, black people could improve their conditions. The anger that the repeated appeals expressed was meant to make salient the goal of bridging the inequality between blacks and white, by liberating the blacks from oppression. Such goal, however, was not linked to the advocacy of violent action, but of self-empowerment and political awareness. Anger, in other words, was not used to blindly instigate action against white people. Rather, it was used to highlight and make palpable the profound injustice inherent in the unequal standing of black and white people in American society, and it was justified by the multiple abuses perpetrated against black people, as listed in the speech. The emotion was, in other words, "grounded", as it was integrated with the factual knowledge about the situation of black people in the US.

The distinction that I have proposed between propagandistic and persuasive emotional appeals, and the examples that I have reported as indicative of it, might not sound fully convincing. Indeed, in actual political contexts, it can be hard to discern whether the integrative processing of an emotion and its goal/value is promoted or not, and identifying particular instances of emotional appeals in this respect require complex considerations, which might be contested. However, alternative criteria to operate the distinction may result equally, if not more, problematic. Moreover, empirical studies seem to confirm that different ways of processing emotional appeals can indeed be identified. I will just mention a couple of them.

On one hand, Cacioppo et al (1992) have found that eliciting emotional responses might influence the formation of attitudes by simple classical conditioning. Similar results were achieved by Huddy and Gunthorsdottir (2000), whose study on the "simple transfer of

promises of the white man now for too long. And they're fed up. They've become disenchanted. They've become disillusioned. They've become dissatisfied, and all of this has built up frustrations in the black community that makes the black community throughout America today more explosive than all of the atomic bombs the Russians can ever invent." Malcolm X (1964) Detroit, Michigan. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9BVENesn6Y>.

affect" I have mentioned above. On the other hand, Rosselli et al (1995) provided direct evidence that the emotions elicited through the exposure to emotional appeals can affect people's opinions, through their integration with the cognitive content of the message. Whereas the first studies seem to suggest that emotive cues might influence individuals independently from any substantive arguments and further considerations, thus embedding a non-integrative processing of emotions, the latter suggests that the messages including emotional cues might be considered in conjunction, not at odds with or independently of, the intellectual content of the message, thus embedding an integrative model of emotion processing. Given the different empirical findings, it seems that emotional appeals might indeed be processed in distinct ways. It would be interesting to verify whether this distinction is grounded, not only in the different characteristics of the people processing the appeals, but also in the different configurations of the appeals themselves: this would help to pinpoint exactly what specific features, encourage or not the process of coherent integration, thus making an emotional appeal, within my framework, persuasive or propagandistic respectively. I leave this research suggestion to the psychologists, and I turn now to outline how the epistemic difference between persuasive and propagandistic appeals results in their different contribution the agent's political sophistication.

6. Emotional appeals and political sophistication

The term "sophistication" has been interchangeably used in the literature with the terms "expertise", "cognition", "awareness", "competence", "literacy", preceded by the word "political", to comprise, despite the diverse accounts of the concept, not only the individual's factual knowledge about political events, but also, crucially, her capacity to relate this knowledge to her own goals and values. In Luskin's words: "[t]here are many reasons to think sophistication important, but perhaps its greatest importance lies in its conditioning of the relationship between values and policy and candidate preferences, which can be expected to be tighter among the more sophisticated" (Luskin 2002 p 220). Indeed, studies have shown that a fundamental difference between political novices and experts is that, although both may be sure of what they value, the first are

unsure on how to use those values in political choices (Alvarez and Brehm 2002). Schreiber (2007) has illustrated this discrepancy by adapting Searle's Chinese Room Argument: in expressing their political attitudes, political novices are like the English speaker who processes ideograms without really understanding them, as in processing political information, they express their preferences, by using ideology as a framework; in contrast, for political experts, "the symbols of politics have meaning and are connected to deeply held values; these people are in the Chinese room and they speak Chinese" (Schreiber 2007, 64).

The relevant point about the notion of political sophistication is that it cannot be accounted for only in terms of the facts that one is able to recall: "If you know the name of the Indonesian president, whether he has the power to veto legislation, and whether his party controls the legislature, you do not have sufficient knowledge to assess whether he and his policies will conform to your values" (Schreiber 2007, 65). Factual knowledge is not enough to make an individual politically sophisticated, but another form of knowledge is necessary. I have call it "evaluative knowledge" and I have defined it as the knowledge concerning how one's own goals and values are evoked by concrete political matters (Romano 2018). My claim is that the emotions elicited by persuasive emotional appeals can give a positive contribution to the agent's evaluative knowledge, while propagandistic emotional appeals can only offer a negative contribution to it.

How can the emotions elicited by persuasive emotional appeals contribute to the agent's evaluative knowledge? I argue that they can do so, in two complementary ways. First, by eliciting an emotion in respect to a situation, a persuasive appeal can make salient properties of that situation that are related to a certain goal/value. For instance, the anger expressed by Malcom X' appeal had the function to make apparent properties of a situation grounding injustice, making salient the goal to remedy. Therefore, perceiving the situation described by Malcom X with anger, through his emotional appeal, may prompt the audience to notice an injustice, that they might have overlooked otherwise. This contribution, however, would not have a positive impact on the agent's evaluative knowledge of the situation, if it did not undergo a coherent integration with the agent's further values

and beliefs. Specifically, confronting the emotional component, elicited through the appeal, with the beliefs and values that the agent holds in relation to a certain political issue, allows the agent to better understand what grounds the evaluative property and the goal/value that the emotion makes salient. For instance, Malcom X' appeal to anger includes a description of the reasons grounding such anger, and by doing so, it promotes the coherent integration of anger with factual knowledge about the situation and with the values on the basis of which the situation is considered unjust. This, in turn, promotes a greater understanding of the injustice and the necessity to remedy, that the emotion makes salient. The two complementary ways in which the anger elicited by Malcom X' appeal can contribute to the agent's evaluative knowledge, and thus to her political sophistication are aptly summarized by the words of Lepoutre (2018): "[t]he salience role of anger is epistemically valuable not only because it can yield knowledge that an injustice is taking place but also because it facilitates a greater understanding of the nature of that injustice" (Lepoutre 2018, 410). By integrating the goal/value suggested by the emotion within the persuasive appeal, the agent can acquire greater evaluative knowledge, because she can more effectively ground her evaluative judgments, and this is exactly, as Schreiber's formulation points out, at the core of her political sophistication.

Having illustrated how persuasive emotional appeals can make the agent more politically sophisticated, by positively contributing to her evaluative knowledge, it is now easier to show how propagandistic emotional appeals can do the opposite. The problem with the emotions elicited by propagandistic emotional appeals is that the goal/value that they make salient in relation to a certain evaluative property, is not meant to undergo a process of coherent integration with the agent's further values and beliefs. In this way, the agent embraces the evaluative claim put forward by the appeal and supported by the goal/value made that the emotion makes salient, without assessing whether this is the goal/value that actually grounds her attitude on that matter. This, clearly, negatively impacts her political sophistication, by impairing her evaluative knowledge. For instance, the anger appeal that I have illustrated above as propagandistic, makes salient the goal of rectifying an injustice, supporting the evaluative claim that the government behaves in a

criminal way, by welcoming immigrants. By not grounding the anger in proper factual evidence, and directing it against the government and immigrants, the appeal prevents the agent from considering whether the political object represented by the behavior of the government towards immigrants, really accounts for his anger, and therefore whether the presence of an injustice to be rectified is the goal on the basis of which the agent should form her evaluative knowledge about the issue. Moreover, by eliciting an emotion and not promoting the assessment of the goal/value that it makes salient, propagandistic emotional appeals prevent the agent from relating to the political object with other emotional attitudes, which might highlight goals that are more coherent with her beliefs and values.

The danger of persuasive emotional appeals for the formation of the agent's evaluative knowledge and therefore for her political sophistication, seems to be confirmed by the observations of Miceli et al (2011), whose "goal hooking model" I have mentioned in section 2. According to Miceli et al (2011), the reason for the particular strength and immediacy of the impact of emotion on attitude change, lies exactly in its relationship with goals. Specifically, whereas beliefs can only activate pre-existing goals, emotions can generate new ones: "Suppose I learn that tomorrow there will be shortage of water. This belief will activate my pre-existing goal 'to have water,' which in turn will generate my goal 'to stock up on water' as a means for it" (Miceli et al 2011 p 140). By contrast, suppose, they continue, that my envy is aroused by someone saying that John is smarter me: this emotion can generate by itself the goal that John suffers some harm, driving me, for instance, to deny John a favor. Although such goal is linked to the more general goal to not be less than John, this is not the reason why I want John to suffer some harm:

"If I envy John, I want this [that he suffers some harm] for its own sake (because of my envious ill will against John), not as a means for not being less intelligent than John. Thus, unlike the purely cognitive activation, the emotional triggering of goals is a form of direct generation of goals" (Miceli et al 2011 p 140).

Clearly, a goal that is generated independently from any planning and reasoning, is less likely to undergo scrutiny or evaluation of its value, and, in this sense, is more likely to exert a manipulative action. However, this danger can be avoided if the goal

generated by the emotion is confronted with the agent's further values and beliefs, to assess whether it is or nor coherent with them. Indeed, as I have indicated above, when the goal generated by the emotion, is coherently integrated, then it can positively affect the agent's evaluative knowledge, thus contributing, in the political context, to her sophistication.

The epistemic distinction between persuasive and propagandistic emotional appeals that I have proposed, can account for the distinction between propaganda and persuasion, that was briefly introduced in the first section of the paper. Specifically, the fact that the persuasive appeals promote the assessment and the coherent integration of the goal/value that they make salient, seems to account for the capacity of persuasion to encourage a reasoned dialogue about values in relation to the political issues at stake (e.g. Jowett & O'Donnell 2014); in contrast, by hindering the assessment and the integration of the goal/value that they make salient, propagandistic emotional appeals hinder such dialogue: instead, they exploit and strengthen flawed ideologies that, as noted by Stanley (2015), prevent a proper understanding of political reality.

Conclusion

My objective in this paper was to show that emotional appeals are not per se harmful in the political discourse; rather, while propagandistic appeals can undermine the agent's political sophistication, persuasive appeals can improve it. To make my point, I have first defined emotional appeals as evaluative arguments, that is, arguments that support an evaluative conclusion by presenting some factual evidence in conjunction with a goal/value. Second, I have argued that the emotions elicited by emotional appeals intervene in the evaluative arguments that these appeals put forward by making salient certain goals/values. Third, I have analyzed the criteria of acceptability, relevance, and adequacy, for determining when an emotion is legitimately used in an evaluative argument; from my analysis, I have concluded that emotional appeals use emotions legitimately if they promote the coherent integration of the goal/value that they make salient with the agent's further values and appropriate beliefs. On this basis, I have established an epistemic distinction between persuasive and propagandistic appeals, claiming that the former use emotions

legitimately, while the latter do not. This epistemic distinction, I have argued, results in a different impact of emotional appeals on political sophistication. Specifically, I have identified what I call "evaluative knowledge" as a key element of political sophistication, as the knowledge concerning how the agent's own goals and values are at stake in concrete political matters. I have argued that persuasive emotional appeals, by promoting the assessment and coherent integration of the goal that they make salient with the agent's further values and beliefs, have a positive impact on the agent's evaluative knowledge, while propagandistic emotional appeals can only have a negative impact on it.

Clearly, the criterion that I propose to distinguish how persuasion and how propaganda make use of emotional appeals might be judged as lacking the rigor required to distinguish them in practice: indeed, I do not propose any straightforward guidelines to disentangle them, but only some indicative examples. Still, my proposal might provide useful inputs for developing this kind of guidelines, by prompting further theoretical and empirical investigation. Moreover, my analysis might contribute to challenge the traditional view of emotional appeals as necessarily detrimental, and, more generally, to the compelling task of rehabilitating emotions in the political discourse.

Figure 1.

Poster from the Swiss People's Party

(Retrieved from <https://www.thedailybeast.com/switzerland-paints-eu-as-cheese-hungry-rat?ref=scroll>)



Figure 2.

A man holds a placard with a photograph of Alan.

(Retrieved from <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-01-12/protesters-hold-a-photo-of-aylan-kurdi/8179320>)



Figure 3.

“Libero”'s first page: “Criminal state”.

(Retrieved from http://www.dagospia.com/mediagallery/Dago_fotogallery-167393/830148.htm)



Chapter 4

I Belong therefore I Am: Immigrants, National Identity and the Feeling of Belonging

Abstract

Is the cultural background of immigrants an appropriate criterion for determining their access to a host country? Those who endorse the cultural criterion have emphasized national culture's value as a source of identity for the members of the national community, and have argued that the inclusion of immigrants with a different cultural background into the community constitutes a threat to it. To assess the cultural criterion, I determine what constitutes national culture's value as a source of identity, and then examine what it entails to respect it. I show that the value of national identity resides in providing a feeling of belonging and that this value has a participatory character. In light of this, I claim that immigrants do not threaten the national identity, when they do not share cultural traits similar to those of the host community, but may threaten it, when they do not share a feeling of belonging to it. For this reason, I conclude that, in order to protect the national culture's value as a source of identity, it is more appropriate to foster immigrants' feelings of belonging to the host community, than to select them based on their cultural backgrounds.

Introduction

Last year's electoral campaigns in Western Europe appealed frequently to the national identity's value, in order to justify a selective exclusion of immigrants. In the Netherlands, the leader of the nationalist conservative FvD party, Thierry Baudet, warned that immigration might cause a "homeopathic watering-down" of Dutch culture. In France, Marine Le Pen's party presented itself as fighting for the "French identity" and a "French France", especially against immigrants with a Muslim background. Italy's Northern League and Germany's AfD party provided analogous examples. Similarly, in the US, Trump's politics depicted immigration as a threat to the authentic American national identity. These kinds of appeals found fertile ground in their electorates. Indeed, studies of mass attitudes towards immigration policies in North America and Western Europe,²⁵ reveal that it is perceptions of immigrants' impact on aspects of national culture and identity, rather than economic concerns, that drive peoples' preferences for restrictive immigration policies. The majority of those who oppose immigrants and asylum seekers attribute a great value to the "cultural, religious, and linguistic distinctness and unity of their national community" (Ivarsflaten 2005, 25). It follows that, since they perceive immigrants and asylum seekers as a threat to their community, they are more motivated to support limitative immigration policies for "preserving the uniqueness and specificity of the national community — that is, unity of language, religion and tradition" (Ivarsflaten 2005, 37).

It seems that the great value attributed to national culture and identity is deeply embedded in popular attitudes about immigration. This might explain the traction of the aforementioned political appeals. I conceptualize these types of appeals as supporting what I

²⁵ See Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) for a comprehensive review.

call the "cultural criterion", namely, the idea that a nation should take immigrants' cultural backgrounds into account, when determining their access to a host country. Economic and social reasons also exist to support the cultural criterion.²⁶ However, in this paper, I focus exclusively on those reasons related to culture and identity. Specifically, I consider the justification of the cultural criterion saying that national culture is valuable to the members of the national community as a source of identity, and that the inclusion of immigrants with a different cultural background into the community constitutes a threat against it.

To achieve this, I will proceed as follows. I will begin (*Section 1*) by presenting a definition of culture and some formulations in defense of the cultural criterion as a means of preserving the national identity of the host country. In order to assess the cultural criterion, I will address two issues. First (*Section 2*), I will determine what the actual value of national culture is, as a source of identity; i.e., how national culture can provide a national identity. I will claim that the actual value of national culture as a source of identity is not that it provides members of the national community with shared characteristic cultural traits, but rather that it offers them a "feeling of belonging". Second (*Section 3*), I will determine what type of value national identity has; i.e. what it means to preserve it and whether immigrants with different cultural backgrounds threaten it. I will argue that national identity's value has a participatory character, meaning that it endures only if the members of the national community participate in it. Having located national identity's value in the feeling of belonging that it provides, I will claim that because of its participatory character, this value can be preserved if the community's members share a feeling of belonging. Thus, immigrants

²⁶ In order to protect national security and the welfare state, for example, nations have used the nationality of immigrants as a criterion to exclude those who were identified as either safety threats or as financial burdens. The Muslim ban, proposed by D. J. Trump in February 2017 discriminates against immigrants from countries with a Muslim cultural majority it associates them with potential terrorists. Likewise, Trump's proposal for a Mexican wall discriminates against immigrants from Mexico, depicting them as potential competitors in the job market. Appeals to culture in order to limit immigration, moreover, have been advanced to preserve social cohesion and democratic participation, on the ground that a culturally homogeneous society is more stable than a multicultural one (Putnam 2007), and that belonging to a country's national culture is necessary to take part in the public and civic life of that country (Mill 1861).

with a different cultural background may threaten the national identity's value, not because they might not share its characteristic cultural traits, but because they might not share the feeling of belonging to the host community. This is why (*Section 4*), I will argue in favor of encouraging immigrants' feelings of belonging, rather than selecting them on the basis of their cultural traits (i.e. the cultural criterion), as a way to preserve the actual national identity's value for the members of the community. I will conclude by addressing some possible objections to my proposal and by highlighting the relevance of my contribution.

1. National culture and the cultural criterion

Waldron (1996) offered a definition of culture that captures, I believe, some of its most relevant dimensions:

"Culture' refers to a set of related practices and traditions associated currently and historically with a community (...). Membership in a community (...) is usually taken to be ascriptive, rather than voluntary, and to have implications across a whole range of one's actions and relations with others (...). The culture of a community is a way of doing things, particularly the things that are done together (...): language, governance, religious rituals, rites of passage, family structures, patterns of material production and decoration, economy, science (...). It is a way that its members have, as they think their ancestors had and as they hope their descendants will have, of enjoying and enduring the joys and vicissitudes of human life together" (Waldron 1996, 96)

As Waldron points out, culture encompasses many different aspects of a person's life in their community, and when this community is a nation,²⁷ we can talk about national culture. Different aspects have been emphasized as more or less salient for the definition of specific national cultures, and here I will not dwell upon discussing whether and how these features can be exactly determined. What matters for my discussion is that one of the main objects of concern, for those endorsing restrictive immigration

²⁷ Herein, I use the term "nation" as generally indicating any country that is organized as a political unit, leaving aside the discussion on multinational states.

policies, is the so-called "national culture", which is characterized by a different combination of the elements mentioned in Waldron's definition. This concern is the basis of what I call the "cultural criterion", namely the idea that the cultural background of immigrants should be taken into account for determining their access to the host country, because immigrants may compromise the country's national culture and the value associated with it. Some formulations of the cultural criterion follow.

Walzer (1983) defended the idea that members of a national community have the right to admit only those who conform to the members' understanding of what it means to be part of the community and to the kind of community they want to have. He explained this as a means of preserving the members' distinctive national culture (Walzer 1983, 32). Without such a criterion for admission, Walzer argues, "there could not be communities of character, historically stable, ongoing associations of men and women with some special commitment to one another and some special sense of their common life" (Walzer 1983, 62). Similarly, when Miller (2005) discusses the good reasons a country might have to limit immigration, he mentions the cultural change that immigration might bring about:

"The public culture of their country is something that people have an interest in controlling: they want to be able to shape the way that their nation develops, including the values that are contained in the public culture (...). [T]hey may certainly have good reason to try (...) to maintain cultural continuity over time, so that they can see themselves as the bearers of an identifiable cultural tradition that stretches backward historically" (Miller 2014, 370)

Even Carens, one of the most influential advocates of open borders, maintains that restrictions on immigration are justified when "they are necessary to preserve a distinct culture or way of life" (Carens 1992, 25). He takes the Japanese culture, as an example:

"It seems reasonable to suppose that many Japanese cherish their distinctive way of life that they want to preserve it and pass it on to their children because they find that it gives meaning and depth to their lives. They cannot pass it on unchanged, to be sure, because no way of life remains entirely

unchanged, but they can hope to do so in a form that retains both its vitality and its continuity with the past (...). It also seems reasonable to suppose that this distinctive culture and way of life would be profoundly transformed if a significant number of immigrants came to live in Japan. A multicultural Japan would be a very different place. So, limits on new entrants would be necessary to preserve the culture if any significant number of people wanted to immigrate" (Carens 1992, 40)

The aforementioned formulations of the cultural criterion seem to have at least three assumptions in common. The first is that national culture bears a value that is not related to furthering economic, social, or political ends, but in itself, as what determines the "character", the "tradition", the "way of life" of the national community. These terms can be comprehensively embedded in what has been called, in a more or less rhetorical fashion, the "identity" of a country, or "national identity". Thus, the first assumption of the cultural criterion is that national culture has value as a source of identity, and, specifically, a national identity. The second assumption is that immigrants who present different cultural traits from those characterizing the national culture of the host country, threaten the value of the national culture as a source of identity. That is to say, their presence may compromise the national identity of the host country. The third assumption is that a nation may legitimately exclude immigrants on a cultural basis in order to protect its national identity.

Supporters of the cultural criterion only rarely state these premises explicitly, but those are at its core. Therefore, assessing the criterion necessitates assessing its premises. In the literature, a number of authors have engaged with the cultural criterion, with respect to the third of its premises.²⁸ However, in this paper, I leave

²⁸ For example, several authors have argued that the cultural criterion is incompatible with a liberal state. Among them, Blake (2005) criticized the cultural criterion saying that it legitimizes the preservation and protection of a particular cultural community. This leads to the nation's discriminating against those within the nation, who do not belong to that community: "in all cases in which there are national or ethnic minorities, which is to say, the vast majority of actual cases, to restrict immigration for national or ethnic reasons, is to make some citizens politically inferior" (Blake 2005 233). Similarly, Lindauer (2017) pointed out how, by expressing an attitude about certain potential immigrants, the cultural criterion also expresses an attitude about the members of the nation who identify with those

the third premise aside and instead focus on the other two. Specifically, I address the following questions. First, is national culture an actual source of identity and, if so, how? Second, do immigrants with a different cultural background disrupt national culture's value as a source of identity? I will begin to answer the first of these questions in the following section.

2. What is national identity's value as a source of identity?

In this section, I will clarify what constitutes national culture's value as a source of identity, that is, how national culture can be a source of identity. Specifically, I will examine the theories of national culture's providing an identity, in terms of distinctive cultural traits and a "context of choice". I will argue that none of them capture the actual value of national culture as a source of identity. Instead, I will propose to understand this value as providing a "feeling of belonging".

2.1 Distinctive cultural traits

Some authors have focused on national culture's value as a source of identity in terms of the cultural traits that the members of the national community share. One of the most prominent among them is David Miller (1995).²⁹ Miller (1995) acknowledges that the great variability and individual diversity, among the members of a national community, make it difficult to pinpoint a community's characteristic

immigrants. This is by virtue of some of the characteristics that they share (e.g. religion, race, ethnicity, etc.): "To exclude nonmembers based on these qualities is also to express disrespect for members who possess them" (Lindauer 2017, 290).

²⁹ Miller (2016) also addresses what I have identified as the third premise of the cultural criterion, claiming that the state may legitimately select immigrants on a cultural basis. He supports this claim by saying that a unified national culture is necessary to support the welfare state. However, citizens would only be willing to pay the state's costs if they shared a sense of common identity with their fellow citizens. Because admitting immigrants disrupts this shared community identity, it follows that it erodes support for the welfare state, thus obstructing the realization of justice. For this reason Miller concludes that the state can legitimately adopt a cultural criterion when selecting immigrants. Pevnick (2009) criticized this, pointing out that even if increased immigration had negative consequences on the support of the welfare state, its consequences would be more advantageous overall than those of restrictive immigration. He supports this, stating that because of the advantages that immigrants from poor countries might bring, an appeal to consequences of immigration is not effective as it does not explain why the interest of compatriots should be prioritized over those of the others (Pevnick 2009).

traits. Conversely, he insists that such traits are precisely what give a national community its own identity and that distinguish it from other communities:

"There is a shared way of life, which is not to say that everyone follows exactly the same conventions or adheres to the same cultural values, but that there is a substantial degree of overlap in forms of life. One can't detach this way of life from the national identity of the people in question" (Miller 1995, 41)

Miller conceptualizes the relevance of national culture as a source of identity, by comparing nationality to the "values that have been inculcated in us by the communities and institutions to which we belong: family, school, church, and so forth" (Miller 1995, 44). He maintains that we construct our identity through experience and reflection, selecting the values that we want to endorse, and "[u]here is no reason why nationality should be excluded from this process" (Miller 1995, 45).

The attempt to distinguish different national cultures on the basis of their characteristic traits has been criticized on the ground that it is based on an "essentialist" notion of culture, as a determinate, bounded, and homogeneous entity (Patten 2011), and that such a notion is fundamentally distorted, because cultures overlap, interact, and change (Waldron 1995, Scheffler 2007). Miller responded to the critique by denying the monolithic view, which poses a set of necessary and sufficient conditions for belonging to a nation. Instead, he favored a broader and more flexible conception of national culture, "as a set of understandings about how a group of people is to conduct its life together" (Miller 1995, 26), including, without being limited to, political principles, social norms, religious beliefs, and language. He argued that "[i]t is (...) wrong to suppose that 'national character' consists in a set of features that everyone who belongs to the nation must display in equal measure (...). National identities can remain unarticulated, and yet still exercise a pervasive influence on people's behaviour" (Miller 1995, 26-27).

Miller's solution does not seem satisfactory. His assumption of a broad definition of the cultural traits and characteristics of a national culture does not make it easier to identify them. It is undeniable, as Miller points out, that people's cultural context

influences them. However, in light of the essentialist critique, we cannot attribute this influence, and therefore the significance of culture to identity, to the distinctiveness of the elements presented within a certain cultural context.³⁰ Drawing from the essentialist critique, Scheffler (2007) rejects the notion of national identity as intrinsically problematic. He argues that the identity of an individual is a "protean" notion, meaning that individuals have multiple and variable identifications, which are generated by different cultural sources and affiliations (e.g. class, religion, occupation, race, gender or sexual orientation). Each of these may be more or less salient, depending on the context. Therefore, Scheffler argues, "the idea of having the state assign each individual to a single culture chosen from a fixed menu of options based on geography, religion, skin color, or language" (Scheffler 2007, 101) is completely misguided. In light of this, Scheffler rejects the cultural criterion: since cultural identity is a complex and fluid phenomenon, one cannot reduce it to the opposition between a host culture and an immigrant one.

Effectively, the essentialist critique shows that the national culture's value as a source of identity does not come from attributing the members of the national community with some features, which are supposed to be distinctive of their national culture. However, this does not imply that national culture has no value for identity at all. Will Kymlicka advanced an alternative proposal.

2.2 Context of choice

According to Kymlicka, cultural membership affects our very sense of personal identity, by offering a "context of choice" (Kymlicka 1989, 164), that is, by providing us with a range of options and the capacity to evaluate them meaningfully. The options that we consider "have meaning to us because they are identified as having significance by our culture because they fit into some patterns of activity which are culturally recognized as a way of leading one's life" (Kymlicka 1989, 165). As we grow up in a certain culture, we participate in and learn about certain forms of life (familial, religious, sexual, educational, etc.), which define potential models for us, and "[w]e decide how to

³⁰ The next section (Section 2.2) will address Miller's position further, when I discuss his critique to the concept of culture as a context of choice.

lead our lives by situating ourselves in these cultural narratives" (Kymlicka 1989, 165).

Kymlicka addresses the essentialist critique by distinguishing between the "structure" and the "character" of a national culture. He defines cultural structure as the primary sense of cultural membership, the "context of choice" as illustrated above. The cultural character, on the other hand, comes from the "norms, values and attendant institutions" (Kymlicka 1989, 166), that is, by the content within the structure at any given time. According to Kymlicka, it is normal and right for the character of a culture to change, as a result of the choices of its members, who may decide to revise their values and to integrate what they find most valuable from other cultures. A liberal nation, he argues, cannot impose restrictions on the character of a culture; instead, it must protect the structure, that is, the essential principles of a culture, those providing people with a "context of choice", and without which the culture would cease to exist.

The weakness of Kymlicka's proposal lies in its lack of any clear criteria to distinguish the "structure" from the "character" of a culture. If we accept that culture's value for identity lies in its capacity to provide a "context of choice", and if that resides in the "cultural structure", we must first determine what constitutes the structure, in order to understand what culture's actual value is for identity. Given the ambiguity in Kymlicka's proposal for distinguishing between cultural structure and character, different conclusions have been drawn about the implications of his distinctions for the arguments concerning immigration policies.

For example, Perry (1995), interpreted Kymlicka's suggestion as saying that a nation should protect the cultural structure, in the sense of granting "cultural continuity" (Perry 1995, 116). He argues that the culture's value as a context of choice does not require a particular cultural framework to shape an individual's identity. Cultures that change under the effects of different factors, including immigration, can also accommodate it, provided that those changes do not happen too quickly. According to Perry, a liberal nation cannot limit immigration in order to shape the nature of cultural change; however, it is entitled to limit the flow of immigration in order "to ensure that change is sufficiently gradual, whatever direction it ultimately takes,

that individuals' 'context of choice' (to use Kymlicka's term) is not disrupted" (Perry 1995, 116). Perry's conception of "cultural continuity" does not include "certain key or core substantive elements" (Perry 1995, 116), not even a particular language, since "sufficiently gradual cultural change can lead, over time, to a shift from one language to another without undue disruption of the context of choice" (Perry 1995, 117).

Other scholars have interpreted culture's value as a context of choice, to comprise basic liberal democratic values and, consequently, have proposed arguments in favor of immigration policies that aim to protect these values. As an example, Orgad (2015) proposes regulating immigration, based on what he calls "National Constitutionalism". Under this, immigrants must accept some structural liberal-democratic principles, such as those contained in a national constitution, as a prerequisite for admission: "these principles are not culturally-oriented but rather constitute a system of rules governing human behavior in liberal democracies" (Orgad 2015, 13). Building on Habermas' "Constitutional Patriotism" (Habermas 2001), Orgad argues that, under national constitutionalism, immigrants are required to respect the national constitutional principles, but not to feel any "devotion" or "emotional connectedness" for them (Orgad 2015, 100).

In their arguments, Perry and Orgad recast the importance of national culture, away from some particular cultural traits and towards something more general, such as cultural continuity or a liberal-democratic structure. In their frameworks, national identity's value coincides with those elements and is protected as long as those are preserved. This led Miller (2014) to call Perry's proposal the "any culture will do" position, as it assumes that as long as a viable public culture is maintained, then "it should not matter that its character changes as a result of taking in people with different cultural values" (Miller 2014, 369).³¹ Similarly, Orgad's solution seems to disregard the cultural elements and attachments that go beyond the respect of

³¹ It should be pointed out that Miller's characterization of Perry's position as the "any culture will do" position, is not fully accurate. Perry, indeed, does not argue that the context of choice can be preserved within "any culture", but rather within a culture that, despite changing its character, does not change too quickly. However, as will be illustrated later, this is still not sufficient for Miller, in order to preserve the value of national identity.

liberal-democratic values. Again, as long as the latter are kept stable, the character of the former does not seem to be relevant.

Scholars have criticized Perry and Orgad's positions on similar grounds. Miller (2014) criticized Perry's proposal, by arguing that a nation has a legitimate interest in controlling the direction, and not only the pace, of cultural change. In particular, a nation should preserve the "community's most important distinguishing characteristics" (Miller 2014, 370), such as its language and its spatial organization. Miller emphasized the importance of people's attachment to the particular culture they have grown accustomed to: "People feel at home in a place, in part, because they can see that their surroundings bear the imprint of past generations whose values were recognizably their own. This does not rule out cultural change, but again it gives a reason for wanting to stay in control of the process" (Miller 2014 370). Orgad's proposal and, in general, all proposals akin to Habermas' constitutional patriotism have been criticized on the grounds that they rely on an excessively thin conception of national identity, one that is based solely on some liberal values. As Joppke (2008) argues, these values cannot supply the national identity discourse with distinctiveness and particularity; thus, they cannot really provide a shared national identity that inspires and mobilizes a feeling of common belonging.³²

Both critiques seem to deny that making cultural change gradually, or ensuring respect of the constitutional principles, may preserve the national identity's value as a source of identity for the members of a national community. Specifically, neither critique considers these measures sufficient to allow the preservation of the particular cultural traits, to which the members of the national community feel emotionally attached, and which make them "feel at home" while prompting a feeling of common belonging. These critiques highlight two crucial aspects that are relevant to my discussion on national identity's value.

³² In Joppke's view, positions such as Orgad's fall into a so-called "paradox of universalism". On one hand, the state wants immigrants to integrate into particular national communities. On the other hand, the liberal state can only legitimately ask for their adherence to liberal democratic values that are universal, even if framed as English, German or Danish. This is a paradox, because universal values cannot denote cultural particularity (Joppke 2008).

First, they rightly point out that solutions, such as those proposed by Perry and Orgad, are not completely satisfactory, because they do not adequately respond to concerns about the protection of a national identity. Although the provision of a "context of choice", either in the form of cultural continuity or a liberal democratic structure, seems to be an important constituent of national identity, I argue that it does not truly exhaust its value. Those who endorse the cultural criterion for selecting immigrants are concerned with protecting their own peculiar culture, not of "a culture" in general. A generic cultural structure does not consider a specific 'something' within their own culture, which bears value for their identity. What is this? The answer brings me to the second aspect, central to these critiques.

Both critiques seem to point out that cultural distinctiveness, in the form of certain particular cultural traits, makes national culture valuable as a source of identity. They suggest that these traits explain why people feel at home in their national community and what prompts their sense of mutually belonging to it. I argue that this view is not completely accurate. On one hand, it highlights the presence of an emotional component, which does indeed seem to be fundamental to the national identity's value. On the other hand, the fact that people have an emotional attachment to a specific culture, with certain characteristics, does not mean that national identity's value lies in the specificity of those characteristics. As previously illustrated, the essentialist critique casts legitimate doubts on the very existence of these characteristics. Notwithstanding, I argue that people's attachment to them indicates that there is another source of value, within the national culture, for its members' identity. Specifically, I locate national culture's value for identity in its capacity to provide a "feeling of belonging", and I argue that this capacity does not depend on the preservation of specific cultural traits. I will present my proposal in the next section.

2.3 Feeling of belonging

Scholars, such as Anderson (1991) and Connor (1993), have emphasized that tangible and objective criteria are not sufficient for a group of people to form a nation. For instance, speaking Polish, living in Poland, and adhering to Catholicism are not enough to make you a

Pole: there are Germans, Lithuanians, and Ukrainians who meet these criteria but who do not consider themselves Polish; nor do their Polish fellow citizens consider them Polish (Connor 1993, 376). Instead, what lies at the core of a nation are the individual feelings of group membership: "The essence of the nation is a psychological bond that joins a people and differentiates it, in the subconscious conviction of its members, from all non-members in a most vital way" (Connor 1993, 376). Given this, Anderson defined the nation as an "imagined political community": "It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 1991, 6). Connor and Anderson both point out that this sense of belonging to a community, despite its being an imagined one, is what creates emotional commitment towards such a community and its distinctive culture, and what makes people willing to kill and die for their nation. I argue that the feeling of belonging, as described by Anderson and Connor, lies at the core of national culture's value of as a source of identity. I will explain how in the rest of this section.

The philosophers Margalit and Raz (1990) proposed a connection between the feeling of belonging and national identity. Like Waldron (1996) in his definition of culture, Margalit and Raz observed that cultural membership has an ascriptive character, because it is a matter of belonging rather than of accomplishment: "qualification for [cultural] membership is usually determined by non-voluntary criteria. One cannot choose to belong. One belongs because of who one is" (Margalit & Raz 1990, 447). They go on to claim that, because of this, national culture is a primary source of a person's identity, as "[i]dentification is more secure, less liable to be threatened, if it does not depend on accomplishment" (Margalit & Raz 1990, 447). Hence, national culture provides people with "an anchor for their self-identification and the safety of effortless secure belonging" (Margalit & Raz 1990, 448-449).

The psychological literature seems to confirm the association between national identity and the feeling of belonging. In particular the research on social identities offers valuable insights. As noted by the psychologists Tajfel and Turner (1979, 2004), individuals not only view themselves as collections of traits and abilities but also define

themselves by the groups to which they belong, thus developing social kinds of identities. A social identity is defined as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1981, 255). Social identities involve multiple dimensions (Ashmore et al. 2004), and their "emotional significance", to use Tajfel's terms, is one of the most important. I will not engage in a thorough discussion on the character and implications of the emotional component within social identities, instead I will only its relevance to a specific kind of social identity; the one provided by identifying with a national community, namely, the "national identity".

National identification occurs when one perceives membership in a certain national community as relevant to one's overall identity (Rahn et al. 1996). Similar to other kinds of social identification, national identity does not merely involve a simple self-categorization, or perception of oneself as similar to the other members of the groups. Rather, studies have shown that, crucially, it includes the perception that the fate of the group overlap with one's own personal fate and an affiliative orientation towards the group.³³ Because of these components, national identification has important affective consequences. Specifically, since the national identity "extends the self" (Rahn 2000, 132) beyond the individual, the individual becomes emotionally responsive to events and information that are relevant to the group (Smith 1993). According to Rahn (1996), these emotional responses constitute a "public mood", which she defines as a "diffuse affective state, having distinct positive and negative components that citizens experience because of their membership in a particular political community" (Rahn et al. 1996. 31).³⁴

In order to characterize the feeling of belonging associated with national identity, it is useful to differentiate this feeling from other forms of national feelings, such as nationalism or patriotism. Specifically, the latter two feelings include exclusively positive

³³ For a review of the studies examining the different dimensions of social identity and the measures employed to account for them, see Ashmore et al. 2004, 90-92.

³⁴ Often, events in politics and sport make national identity salient. Examples are the death of the UK's Princess Diana in 1997, and Italy's victory in the 2006 World's cup, both of which affected the public mood, by evoking, respectively, collective feelings of sadness and joy.

feelings for the national community and its symbols. In the case of nationalism, it also comprises a belief in the superiority of one's own nation compared to others. Conversely, the notion of national identity is not exclusively positive. The feelings associated with national identity may also include negative emotions, such as disappointment or shame, if a nation is judged to behave in a reprehensible way (Rahn 2000). Moreover, whereas nationalism and patriotism center on beliefs about the specific cultural traits that make up a certain national identity (e.g. what being an American amounts to), national identity is about the significance that the individual invests in membership (e.g. how important the fact that I am American is to who I am) (Rahn 2000, Jeong 2013)³⁵.

To conclude, drawing from the philosophical and psychological accounts of what I call the "feeling of belonging", this feeling can be described as an affective state, associated with the perception of a particular national community, including its members and its characteristics, as part of one's own identity. The individual, who identifies as a member of a certain national community and who experiences the feeling of belonging associated with this identification, becomes emotionally attached to the cultural artefacts and traits that she perceives as characterizing her national community. In the following section, I will explain why the feeling of belonging to a national community is relevant. I will also show why attributing to it national culture's value as a source of identity, is more defensible than attributing it to particular cultural traits or to a context of choice.

2.4 Feeling of belonging and national identity

³⁵ In his study, Jeong (2013) shows that nationalism and national identity have a different impact on the formation of attitudes towards immigration. Specifically, while nationalism correlates with greater resistance to immigrants, national identity does not. Jong speculates that the reason might be that nationalism puts emphasis on some specific cultural traits, which immigrants do not possess, while national identity does not. Consequently, people who endorse nationalism may be concerned about maintaining these traits unaltered, and therefore support immigrants' exclusion, whereas people who have a sense of national identity may not be concerned about this. These results suggest that the concern underlying the preservation of a national identity, may not be the conservation of some specific cultural traits. What I suggest (in *Section 2.4*), is that this concern is actually about the preservation of a feeling of belonging.

Social identities are relevant because they serve important psychological functions for the person and, in particular, they meet the basic and fundamental need to belong, which Baumeister and Leary (1995) identified as a distinctive feature of humans. According to Ashmore and colleagues (2001), people manifest this need for attachment to important reference groups, in their tendency to develop affective ties to even the symbols representing these groups, such as flags, land, cities, buildings, etc. The key to understanding what national identity's value truly entails, as a source of identity, is to reflect on how the national type of identification meets this need to belong. As with other forms of identification, national identity offers "a place in the social world" (Simon and Klandermans 2001). However, the type of social world, which the national community defines, is particularly relevant to the individual. This is because the feeling of belonging to the national community can contribute to an individual's identity in a more crucial manner than other forms of social identification. I will illustrate this in the following section.

The classical literature on nationalism has largely engaged with the argument that "a sense of national identity provides a powerful means of defining and locating (...) divided and disorientated individuals who (...) contend with the (...) uncertainties of the modern world" (Smith 1991, 17). Recent approaches have provided a more precise characterization, showing how the feeling of belonging to a national community is particularly important because it is grounded in people's everyday lives and underpins access to key psycho-social resources. Specifically, although the increased mobility of the contemporary era has led many to dismiss the concept of national identity as historically obsolete and politically questionable (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002), others have noted that social and political life remain largely structured by discourses, practices, and institutions that are articulated on a national scale (Antonsich and Matejskova 2015). This articulation is not abstract, but is materially embedded in people's lives "through the management of the physical environment, the consistent patterning of socio-spatial relations and a range of recurring material/symbolic features" (Skey 2013, 88). Skey (2013), drawing from a number of authors, points out how all these aspects form a frame of reference, which generates a more or less consistent sense of reality, and which enables individuals to manage

their daily lives and to connect with others. Since the collectivity embedded in the nation, informs and defines so many relevant aspects of the individual's life, a feeling of belonging to this collectivity emerges as particularly crucial for the individual's identity and her need to belong.

Attributing national culture's value as a source of identity to its capacity to provide a feeling of belonging avoids the problems connected with the aforementioned other characterizations of such value. Specifically, locating culture's value for identity in the provisioning of a context of choice does not explain what is valuable about a particular culture; however, locating that same value in the feeling of belonging does. This is because people cannot feel that they belong to just any kind of culture. It is their identification with a particular culture, with its characteristics and its members, that provides them with a feeling of belonging. This does not entail, however, that the feeling of belonging depends on the distinctiveness of certain cultural traits. One critique of my proposal, on this ground, may be the following.

In the end, a feeling of belonging has to have a connection to a certain representation of the national community and its cultural characteristics. Anderson (1991), pointed out that this representation is only "imagined", as it originates from a picture of national culture that is offered by the media. Miller (2005) also highlighted how the national media, in order to stir national feelings in the members of the community, sustain the collective imagination of the national culture as continuous and distinct, making up for the contingencies and the discontinuities that characterize its actual development and configuration (Miller 2005, 31-35). If the feeling of belonging, which I claim is central to national culture's value as a source of identity, depends on this fictitious representation, then the essentialist critique can undermine it, in the same way as it undermines the assumption of characteristic cultural traits. As it is misguided to attribute national culture's value as a source of identity to some specific cultural traits, because one cannot identify those traits, likewise, it is misguided to attribute national culture's value as a source of identity to the feeling of belonging, because it depends on a fictitious representation. Although people clearly base part of the importance they attach to their national identity on their view of what characterizes their

national community, and mediated information further conditions this view, I argue that the distinctiveness of this content is not a determinant in prompting the feeling of belonging associated with national identity. I ground my claim in the empirical evidence presented by particular studies on social identification.

In these studies, researchers allocated individuals to different groups using trivial and arbitrary criteria, such as their estimation of the number of dots on a page, their preference for Kandinsky or Klee, or according to the flip of a coin.³⁶ The results consistently showed that these types of categorization were enough to prompt the individual's preference for their in-group over the out-group. This was bore out in terms of their evaluation, liking, and allocation of resources, as well as in estimations of inter-category differences and intra-category homogeneity.³⁷ Further experiments confirmed that this type of behavior was not due to expected reciprocity or familiarity. Rather, according to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner 1994), it was a psychological consequence of knowing that one belongs to a particular social group. Specifically, social identity theory postulates that individuals strive to obtain a positive sense of the self from their social identities and, therefore, they construct more favorable representations of the in-group members, as distinct from the out- group. Here, I will not engage in a thorough assessment of social identity theory. Instead I will outline what the aforementioned experimental evidence seems to suggest as concerns the national type of identification and the feeling of belonging associated with it.

In these studies, the group members' behavior reflected how they identified themselves as members of their allocated group and how they experienced feelings of belonging to it. Indeed, if they had not identified with the group by internalizing the group membership as part of their self-concept, such behavior would not have occurred (Tajfel & Turner 1979). Given the triviality of the allocation criteria for the groups, it seems that the content of these criteria was not the decisive factor for the identification, the feeling of belonging, and the associated behavior to arise. Applying these considerations to the identification with a national community, seems to suggest that it is

³⁶ For a review of the studies on social categorization criteria, see Diehl (1990).

³⁷ For a review of the methods for triggering these intra and inter-group effects, see Pinter & Greenwald (2011).

not necessary to hold a picture of one's national culture as rich and coherent, or as characterized by relevant characteristics, to prompt the individual's identification as a member of the community and the feeling of belonging associated with it. Rather, the feeling of belonging may be evoked, even in the absence of such a picture. As I will discuss later, other factors may be important for evoking the feeling of belonging, but the specificity of certain cultural traits does not seem to be one of them. Therefore, characterizing national culture's value for identity as providing a feeling of belonging can avoid the essentialist critique.³⁸

Having illustrated how the feeling of belonging to a national community is important for an individual's identity, and how it does not depend on peculiar cultural traits, my claim is that national culture's value for identity consists specifically of providing the individual with this feeling of belonging. Common attitudes about cultural preservation, especially those within small cohesive communities, seem to deny that the national identity's value actually consists of this feeling, rather preferring the preservation of certain cultural traditions, conventions, and "ways of life". As mentioned earlier, these elements are indeed what give a culture its form: people are attached to them and consider them valuable. However, although a culture, including a national one, does take the form of particular shared "ways of life", and people do care about their preservation, I claim that the distinctiveness of these elements is not what constitutes national culture's value for identity.

An analogy might help to make sense of this point, at least in part. Suppose that I am fond of a teddy bear that my mother gave me when I was little. If I lose it, I will miss it; not because of its characteristics (e.g. the old fur, the loose eye, etc.), but because it represents the loving relationship with my mother. In other words, its value does not lie in its physical characteristics but in what it represents. These characteristics could be different, and they could change over time, but this would not really matter to its value, as its value is independent of these specific characteristics. Of course, given my attachment to the teddy bear, I would recognize it anywhere, and I would not like it, if my daughter painted its face or sewed buttons

³⁸ I further discuss the findings of social categorization and their implications for the feeling of belonging as the core of national identity in Section 4.

onto its ears. However, despite disliking these changes, I would not say that the teddy bear meant less to me because of them.

The points of analogy that this example offers as concerns the national identity's value are the following. People are attached to the specific forms that their national culture takes; however, their attachment does not originate from the particularity of these cultural expressions themselves, but rather from the feeling of belonging to the national community that includes these cultural expressions. The individual's attachment to a particular language, holiday, or architecture is not because their specific character is relevant to them, as such. They are attached because, by considering them as part of what they are, they feel that they belong. This fulfils their human need to belong, gives them a place in the social world, and ultimately contributes to the constitution of their identity in the important ways illustrated above.

Politicians, especially those in the populist wings, often appeal to people's feelings concerning the perceived threat of immigrants' cultural diversity, and they emphasize that people's feelings matter. Indeed, people's feelings do matter because, although they are more or less grounded in reality, they have tangible consequences.³⁹ However, if political discourse appeals to national identity's value, feelings of attachment to specific cultural traditions do not show, by themselves, that the national identity's value resides in these specific cultural traditions. People's attachments to them are legitimate and their fear of what they perceive as a threat to them is understandable. However, the fact that people are attached to their particular cultural traits does not imply that these traits play the role they perceive, in the constitution of their identities. I argue that changes in these traits (which immigrant might bring about, among other causes) would not alter, by themselves, the value that national culture holds for the identity of the members of the national community. As mentioned earlier, the reason is that this value does not depend on the preservation of specific cultural traits, but comes from a feeling of

³⁹ Margalit and Raz (1990) described this thus: "To a considerable extent, what matters is how well people feel in their environment: Do they feel at home in it or are they alienated from it? Do they feel respected or humiliated? etc. This leads to a delicate balance between "objective" factors and subjective perceptions. (...) Even a group that is not persecuted may suffer many of the ills of real persecution if it feels persecuted" (Margalit and Raz 1990, 453-454).

belonging that is independent of them. Having characterized the national identity's value in these terms, the question remains whether, and how, admitting immigrants with a different cultural background may threaten it. In order to answer this question, I will first clarify what type of value national identity is and what it means to respect it.

3. What type of value is national culture?

According to the definition that was reported in the first section of this paper, the term culture encompasses many aspects of an individual's life, but especially those relative to the individual as a member of a community (and specifically a national community, in the case of national culture). Besides culture's comprising "a whole range of one's actions and relations with others" (Waldron 1996, 96), and "ways of life together" (Miller 1995, 26), a deeper sense exists in which one could say that culture concerns the individual as a member of a community. Researchers, such as Réaume (1988), Waldron (1993) and Taylor (1995), captured this, by characterizing culture as a "participatory", "communal", and "irreducibly social" good respectively. They used this terminology to illustrate that culture is a special kind of public good, as the individual cannot either realize its production or its enjoyment in isolation, but only together with others. Clean air, for instance, is a public good, because it needs a community to produce it. However, it is not a communal or participatory good, because it does not need a community to enjoy it. Each individual can breathe and enjoy the good of clean air, alone (Réaume 1988, 8). As with the example of clean air, a single individual cannot produce communal or participatory goods; however, unlike clean air, the individual cannot enjoy these goods, unless others enjoy them also. Waldron suggests an example of communal goods as the good of conviviality in a party:

"A party is convivial when people derive benefit from the active enjoyment of one another's company, not when each of them sits around experiencing the pleasures of the evening the food, the wine, the music as purely personal enjoyment (...). Conviviality (...) is a communal good experienced as such by people only to the extent that they are participant members

of a group to which the benefit of the good accrues at a collective level" (Waldron 1993, 356)

Waldron also included cultural features, such as traditions and languages, in the category of communal goods:

"We can say that Welsh people, for example, do not benefit as individuals from the preservation of their language. Though each may get a warm glow of pride when he sees a road sign in Welsh, his own sense of that experience will refer immediately beyond itself to the fact that this is something whose nature and value make sense only on the assumption that others are enjoying and participating in it too" (Waldron 1993, 358)

It is intuitive that a national culture cannot exist without a national community. However, the definition of culture as a social good also points out that the national community is what allows the realization of national culture as a value. National culture is valuable to the individual because the members of the national community participate in it. It follows that, if the community includes members that do not participate in the national culture, the value of the national culture is compromised. However, what does participating in the national culture actually mean here? The answer to this question carries important consequences for determining whether immigrants with a different cultural background can participate in the culture of the host community, and thus whether they can actually "dilute" national culture's value of as a source of identity.

Participating in a culture may be intended as displaying its characteristic traits, which are assumed to be common to its members, and which are assumed to be distinctive of the national community in question. For example, participating in the national culture may be intended as speaking a certain language, or celebrating certain national holidays, and so on. Since immigrants with different cultural backgrounds do not share these cultural traits (i.e. they do not speak the language, they do not celebrate the holiday, etc.), they cannot participate in the culture. Therefore, given the communal character of the cultural membership's value, the presence of immigrants, within a community whose culture they do not share, may "dilute" the national identity's value. This idea of participation seems to be behind the defense of the cultural criterion: if

participation in a national culture is interpreted as displaying its characteristic traits, then immigrants that do not display them are not participating; therefore, they are undermining its value, thus justifying the cultural criterion. However, I argue that the cultural criterion can be dismissed by applying a more appropriate conception of participation in a culture.

Several authors have already pointed out that one cannot interpret a culture as a series of meaningful and representative objects, because even the most static culture is never made once and for all; rather, cultures are continually readapted and reaffirmed, as cultural objects change their salience and meaning (Poole 1999, 2). As Réaume noted,

"A cultured society is not a set of artefacts – plays, paintings, films. The good (...) consists in participating in the production of those artefacts which constitute a cultured society. But there is no end product because, in a sense, these artefacts are never completed but are continuously reinterpreted and re-created by each generation" (Réaume 1988, 10-11)

Similarly, Scheffler argued in favor of what he called "Heraclitean pluralism"; that is, the idea that "cultures are always in flux" (Scheffler 2007, 105), as change is necessary for a culture to survive. According to Scheffler, insulating a culture from external influences in order to keep it fixed will not accomplish cultural preservation. Instead, "the successful conservation of valued practices, ideals, and ways of life necessarily involves their extension, modification, and reinterpretation in changing circumstances" (Scheffler 2007, 109).

The observations above highlight that one should conceive of culture as, to use Poole's expression, a process rather than a product (Poole 1999). Therefore, one might conceptualize participation in a culture more adequately, as consisting of contributing to the development of cultural traits and artefacts, rather than displaying them as they are in present. If one interprets participation in a culture in this sense, immigrants with a different cultural background can participate in the national culture. This is because, by taking part in the common life and interacting with the other members, they can give their contribution to the way in which the common culture

evolves, and to the shape that it takes. I argue that this conception of participation is more appropriate to the changing nature of culture itself, and does not justify the cultural criterion: by bringing their different cultural backgrounds to a particular national community, immigrants do not dilute the national culture but instead contribute to its development.

To conclude, the participatory character of national culture means that national identity's value is preserved only through the national community's participation in that culture. Since participation in a culture does not entail the exhibition of specific cultural traits, immigrants with a different cultural background can participate and their differences do not, in principle, undermine its value. However, as Festenstein (2005) noted, the participatory character of national culture only refers to the kind of value that national culture is, and not to its content. Therefore, since here I consider the value of national culture as a source of identity, and I have characterized this value as providing a feeling of belonging, the participation of immigrants in respect to this content should be considered, in order to assess whether they undermine it or not. I will discuss this in the next section.

4. How do we preserve national identity's value as a source of identity?

In the previous two sections, I argued, first, that national culture's value as a source of identity consists in providing the members of the national community with a feeling of belonging; second, I argued that that national identity's value has a participatory character; namely, the participation of the members of the national community is what preserves it. It follows that, in the same way as the value of conviviality at a party is undermined, if the partygoers do not feel convivial, so the feeling of belonging, which makes national culture valuable as a source of identity, is compromised, if the community includes people who do not feel they belong. By the same measure, if immigrants with a different cultural background can participate in the culture of the host community, in principle, and do not necessarily undermine its value, then immigrants who do not share a feeling of belonging might, indeed, do that.

Therefore, what is it appropriate to do, in order to preserve national identity's value as a source of identity for the members of the national community? I argue that the answer is not to select immigrants based on their cultural background but rather to foster their feeling of belonging to the host community. If immigrants feel that they belong to the host community, then the value of the national culture for the identity of its members can be preserved. In the following section, I will examine some possible objections to my proposal, and I will elaborate on its content and implications.

A first critique might be that people can develop a feeling of belonging only to the national culture they grew up in and, therefore, it would be impossible for immigrants to feel that they belonged to their host community. This critique assumes that national identity is a zero-sum game, in which identification with one national community reduces ties to others. However, research on international migration has refuted this assumption, by developing the concept of "transnational identity". The term indicates that the national identity of immigrants is not monolithic. Rather, immigrants' identities can absorb new elements from the host culture, while preserving old elements from the culture of origin through "the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (Basch et al. 1994, 6). According to transnational theorists, immigrants can participate in familial, social, economic, religious, political, and cultural processes that extend across borders, while they become part of the communities that host them (Levitt & Jaworsky 2007). Given the contemporary era's increased mobility, some have questioned the concepts of national identity and the feeling of belonging to a national community; however, there is evidence that these new forms of mobility have enabled immigrants to create and maintain transnational connections, in terms of social spaces and forms of national belonging (Dahinden 2012).⁴⁰

A second point of criticism might target the feeling of belonging itself and its conditioning factors. I have drawn from the literature on social categorization to argue that the feeling of

⁴⁰ I will not go further into the temporal dimension of the process in this paper. However, it seems reasonable to assume that immigrants' achievement of a stable feeling of belonging to a host community might require some time and, in some cases, possibly generations.

belonging does not depend on the distinctiveness of cultural traits; however, I have not clarified what it depends on instead. A thorough examination of this issue falls beyond the scope of this paper, but I consider one factor decisive. Specifically, I suggest that the practices, which make up what I have identified as participation in a culture, might foster the feeling of belonging to a culture. In the previous section, I mentioned how immigrants can contribute to the host community's cultural development, by taking part in the common life and by interacting with the other members, thereby participating in it in the true sense. I believe that these forms of participation are exactly those that might foster a feeling of belonging. The work of scholars and experts in the field seems to confirm this. For example, Alison Phipps, UNESCO Chair Refugee Integration through Languages and the Arts, highlighted the impact of activities for refugees, such as plays or art projects in general, in which what was central was not speaking the language of the host community, or learning about its cultural value and traditions, but participating in the realization of a common project. These activities took place in Glasgow and seemed to be very effective in fostering a sense of belonging to the Glasgow community in the refugees who were involved (Phipps 2017). A recommendation to the Council of Europe from Andrew Orton (2012) puts forward a similar message. Orton thoroughly illustrated the importance of promoting more and more positive interactions between immigrants and receiving societies, "as a means for building a greater sense of belonging for the individuals concerned" (Orton 2012, 9). He emphasized the necessity to design interaction processes "so that not only migrants but also those within receiving communities feel less threatened and more like they belong in their changing environment" (Orton 2012, 27).

My claim that participation is key to the development of a common feeling of belonging could provoke a third and a fourth objection to my proposal. The third objection might be that one cannot truly disregard cultural traits. If the feeling of belonging depends on participation, immigrants, who present cultural traits more similar to those characterizing the host community (e.g. language, religion, etc.), might participate more easily in its cultural life and, therefore, might find it easier to develop a feeling of belonging to it. It follows that the cultural criterion might still be

valid, even admitting that the core value of national identity lies in the feeling of belonging, rather than in the specific cultural traits. I suggest the following response to this objection. It is true that immigrants, who are less culturally similar to the members of the host community, might find it harder to feel that they belong to it. However, they can still develop a feeling of belonging through the many forms of participation and interaction, wherein cultural similarity plays only a minor role. This is especially true for the younger generations. In this respect, Orton emphasizes the necessity to give immigrants a diverse scope of opportunities for interactions, whether they are in the workplace, in their neighborhood, at school, in the hospital, or in the offices of the local administration etc., in order to prevent particular groups from being excluded from the interaction if they are unable to participate on one particular basis (e.g. a Muslim immigrant might not be able to join her German peers in the celebration of the Oktoberfest, which is based on drinking beer and eating pork knuckles).⁴¹

A fourth objection to my proposal concerns those immigrants who refuse to engage in the forms of participation that could foster their feeling of belonging to the host community. Miller (2016), among others, points out how immigrants might retreat into enclaves that are isolated from the rest of the community, because of their religious or linguistic differences. These immigrants might not participate in the public culture of the host society, nor would they engage in any kind of political interaction with those outside of their own circle. This could cause a "possible alienating effect of separate and exclusive cultural identities" (Miller 2016, 68). Establishing that national identity's value lies in a shared feeling of belonging, and that

⁴¹ I would refer to Orton (2012, Section 3) for a more detailed description of how positive interactions between immigrants and receiving communities should look like, and for indications about their practical implementation. One point that I consider important is that the activities and the interactions that contribute to the building of a common feeling of belonging are those that involve working together on issues of common concern, and that focus on the individual's contribution to a "shared future", to use Orton's terminology. These kinds of interventions, I argue, are much more effective than those emphasizing the difference and the peculiarity of certain cultural characters, such as, for example, those fairs that involve immigrants' traditional music, food, art, and so on. Although these kinds of events might be pleasant and, although they might be organized with the intent to present the cultural diversity of immigrants as valuable and to promote integration, they might achieve the opposite, by reinforcing stereotypes, and by failing to show how immigrants, as individuals, might be part of the social fabric in a significant way.

immigrants who do not participate in the host society's culture might not develop this feeling, leads to the potential conclusion that these immigrants might jeopardize the national identity's value as a source of identity for the members of the community. Therefore, would it be legitimate to exclude them? Answering this question would require touching on the third premise of the cultural argument, i.e., whether a nation can legitimately exclude immigrants in order to preserve the members of the national community's feelings of belonging. I will not address this point directly, as it lies beyond the scope of this paper, but I will propose a few considerations concerning it.

My characterization of the forms of participation that can foster a feeling of belonging is deliberately broad. It is possible that immigrants, who live in cultural enclaves, might have no interest in developing feelings of belonging to the host community, and may live in an isolated manner. However, by virtue of their living in the host country, they will be obliged to engage in at least some interactions, albeit slight, with the other members of the national community. These minimal interactions might be a starting point, and they do not necessarily have to entail an eagerness to join the local culture, in order to initiate the development of a feeling of belonging. Moreover, as mentioned above, I consider participation as a decisive factor for fostering a feeling of belonging in immigrants, but it is not the only one,⁴² and different factors might exert their influence at different times. Concerns about immigrants' cultural enclaves are often an expression of the so-called "participation paradox" (Klarenbeek and Weide 2019): on the one hand, the active participation of migrants in the host society is considered necessary for their integration; on the other hand, the presence of immigrants with a different cultural background is feared because of the alleged "illiberal threats" that they pose. Thus, worries about cultural enclaves often go hand-in-hand with proposals to impose conditions for what counts as good, integrative participation. Apart from being potentially discriminatory, these proposals stem from a view that sees participation in a culture as the display of certain characteristics, and the previous section showed this perspective to be inadequate.

⁴² Citizenship, for instance, has been associated with increased host national belonging, in countries where the host population attaches great importance to citizenship as a mark of national membership (Simonsen 2017).

One final objection could be that the aforementioned experiments on social categorization do not actually support my conclusion. After considering the triviality of the criteria for allocating the test groups and the consequent behavior of the groups' members, I stated that the specificity of cultural traits is not what is relevant to engendering a feeling of belonging. However, studies did show that even such trivial criteria were sufficient to prompt one group's members to perceive that their group was different from, and better than, another group. This may indicate that the act of identifying with a group unavoidably implies the discrimination of others, even if the most of trivial differences separate them. This would make the possibility of a more inclusive notion of national identity, based on the feeling of belonging, utopian, at least. However, before dismissing my proposal for this reason, the following considerations should be taken into account. Even if it is true that humans have a tendency to discriminate others, as part of the constructing the groups to which they belong, this does not take away their capacity to reflect on the reasons for their discriminatory behavior or (at least, try) to counteract this tendency. What my proposal intends to suggest is precisely that cultural homogeneity is not necessary to preserve the national identity's value. Grounding the national identity's value in the feeling of belonging might still be discriminatory, but it advances an account of national identity that is much more inclusive than one based on the cultural criterion. Moreover, the idea of protecting national identity by fostering a feeling of belonging has not yet been translated, at least to my knowledge, in concrete institutional and political attempts. These attempts would be necessary before dismissing my proposal as utopian.

Conclusion

In this paper, I attempted to determine whether it is effective to select immigrants based on their cultural background, in order to protect the national culture's value as a source of identity. To do this, I answered two questions. The first was whether, and how, national culture can truly be a source of identity. I argued that national culture is indeed valuable to the identity of the national community's members; not because it provides them with characteristic cultural

traits or with a "context of choice", but because it offers them a feeling of belonging. Having determined what constitutes national culture's value as a source of identity, I then assessed whether, and how, immigrants with a different cultural background might threaten it. Given that national identity's value has a participatory character, I argued that it might be compromised when the members of the national community did not share its content, that is, when they did not share a feeling of belonging to the community. Therefore, I concluded that if the intention is to protect the national culture's value as a source of identity, it is more appropriate to foster immigrants' feelings of belonging to their host community than to select them based on their cultural backgrounds.

Other objections, besides those that I have addressed, might be raised against my proposal. Moreover, a complete assessment of the cultural criterion would require a determination of what a nation can, and cannot, legitimately do concerning the selection of immigrants. I have not covered this question in this paper. Instead I have focused on the national culture's value for identity and immigrant's potential to threaten it. For this reason, my contribution is not intended to provide a definitive answer to the question of the cultural criterion's legitimacy, but only to add a few elements to reach a more thorough and informed examination of the problem. These elements include the suggestion that respecting the national identity's value does not entail keeping things as they are, but rather keeping what is valuable about them, and that creating more favorable attitudes towards immigration may require a reimagining of the role of national feelings.

Summary and general conclusion

The objective of this thesis was to show that emotions have an epistemic value, that is, they can give a positive, distinctive, and even essential contribution to certain epistemic processes within particular domains. Specifically, this thesis focuses on the contribution of emotions to the acquisition of knowledge, and to the processes of understanding, argumentation and reasoning; the domains that the thesis considers are the political context, the narrative setting and specific ethical issues, such as the selection of immigrants on a cultural basis. In the four papers that make up this dissertation, four particular questions about the epistemic value of emotions have been addressed:

- 1) What kind of knowledge can emotions provide to make citizens more politically sophisticated?
- 2) What part do feeling and inferring emotions play in the readers' understanding of literary narratives?
- 3) Are the arguments presenting emotional appeals necessarily manipulative, or can they be epistemically beneficial?
- 4) How can the feeling of belonging ground the value of national identity, and how can it affect reasoning about immigration policies?

As for the first question, it is addressed in the first chapter. In this paper, I consider emotional reactions in response to political facts, and I investigate how they may provide relevant knowledge about those facts. I assess the value of such knowledge, both from an epistemic and a political perspective. Concerning the epistemic part, I argue that, although emotions in themselves are not sufficient to

ground evaluative knowledge about political facts, they can do so within a network of further coherent epistemic attitudes about those facts. With regards to the political part, I argue that the contribution of emotions to evaluative knowledge about political facts, is indeed politically valuable. To develop my argument, I first show that an evaluative kind of knowledge is relevant for reaching a sophisticated level of political cognition. Second, I show that emotions contribute distinctively to this kind of knowledge. I conclude that, when emotional experiences towards political events are coupled with an adequate factual knowledge about those events, they can ground a distinctive evaluative knowledge about those events, and such knowledge is relevant both from an epistemic and a political perspective.

In the second paper, I show how emotions contribute to the understanding of literary narratives. Narrative understanding depends on the connection between the elements within a narrative, but previous philosophical solutions that explain the contribution of emotions to this connection seem to be inadequate. I develop a more plausible account, by drawing insights from empirical literature, and by applying an enactivist account of emotions. I argue that the reader responds to emotional affordances in the text, and that by feeling or inferring emotions, she processes subsequent elements in the narrative in respect to the anticipation afforded by previous elements. I conclude that this is the way in which emotions intervene to connect the elements within a narrative, thus contributing to narrative understanding.

The third paper concerns again the political context and tackles the topic of emotional appeals. The traditional view holds that appeals to emotions in politics are harmful, because they exert a manipulative function, by undermining rational reasoning. In this paper, I propose a novel account of emotional appeals: specifically, I distinguish persuasive from propagandistic appeals, and I attribute the manipulative character of the latter to the impact that they have on the agent's emotional processing of political objects. I argue that both kinds of appeals put forward evaluative kinds of arguments, and the emotions that they elicit make salient certain goals/values. However, whereas persuasive appeals promote the assessment and coherent integration of these goals/values with the agent's further

values and appropriate beliefs, propagandistic appeals do not do so. In virtue of this epistemic distinction, I argue, persuasive emotional appeals can give a positive contribution to the agent's political sophistication, whereas propagandistic ones can only undermine it.

Finally, the fourth paper addresses a particular issue with political and ethical relevance, namely, the "cultural criterion". This is the idea that immigrants should be selected for admission on the basis of their cultural background, in order to preserve a country's national identity. To assess the cultural criterion, I determine what constitutes national culture's value as a source of identity, and then examine what it entails to respect it. I show that the value of national identity resides in providing a feeling of belonging and that this value has a participatory character. In light of this, I claim that immigrants do not threaten the national identity, when they do not share cultural traits similar to those of the host community, but may threaten it, when they do not share a feeling of belonging to it. For this reason, I conclude that, in order to protect the national culture's value as a source of identity, it is more appropriate to foster immigrants' feelings of belonging to the host community, than to select them based on their cultural backgrounds.

Despite addressing different topics, these four papers all illustrate instances of the epistemic value of emotions. The guiding concern of this thesis has been to characterize the place of emotional experiences within epistemic processes, and to do so in a way that is compatible with empirical evidence, and that gives emotional experiences a significant and favorable role. The diversity of the contexts that are touched upon, is indicative of the many dimensions that are affected by the emotions and by their epistemic functions. Clearly, the collection presented here does not exhaust the ways and the places in which emotions can be epistemically relevant. Rather, the contribution of this thesis is intended as an addition to the increasing body of research about the epistemic role of emotions, and as an indication of how considering this role is relevant not only to the philosophy of emotions, but to a number of other domains as well.

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Curriculum Vitae

Benedetta Romano

Education

Oct 2015- present: Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, DE
Research Center for Neurophilosophy and Ethics of Neuroscience

2012-2014: University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands
ResMSc Brain and Cognitive Sciences

2009-2012: Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano, Italy
BA Philosophy

Summer Semester 2011-2012: Bellarmine University, Louisville, KY,
US Overseas Scholarship

Work Experience

January - August 2015: Frontiers in Neuroscience, Switzerland
Editorial Operations Assistant

Teaching experience

- Philosophy of emotions - Seminar, Summer Semester 2017
- Philosophy of Action - Tutorial, Winter Semester 2016-2017

Conference Presentations

Propaganda and the ethics of emotional appeals

4th Braga Colloquium in the History of Moral and Political Philosophy The Politics of Emotions: Historical Insights and Contemporary Challenges, 29-30 January 2019, University of Minho, Braga - PT

I belong therefore I am: Immigration and national identity

WZB Research Colloquium 5 Dec 2018, Berlin, DE

Immigrants, national identity and feeling of belonging

Nationalism in Times of Uncertainty - ASN 2018 European Conference 4 - 6 July 2018, University of Graz, AU

Are immigrants a threat to national identity?

Refugees and Minority Rights: Acceptable and unacceptable criteria for accepting/rejecting refugees in a non-ideal world, 14-15 June 2018
UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Campus Tromsø

The role of emotions in analogical reasoning

Feeling Reasons. The Role of Emotions in Reasoning, 24-26 May 2017, University of Edinburgh, UK

Emotion and narrative connection: an enactivist approach

Narrating Emotions, 21-22 April 2017, University of Lucerne, CH

Emotion and narrative understanding

The Role of Empathy and Emotion in Understanding Fiction, 27-31 March 2017, University of Göttingen, DE

The epistemic relevance of emotions in the political context

Third Annual Conference of the European Philosophical Society for the Study of Emotions (EPSSE), 13-15 June 2016, Athens, GR

Emotion and information in politics

Wordly Matters Sixth International Graduate Conference of the Department of Philosophy, 1-2 April 2016, Central European University, Budapest, HU

Editorial Duties and Society Fellows

Member of the DFG-Netzwerk "Fühlen und Verstehen"

Member of EPSSE (Philosophical Society for the Study of Emotions)

Reviewer for *The Monist*

Languages

Italian: mother tongue

English: full proficiency

French: B 1

German: B 2

Latin and Ancient Greek: basic written proficiency

Publications

Romano, B. (2017) The Epistemic Value of Emotions in Politics
Philosophia, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11406-017-9888-y>

Romano, B. (2016). Feeling lonesome: The philosophy and psychology of loneliness. *Philosophical Psychology* 29 (7), 1-3. (*Book Review*)

In review

The Epistemic Value of Emotions in Literary Narrative

I belong therefore I am: Immigrants, National Identity, and the Feeling of Belonging

Emotional appeals in persuasion and propaganda: epistemic differences

In preparation

Feeling analogies: on the role of emotions in analogical reasoning

How empathizing with real people differs from empathizing with fictional characters

Forgiveness and emotional wrongdoing

List of publications

- Romano, B. (2018). The Epistemic Value of Emotions in Politics. *Philosophia* 46 (3), 589-608.
- Romano, B. (2016). Feeling lonesome: The philosophy and psychology of loneliness. *Philosophical Psychology* 29 (7), 1-3. (Book review)

Eidesstattliche Versicherung/Affidavit

Hiermit versichere ich an Eides statt, dass ich die vorliegende Dissertation "The epistemic value of emotions. Inquiries in Politics, Narrative, and Ethics" selbstständig angefertigt habe, mich außer der angegebenen keiner weiteren Hilfsmittel bedient und alle Erkenntnisse, die aus dem Schrifttum ganz oder annähernd übernommen sind, als solche kenntlich gemacht und nach ihrer Herkunft unter Bezeichnung der Fundstelle einzeln nachgewiesen habe.

I hereby confirm that the dissertation "The epistemic value of emotions. Inquiries in Politics, Narrative, and Ethics" is the result of my own work and that I have only used sources or materials listed and specified in the dissertation.

Munich, April 2019

Benedetta Romano

Declaration of Author Contribution

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself, that the work contained herein is the result of my own work, and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Munich, April 2019

Benedetta Romano

Stefan Sellmaier

