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Towards a theory of collective emotions

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Abstract

Collective emotions are at the heart of any society and become evident in gatherings, crowds, or responses to widely salient events. However, they remain poorly understood and conceptualized in scientific terms. Here, we provide first steps towards a theory of collective emotions. We first review accounts of the social and cultural embeddedness of emotion that contribute to understanding collective emotions from three broad perspectives: face-to-face encounters, culture and shared knowledge, and identification with a social collective. In discussing their strengths and shortcomings and highlighting areas of conceptual overlap, we translate these views into a number of bottom-up mechanisms that explain collective emotion elicitation on the levels of social cognition, overt behavior, and social practices.

Keywords: collective emotions, social groups, emotional contagion, social appraisal

Towards a theory of collective emotions

Ever since the works of Emile Durkheim and Gustave Le Bon, researchers in the social and behavioral sciences have been intrigued by collective emotions. These include a wide range of different kinds of emotions, from the shame one might feel on behalf of other members of one's group to the collective ecstasy experienced in the midst of the carnival in Rio de Janeiro or the fear felt by citizens anticipating an armed conflict. Although collective emotions have played a key role in various areas of inquiry, research explicitly dedicated to them has not kept pace with studies on individual emotion.

More recently, however, there is a renewed interest in collective emotions and their close relatives, such as emotional climates, atmospheres, and (inter-)group emotions. This interest is propelled by a general increase in research on the social and interpersonal aspects of emotion on the one hand, and by trends in philosophy and cognitive science towards refined conceptual analyses of collectivity. There now is a growing body of research on collective emotions in disciplines such as sociology, philosophy, and social psychology. Parsing this literature, it is striking that conceptual analyses of what "collective emotions" actually are, how they relate to existing theories of individual emotions, and how they can be investigated methodologically, are rare.

A review of the literature in different disciplines suggests that collective emotions are in fact discussed under various labels and with different foci, which often represent core interests of the respective disciplines. Here, we propose an understanding of collective emotions as the *synchronous convergence in affective responding* across individuals towards a specific event or object. Given this understanding, much of the existing literature shares a number of assumptions on the nature and culture of collective emotions and their elicitation. As far as we can assess, most of these assumptions are of complementary rather than contradictory character, but have not yet been brought together in a coherent fashion. In this

article, we offer first steps towards such integration by highlighting areas in which the different accounts complement one another and by identifying the potential for cross-fertilization. Reviewing theoretical and empirical work on different aspects or components of collective emotions, we illustrate their multi-faceted nature and identify a number of principles that refer to their properties and elicitation. In doing so, we examine and portray the mutual points of contact between the different approaches, highlight where different semantic labels obscure domains of conceptual convergence, and emphasize where they actually point to empirically observable variation in collective emotions.

Based on this analysis, we suggest initial steps towards a theoretical framework that reduces the complexity of the many theoretical traditions and disciplinary jargons and explicitly accounts for the ontological complexity of collective emotions. This framework shall achieve three goals: It should foster exchange of research between disciplines by offering a common theoretical and terminological ground; it should promote the interlinking of theory and evidence on individual emotions with accounts of collective emotions; and it should inspire future research by facilitating the generation of testable hypotheses.

To do so, we first briefly review existing research on the social and cultural embeddedness of emotion that contributes to an understanding of collective emotions as synchronous convergence in affective responding. Our review is organized around three broad perspectives that reflect different understandings of what the "collective" dimension of emotion is and where it manifests in the social world: in face-to-face encounters, through culture and shared knowledge, and by way of identification with a social group. In the second part of this article, we then suggest a framework that translates key assumptions of these different perspectives into a number of micro-level mechanisms along the lines of social cognition, expressive behavior, and social practices. In concluding, we delineate the various

reciprocal connections between these dimensions and suggest a graphical model of these linkages.

Three perspectives on the social and cultural embeddedness of emotion

Existing research in different disciplines on the social and cultural embeddedness of emotion has identified a number of processes that may contribute to convergence in emotional responding across individuals. Our review is therefore organized along these lines rather than along disciplinary boundaries. We first discuss studies on the role of emotion expression in face-to-face encounters, assuming that physical proximity promotes emotional contagion between individuals. Second, we review research arguing that culture and shared knowledge let individuals assign similar meanings to emotionally relevant events, thus leading to a shared emotion culture. Third, we discuss works arguing that group membership and social identity elicit a specific class of emotions in response to events affecting one's group.

Face-to-face encounters

One of the earliest and most explicit accounts of emotional convergence in close physical proximity is the work of Le Bon (1895), who was interested in how synchrony in cognitions, emotions, and behaviors emerges in crowds. He held that emotional unity can occur in crowds which are quite distinct with respect to the beliefs, values, and desires of the crowding individuals. Le Bon explained the emergence of this synchrony by analogy to the spreading of disease: He held that cognitive and affective states can be *infectious* under certain circumstances and that they spread by *contagion*. Although many of Le Bon's claims have been refuted to date, his notion of contagion in face-to-face gatherings represents a well-established view in contemporary research on collective behavior and social movements (Goodwin, Jasper, & Poletta, 2000).

The very idea of emotional contagion, however, has primarily been taken up by psychological research largely unlinked to collective behavior, which instead mainly focuses

on nonverbal contagion in dyads and small groups. In their classic treatise, Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson (1992, p. 153f) define emotional contagion as the "tendency to automatically mimic and synchronize facial expressions, vocalizations, postures, and movements with those of another person and, consequently, to converge emotionally." In investigating the basic mechanisms of contagion, Hatfield and colleagues highlight the importance of motor mimicry and imitation. Moreover, in reviewing evidence on facial, vocal, and postural mimicry, they highlight that afferent feedback generated by these motor processes (as marshaled by the facial feedback hypothesis) is a major determinant of emotional experience and probably also a crucial component of emotional contagion. Despite the evidence in favor of contagion, it has also become clear that there are many confounding factors influencing the operation of facial mimicry, most notably the immediate and more general social context in which imitation occurs (e.g., Bourgeois & Hess, 2008).

These linkages between involuntary processes of emotional contagion and sociocultural context have been investigated in the pioneering works of Emile Durkheim (1912). Durkheim argued that the cognitive acquisition of beliefs and values is not sufficient to generate strong group commitments and solidarity, but needs an embodied grounding in the experience of *collective effervescence* during rituals. Rituals, in turn, need some kind of symbolic order, such as shared norms, rules, and beliefs to be successfully accomplished. Although this is one of the most well-known and explicit accounts of collective emotions in the social sciences, Durkheim and more recent sociological studies are primarily concerned with the functions of effervescence rather than with its properties and antecedents (e.g., Shilling & Mellor, 1998; Summers-Effler, 2002). Most notably, Collins (2004) has extended Durkheim's account in his theory of Interaction Ritual Chains, in which physical co-presence and the "mutual entrainment of emotion and attention" produce "a shared emotional / cognitive experience" (Collins, 2004, p. 48). Collins adds to Durkheim's approach a precise

micro-sociological account of how mutual entrainment evolves and how the acquired emotional energy can be understood as a socially stratifying resource.

In sum, research on emotions in face-to-face encounters suggests that expressive behavior and contagion are vital ingredients to collective emotions understood as affective convergence. Although studies on emotional contagion give insights into the physiological processes underlying the transmission of emotion and emphasize the role of immediate social contextual factors, they are somewhat mute on the effects of the more general social and cultural embeddedness. Conversely, sociological research in the Durkheimian tradition can profit from consideration of the behavioral mechanisms that facilitate effervescence. Importantly, however, they point out that group properties are systematically implicated in generating effervescence in rituals, although the exact pathways remain unexplored.

For the most part, these strengths and limitations of face-to-face approaches align with the respective disciplinary endeavors and their aims to explain either individual and social psychologies or the fabrics of society. Having established initial links between contagion and group properties, the works of Durkheim (1912) and Collins (2004) can be further complemented by studies on the role of culture and shared knowledge in emotion elicitation, since they point to ways in which emotions can be conceived of as "collective" outside of face-to-face contexts.

Culture and shared knowledge

Emotion research focusing on the role of culture and shared meaning often implicitly assumes that common interpretative strategies and normative expectations likewise contribute to socially shared emotions. These works tend to stress the commonalities within groups of individuals and certain group properties rather than the importance of physical proximity and focus on a general tendency of group members to react emotionally in similar ways, have comparable affective dispositions, and belong to the same emotion culture.

In small group research, the concept of "group emotion" refers to "similarities in group members' emotional experiences or behaviors" and a general convergence in emotional responding based on membership in a social collective (Parkinson, Fischer, & Manstead, 2005, p. 87). These similarities are hypothesized to occur due to (1) exposure to identical eliciting events; (2) regular interactions with other group members and mutual influence on each other's appraisals; (3) the sharing of common values and norms; (4) identification as group members and appraisals of group-relevant events, and (5) patterns of emotional behavior seen as constitutive for group membership (Parkinson et al., 2005). A number of studies have substantiated the existence of group emotions according to some of these criteria (e.g., Barsade & Gibson, 1998), although some of them go under the labels "group affective tone" or "affective team composition" (cf. Kelly & Barsade, 2001).

Other works have focused on larger collectives such as societies and nations. With this, there is also a notable shift towards the symbolic and cultural properties of collectives, for example norms, practices, and ideologies. For instance, Bar-Tal's (2001) concept of *collective emotional orientation* refers to the tendency of a society to express a particular emotion, for example a "collective fear orientation" in Israel that he describes as an obstacle to peace. Societies may develop collective emotional orientations which emphasize specific emotions by providing the cultural models and practices that shape the emotions of its members (Bar-Tal, 2001, p. 605). Importantly, these socially shared emotions are not just an aggregation of individual emotions but represent "unique holistic" qualities of social collectives (ibid.).

A further approach stressing the importance of culture and group properties is outlined by de Rivera (1992), who introduced the concepts of emotional atmosphere, emotional climate, and emotional culture. The first pertains to the emotional reactions of a group when focusing on a common event, such as despair when losing an armed conflict. The second is

constituted by the enduring emotional quality of the relationships individuals within a society have with each other, for example when relationships are characterized by fear (e.g., in a totalitarian state). Finally, an emotional culture refers to long term social and cultural practices, norms, and ideologies regarding the experience and expression of emotions. Once internalized, these symbolic frameworks guide and "calibrate" the emotions of many individuals.

These ideas are paralleled by theories and empirical studies in sociology highlighting the importance of social norms (Hochschild, 1979), social structure (Barbalet, 1998), social order (Thoits, 2004), and symbolic interaction (MacKinnon, 1994) in shaping emotions in society. The shaping of emotions has been shown for different institutional settings (Turner, 2007), stratified groups (Collett & Lizardo, 2010), gender (Simon & Nath, 2004), race (Harvey Wingfield, 2010), identity (Stets, 2005), and culture (Heise, 2010). Cross-cultural psychology has argued along the same lines, as shown, for instance, by Nisbett and Cohen (1996) in their study on the "culture of honor" in the southern United States.

In summary, works referring to culture and shared knowledge contribute to an understanding of collective emotion based on enduring and stable cultural and structural properties of a group. They are a valuable addition to those face-to-face approaches explicitly acknowledging the importance of shared norms, rules, and beliefs. Whereas Durkheim (1912) and Collins (2004) excel regarding the functions of collective emotions, CSK approaches complement their views by a more thorough conceptual analysis of the effects of group properties. Importantly, this prompts the question how socially shared knowledge and face-to-face processes mutually interact in generating emotional convergence. Until now, we have mainly reviewed research considering group properties and shared cognitions from an aggregate, top-down perspective, paying less attention to the role of social identification, which we will do in the following section.

Identification with a social collective

Research in group processes and intergroup behavior has advanced a perspective on emotions that highlights the profound effects of self-categorization and social identity and suggests the existence of *group-based emotions*. Social categorization refers to the tendency to perceive the self as a member of a socially defined group or category. Social identity is defined as the knowledge of belonging to certain social groups and an emotional significance that goes along with membership in a group (Tajfel, 1981). Correspondingly, group-based emotions are conceived of as emotions felt by individuals on behalf of a social collective or other members of a collective (Smith, 1993). Kessler and Hollbach (2005, p. 677) emphasize that the "distinctive feature between individual and group-based emotions is that individual emotions are elicited by events concerning one's personal identity whereas group-based emotions are elicited by events concerning one's social identity as a member of a particular group". This notion of group-based emotions has been extended to not only encompass emotions felt by way of identification with an in-group, but also emotions directed towards out-groups. These intergroup emotion theories postulate "that when people identify with a group, they will appraise social objects or events in terms of their implications for the group" (Smith & Mackie, 2006, p. 174). Importantly, group-based emotions can be elicited in solitude, for example when other members of an in-group perform favorable or unfavorable actions or are ascribed certain qualities by third parties – as in cases of collective guilt (Branscombe, 2004) – and do not require effervescence or contagion in physical proximity.

In summary, group-based emotion theory contributes to an understanding of collective emotions based on a "non-aggregate" perspective on group properties. Although one can assume that many group members share the quality of identifying with their group – in the same way the group's beliefs and values are shared – emotions resulting from social identification are supposed to be qualitatively different from those elicited by shared beliefs

and values. Nevertheless, they clearly contribute to emotional convergence and add a further dimension to approaches relying on culture and socially shared knowledge. However, they remain comparably silent on the role of face-to-face processes, for instance in reinforcing group-based emotions or maintaining social identity.

Mechanisms of emotional convergence

Looking at the works reviewed above, it is striking that there are various accounts of emotions from different disciplines that (often implicitly) assume converging emotional responding within social collectives, either by way of contagion in face-to-face encounters, culture and shared knowledge, or social identification. Although some of the works discussed indeed emphasize the importance of multiple factors and hint at their interplay (e.g., Barsade & Gibson, 1998; Collins, 2004; Parkinson et al., 2005), detailed and systematic analyses of the possible causal and reciprocal connections between them are – to the best of our knowledge – yet to be done.

In the following, we build on these existing avenues and on further research to substantiate and bring together the different factors and pave the way for an integrative account of collective emotions. Much of the social science literature that is suggestive in explaining emotional convergence takes a top-down approach and emphasizes the role of social and cultural patterns. Here, we suggest a bottom-up approach in the tradition of methodological individualism to be able to better link approaches from different disciplinary fields. Our aim in this section is to identify and characterize mechanisms of collective emotion elicitation that are often implicitly assumed in the literature and that allow translating the face-to-face, culture and shared knowledge, and social identification perspectives into a coherent framework. We locate these mechanisms on three levels of analysis and point to interactions between them to better understand synchronous emotional convergence. Our suggestion for a theoretical framework follows a social micro-to-macro logic in that we begin

with mechanisms related to social cognition, then include those based on overt behavior in social interaction, and finally incorporate mechanisms rooted in social practices and normative order.

Social appraisal and collective intentions

Major strands in research on the generation of individual-level emotion are based on appraisal models. These theories assume that emotion elicitation is initiated by appraising situations, acts, or events based on individual cognitions such as goals, beliefs, and desires (Lazarus & Smith, 1988). More recently, these approaches have been extended to include *social appraisals*, which explicitly account for the social embeddedness of the appraisal process (Parkinson, 2001; Manstead & Fischer, 2001). This perspective highlights that one person's appraisals are often influenced by others' emotions and appraisals, either by way of sharing emotions and appraisals (Rimé, 2009) or by witnessing corresponding emotional reactions (Manstead & Fischer, 2001). This orientation can either be conceptualized as (a) socially distributed in that relevant appraisal-input comes from other actors (Oatley, 2000); as (b) socially learned by adopting appraisals of various socialization agents (Manstead & Fischer, 2001); or as (c) a process of legitimizing and supporting one's appraisals by reference to the appraisals of others (Manstead & Fischer, 2001).

As Parkinson and colleagues (2005) point out, social appraisal is well suited to partly explain collective emotions from the perspective of shared knowledge since groups systematically influence members' appraisals and provide appraisal orienting guidelines, primarily via norms and values. We add to this view by arguing for the social constitution and sharing of the beliefs, desires, and various forms of tacit and declarative knowledge underlying appraisals. In its basic form, this argument is present in a number of appraisal theories, although it remains marginal for the most part (e.g., Lazarus & Smith, 1988; Scherer, 2001). This view is in line with cognitive sociology which has repeatedly pointed out that

social collectives are – inter alia – defined by a high degree of overlap in individuals'

cognitions, motivations, and social representations (Zerubavel, 1997) which, according to

appraisal theories, are crucial in eliciting emotions.

Based on these arguments, *socially shared cognitive appraisal structures* can be seen

as one part of the cognitive foundations of collective emotions by contributing to the

alignment or "calibration" of emotions within collectives (e.g., von Scheve, 2012). This idea

is also partly reflected in the concept of emotional atmospheres (de Rivera, 1992), in research

on social movements (Goodwin, Jasper, & Poletta, 2000), and social structural emotion theory

(Barbalet, 1998; Kemper, 1978).

A second dimension of the cognitive foundations of emotional convergence can be

identified in works on group-based emotions and those highlighting the role of collective

intentions in emotion. Whereas group-based emotion theory usually focuses on the social

sharing of cognitive and motivational appraisal components (Smith, 1993), recent work in

philosophy (Bratman, 1993; Gilbert, 1990; Tuomela, 1995) and evolutionary anthropology

(Tomasello, 2008) has emphasized the importance of the collective intentions in the

coordination of social action. More recently, these accounts have been related to the

explanation of collective emotions (Huebner, 2011; Salmela, 2012). Although the approaches

differ in details, they suggest that emotions elicited on the basis of *collective intentional states*

or *collective concerns* (e.g., goals, intentions) are qualitatively different from emotions

elicited by private, individual intentions (Salmela, 2012).

Here, two positions can be distinguished from one another. Aggregate accounts argue

that collective intentional states exist if a sufficiently large number of members of a social

collective intend or believe that something is or should be the case. In this case, collective

intention is considered the sum of its individual parts, much like Barsade and Gibson (1998)

define group emotion as the sum of its parts. On the other hand, "non-aggregate" accounts

pinpoint collectivity in intentions through members of a social group having certain intentions *as members of that group* viz. by referring to intentional states of individuals directed at the group or existing "on behalf" of the group. For example, a theatre ensemble strives to perform exceptionally *as an ensemble* and not in a way that each member performs exceptionally. From this perspective, collectively intentional emotions represent the "togetherness" and mutual goal-directedness found in social collectives (Salmela, 2012).

Accounts of group-based emotions, however, usually focus on aspects of identification rather than on the collectively intentional aspects of emotions. Tuomela (2006) distinguishes summative forms of collectively intentional states from non-summative forms by referring to the former as weak "We-mode" (or pro-group "I-mode") collectivity and to the latter as strong "We-mode" collectivity. Correspondingly, Salmela (2012) has suggested distinguishing "I-mode" from "We-mode" collective emotions. These kinds of collective emotions are most probably qualitatively distinct because they rely on different modes of identification, to which theories of group-based emotions are largely insensitive. For example, as a shareholder of Apple, Inc. I am happy – together with thousands of other stakeholders – about the company's announcement to pay dividends again, because it increases individual wealth. This "I-mode" happiness is clearly different from the "We-mode" happiness I experience when the start-up I founded together with a couple of friends finally yields a profit.

To summarize our view on the cognitive foundations of collective emotions, we assume that (1) socially shared appraisal structures promote "I-mode" emotional convergence and (2) appraisals founded on joint, collectively intentional states based on the identification with a social collective foster the elicitation of "We-mode" collective emotions and, too, support emotional convergence.

Expressive behavior and facial dialects

Although "I-mode" and "We-mode" collective emotions can be experienced and lead to emotional convergence *outside* face-to-face encounters, they influence behavior and are influenced by others' behaviors in social interaction. In fact, it has been argued that *joint attention* in social encounters is a prerequisite for collective intentionality to emerge (Tomasello & Carpenter, 2007). We therefore take a closer look at the interplay of both with contagious face-to-face processes, from dyads to large crowds. Two (interlinked) lines of argument are conceivable: First is the assumption that these processes can support the emergence or stabilize pre-existing shared appraisal structures and collective intentions. Second is the conjecture that cultural embeddedness shapes and fine-tunes nonverbal behavior and makes contagion more effective within rather than across groups.

The first option corresponds to and specifies the key function attributed to collective effervescence by authors such as Durkheim (1912) and Collins (2004), i.e. the contribution of emotional contagion to the affective grounding of the beliefs and values of a group. Facial expressions not only make visible the affective consequences of situational appraisals, but also allow individuals in face-to-face encounters as well as in mediated interactions to make inferences about the cognitions that caused an emotion. For example, when two or more individuals are part of the same situation and mutually perceive convergence in emotional responding, it is plausible that they also infer similarities in underlying values and beliefs that caused an emotion and possibly also in the degree of commitment to these values and beliefs, depending on the perceived "authenticity" of an expression. In line with the arguments of Durkheim and Collins, the mutual attribution of shared motives and cognitive structures may well foster the formation of groups and group identification and – extending their arguments – "We-mode" collective intentions. Hence, although empirical evidence on this linkage is still missing, we suggest that facial expressions in assemblies, crowds, or masses contribute to the

formation of social collectives, which in turn have independent effects on the elicitation and quality of collective emotions.

The second option proposes that face-to-face processes are fine-tuned to distinct social collectives, meaning that they evolve in adaptation to the cultural environment (v. Scheve, 2012). This thesis of the social calibration of emotional expression rests on the assumption that facial expression exhibits marked social plasticity. Given the existence of "facial dialects" in expression and recognition (Elfenbein, Beaupré, Lévesque, & Hess, 2007), it is plausible to assume that these dialects also influence emotional contagion, which is based on rapid and non-conscious imitation of expressive behavior and thus on recognition and decoding abilities. This justifies the conjecture that contagion as a precursor of emotional convergence is more effective within rather than across social groups and depends on individuals' relative familiarity with the dominant dialects of expressive behavior. Collective emotions in face-to-face encounters might thus arise more easily when individuals share the same expressive dialects. Although the proposed linkages are theoretically plausible, there is hardly any evidence yet to support our claims.

To summarize our view on the behavioral foundations of collective emotions and their links to the cognitive dimension, we suggest, firstly, that similar expressive behaviors in face-to-face situations promote the perception of similarities in emotion generating cognitions and appraisals, which in turn support and amplify "I-mode" and potentially also "We-mode" collective emotions. Secondly, facial dialects and the calibration of expression to a group's cultural environment increase the likelihood of contagion-based emotional convergence within existing groups rather than across group-boundaries.

Collective memory and social norms

As we have argued above, belonging to the same social group or collective is an important facilitator of emotional convergence in terms of the alignment of cognitions, social

identity, collective intentions, and expressive behavior. But social collectives transcend individual cognition and behavior in generating symbolic and normative orders of meaning making that are expressed and negotiated through, for example, social institutions, practices, discourse, and the arts.

At the most basic level, group membership heightens the probability of exposure to or being involved in identical emotionally relevant events (Parkinson et al., 2005). This not only has implications for immediate emotional convergence, but forms collective memories (Biettei, 2012) which in turn heighten the propensity for recurring emotional convergence. Collective memories may contribute to emotion elicitation in much the same way as "individual" memories do, however with the resulting emotions being most probably qualitatively different. Moreover, symbolic practices of remembering and commemoration and public discourse may establish society-wide conventions of what is remembered in which ways and with which emotional consequences (Olick & Robinson, 1998).

Such practices in conjunction with group identification may also lead to more subtle and stable feelings, which we term *group-based sentiments*. In contrast to group-based emotions, these sentiments are enduring and mood-like affective dispositions or "emotional attitudes" (Oatley, 2000) which are directed towards in- or out-groups, such as feelings of belonging, solidarity, hostility, or resentment. Importantly, Frijda (1994) argued that these sentiments comprise specific appraisal dispositions, i.e. cognitive schemas promoting the elicitation of discrete emotions of identical valence. Group-based sentiments therefore constitute important precursors of collective emotions.

Membership in a social collective is also tied to the adoption of norms, values, and conventions. As Parkinson and associates (2005) have argued, sharing of these norms systematically influences appraisals and contributes to emotional convergence, also in cases of norm violation. Interestingly, social norms target various kinds of behaviors – including the

experience and expression of emotions, both in a prescriptive and a descriptive way. Feeling and display rules (Hochschild, 1979) demarcate the social appropriateness and expectedness of emotional behavior. Since they are tied to informal sanctions, feeling and display rules constitute mechanisms for the social control of emotions and thus clearly foster emotional congruence within groups.

Such normative orders are reinforced by culture-specific practices of the verbal communication of emotion and their social sharing (Rimé, 2009). Representing and communicating emotional experience through language is an important means of negotiating and ensuring emotional responding towards specific events. In social interaction, this contributes to the interpersonal "validation" of appropriate emotions and "ideal affect" (Tsai, 2007) within social collectives. In other representational formats, for example artworks, mass media, or advisory books, cultural conceptions of what is usually felt or should be felt are disseminated to large numbers of recipients which in turn may promote the elicitation of collective emotions.

To summarize our view on the symbolic foundations of collective emotions, we emphasize four key mechanisms: First, group membership contributes to the formation of collective memories through discourse, which promote long-term emotional convergence. Second, enduring group-based sentiments dispositionally influence the elicitation of valence-congruent collective emotions. Third, social norms contribute to the elicitation of collective emotions as shared components of appraisals and as mechanisms of the social control of emotion. Fourth, cultural practices contribute to the large-scale dissemination and validation of appropriate and expected feelings.

Conclusion

In this concluding section we emphasize mutual points of contact between the cognitive, behavioral, and symbolic foundations of collective emotions. Our aim is to

highlight the major factors that promote collective emotion elicitation at different levels of analysis and to establish links that foster the derivation of testable hypotheses. We have defined collective emotions as synchronous convergence in affective responding across individuals towards a specific event or object. This view does not necessarily presuppose that collective emotions are qualitatively different from individual emotions and that convergence is established exclusively in face-to-face encounters. In its most basic form, this definition does not even presuppose or require mutual awareness of others' emotions.

For collective emotions to emerge, individuals have to appraise an event in similar ways, which in turn requires a minimum of shared appraisal structures or shared concerns and leads to convergence in emotional responding. For example, people stuck in a traffic jam, having the goal of reaching their destination quickly, having limited coping potential, and sharing the belief that it is a long-lasting traffic jam, might well simultaneously experience anger or frustration with only very limited mutual awareness of each other's feelings and expressions.

These basic forms of collective emotions are subject to two key processes that alter elicitation probabilities and qualitative aspects. One is mutual awareness of others' expressive behaviors and feelings, either in physical proximity through non-verbal modalities or through mediated channels and verbal communication. Physical proximity may substantially amplify and reinforce convergence by way of facial mimicry and contagion, and verbal communication contributes to the symbolic transmission of appraisal outcomes and the descriptive labeling of emotions. Initial phases of protests, such as the 2011 riots in London, are good examples for the mingling of shared appraisal structures, nonverbal emotional contagion, and the verbal sharing and labeling of emotions, for instance on banners, signs, and through oral communications.

The second process refers to widely shared appraisal structures *within* existing social collectives. Membership in a collective usually goes hand in hand with the sharing of certain beliefs and values, with patterns of interaction and common perceptions of relevant events. In addition to this alignment in terms of appraisals and event exposure, groups and collectives are the point of reference for social identity and therefore contribute to emotional convergence by way of group-based emotions. Moreover, their existence is essential for "We-mode" collective intentional states and emotions. Furthermore, group-specific norms and practices directed at the experience and expression of emotion further contribute to a "collective emotional orientation", as does the social sharing of emotion. Last but not least, in-group directed group-based sentiments foster collective emotional responding, in particular when the event affects group-concerns. Both of these processes are most intricately intertwined, which is schematically illustrated in figure one.

<center><insert figure 1 about here ></center>

When individuals become mutually aware of one another's congruent emotional reactions towards an event and close physical proximity promotes contagious processes, this might contribute to the formation of social collectives and a common social identity, for instance in the form of social movements. Protests like recently seen in the Arab world often begin with assemblies of individuals sharing certain beliefs and desires, who then become aware of others' similar emotional reactions. For example, participants in the Arab Spring protest marches may initially have come together out of individual discontentment with the regime, collectively expressing "I-mode" anger and indignation. Being assembled in large crowds and subjected to contagious face-to-face processes may then have heightened awareness of shared beliefs and desires and promoted the emergence of a common social identity, leading to the experience of corresponding "We-mode" emotions.

Similarly, members of existing groups with shared cognitions and intentions engaging in social interaction profit from the social calibration of facial expression which probably makes contagion more effective within rather than across social groups. Importantly, transitions from "I-mode" to "We-mode" collective emotions are not confined to face-to-face gatherings. Although co-presence makes others' emotions particularly salient through multimodal channels, various forms of group- and culture-specific communication and representation (e.g., Bernstein, 1971) contribute to the emergence of "We-mode" collective emotions, much like they promote the rise of "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1991).

The tight intertwining of cognitions, expressive behavior, and social practices in the elicitation of collective emotions had already been envisaged by Durkheim (1912) a hundred years ago. We have added to Durkheim's and other approaches in his legacy by dissecting the micro-level mechanisms involved in this process, by specifying these mechanisms using theory and research previously unrelated to collective emotions, by hinting at their connectedness, by highlighting the pathways to emotional convergence outside face-to-face encounters, and by suggesting prototypical transitions from "I-mode" to "We-mode" collective emotions.

The bottom-up mechanisms we have identified and whose linkages we have illustrated should help to promote both, future theorizing and empirical research on collective emotions, not only in view of eliciting conditions and subjective experience, but also with respect to their potential to drive crowd behavior, mobilize collective action, and direct the historical and political trajectories of social collectives.

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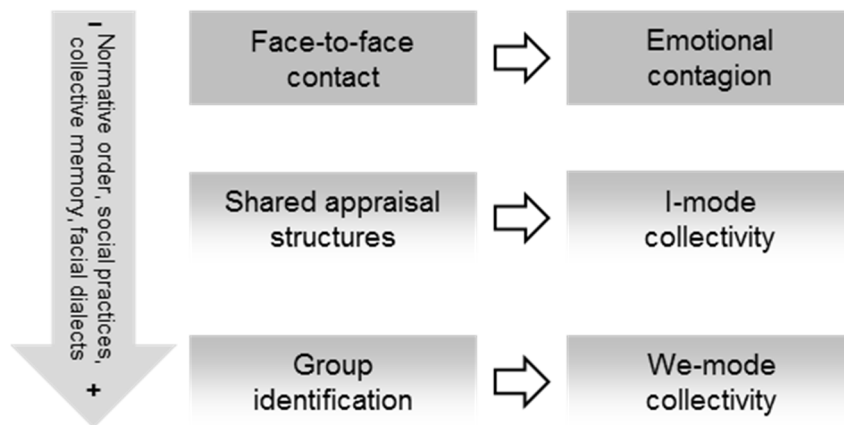Zerubavel, E. (1997). *Social Mindscapes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Figure 1. Schematic model of the interplay of key processes in collective emotion elicitation. Gray gradient indicates processes that can occur in face-to-face situations as well as in solitude.