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Publication date
2011
Document Version
Submitted manuscript

Citation for published version (APA):
Verhoeven, I., & Duyvendak, J. W. (2011). *Enter emotions. Fear, Anger and Political Engagement in a Process of Municipal Amalgamation*. Paper presented at 6th ECPR General Conference, University of Iceland.
https://ecpr.eu/Events/PaperDetails.aspx?PaperID=9011&EventID=1

Enter emotions. Fear, Anger and Political Engagement in a Process of Municipal Amalgamation

Paper prepared for the 6th ECPR General Conference, Reykjavik, 25th-27th August 2011. Section 109: The Argumentative Turn Revisited; Panel 418: Bringing Rhetoric to Policy Studies

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Abstract
In recent years emotions have finally taken centre stage in studying political relations and interactions. In the analyses of policy processes that immediately followed from The Argumentative Turn, emotions seem to be an understudied theme. In our paper, we argue that language use and meanings implied in policy frames help citizens to figure out which feelings are legitimate in a specific policy context. The usage of rhetorical techniques such as problem definition, causal attribution, and moral judgment, together with the usage of metaphors, all contribute to emotional appeals in framing processes. For our empirical analysis we draw on research on the political mobilization of citizens against a process of municipal amalgamation in The Netherlands between 1997 and 2001. This process started as a policy controversy but quickly developed into a case of contentious politics in which political opponents started to mobilize citizens against the plans. Our analysis of the framing processes shows that the emotional appeals shifted from fear to anger. This shift was of great significance: feelings of anger motivated citizens to protest the policy plans in high numbers. The 'effect of affect' behind the protest behaviour turned out to be closely related to intense framing efforts by political opponents.

Keywords: Emotions, Policy Processes, political engagement

Introduction

In many countries examples can be found of governmental policymaking processes contested by anxious or infuriated citizens. They make claims against plans for chemical weapons or radioactive waste disposal (Futrell 2003, Kraft & Clary 1991), new highways (Burningham 2000), new airport runways (Marchi 2005), noxious facilities such as incinerators or gas pipelines (Shemtov 2003, Wolsink 1994), processes of nature development (Hajer 2003), community mental health facilities (Cowan 2003), emergency river storage (Warner 2010, Roth & Warner 2007), or against aircraft noise (Bröer & Duyvendak 2009). Often becoming involved after political decisions affecting their environment or community have been made, these citizens do not fit the traditional idea of a policy cycle. Not surprisingly policy makers often react dismissive, framing these citizens as NIMBY's driven by their self-interest or as angry citizens acting irrationally.

However, this type of dismissive feedback misses an important point: citizens' reactions are not disconnected from processes of policymaking; citizens are not solipsistic but embedded in a social

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and political context. Their emotional reactions to policy interventions turn out to be heavily influenced by policy proposals and the performance by politicians and policy makers in practice (Bröer & Duyvendak 2009). If other governmental authorities, NGOs, local actions groups, and media become involved, they also influence citizens' reactions. Through their language use these collective (political) actors give meaning to policy initiatives (Fischer & Forrester 1993, Hajer & Wagenaar 2003, Rein & Schön 1993, Benford & Snow 2000). In ever changing combinations they create public discourses in which some participants try to legitimate and others try to problematize specific policy interventions. In this way citizens can be triggered by policy initiatives "to reflect on what they really value, what motivates them to voice their concerns or wishes and become politically active themselves" (Hajer 2003: 88). Particularly if citizens are triggered by the problematization of a policy intervention, they start to pay attention to the downsides. This shared attention connects them as a public (Warner 2002: 50), as a reservoir of potentially active citizens seeking to redress the contested policy.

In this process, emotions obviously play a preponderant role. Emotions, however, are surprisingly understudied in the field of interpretative policy analysis. Important books in the field such as *The Argumentative Turn* (Fischer & Forrester 1993, *Deliberative Policy Analysis* (Hajer & Wagenaar 2003) and *Reframing Public Policy* (Fischer 2004) hardly mention emotions or feelings. Closest to this topic are connections between fact and value or between policy arguments and symbolic aspects of meaning production. There are exceptions such as Rein & Schön (1993: 164) acknowledging that processes of frame reflection are not exclusively cognitive but affective as well, and Forrester (1999), who argues that emotional sensitivity is an important aspect of planning practices. The lack of attention for emotions is probably due to the highly cognitive approach within policy analysis. Argument has been the dominant feature of interpretative policy analysis ever since Fischer & Forrester (1993: 1) claimed its importance for policy making: "Whether in written or on oral form, argument is central in all stages of the policy process."

We agree that argument is hugely important in policy making. However, we claim – based on examples of contested policy processes – that arguments have been poorly understood. Hence we argue in this paper that emotions need to be studied more carefully as part and parcel of meaning production in policy arguments, particularly when policy interventions become contested. More specifically, our point is that policy arguments always contain 'emotional appeals' (Gross & D'Ambrosio 2004) that signal what feelings are legitimate on a contested policy. Cognition and emotional appeals are intertwined in these arguments and can only be separated for analytical purposes (Gross & D'Ambrosio 2004, Goodwin & Jasper 2004, Jasper 1998, Emirbayer & Goldberg 2005). When citizens become aware of plans for a disposal of contaminated sludge, they can be confronted with arguments on the possible consequences for public health that *also* use language referring to a threat to their existence. Processes of nature development in agricultural areas can be criticised for ecological reasons *and* for undermining the identifications people may have with the cultivated

landscape. Thus we add another role to policy and planning arguments as 'practical productions' (Fischer and Forrester 1993: 3).

To understand how and to what effect emotional appeals are part and parcel of argumentation in contested policy processes, we will present our research on a case of municipal amalgamation of the Dutch Capital The Hague and its vicinity (1997-2001). Citizens of five municipalities were politically mobilized against these amalgamation plans. For the empirical analysis of emotional appeals and their effects on mobilization we pose the following questions: what emotional appeals were important in the policy argumentation against municipal amalgamation? When did they play a role? How important were these emotional appeals for the mobilization of citizens against municipal amalgamation? Before we address these questions in the empirical sections of this paper, we will first elaborate on the framing of emotional appeals in politics and policy.

Framing emotional appeals in politics and policy

People perform many of their daily activities on a routine basis. According to Herbert Simons' (1983) famous insight on bounded rationality, this routine behaviour is rational since it allows people to direct their limited capacity for thinking on more important matters. Bounded rationality should not be misunderstood, however, as if emotions are not important for routines. In fact, emotions play a pivotal role in routines. How do emotions exactly work in political routines and in less routinized political circumstances? As in other daily matters, we can assume that many people routinely watch the news or read the paper on political matters and policy issues. They only start to focus their attention when they are triggered by something out of the ordinary. According to affective intelligence theory developed by Marcus, Neuman & MacKuen (2000) emotions regulate both routine behaviour and trigger peoples attention. The theory suggests that two systems perform the emotional regulation: the disposition system and the surveillance system. The disposition system helps to learn and execute habits and behavioural routines, because it blocks anomalous information and enhances existing opinions. The surveillance system draws attention to new developments and sudden threats and focuses attention on them. If people experience negative emotions they will be prepared to make a big effort to find the cause and take it away (Marcus 2002: 116). Affective intelligence theory also seems to apply to emotional appeals related to policy interventions. These emotional appeals can focus people's attention to a problematic policy, motivate them to find out more about the plans and in the end protest against them. But what kinds of emotional appeals are relevant in this context?

Within the domain of politics and policy a broad range of emotions can be found. Following Jasper (1998) and Goodwin et al. (2001) we can make a distinction between affective and reactive emotions and between object centred and diffuse emotions. Affective emotions such as sympathy, acceptance, hate and cynicism are long-term oriented. They can strengthen or undermine trust in government (object centred) or in democracy (diffuse). Reactive emotions such as fear, anxiety, anger,

surprise, joy, grief and sorrow are more important for citizens' involvement in contested policy processes. They are temporary because they focus on specific events or persons involved in them. Anger and surprise, for example, can be triggered by actions undertaken by politicians or public authorities (object centred). Fear and joy are diffuse reactive emotions that can be connected to intentions of a policy plan. Whenever citizens start to contest policy interventions they react to a policy they don't like. Hence we can assume that appeals to reactive emotions such as fear and anger are relevant in this context.

Social-cultural processes of meaning-production are very important factors triggering and regulating emotions (Turner & Stets 2005: 2-3). More specifically, emotional appeals conveyed through processes of meaning-production by politicians, policymakers, NGOs, the media and other collective actors signal to citizens which feelings are legitimate in a specific policy context and which are not. Thus they enable citizens to interpret an (re) construct their feelings (cf. Hochschild 2003: 82) and provide them with potential motivations to protest against a specific policy. To analyse the transmission of emotional appeals through meaning-production, we draw on framing theory from the extant body of literature in the fields of policy analysis, social movement studies, and communication studies (cf. Benford & Snow 2000, Snow 2004, Rein & Schön 1996, Entman 1993).

Particularly in policy analysis and social movements literature framing is often assumed to be a strategic activity based on cognitive arguments. If citizens are confronted with sound and rational argumentation they will accept the legitimacy of policy proposals, or become convinced that collective action is needed. For example, in policy analysis literature Rein & Schön (1993: 194) mention affective elements of frame reflection processes that may occur during policymaking, but they do not account for them in their analysis. In social movements literature this 'cognitive bias' is debated because it excludes emotions from framing processes: "At its core, the problem that framing language presents is that it "cools" the analysis of movement thinking by separating it from the deeply-felt passions and value commitments that motivate action" (Marx Ferree & Merril 2004: 252). Emotions are only relevant for action mobilization as the 'hot button components' accompanying 'cold cognitions' (ibid). More scholars can be found who claim that framing processes are also very important for the transmission of emotional appeals: "Clearly, emotional appeals are part and parcel of these frames. Yet we know little about the possible effects of framing on emotional response. Most of the framing literature has focussed on the cognitive aspects of opinion, not on it affective aspects" (Gross & D'ambrosio 2004: 1-2, for comparable arguments see Marx Ferree & Merril 2004, Goodwin & Jasper 2004, Jasper 1998, Emirbayer & Goldberg 2005). We build on these authors for our assumption that policy arguments framed by collective actors always contain 'emotional appeals' that signal how citizens may feel about a contested policy.

For the empirical analysis of emotional appeals we can use rhetorical techniques and metaphors. Rhetorical techniques are problem definitions, identifications of causes, argumentations on consequences, causal attribution of problems to actors, moral judgements on actors, and suggestions

for solutions to a problem (Entman 1993: 52, Mc Leod et al. 2002: 223, Pan & Kosicky 1993: 64). Some of these rhetorical techniques refer to emotional appeals in meaning production. This is e.g. the case for causal attribution of problems to actors and moral judgements on actors that can convey appeals to be angry on or surprised by politicians or public authorities, because these are object centred and reactive rhetorical techniques. Problem definitions and argumentations on consequences may appeal to fear for policy interventions due to their more diffuse reactive nature. Metaphors are another tool for the analysis of emotional appeals. They can amplify emotional appeals in framing processes, through their symbolic communication on an issue (Gamson & Modigliani 1989: 3, Kane 2001: 252-255). The essence of metaphors is "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff & Johnson 2003: 5). Metaphors can express a feeling, an experience, or an act motivated by feelings. Anger, for example, is often expressed by heath metaphors: "I was boiling with rage", "I blew of steam" (Kane 2001: 253). According to Lakoff & Johnson (2003: 156) metaphors are at the core of our conceptualizations of the world around us. Metaphors can create a social or political reality that may guide future action. Within policy language, metaphors can convince people and stimulate their imagination and reflection (Gamson & Modigliani 1989: 3, Pan & Kosicki 1993: 70) but also trigger their emotions and reflections on legitimate feelings in situ.

As the term suggests, framing processes are dynamic by nature. There is, however, not so much understanding of the factors influencing this dynamic and therefore of the changing emotional aspects of meaning production through time. We suggest that in contested policy processes the framing of the situation is influenced by important steps taken and procedures to be observed by the actors involved in the political decision-making. How emotional appeals can change through such processes will be analysed in the case of municipal amalgamation of the Dutch capital The Hague and its vicinity.

Collective actors create the amalgamation discourse

Processes of municipal amalgamation are amongst the most contested policy interventions in the Netherlands. The object is to partially or entirely merge smaller municipalities with bigger ones. In many cases higher tiers of government initiate an amalgamation process and the smaller municipalities contest the plans, because they might cease to exist or loose part of their territory. For these municipalities and their citizens amalgamation is an emotional process with potentially threatening outcomes. It touches upon local identities and feelings of home. There may also be strong identifications with the 'we' of the community and des-identifications with and anger on 'them' doing this to 'us'. In the last three decades many instances can be found that provide fertile ground for empirical analysis of how these emotional processes come about and how they affect citizens' protest against amalgamation. One of the most intensive and extensive cases is the process of municipal amalgamation of the city of The Hague and its vicinity between May 1997 and the end of 2001.[1]

A motion accepted by the Dutch House of Representatives on May 22nd 1997 set up the plan for municipal amalgamation of The Hague and its vicinity. In this motion municipal amalgamation was a solution to the city of The Hague's lack of space within the city limits to build new houses in order to stop the flight of the middle class and earn more tax revenues. The city was at that time on the verge of bankruptcy. In the motion the House of Representatives decided that The Hague would obtain territory from five municipalities in its vicinity: Leidschendam, Nootdorp, Pijnacker, Rijswijk and Voorburg.

The execution of the parliamentary motion was a two-stage process. In September 1997 the Minister of the interior mandated the provincial authorities of Zuid-Holland (a regional tier of government) to take charge of the planning process. After losing a legal battle on a procedural technicality the provincial authority had to return its mandate to the Minister of the Interior. From then on the second stage started in which the Minister took charge of the planning process. In the end he succeeded. The law regulating the municipal amalgamation on The Hague became effective on January 1st 2002. Before that moment the five municipalities, local action groups, a well-read regional newspaper and individual citizens fiercely contested the plans. Particularly during the spring, summer and fall of 1998 contestation was at its peak. Hence we focus on this first stage of protest.

Two opposing governmental discourse coalitions (Hajer 1993) formed themselves in the summer of 1997. On the one side the municipality of The Hague, the provincial authority of Zuid-Holland and the Ministry of the Interior were in favour of municipal amalgamation. They quickly developed the slogan "Give The Hague space". On the other side the five municipalities were against the plans. Their slogan was: "Cooperation yes, annexation no." With this slogan they quickly reframed municipal amalgamation into 'annexation', which allowed them to diagnose the possible consequences for their citizens. These slogans captured opposing policy frames and underlying normative storylines. The proponents built their frame justifying the amalgamation process on normative storylines signalling the "problems of the big city", "lack of space", "financial problems", and the need for a "revival of the big city". They also produced numbers and reports to underpin the benefits of amalgamation. Their opponents countered with normative storylines arguing that due to annexation "neighbourhoods would be lost", that there would be "increased distance between citizens and local government" and that the plans would result in "extra financial burdens due to rising taxes". Their solution preventing annexation was "administrative cooperation" amongst municipalities in the region. The discursive boundaries of the public discourse on amalgamation were thus set by the catchphrases and the normative storylines, resulting in pro-amalgamation versus anti-annexation framing. The proponents and the opponents structured this discourse around two extreme positions and signalled in condensed form what it was about, what was open for discussion and what wasn't, what problems were at stake, and what kinds of action were preferable to make a leap from 'is to 'ought' (cf. Ellingson 1995: 107-108, Laws & Rein 2003: 173, Rein & Schön 1993: 148, and Verhoeven 2011 for a more extensive discussion on discursive boundaries).

Within these discursive boundaries the five municipalities started to mobilize their citizens in the spring of 1998. They organized information evenings, planned for a non-binding referendum, and stimulated the formation of five local anti-annexation action groups (AACs). These AACs are of great interest because they became one of the key collective political actors involved against annexation. They adopted the anti-annexation frame of the five municipalities. Although being financed by the five municipalities, the AACs were very keen on demonstrating to the public that they were as independent as possible. To do so, they created some normative storylines of their own. They argued that social capital and public facilities would be undermined by annexation. Also they criticized choices made by national politicians in this case and the waste of money that the whole process would entail. Their most important normative storyline openly criticized the provincial authority and the city of The Hague for undemocratic conduct, neglecting the preferences of the more than 100,000 inhabitants of the five municipalities. The AACs were a vanguard of very active citizens that manifested themselves as well organized collective political actors capable of mobilizing citizens for collective action against annexation.

The five municipalities and the AACs were not the only collective political actors involved as opponents. They received support from the at that time well-read regional daily newspaper *De Haagsche Courant* that altogether published 3,200 (!) articles on the issue, from 1997 until the end of 2001. Immediately after the motion from the House of Representatives became public in the spring of 1997, the editors of the newspaper took a very clear position. In a couple of op-ed's and news analysis they expressed understanding for The Hague's lack of space and financial burdens, but also stated that the solution was to be sought in administrative cooperation and not in municipal amalgamation. This perspective made them very critical on the provincial plans and turned them into a political collective actor instead of an independent watchdog of democracy. In 1998 the newspaper gave much more attention to the opponents, almost outnumbering the proponents by 3 to 1. The public opinion was also given substantial space by publishing a lot of letters by citizens and by featuring them prominently in human-interest articles (cf. Verhoeven 2011).

Altogether in the spring of 1998 the five municipalities, the AACs and *De Haagsche Courant* formed an unusual but very powerful alliance of collective political actors against annexation. Together they had a broad action repertoire to convince the citizens of the five municipalities that they should protest against annexation.

Transforming emotional appeals of annexation: from fear to anger

Before May 1998, when the provincial authority was to announce its initial plan there were many speculations on the possible content and its consequences. The five municipalities started to address their citizens as an anti-annexation public expressing the uncertainty of the situation. They applied a combination of rhetoric on consequences with metaphors problematizing annexation as a threat for

their living conditions: "neighbourhoods would be lost", there would be "increased distance between citizens and local government" and the plans would result in "extra financial burdens due to rising taxes". Citizens' letters to the newspaper provided another threat: "loss of local identity". Although the newspaper did not add meaning explicitly on this threat, journalists quite frequently used threat metaphors to paraphrase quotes from politicians in their news reports and human-interest articles. For example "annexation threatened", "neighbourhoods were threatened", "anxieties and fears were confirmed", and "municipalities were at risk"… These examples indicate that the opponents anti-annexation framing appealed to feelings of fear that life conditions would deteriorate. More precisely, they appealed to feelings of concern and anxiety, which are both expressions of fear on a more moderate intensity level (cf. Turner & Stets 2005: 16). Concern and anxiety being both diffuse reactive emotions that are not directed at a specific object.

After the provincial authority announced its initial plan on May 7th 1998, the collective opponents transformed their anti-annexation framing (cf. Snow 2004: 384). The five municipalities were enabled to broaden their diagnosis of the problem with new normative storylines concerning the "poor financial foundations" and "lack of clarity of purpose" of the plans. The editors of *De Haagsche Courant* and individual citizens through their letters to the editor shared this critique. More important, however, was the severe upcoming criticism on the performance by politicians from the city of The Hague and the provincial authority. Both were blamed for using power politics. Let's look at some examples out of many quotes on this issue in *De Haagsche Courant*:

> "The Hague is trying to solve its financial problems by taking territory of surrounding municipalities. I find this improper political conduct and to be frank quite vulgar. This notwithstanding, it is questionable if an extension of The Hague will actually result in a better financial position" (quote from a citizen in a human interest article 4-4-1998).

> "Finally the provincial authority of Zuid-Holland could prove itself and show citizens that it consists of proper administrators who know what they are doing – not administrators that abuse their power. But no: instead they come with proposals for the annexation of vital well-governed municipalities" (letter to the newspaper 6-6-1998).

Especially the provincial authority came under attack. In the summer of 1998 it organized two open information evenings on their plan. These evenings attracted 6,000 citizens and were turned into demonstrations. Many citizens complained during and after these evenings that the provincial administrators were playing a political game and that they didn't listen to the arguments put forward by citizens. *De Haagsche Courant* even opened a letter rubric labelled 'Display' for citizens to speak from their heart on the "arrogant" and "ruling class" attitude of the provincial administrators. Let's look at another example criticising the first open information evening:

"I'm very annoyed by the arrogant way in which the administrators of our province have executed the open information evening on the annexation plans – o pardon me, the plans for 'border corrections'. The Commissioner and the responsible administrators have succeeded in producing a meaningless – and sometimes unintelligible toffee-nosed – vocabulary, thus sending home 4,500 citizens in uncertain circumstances. (…) With a lot of courage questions concerning content were posed, whilst the panel was whispering and finally coming up with meaningless answers. The whole procedure during this 'obligatory sham' is typical for the lack of respect from these administrators for all concerned citizens from the prey-municipalities in The Hague's vicinity" (letter to the newspaper 1-7-1998).

The citizens representing the AACs were interviewed a couple of times to express their opinions on the open information evenings. They referred to it as "an atrocity", "ill prepared administrators" and "a failure". Politicians from the five municipalities were referring to it as "the ivory tower of the provincial governors" and "administration that is distancing itself from its citizens". Characteristic for the criticism of the 'power politics' was the frequent usage of causal attribution and moral judgement on the provincial authorities and the municipality of The Hague. In the coverage of *De Haagsche Courant* the use of these rhetorical techniques exploded at that time: "we won't put up with this", "they cannot do this", "it's a disgrace", and "we are being blackmailed". It was mentioned that people were "baffled" by the "arrogance", "aloofness", "demagogy", and inflexibility" of the proponents. Moreover, politicians and administrators of the five municipalities drew more heavily on war metaphors. The municipalities were "forming one front", mayors called upon inhabitants for "resistance against annexation", "the population would be mobilized", they mentioned a "battle against territorial alterations" and "a hot summer will come next"… The employment of causal attribution, moral judgement and war metaphors expresses feelings of moral indignation and anger on how things went during the summer of 1998. These appeals to indignation and anger were not (yet) traceable in the meaning production against annexation earlier on during the spring of 1998.

Important steps taken by the proponents in the political decision-making process transformed the anti-annexation framing. The summer of 1998 was the hinge point of this transformation. Because the opponents reacted on what happened, the anti-annexation framing shifted from argumentations on possible consequences and metaphors suggesting threat to causal attribution, moral judgement and war metaphors. Most collective opponents of annexation found each other in a new diagnosis of the problem: it wasn't any longer a threat to living conditions but it had become a morally unjustifiable intervention that indicated undemocratic behaviour and improper conduct. Appeals to the diffuse reactive emotion of *fear* were thus almost completely replaced by appeals to the object centred reactive emotion of *anger*. This appeal to anger was permanently sustained by the 'performative

failure' (Alexander 2006: 32-37) of the proponents during meetings and in the media throughout the whole summer and the fall of 1998.

According to emotion expert James Jasper (1998) fear is an emotion that not necessarily contributes to the political activation of citizens. It is a diffuse reactive emotion that cannot easily be attributed to an actor and is therefore less urgent to act upon. Most people have found ways to regulate suppress or neglect their fear. In this respect anger is a whole different story. According to Jasper it is a reactive emotion that is powerfully connected to new developments and to persons that should be acted upon. Research on social movements suggests that political mobilization is highly dependent of the shift from latent fears to moral indignation and anger focussing on a concrete object (Klandermans 1997: 17, Jasper 1998: 409).

The literature on collective action frames indicates that citizens often need a last push to become politically active. After a diagnosis of the problem focussing on feelings of injustice, a prognosis on solutions and the creation of 'us'-'them' identifications between the actors causing the problem and the ones who suffer from it, there is always a phase during which emotional motivations for political action are framed (Gamson 1995, Klandermans 1997, Benford & Snow 2000). However, the transformations in the anti-annexation framing suggest that this distinction is too artificial. From the moment that collective political opponents started to address a public there were always emotional appeals present in the anti-annexation framing. These emotional appeals built up over time being permanently fed by the reactions of the collective political opponents on events and actions during the decision-making process in the spring, summer and fall of 1998 (cf. Verhoeven 2009 for an extended analysis). Without the criticism on the political performance of the proponents the transformation in the anti-annexation framing and the crucial shift towards appeals to anger had not been possible. If this shift hadn't occurred it would have been very difficult to mobilize the anti-annexation public as massively as eventually happened in 1998.

The effect of affect on citizens against annexation

The anti-annexation public became massively involved in protest activities during the summer and fall of 1998. A representative survey under the population of the five municipalities by Inter/View International indicated that 98 percent knew about the plans and 93 percent was against. Approximately 2,000 citizens attended information evenings organized by the five municipalities at the end of April. Nearly 100,000 anti-annexation posters were distributed amongst a total population of 152,000. End of June and beginning of July about 6,000 people came out to demonstrate during the open information evenings organized by the provincial authorities. In the period from June until the end of September 23,500 citizens were mobilized by the AACs to file a notice of objection on the plan by the provincial authority. One-sixth of the total population in the five municipalities was involved. In October 1998 even more citizens were mobilized to participate in a non-binding referendum. Out of

the 122,000 citizens called upon 90,000 came to vote and 98 percent voted against annexation. Numerous petitions, demonstrations and other forms of small-scale protest regularly occurred in 1998.

All this protest against annexation suggests that the emotional appeals to fear and anger in the anti-annexation framing heavily influenced citizens in their decisions to become involved. But is this actually the case? Can we trace an effect of affect from the framing process to citizen's political conduct? To answer this question we use the results of an explorative survey held under citizens that were active against annexation in the five municipalities (N=315). The survey was conducted after the municipal amalgamation process was completed and thus provides an interesting reflection of the active citizens on the political actions they participated in and the factors influencing that participation. As such we can get an impression of how important emotional appeals to fear and anger have been for this active part of the anti- annexation public.

The 315 active citizens have on average been involved in 8 political activities. About 70 percent expressed their dissatisfaction through 5 or more activities. All these citizens were asked why they became active against annexation. The why question that tries to get as close as possible to emotions underpinning motivations to act is posed indirectly by asking for the reasons to become active against annexation.[2] These reasons apparently seem to exclusively reflect cognitive arguments. Earlier on we have argued that emotional appeals are part and parcel of policy arguments. So, if these 315 citizens retrospectively claim that certain reasons found earlier in the analysis of the anti-annexation framing mattered for their political involvement, we may assume that their opinions also reflect the emotional appeals that came intertwined with cognition in the anti-annexation arguments.

Table 1 Reasons to become active against annexation (N=315)

	Very important	Moderatly important	Not so important
Undemocratic procedures	63%	19%	18%
Preservation of the unique character of the municipality	61%	22%	17%
Loss of small scale	61%	20%	18%
Resentment against the local authority of The Hague	60%	16%	24%
Satisfaction with current living conditions	59%	29%	12%
Fear of urban problems	49%	23%	28%
Lack of clarity of purpose of the plans	42%	37%	21%
Poor financial foundations of the plans	37%	30%	33%
An increase in local taxes	32%	17%	51%
Authorities lacking knowledge on the local circumstances	31%	27%	42%
Splitting up neighbourhoods	28%	19%	53%
A threatening loss of neighbourhoods	25%	22%	53%

Source: Modern political citizenship 2004 (Imrat Verhoeven, University of Amsterdam).

The results (see table 1) indicate that five reasons are most often mentioned. About 60 percent of the respondents qualify them as very important. Undemocratic procedures are the most important reason to become politically engaged against annexation. Citizens also valued the preservation of the unique character of their municipality, loss of small scale, and satisfaction with current living conditions. Finally, resentment against the local authority of The Hague scored high.

To check if there are any coherent emotional appeals underlying these reasons we have conducted a principal component analysis. If several consistent dimensions can be found, we can assume that they point to different emotional appeals in the anti-annexation framing.

Table 2 Three motivational dimensions in reasons to become active against annexation (N=315)

	Fear for change in living conditions	Fear for loss of the Neighbourhood	Anger on improper conduct
Loss of small scale	,635		
An increase in local taxes	,506		
Satisfaction with current living conditions	,435		
Preservation of the unique character of the municipality	,710		
Fear of urban problems	,680		
Splitting up neighbourhoods		,846	
A threatening loss of neighbourhoods		,783	
Lack of clarity of purpose of the plans			,638
Poor financial foundations of the plans			,413
Authorities lacking knowledge on the local circumstances			,502
Undemocratic procedures			,682
Resentment against the local authority of The Hague			,548

Source: Modern political citizenship 2004 (Imrat Verhoeven, University of Amsterdam). Principal component analysis after varimax-rotation. For this explorative analysis factor loadings above ,35 were included. All scales are reliable.

Table 2 suggests that three coherent motivational dimensions can be found in the set of reasons. First of all there is coherence between reasons related to changes in living conditions. The big city should not come too close, small scale should be preserved and costs should not increase too much. This motivational dimension refers threatening changes to living conditions that were framed by the collective political opponents in the spring of 1998. It connects to the emotional appeal to fear in its more modest forms of concern and anxiety. Another cluster of reasons is directed at preserving the neighbourhood. There was much resistance against the idea that neighbourhoods would be split up, particularly by a planned corridor to connect the city of The Hague to the new housing estates. This suggests an identity motive connected to involvement in the neighbourhood. We saw this motive in the letters of citizens to the regional newspaper who felt threatened by loss of local identity. This

motive can also be related to fear, but now for the consequences that would affect the collectivity of the neighbourhood instead of personal living conditions. The third cluster of reasons is strongly related to the criticism of the plans and the undemocratic performance by the provincial authority and the city of The Hague. It suggests that the appeals to moral indignation and feelings of anger are underpinning this motivational dimension.

The three motivational dimensions enable us to make an analysis of an effect of affect on the political involvement of the 315 active citizens. It is obviously not an analysis of influences on becoming active or not, because all 315 respondents have been active. The analysis focuses on the variety in the number of political activities undertaken against annexation.[3] The emotional appeals were used in a broader analysis of various well-known explanations for political participation. Because we are focussed here on the effect of affect we will not go into all those alternative explanations (see Verhoeven 2009 for extensive discussions).

Table 3 OLS Regression analysis of the variety in 24 activities undertaken against annexation, presented in standardized coefficients (N=315)*

	Participation in 24 political activities against annexation	
Independent variables	Model 1	Model 2
50+	0,232***	0,159**
Paid work	0,137*	0,065
Low income	0,130*	0,098*
1-2 years of residency		-0,117*
Mobilization		0,299***
Active style of citizenship		0,105*
Moral indignation		0,297*
Active member civic associations		0,097*
Talking about politics		0,123*
Adjusted R^2	0,059	0,365

Source: Modern political citizenship 2004 (Imrat Verhoeven, university of Amsterdam). Significance: *** = ,001; ** = ,01; * = ,05. * Variables are displayed if they were significant in one of both models. Previous regressions included many more independent variables (including level of education), aspects from several theories explaining participation and the three scales of motivations found in table 2.

Table 3 indicates that model 1 – that only contains socio-economic characteristics of the respondents – has very limited explanatory power. This power rises quite dramatically if we add the other independent variables in model 2 (the adjusted R2 rises substantially). If we study model 2, we see that a short residency in the neighbourhood has a negative effect on the intensity of the participation. This is hardly surprising for this annexation issue. Being over 50, earning a low income, employing an

active style of citizenship, being an active member of civic associations, talking to other about politics, and being mobilized (asked by people to participate) all contribute positively to the intensity of the political activities the respondents were engaged in.

Important for our argument is that moral indignation and appeals to anger seem to contribute substantially to the explanation. The other motivations referring to appeals to fear were not relevant in the end. This suggests that the anti-annexation framing and particularly the shift from appeals to fear to appeals to anger have been very important for citizens to become widely engaged in protest against annexation. The angrier people became, the more protest activities they undertook.

Conclusions

The case study of municipal amalgamation clearly indicates the importance of studying emotional appeals in framing processes. These emotional appeals can produce an effect of affect in the mobilization of citizens' protest against a policy intervention, as the above case has shown.

The effect of affect is highly dependent on how collective political actors embroiled in a policy conflict react on critical events that unfold through time. In the case study the announcement of the plan and later on the conduct of the provincial authorities during the open information evenings proved to be such critical events. Meaning production by the opponents transformed from speculation on consequences (t1) to criticism of the plan (t2) to criticism of the proponents political performance (t3). Moreover, somewhere between t1 and t3 the application of rhetorical techniques and metaphors transformed from possible consequences and metaphors suggesting threat (t1) to causal attribution, moral judgement and war metaphors (little bit t2 and definitely t3). This transformation of how annexation was framed also produced a very significant shift in emotional appeals on fear (t1 & t2) toward anger (t3). This shift proved to be very significant in providing citizens with a strong motivation to act up. If we interpret these results from the affective intelligence theory by Marcus et al. (2000) we can say that the emotional appeals to fear helped in attracting people's attention to the policy intervention. Many of the inhabitants were aware of the municipal amalgamation process, thus forming a huge anti-annexation public of potentially active citizens. The appeals to anger were picked up by their 'surveillance system' and proved to be so strong that people had to do something about the situation. Of course not everybody picked up these emotional appeals, but the massive participation in some of the actions shows that it affected quite a substantial number of people.

These transformations in meaning production and shifts in emotional appeals were not produced by concerted strategic planning by several of the collective opponents. The resulted from reactions to critical events and ongoing heated public debate between proponents and opponents. One mayor says this and than another one says that. One journalist uses more emotional appeals in paraphrasing quotes by politicians and another does less so. Of course there are strategic elements involved in this process. From the moment the five municipalities and the AACs started to mobilize

citizens for specific actions they used more causal attributions, moral judgements and war metaphors. However, individual citizens also expressed themselves in these terms in their letters to the newspaper after the proponent's performance frustrated them at the open information evenings. This reflects that the shift to anger is not completely an artefact of strategic action mobilization. There had already been a build up in appeals to anger in the meaning production, as had happened in the appeals to fear previously. An emotional under stream had been present all the time since the spring of 1998.

The importance of studying emotions as an element of policy interventions cannot be overstated. However, we do not suggest that there should be an 'emotional turn' in interpretative policy analysis. Rather we would like to suggest that emotional appeals should be taken into account as part and parcel of policy arguments within the argumentative turn. To do so, the tools of rhetorical techniques and metaphors are already in reach for interpretative policy analysts. They should just broaden their focus on arguments as practical productions that also involve emotional appeals and become more sensitive of them. Enter emotions!

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Endnotes

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[1] Research on this process of municipal amalgamation was conducted by the first author for his doctoral thesis (Verhoeven 2009). This paper makes use of extensive research including interviews on the planning and decision-making process by Mok (2004), our own analysis of archival material on the mobilization efforts of the governmental claimants, insights on the mobilization efforts of local citizen action groups based on interviews with 73 core members, and an analysis of an empirically selected corpus of 389 articles from a total of 3,200 published in the regional newspaper *De Haagsche Courant*.

[2] Here we have used a method developed by Verba et al. (1995: 105-107, 550-552). The reasons were derived from qualitative interviews with active citizens at the beginning of the empirical phase of the research project, long before the framing of annexation was analysed on cognitive and emotional aspects of meaning production. Interestingly the same reasons came up in open interviews conducted with the 73 core members of the AACs.

[3] From the 315 respondents 99 percent has been involved in one or more political activities. We therefore have not analysed the dichotomy between being active or not, but instead we have analysed the frequency of activities that respondents have been involved in. Out of a total of 24 activities we have constructed a dependent variable that counts in how many activities one respondent has been involved. For the independent variables we have used several indicators well-known in research explaining all kinds of political participation. For an overview of all distributions on the dependent and the independent variables we refer to (Verhoeven 2009). In the analysis we have built in a control procedure to check if social-economical characteristics have more impact than the other independent variables taken into account.