

Filip PIERZCHALSKI 

University of Warsaw

[f.pierzchalski@uw.edu.pl](mailto:f.pierzchalski@uw.edu.pl)

## CLASS RESENTMENT AND LEADERSHIP

### MANIPULATION OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

#### ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to discuss the emotional plane in the context of the formation of leadership asymmetry, especially the instrumental use of grudge and resentment by a leader in the process of political leadership. The starting point to explaining the instrumentalisation of the affective sphere in politics, interpreted as a source of political leadership, will be the critical argumentation in relation to the assumptions of the theory of rational choice about the stability and predictability of political process. This article attempts a critical look at the rationality of leadership practices in politics, where it is emphasized that the individual and collective structures – including collective identities – of beliefs on which the leadership process is formed, consolidated and based, are not permanent, but increasingly dependent on irrational manipulative strategies. Hence, this paper will analyse the mechanism of creating or reactivating negative emotions by the leader in a given cultural and structural environment as the reasons for the emergence and legitimacy of supra-individual resentment or the functioning of class resentment, which translates into the escalation of hostility in a stratified society, as well as into followers' receptivity; more broadly – into the form and shape of effective political leadership.

**Keywords:** political leadership, class resentment, *ressentiment*, negative emotions, political emotions, collective emotions, collective identity, affective dimension of leadership

## INTRODUCTION

The current state of research on leadership in political science shows theory and research diversity in form and content, where, in principle, we may talk about many complementary, but very often mutually exclusive scholarly methods of description and explanation concerning the leader – followers relationship. In other words, detailed analyses of leadership practices in politics are based on various scholarly theories,<sup>1</sup> explanatory schemes,<sup>2</sup> paradigms<sup>3</sup> or mental models.<sup>4</sup> These differences stem from diverse conceptualisations where the analysis of leadership phenomenon – understood as complex, multi-dimensional relationship between the leader (leader subject) and followers (external surrounding) – basically becomes a scholarly interpretation of the social understanding which emerges in a given historical, socio-economic or cultural context.<sup>5</sup>

An equally important issue in contemporary studies of political leadership is the analysis of the affective plane, which means the need to conduct multidimensional research combining various analysis levels (micro and macrolevel analysis of political leadership) or factors (situational, political, organizational, discursive, religious, cultural etc.),<sup>6</sup> Studies in this respect include the research on the sources of emotional interaction between leaders and their followers [emotional contagion hypothesis<sup>7</sup>] or on interdependencies between leader attributes – context, and culture – follower receptivity, where the emotional dimension directly affects the relations of leadership in politics.<sup>8</sup> They also include scientific analyses of emotions – of their types, extent, range, forms

<sup>1</sup> P.G. Northouse, *Leadership. Theory and Practice*, London 2013.

<sup>2</sup> B.M. Bass, *Bass and Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications*, New York 1990; B.M. Bass, R. Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications*, New York 2008.

<sup>3</sup> G.C. Avery, *Understanding Leadership. Paradigms and Cases*, London 2004, pp. 37-66.

<sup>4</sup> J.P. Andrews, R.H.G. Field, "Regrounding the Concept of Leadership", *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, vol. 19, no. 3 (1998), pp. 128-136.

<sup>5</sup> R.G. Lord, K.J. Maher, *Leadership and Information Processing: Linking Perceptions and Performance*, New York 1993, pp. 25-61; R.J. House et al. (eds.), *Culture, Leadership and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies*, Thousand Oaks 2004.

<sup>6</sup> J.K. Hazy, J.A. Goldstein, B.B. Lichtenstein (eds.), *Complex Systems Leadership Theory. New Perspectives from Complexity Science on Social and Organizational Effectiveness*, Mansfield 2007; M. Uhl-Bien, R. Marion, B. McKelvey, "Complexity Leadership Theory: Shifting Leadership from the Industrial Age to the Knowledge Era", in M. Uhl-Bien, R. Marion (eds.), *Complexity Leadership. Part I: Conceptual Foundations*, Charlotte 2008; M. Wang, L. Zhou, S. Liu, "Multilevel Issues in Leadership Research", in D.V. Day (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Leadership and Organizations*, Oxford 2014, pp. 146-166; F. Pierzchalski, *Political Leadership in Morphogenetic Perspective*, Frankfurt am Main 2017.

<sup>7</sup> E. Hatfield, J.T. Cacioppo, R.L. Rapson, *Emotional Contagion*, Cambridge 1994; O. Epitropaki, R. Martin, G. Thomas, "Relational Leadership", in J. Antonakis, D.V. Day (eds.), *The Nature of Leadership*, London 2018, p. 128.

<sup>8</sup> R.C. Liden et al., "Servant Leadership: Antecedents, Consequences, and Contextual Moderators", in D.V. Day (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook...*, pp. 357-380.

etc. – which, in leadership practices, become one of the main determinants of temporal and complex leadership mechanism. In this approach, various types of emotions contribute to the framework of the leadership process in politics that is synonymous with the processes of emotion regulation.<sup>9</sup>

The aim of this paper is to discuss the emotional plane in the context of the formation of a leadership relationship, especially the instrumental use of resentment and class resentment by the leader in the process of political leadership. The points of reference to the synthesizing reflection on the use of secondary emotions in the political process of leadership will be the critical arguments used in relation to the theory of rational choice, where the assumption about the rationality of the behavior of entities in politics and the arguments regarding the stability of political preferences of participants in the political process are questioned. It is the reductionist approach to political practices, which assumes that we are able to determine approximately what political actors (players) can and cannot do in public space, what they know and what they do not know. For political analysis of leadership practices, this means providing some knowledge based on stylized and predictable representations of roles and capabilities of both the leaders and their supporters, omitting their irrational (emotional) motivations, action strategies, reactions, etc., and belittling, to a certain extent, structural-social and cultural-semantic conditions that refer to and/or cause a specific range of supra-individual emotions.<sup>10</sup> In that respect, this article attempts a critical look at the rationality and stability of leadership practices in politics, where it is emphasized that individual and collective belief structures not necessarily can be reduced to repetitive and predictable behaviours, attitudes, responses etc., but, on the contrary, their emergence and reproduction depend on the affective-imaginary sphere, the one that translates into materializing in the process of political leadership of irrational – often incoherent, incomprehensible and inexplicable in the light of specific premises (causes) – actions, strategies or decisions.

An equally important goal of the article is an attempt to fill a certain research gap in political science analyzes of the phenomenon of leadership, where, by presenting and discussing selected concepts developed within neuropsychology, cognitive science and evolutionary epistemology, a more substantive explanation and understanding of contemporary leadership practices is possible. In this regard, it seems helpful to: refer to the division into primary and secondary emotions; discuss the complexity of cognitive processes (automatism *vs* reflectivity) and the impact of cultural transmission on politics (the concept of cultural power); indicate imaginative and affective sources of

<sup>9</sup> C.E.J. Härtel, W.J. Zerbe, N.M. Ashkanasy (eds.), *Emotions in Organizational Behavior*, Mahwah N.J. 2005.

<sup>10</sup> H. Ward, "Rational Choice", in D. Marsh, G. Stocker (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, Basingstoke 2002, pp. 65-89; K.A. Shepsle, M.S. Bonchek, *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior and Institutions*, New York 1997; D.P. Green, I. Shapiro, *Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory: A Critique of Applications in Political Science*, New Haven 1994; J.J. Mansbridge (ed.), *Beyond Self-Interest*, Chicago 1990; P. Self, *Government by the Market? The Politics of Public Choice*, London 1993; M. Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics*, Urbana 1964.

ideological polarization in politics. No less important is also to show the effectiveness of social engineering tools, that is, manipulation of collective emotions, where, by evoking, and consequently controlling revenge, anger or envy in society, the leaders (leader, political party, trade union, etc.) can pursue political ambitions and goals.

Moreover, this article is an attempt to answer the following research questions: Is political leadership, defined as a complex and temporal relationship at the leader – followers meeting point, a current practice based on real limitation of rationality, stability and predictability? Is effective leadership in politics reduced today to implementing emotional manipulative strategies, where, through instrumentalisation of secondary emotions on a mass scale, one gains the desired follower receptivity?

This is where secondary negative emotions act as a catalyst and a direct factor legitimizing the action and activity of a leader in a socio-structural environment, at the same time being a premise for a political change that varies in form and content. In a broader context, we can talk about a dynamic relationship between emotions – including cultural transmission – and leadership practices, where the space of political leadership is co-constituted by existing cultural constructs in a given society – the constructs that, as social semantic-symbolic codes evoking a specific spectrum of emotional states – integrate or antagonize (divide) members of a political community. Hence, a leadership practice based on resentment is associated with the creation, evocation, control and quenching of various types of emotions. It should be identified both with human enculturation, where in the relation leader – followers we deal with a gradual unification of emotional reactions among people [mechanism of homogeneity regarding emotional reactions or reactive attitudes of both the leader and their supporters<sup>11</sup>], and with the process of symbolization thus necessitates dichotomization.<sup>12</sup>

## BASIC EMOTIONS AND THEIR POLITICAL ELABORATIONS

Current research on emotions,<sup>13</sup> especially those in the field of affective neuroscience and neuropsychology, shows that emotions should be considered as multicomponent phenomena, which are two-step processes involving emotion elicitation mechanisms that produce emotional responses and have relevant objects. In this sense, emotions

<sup>11</sup> L.L. Cavalli-Sforza, *Genes, Peoples, and Languages*, London 2001, pp. 173-209; P.J. Richerson, R. Boyd, *Not by Genes Alone: How Culture Transformed Human Evolution*, Chicago 2005, pp. 99-147; U. Schönplflug, "Cultural Transmission: Psychological, Developmental, Social and Methodological Aspects", in U. Schönplflug (ed.), *Theory and Research in Cultural Transmission*, Cambridge 2009, pp. 9-30.

<sup>12</sup> H.D. Lasswell, *Psychopathology and Politics*, Chicago 1977, p. 189; R. Capriles, *Leadership by Resentment. From 'Ressentiment' to Redemption*, Cheltenham–Northampton 2012, pp. 50-78.

<sup>13</sup> For the purpose of this article the notion of emotions will be defined as: *relatively brief episode of synchronized responses by all or most organismic subsystems to the evaluation of an external or internal event as being of major significance (e.g., anger, sadness, joy, fear, shame, pride, elation, desperation)*" (K.R. Scherer, "Psychological Models of Emotion", in J.C. Borod (ed.), *The Neuropsychology of Emotion*, New York–Oxford 2000, pp. 137-162).

are associated with human perception, individual and group expression, action tendency, bodily reaction, feelings and cognition.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, among many typologies of emotion, or, more precisely, relevant factors in classifying emotions, there are both basic emotions and secondary (dependent on the social environment) emotions, which co-shape behaviours, experience, attitudes and actions of both individuals and bigger groups.

In neuropsychology, basic emotions – derived from basic emotion theory<sup>15</sup> – are identified with evolutionary and the adaptive function of *homo sapiens sapiens* to a changing environment, especially in performing basic life tasks. They are also associated with physiological changes that prepare the human body to respond differently in various emotional states. In this context, basic emotions have a direct relationship with automatic appraisal mechanism, which: *Selectively attends to those stimuli (external or internal) which are the occasion for (exist – emphasis F.P.) one or another emotion. Since the interval between stimulus and emotional response is sometimes extraordinarily short, the appraisal mechanism must be capable of operating with great speed. Often the appraisal is not only quick but it happens without awareness (...) the appraisal mechanism is able to operate automatically.*<sup>16</sup>

In this respect, basic emotions are associated, among others, with emotion-specific hardwired neural circuits; are elicited by automatic appraisals, and generate automatic and mandatory responses; are associated with emotion-specific responses (each basic emotion is associated with a distinctive pattern of responses or components); are pan-cultural, present across species, and emerge early in development.<sup>17</sup>

It is clear that basic emotions – as universally, ahistorically and relatively brief episode of responses – in temporal relation entity – environment are characterised by automatism and involuntariness in humans – regardless of their place of residence, origin, financial status, social status or political views. At the same time, due to the fact that primary emotions are a biological and timeless source of elicitation mechanisms that produce emotional responses, we can talk about their social and cultural elaborations.

In such conditions, the process of social elaborations of basic emotions is connected with the category of secondary emotions. We are talking about such emotions, which are shaped in interaction with external environment, or, more precisely, which are fully dependent on a social and cultural content. In this sense, emotions are related to both

<sup>14</sup> D. Sander, "Models of Emotion: the Affective Neuroscience Approach", in J.L. Armony, P. Vuilleumier (eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Human Affective Neuroscience*, Cambridge 2013, pp. 5-56.

<sup>15</sup> P. Ekman, "Biological and Cultural Contributions to Body and Facial Movement in the Expression of Emotions", in A.O. Rorty (ed.), *Explaining Emotions*, Berkeley 1980, pp. 73-102; J.A. Russell, "Core Affect and the Psychological Construction of Emotion", *Psychological Review*, vol. 110, no. 1 (2003), pp. 145-172; L.F. Barrett, "Solving the Emotion Paradox: Categorization and the Experience of Emotion", *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, vol. 10, no. 1 (2006), p. 20-46.

<sup>16</sup> P. Ekman, "Basic Emotions", in T. Dalgleish, M. Power (eds.), *Handbook of Cognition and Emotion*, Chichester 1999, p. 51.

<sup>17</sup> A. Scarantino, "Basic Emotions, Psychological Construction, and the Problem of Variability", in L. Feldman Barrett, J.A. Russell (eds.), *The Psychological Construction of Emotion*, New York–London 2015, pp. 334-376.

individual/group behaviours and his/him reactions, as well as depend on the social structure, political atmosphere etc. Frequently, the shape of this structure, especially political position or actual place in political rivalry some particular actors are determined by secondary emotions. Therefore emotions are defined as *the process of actors appraising and responding to real or imagined focused social situations*, where analysis is needed of the social structural and cultural circumstances that are prerequisite to experiencing and expressing a particular emotion.<sup>18</sup>

It should be noted that in social psychology this differentiation between basic (primary) and secondary emotions can be linked to dual-process model attribution explaining the mechanism of human cognition, understanding and interpretation of the world. In this approach, the neuronal-cognitive and phenomenological structure of people consists of two complementary systems that form a certain continuum of psychological processes, i.e. X-system (reflexion) and C-system (reflection). In other words, individual perception, understanding, behavior in public space – especially the somatic and mental-intellectual reactions associated with the occurrence of given emotions in the political environment – is realized between the reflex (automatism – X-system) and reflection (conscious recognition of reality – C-system). Hence: *The X-system is responsible for what psychologists generally refer to as “automatic processes” and what ordinary people call “perception”. It is instantiated in the lateral temporal cortex, basal ganglia, and amygdala, and its main function is to produce the stream of consciousness that we experience as the real world – not just the objects of the real world, but also the semantic and affective associations of those objects, which are also experienced as the real world.... The C-system is responsible for what psychologists generally refer to as “controlled processes” and “reflective awareness” and what ordinary people call “thought.” It is instantiated in the anterior cingulate, prefrontal cortex, and hippocampus.*<sup>19</sup>

Interpreting the above distinction into theory of cognitive studies, especially within evolutionary epistemology, it can be said that the X-system would be identified with direct (sensual) cognition and C-system with indirect (reflective, intellectual) cognition. Therefore, along the path of evolution, people were equipped with cognitive structures having phylogenetic sources that enable and condition their experience (cognition). At the same time, individual cognition is not an unobstructed, direct observation of the world (presentationism), but is a subjective interpretation of that world (representationism), as well as it is functional in nature and is associated with the organism's adaptation to the environment.<sup>20</sup> In other words, the C-system is closely related to socialization, education, imitation or functioning background knowledge in

<sup>18</sup> R.A. Thamm, “The Classification of Emotions”, in J.E. Stets, J.H. Turner (eds.), *Handbook of the Sociology of Emotions*, New York 2006, p. 16.

<sup>19</sup> M.D. Lieberman et al., “Reflection and Reflexion: A Social Cognitive Neuroscience Approach to Attributional Inference”, in M.P. Zanna (ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 34 (2002), San Diego–London, pp. 199–249.

<sup>20</sup> R. Kaspar, “A Short Introduction to the Biological Principles of Evolutionary Epistemology”, in F.M. Wuketits (ed.), *Concepts and Approaches in Evolutionary Epistemology. Towards an Evolutionary Theory of Knowledge*, Dordrecht 1984, pp. 51–67.



given socio-structural conditions, diverse in form and content, or, more broadly, cultural transmission.

It can be said that human perception, thinking or behavior are based not only on cognitive automatisms, but are also gradually dependent on the reflection component, which is shaped – as Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann put it – in the *dialectical process composed of the three moments of externalization, objectivation and internalization*.<sup>21</sup> At the same time, the C-system, understood as an intermediary form of acquainting and communicating individuals with the external environment – contains an emotional component. This is directly related to the fact that most mental states of individuals are conventional and conformist (adaptive functions of emotions). Emotions in this regard are socially learned intellectual constructions. People living in given cultural conditions learn emotions from others through imitation to react similarly to stimuli or situations. The existence of emotions in the social dimension means the evocation of emotional states that should be treated as a supra-individual psychological phenomenon immersed in culture.<sup>22</sup> It is also the moment when, through cultural transmission, its institutional and relational dimension, the phenomenon of *embodied structures* occurs, involving sharing social emotions, that is, similar processes involving emotion elicitation, as well as similar produce emotional responses. Such collective sharing of emotions in the sense of creation of *embodied structures* resembles a mechanism where certain groups emerge from shared structural conditions and are embedded in what Nicos Mouzelis calls *interactive* or *figurational* structures.<sup>23</sup> In this case: *According to this point of view, patterns of institutions and relations result from the actions of individuals who are endowed with the capacities or competencies that enable them to produce them by acting in organised ways. These capacities are behavioural dispositions, and so social structure has to be seen as an embodied structure. Embodied structures are found in the habits and skills that are inscribed in human bodies and minds and that allow them to produce, reproduce, and transform institutional structures and relational structures*.<sup>24</sup>

It also means that emotions should be seen as mental states rooted in cultural practices that are both structure- and orderliness-forming. It is consistent with the ideas of Clifford Geertz, to whom emotions are – next to ideas – cultural artifacts.<sup>25</sup> This position indicates that emotions in politics – their intensity, forms, manifestations, etc. – are shaped by and with the help of culture, or more precisely, specific cultural practices

<sup>21</sup> P.L. Berger, T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality. A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, New York 1996, pp. 147-204.

<sup>22</sup> K.R. Scherer, H.G. Wallbott, “Evidence for Universality and Cultural Variation of Differential Emotion Response Patterning”, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 66 (1994), pp. 310-328.

<sup>23</sup> N. Mouzelis, *Modern and Postmodern Social Theorizing*, Cambridge 2008, p. 111.

<sup>24</sup> J. Lopez, J. Scott, *Social Structure*, Open University Press, Buckingham 2000, p. 4; D. Elder-Vass, *The Causal Power of Social Structures. Emergence, Structure and Agency*, Cambridge 2010, pp. 77-80.

<sup>25</sup> C. Geertz, “The Growth of Culture and the Evolution of Mind”, in J.M. Scher (ed.), *Theories of the Mind*, New York 1962; J. Leavitt, “Meaning and Feeling in the Anthropology of Emotions”, *American Ethnologist*, vol. 23 (1996), pp. 514-539.

that create, consolidate and validate given behavioral patterns or reactions. Catherine Lutz and Lila Abu-Lughod addressed it accurately, claiming that the current shape and level of emotions in society depend not so much on universal formulas of survival (it is not a simple coupling of individual psycho-somatic reactions), but rather they result from the existing emotional discourse in political space. In this sense, emotional discourse is treated as a pragmatic act and communication performance, not as a kind of expression or mental reaction. Therefore, emotions are a key element in explaining the complex mechanisms of the game of power, including increasing influence or actual domination in politics.<sup>26</sup>

In this interpretation, political space is reduced to discursive and cultural practices, where emotions – their course, content, range, etc. – are determined by the symbolic sphere. Using Stuart Hall's arguments, one can say that this is not about political power *per se*, but about political "cultural power" based on evoking, controlling and steering specific emotions in politics.<sup>27</sup> In this sense, cultural power is also the power of managing the affective sphere, more precisely, secondary emotions functioning in given political conditions. It means stimulating, controlling and extinguishing emotions – both positive and negative – in public space in order for the rulers to obtain or maintain power. It also means the use of social engineering to discredit opponent or political rivals. It means a situation in which emotions, those conditioned by cultural factors, become a tool through which thoughts, attitudes, behaviors and communication on a social scale are controlled and manipulated.

From the point of view of shaping political leadership based on resentment, the holistic approach to emotions seems to be crucial, where the sociocultural context and/or structural condition translates directly into individual affective sphere. This includes the explaining of different types of emotions not only by referring each time to personal reactions or endogenous factors (subjective feeling, internal analysis of emotion), but rather to extended the scope of the scientific research. This inclusion and complementation of exogenous factors (objective attitude, external determinants of emotion), where, primarily, some collective patterns of the emotion-specific response in society (some interactive community) are investigated, that is, different variants shaped on the basis of the emergence of common, similar emotions in given socio-structural conditions.

Hence, emotions may be experienced socially – they are not simply individual, but inter-subjective experiences.<sup>28</sup> Resentment is not only an individual emotion and/or subjective frame of mind, but rather some collective, interpersonal emotion, an alignment or coordination of individual emotions. Therefore, the emotions in politics contribute to the emergence or continuation of social stratification or power positions.

<sup>26</sup> C. Lutz, L. Abu-Lughod, "Introduction: Emotion, Discourse, and the Politics of Everyday Life", in Eidem (eds.), *Language and the Politics of Emotion*, Cambridge 1990, pp. 1-24.

<sup>27</sup> S. Hall, "The 'Structured Communication' of Events", *Stencilled Occasional Paper*, no. 5 (1974), p. 32.

<sup>28</sup> K.T. Strongman, *The Psychology of Emotion. From Everyday Life to Theory*, Chichester 2003, pp. 177-192; W. TenHouten, *A General Theory of Emotions and Social Life*, London-New York 2007, p. 43.



It is about varied statuses, different positions, or unequal places in political rivalry – more broadly about intergroup antagonisms based on various forms of emotional manipulation.<sup>29</sup>

## CLASS RESENTMENT

Our considerations lead to the conclusion that politics, including discursive practices or communication between various political entities, is determined by the emotional plane. It is mainly about secondary emotions, which under the influence of various circumstances (emotional discreditation used by politicians), historical moments (political crises, revolutions, ideological unrests etc. that arouse and/or refer to specific emotions) or social processes spread over time (education, socialization, internalization etc. based on a given set of values/emotions) have a gradual impact on the members of a society. In historiosophical research, it is emphasized that political practice is even “marked” by emotions through which, and thanks to which a broadly understood political change is realized. Resentment is a similar case. On the one hand, these types of emotions focus and bring together people, groups or social classes in given concrete and historical conditions, which is reflected in similar responsiveness or social sensitivity (relatively similar reactions to political reality), and, as a consequence, triggers the expression of collective anger, opposition, revenge or justice.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, resentment is an important factor in shaping and conducting political practices. Hence resentment can be treated as: a reactive attitude – a reaction to injustice or indifference; a legitimate and valuable form of anger responding to perceived moral wrongs; an emotional testimony that we care about ourselves and our rights; an emotional apprehension of undeserved advantage; an accusing anger that responds to threats or perceived violations of norms.<sup>31</sup>

The emotion of resentment is not only associated with sociocultural, discursive production of emotions, especially secondary emotions in public sphere, but also becomes synonymous of a *kind of knowing* and/or *piece of understanding* between particularly entities in intersubjective communication. In this approach, emotions are elements of

<sup>29</sup> R. Solomon, “The Politics of Emotion”, in R. Kingston, L. Ferry (eds.), *Bringing the Passions Back In: The Emotions in Political Philosophy*, Vancouver 2008, pp. 189-208; J. Protevi, “Political Emotion”, in C. von Scheve, M. Salmela (eds.), *Collective Emotions. Perspectives from Psychology, Philosophy and Sociology*, Oxford 2014, pp. 326-340.

<sup>30</sup> M. Ferro, *Resentment in History*, Cambridge 2010, pp. 21-72.

<sup>31</sup> W.G. Runciman, *Relative Deprivation and Social Justice: A Study of Attitudes to Social Inequality in Twentieth-Century England*, Harmondsworth 1972, pp. 3-9; T.H. Marshall, *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development*, Westport 1973, pp. 168-170; A. Ortony, G.L. Clore, A. Collins, *The Cognitive Structure of Emotions*, Cambridge 1988; R. Solomon, *A Passion for Justice: Emotions and the Origins of the Social Contract*, New York 1991, pp. 247-248; J.M. Barbalet, *Emotion, Social Theory, and Social Structure. A Macrosociological Approach*, Cambridge 1998, p. 63; P.F. Strawson, *Freedom and Resentment and Other Essays*, London–New York 2008, p. 15; T. Brudholm, *Resentment's Virtue: Jean Améry and the Refusal to Forgive*, Philadelphia 2008, pp. 9-11.

appraisal – formed through interaction and involvement (or a lack of) with the social world.<sup>32</sup> Consequently, resentment is not just an individual emotion, reactive attitude or intra-psychic content, but a social relationship.<sup>33</sup>

It should be remembered that resentment is an ambiguous term, which is reflected in differentiation between *resentment* and the French notion of *ressentiment*. In this context, the notion of resentment describes certain feeling, especially negative reaction, mental state or grudge towards someone as a result of hurtful or offending behaviours or actions. In turn, *ressentiment* is a complex web of beliefs that foster it, and the impact of this feeling on individuals, groups and societies. According to Max Scheler, *ressentiment* is a self-poisoning of the mind which has quite definite causes and consequences. It is a lasting mental attitude, caused by the systematic repression of certain emotions and affects which, as such, are normal components of human nature. Their repression leads to the constant tendency to indulge in certain kinds of value delusions and corresponding value judgments. The emotions and affects primarily concerned are revenge, hatred, malice, envy, the impulse to detract, and spite. Thirst for revenge is the most important source of *ressentiment* (...) and feeling of *inability* and *impotence*.<sup>34</sup>

In other words, the existence of resentment among people, interpreted as a lasting mental attitude, is a synonym not only for individuals gradually becoming aware of their own *impotence* in relation to the external world, but above all for hatred arising from it. According to Friedrich Nietzsche, such hatred is not only destructive, but also – paradoxically – it can be a driving force to negate and/or overcome existing socio-structural conditions. It is about the position and mentality of the so-called *slaves*, that is, people *inferior* or *weaker* who, in the face of their own failures in the world, reach for imaginary substitute means – imaginary revenge. They reach for resentments, thanks to which they are able to create new ideals or values (re-evaluate existing, unfavorable values, position, status etc.). In this sense, a resentful person must make an *enemy* for himself as a starting point for action, but also as an antithesis for himself. As suggested by Nietzsche, *the slave revolt in morality begins when ressentiment itself becomes creative and gives birth to values: the ressentiment of natures that are denied the true reaction, that of deeds, and compensate themselves with an imaginary revenge.... This inversion of the value-positing eye-this need to direct one's view outward instead of back to oneself – is of the essence of ressentiment: in order to exist, slave morality always first needs a hostile external world; it needs, physiologically speaking, external stimuli in order to act at all – its action is fundamentally reaction*.<sup>35</sup>

In this respect, resentment or a reference to culturally and socially rooted resentments is directly related to the empowerment of specific groups, strata or social classes,

<sup>32</sup> E. Hutchison, *Affective Communities in World Politics. Collective Emotions after Trauma*, Cambridge 2016, p. 95.

<sup>33</sup> S. Tomelleri, "The Sociology of Resentment", in B. Fantini, D.M. Moruno, J. Moscoso (eds.), *On Resentment: Past and Present*, Newcastle 2013, p. 260.

<sup>34</sup> M. Scheler, *Ressentiment*, Milwaukee 2007, pp. 27-58.

<sup>35</sup> F.W. Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, New York 1989, pp. 36-37.

where political polarization occurs through the negative perception of specific emotions. It is about the instrumental use of emotions as a strategy or political tactic, where by evoking, and consequently controlling revenge, anger or envy in society, political entities implement their own political ambitions, including imperative motives or leadership practice. At the same time, the propensity for resentment or resentment in politics – understood as cognitive and social emotional reactions occurring among people – does not necessarily mean unequivocal emotional states articulated in public space on a mass scale. It can be a sign of emotional suppression, internal tension spread over time. Tensions, which, despite the fact that it is not fully articulated in public space, remain under the control of the authorities.<sup>36</sup>

It is worth emphasizing that shaping and sharing resentment in a supra-individual dimension in given concrete and historical conditions is related to ideology, which in this case should be considered from the perspective of human desires and emotions. In this sense, ideology becomes the mediated (representative) meaning-forming system used by the rulers, referring to collective, socialized emotions, which in turn leads to the determination and reproduction of specific practices of domination, influence or asymmetry of leadership in politics. It is a culturally structured and structuring instrument thanks to which inter-group conflicts or class antagonism, as well as political rivalry or class struggle can materialize.<sup>37</sup> In this perspective, the dissemination of ideology takes place by means of arousing, stimulating and extinguishing emotions – both primary and secondary – in a society thanks to which it is possible to create social political atmosphere (mood), including legitimization and delegitimization processes in political competition. Hence, the basic goal of the political entities seeking power (e.g. political parties and their leaders) is the rhetorical organization of thematic discourses that are part of public discourse. It is about adopting and imposing on a wide audience – positioned segments of the electorate – messages which are diverse in form and content, expressing previously defined views, ideation systems, beliefs, prejudices, fears, threats, stereotypes, etc.

In political practice, such a complex rhetorical organization based on emotions is directly related to the selectivity of the message, controlling perception and collective thinking and, more importantly, it determines the communication and meaningful framework for diverse political activities – more specifically election rivalry or political struggle. Of key importance to the authorities is to develop and use supra-individual emotions – including reactions or internal emotional tensions – thanks to which domination, governance and management become not so much possible as they are more effective and efficient. It is about the moment where the control of the rulers is extended to the emotional patterns which occur with an individual's experience are transformed and change as a result of relational and circumstantial changes, which provoke further emotions.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> M.C. Nussbaum, *Anger and Forgiveness: Resentment, Generosity, Justice*, New York 2016, p. 51.

<sup>37</sup> L. Althusser, *For Marx*, London–New York 2005, pp. 233–234.

<sup>38</sup> J.M. Barbalet, *Emotion, Social Theory...*, pp. 23–25.

In the case of resentment, we are talking about the mechanism of collective empathy, which is a premise for shaping collective (i.e. class) consciousness, identification or social identities. In the latter case, the speech includes the use of negative emotions when favouring one's own group and discriminating against a foreign group, which favours the formation of such positive self-esteem in the own group, as it leads to radicalization of behaviour – more precisely – practical discrimination or dehumanizing the foreign group.<sup>39</sup> It is a joint, supra-individual, somewhat temporal and contingent, emotional reaction. It is reading or perception of objective (external to a given social whole) adverse socio-structural conditions that result in a sinister attitude, negative motivation to take action, envious criticism, uncompromising desire to change, etc. According to Thomas H. Marshall, class antagonism has its affective sources in *resentment against inequality*, which results in class resentment in social circumstances. What is more, we can talk about stratified society based on supra-individual resentment. Of course, class resentment depended on three distinct processes in public sphere: comparison (main forces creating social levels; mechanism of trigger for a situation of political conflict); frustration (arises wherever privilege creates inequality of opportunity; frustration reinforces class resentment, which means: *imput to the superior class responsibility for the injustice under which the inferior suffers*) and oppression (*conflict between parties engaged in unequal co-operation; the synonym of the group of persons wielding power*).<sup>40</sup> In this interpretation, class resentment – defined as unacknowledged shame, arising from rejection (by a higher social class), leads to anger – is always situated in the context of culture and *generated in the frustrated sacrificial contact have a clear basis in class relations, but their consequences are individuating and isolating*.<sup>41</sup>

It should be remembered that one crucial function of collective emotion in public sphere is integration and affiliation of certain groups, social classes or communities. Therefore among different types of political activity – especially differently human agency of political leader – based on the class resentment are the synonymous of collective sublimations (large emotional expression), which merged and bonded some entities into social whole.<sup>42</sup> By sharing resentment – more precisely the socio-technical efforts of the authorities to share resentment among the ruled – members of a given society, at least temporarily and/or for generations, begin to think, feel, categorize, explain, etc. in a similar way. Thanks to such an emotional mechanism, homogeneity of attitudes and behaviors, common awareness and similar responsiveness is realized to some extent.<sup>43</sup> In the case of collective and/or class resentment it is also the

<sup>39</sup> P. Ścigaj, "Od osobowości autorytarnej do uzasadnienia systemu. Elementy teorii krytycznej w psychologicznych koncepcjach wyjaśniających wrogość międzygrupową", *Teoria Polityki*, vol. 2 (2018), pp. 181-201.

<sup>40</sup> T.H. Marshall, *Class, Citizenship*.

<sup>41</sup> J.M. Barbalet, "A Macro Sociology of Emotion: Class Resentment", *Sociological Theory*, vol. 10, no. 2 (1992), pp. 150-159; R. Sennett, J. Cobb, *The Hidden Injuries of Class*, New York 1983, pp. 137-139.

<sup>42</sup> J.M. Barbalet, "A Macro Sociology...", p. 157.

<sup>43</sup> T.J. Scheff, *Microsociology: Discourse, Emotion, and Social Structure*, Chicago 1990, pp. 76-77.

phenomenon of escalation of hostility in politics, where we deal, among others, with created dichotomization of *we* and *they*, *friend-foe* or numerous intergroup antagonisms, thanks to which it is easier to control collective imagination, shape beliefs and attitudes among the ruled, and, most importantly, effectively realize the goals, interests or needs of the authorities. For example, the emotions of resentment and class resentment may be the sources of the siege mentality. It includes applying negative emotions by the rulers to consolidate a group, nation or state in relation to the external environment (other groups, nations or states) that is defined and perceived as hostile, evil or unfriendly. Here, the affective component is complementary to creating and reproducing the atmosphere of fear, anxiety or anger among the society, especially cultivating resentment, hatred, desire for revenge for generations, common-siege beliefs, negative stereotypes or some specific sensitivity in processing information. The emotional base of siege mentality is both repulsive (shared by members of the society of emotions of envy, disgust and fear of *strangers* or *enemies*), as well as reactive (supra-unit desire for revenge, retaliation, revenge for actual and/or imaginary wrongs, crimes, traumas, aggression, wars, crimes etc.).<sup>44</sup>

## CLASS RESENTMENT AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

In other words, class resentments play an important role in shaping and conducting political practices, especially those related to the creation and reproduction of leadership asymmetry between leader and followers. This is the moment when the leader is aware that the leadership activity – including accreditation and social legitimisation – is realised in specific social and structural conditions, interpreted as emotional regime.<sup>45</sup> It is a political surrounding in which collective emotions stimulate and determine multiple political processes, include arranging of the space (discourse, argument, ideology), produce thinking what is political<sup>46</sup> and form some emotional climates, which are connected with asymmetries of authority.<sup>47</sup> At the same time, it is a space where emotions are

<sup>44</sup> D. Bar-Tal, Y. Teichman, *Stereotypes and Prejudice in Conflict. Representations of Arabs in Israeli Jewish Society*, Cambridge 2005, pp. 96-98; J. Ziolkowski, "Syndrom oblężonej twierdzy jako mechanizm socjotechniczny", in F. Pierzchalski, J. Golinowski (eds.), *Socjotechnika lęku w polityce*, Bydgoszcz 2016, pp. 77-96; J. Ziolkowski, *Syndrom oblężonej twierdzy*, Warszawa 2019, pp. 45-65.

<sup>45</sup> William M. Reddy defined emotional regime as: *The set of normative emotions and the official rituals, practices, and emotives that express and inculcate them; a necessary underpinning of any stable political regime*. In this case we deal, in general, with two types of emotional regimes: *strict regimes offer strong emotional management tools at the expense of allowing greater scope for self-exploration and navigation. Loose regimes allow for navigation and allow diverse sets of management tools to be fashioned locally, individually, or through robust subgroup formation* (W.M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*, Cambridge 2004, pp. 125-129).

<sup>46</sup> M. Freeden, *The Political Theory of Political Thinking. The Anatomy of a Practice*, Oxford 2015, pp. 84-91.

<sup>47</sup> J.M. Barbalet, N. Demertzis, "Collective Fear and Societal Change", in N. Demertzis (ed.), *Emotions in Politics. The Affect Dimension in Political Tension*, London 2013, pp. 173-177.

an indispensable element of practices of representation, where not only the meanings for particular facts, events or states of affairs from the world of politics are determined in a controlled and selective way, but also the level of commitment, trust, hostility, etc. is defined among the general public.<sup>48</sup> In both cases it concerns the direct shaping of public opinion by the leaders (the rulers), especially the controlling of social moods or – using Walter Lippmann's arguments – “the manufacture of consent” among potential and real followers (governed).<sup>49</sup> It is emotionally based manipulation/propaganda that becomes leadership indoctrination, that is, supporters uncritically, often not fully consciously and irrationally, believe and accept the leader's words, projects, visions, actions, decisions etc. In political practice, this translates into voluntary, although emotionally initiated, submission of followers to the leader. In this regard, Noam Chomsky was right when, addressing a variety of techniques of manufacture of consent, he stated the following: *For submissiveness to become a reliable trait, it must be entrenched in every realm. The public are to be observers, not participants, consumers of ideology as well as products. Eduardo Galeano writes that “the majority must resign itself to the consumption of fantasy. Illusions of wealth are sold to the poor, illusions of freedom to the oppressed, dreams of victory to the defeated and of power to the weak.”*<sup>50</sup>

In this sense, leadership practice is based on establishing and/or referring by the leader to the normative order supported by the spectrum of secondary emotions which the leader gives a specific meaning, meaning or interpretation. At the same time, they are emotions that resonate and have an impact on the supporters – their attitudes, motivations, behaviours, views and opinions about politics. In other words, such leadership practices become a manipulated emotional space, where specific emotions are at the same time a disciplinary measure and/or a premise for social conformism – habitus (elements confirming and reproducing the political status quo), as well as they can become a turning point for social dissatisfaction, resistance, rebellion, revolution, or, more broadly, political non-conformism (a factor undermining and destabilizing the political *status quo*).

In the first case, we are talking about the mechanism of deliberate implementation of supra-individual habituses among followers, which favorably structure the process of leadership of a given leader. Habituses, which are defined as *sustainable and transferable systemic predispositions*, sustain, perpetuate and reproduce a defined political order and structuring framework. In this way, the leader is able to lead more effectively, which means obtaining legitimacy among the supporters. It is a situation in which, through an emotional factor, the leader increases, among others: causal power; control over the environment; motivation; subjective OBE (out-of-body experience).<sup>51</sup>

<sup>48</sup> S. Hall, “The Work of Representation”, in S. Hall (ed.), *Representation. Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, London 2003, pp. 13-74; E. Hutchison, *Affective Communities...*, pp. 139-151.

<sup>49</sup> N. Allott, “The Role of Misused Concepts in Manufacturing Consent: A Cognitive Account”, in L. de Saussure, P. Schulz (eds.), *Manipulation and Ideologies in the Twentieth Century. Discourse, Language, Mind*, Amsterdam–Philadelphia 2005, pp. 147-168.

<sup>50</sup> N. Chomsky, *Deterring Democracy*, London 1998, p. 370.

<sup>51</sup> F. Pierzchalski, *Political Leadership...*, pp. 48-49.



On the other hand, the second case is about achieving a varied activity in terms of form and content of the leader, especially that related to mobilization among followers, where the reasons, arguments or narrative used by the leader – each time referring to emotions – leads to a political change. As Helmut Schoeck argued about the negative emotion of envy in the context of the affective initiation of collective political activity: *There is no intrinsic, scientific objection to a social movement, a political party or a sect basing its tenets on the motive of envy* (more negative emotions – emphasis F.P.), *or using it as an inducement to its followers and to gain new adherents. The envy latent in man is no less socially legitimate in this capacity than is, say, love, the urge for freedom, national pride, homesickness, nostalgia or any other emotion that can be used to inspire collective political action.*<sup>52</sup>

In other words, leadership based on resentment and/or class resentment is assumed to increase the chance of effective leadership in given cultural and political conditions.<sup>53</sup> This is the moment when political leaders are aware of the effectiveness of affective mechanisms in shaping opinions, behaviors, views or preferences in the social dimension, they even treat the affective sphere as a key instrument for gaining influence, domination and advantage in politics. This means, among others:

A pragmatic guarantee of emotional excitement and blindness, where the emotions of resentment or *ressentiment* become a productive *driving force* of creation as well as reproduction of leadership asymmetry. It is also the moment when negative emotions become an essential ingredient through which and thanks to which the leader defines, expresses and supervises the so-called *universal will* of broad masses of the people, including their own supporters.

The leader's application of a political strategy involving the emotional frustrating of society, where the instrumental use of resentment and class resentment causes emotional tensions, discrepancies or real and/or imaginary conflicts in politics, including those resulting in political communication, among others: a desire for revenge; a need to retaliate; striving to obtain compensation for wrongs; holding the "guilty" accountable; focusing anger or resentment on selected people, groups, nations, events etc. This is not only an effective tactic to consolidate and integrate supporters, but, above all, it allows for clear – even "fanatical" and uncompromising – political polarization. In practice, this leads to building lasting bonds and relations between the leader and the electorate. It means a delineation of the emotionally motivated demarcation line and the division into "we" (victims) versus "they" (winners), where the mutual feeling, sharing and articulation of a resentment is a sign of strength, agency, causality or supra-individual self-identification. This is a targeted manipulation based on the activation of negative emotions, which is to lead to deliberate dichotomization imposed by the leader, and, consequently, to stigmatization of specific participants in political rivalry. In this sense,

<sup>52</sup> H. Schoeck, *Envy: A Theory of Social Behaviour*, Indianapolis 1987, p. 237.

<sup>53</sup> J.E. Dinh, R.G. Lord, E. Hoffman, "Leadership Perception and Information Processing: Influences of Symbolic, Connectionist, Emotional, and Embodied Architectures", in D.V. Day (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook...*, p. 316.

resentment is becoming a prerequisite for political discrediting, stigmatizing or combating political opponents.

Temporary stabilization and stimulation of followers, where the occurrence and functioning of resentment and class resentment among them results in a growing predictability of their actions, behaviors, views, etc. For the leader, this sharing of negative emotions and/or homogeneous reactive attitudes among supporters becomes a guarantee of consolidating leadership relationships. Paradoxically, the leader-initiated and nurtured *ressentiment* or resentment among followers is a targeted rationalization of the leadership mechanism, in which, by means of using irrational arguments or using a narrative based on suppressed or explicitly articulated aversion, envy, anger, etc., the leader gains more influence and control over his followers. Here, the creation of class resentment by the leader has greater resonance and social acceptance than the use of factual argumentation or conducting deliberations of various form and content among everyone. It is not about listening to the followers' needs, goals or preferences, but about imposing an envious worldview, narrative or vision on them. On the basis of negative emotions – their fueling, escalating, targeting – we dealing with an *non-inclusive dialogue*, where the diverse interaction between the leader and his supporters oscillate around a language, symbolism or interpretation that is biased, or even marked with resentment. This communication is hermetic enough to be shared and accepted by the chosen ones – those negatively excited.

Summing up, it can be said that in such a complex and interdisciplinary issue addressing the instrumentalisation of class resentment in leadership practices, political science analyses should consider the following issues:

Human activity – especially cognition, communication, behaviour or activity in politics – is not limited to evolutionarily assigned automatisms; it also covers reflectivity, which is determined by such factors as processes of internalization, socialization, education, or, more broadly, by cultural transmission. Moreover, human reflectivity in the political space is determined by the affective sphere, which in the case of leadership practices is synonymous with irrationality or instability.

Political practice, varied in form and content, is mainly discourse-communicative semantic practice, where mediation and representation play key roles. Therefore, the processes of creating, maintaining, reproducing and losing leadership asymmetry in specific political conditions translate into making references to the cultural codes, meanings and ideological values prevailing in society. These processes are accompanied by an instrumental use and/or elicitation of specific emotional states in the leader – followers relationship, which, paradoxically, can (and often does) increase the effectiveness of leadership processes.

Leadership in politics – its actual legitimization or institutionalization – is not only about the rational consolidation by the leader of the desired belief structures among the followers, but also means emotional and imaginative indoctrination or manipulation, which translate into making references to collective secondary emotions.

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**Filip PIERZCHALSKI** is an assistant professor with Ph.D. in political science at University of Warsaw, author of *The Category of Political Subjectivity in Two Perspectives: Individualistic and Holistic* (2009) [Podmiotowość polityczna w perspektywie indywidualistycznej i holistycznej]; *The Morphogenesis of Political Leadership. Between the Structure and Human Agency* (2013) [Morfogeneza przywództwa politycznego. Pomiędzy strukturą a podmiotowością sprawczą]; *Political Leadership in Morphogenetic Perspective*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main (2017) and co-editor of *Feminism in Four Scenes: Feminist Perspectives in Poland* [Feminizm po polsku] (2011; 2018); *Authoritarian Populism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Critical Reconstruction* [Autorytarny populizm w XXI wieku. Krytyczna rekonstrukcja] (2017). His current research interests include political theory, political leadership, aesthetics and politics.