Igor Cvejić

TRUST AND "BEING MOVED" AS FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT IN SITUATIONS OF UNCERTAINTY[1]

ABSTRACT
The main aim of this paper is to put emphasis on the role of trust and the emotion of being moved in a situation of crisis. I do not intend to address the general role, or all roles, these emotions might have in a crisis situation. My focus is rather on the role of these emotions in we-formation, presupposing that mutual engagement between the actors is the crucial constituent through which first-person singular shifts to first-person plural. I rely on Bennet Helm's argument on how trust can function as an invitation to delineate communal norms in the new circumstances of uncertainty. Accordingly, by being trusted by other(s), the addressee is entitled to the expected responsibility for a situation: (1) the addressee is entitled as a member of a group (of us who are responsible in the situation); (2) the addressee is exposed to pressure to respond to a situation with responsibility. In the second part, I adopt Cova's and Deonna's argument about the function of the emotion of being moved. I suggest that in such a situation "being moved" expresses the readiness to reorganize one's hierarchy of values in the light of new circumstances of mutual dependency. Taken together, trust and being moved portray the outline of mutual engagement between the actors in a crisis situation which aims to establish new communal norms and values.

KEYWORDS
engagement, trust, being moved, uncertainty, emotion

Trust is an attitude in relation to other(s) which we usually associate with some form of certainty. In other words, it seems that the nature of trust involves confidence that one will and can do something, or otherwise confidence in one's moral and political decisions. This is what we express when we say: "I trust that he will do it" or "I trust him completely". However, trust also involves some reference to at least the possibility of contingency – trust is a relevant

Igor Cvejić: Research Fellow, University of Belgrade, Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory; igor.cvejic@ifdt.bg.ac.rs. ORCID: 0000-0001-9634-6652; Researcher ID: F-9953-2018

attitude only when there is a possibility that an agent could let someone down or fail. Trust is a forward-looking attitude which concerns something that has not taken place yet. My aim is to explore the role of trust, as a forward-looking emotion toward other(s), in situations of uncertainty such as the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Contrary to the common understanding of trust as being justified inside institutional reality, I will argue for the emergence of trust in a situation of uncertainty. I do not have an intention to address the general role, or all roles, these emotions might have in situations of crisis. My focus is rather on the role of these emotions in we-formation, presupposing that mutual engagement between the actors is the crucial constituent through which first-person singular shifts to first-person plural. This is of particular importance in situations of uncertainty and mutual interdependency. In such a situation, trust could be understood as an invitation to introduce new norms or change the existing ones, given the new circumstances. As a forward-looking positive attitude, trust, even therapeutic one (cf. McGeer 2008), exposes the addressee to pressure to respond adequately. Namely, by being trusted by other(s), the addressee is entitled to the expected responsibility for a situation: (1) the addressee is entitled as a member of a group (of us who are responsible in the situation); (2) the addressee is exposed to pressure to respond to a situation with responsibility. In the recent pandemic, this kind of trust has been paradigmatically expressed with the phrase: "Be responsible".

There is another emotion which I want to address in this paper, namely, the emotion of being moved. "Being moved" has recently gained the attention of researchers. Notably, Cova and Deonna have claimed its status as a distinct type of emotion (Cova, Deonna 2014). As argued by these authors, being moved is a distinct emotion which has an important function in "the reorganization of one's hierarchy of values and priorities" (Cova, Deonna 2014). In this paper, I will focus on the social function of this emotion. My aim is to show how being moved could represent a significant response to the social engagement of others. Moreover, expressions of this emotion could also reinforce links that tie a community together (Cova, Deonna 2014). In this regard, these (very) manifestations (themselves) can count as engaged acts. Finally, I will examine how trust and being moved taken together can be an incentive to reorganize communal norms and values.

The Problem of Communality in the Situations of Uncertainty from the Philosophical Point of View

The philosophical arguments about shared experiences, collective entities, groups and 'being together' usually aim to provide their formal conditions. Generally speaking, it is about the formal conditions of collective intentionality – the capability of minds to be jointly directed at objects, goals, states of affairs, values, etc. There are certainly several different accounts of collective intentionality (Bratman 1993, Searle 1990, Tuomela 2007, Gilbert 1992), but all of them presuppose some kind of common knowledge between the actors.

Values which a community shares or norms of a community are what they are only insofar as there is a common knowledge about them, i.e. I know that you know that I know that you know that X. Under those circumstances of common knowledge, X counts as a value or as an object of our joint attention. Not only does common knowledge provide the foundation of collective intentionality and communal norms, but it also regulates our cooperation – in the sense that I know what part of our job I should undertake, and I also know and trust that others will do their part in the completion of the job.

By the notion of the situation of uncertainty I want to refer to such situations in which the security of existing communal norms or their relevance to the new circumstances become undermined. Either the existing norms become insecure and lose their foundation in common knowledge, or they cannot appropriately respond to the new circumstances, with the practical implication that they are not relevant for the new situation. Moreover, the dictionaries we use, semantics, our communication, particularly about the event and communal norms, become less secure (cf. Boltanski 2011; Cvejić, Ivković, Prodanović 2023).

The philosophical challenge is to explain how, in such situations, collective intentionality could be (re)established. The conditions which make the issue challenging are (1) that there is no security nor common knowledge that we are jointly attending to the situation in the same way and (2) there is no security nor common knowledge about what the relevant communal norms regarding the event which we are jointly accepting are. My main presupposition is that social engagement between the actors plays a crucial role in establishing collective intentionality.[2] This thesis draws on more interaction-oriented and plural phenomenological accounts of collective entities, such as those defended by Zahavi and Loidolt (Zahavi 2015, 2021; Loidolt 2018). Plural subject, accordingly, has to be understood as a subject in relation – constituted of relations between its members. What is needed are experienced engaged relations between participants through which first-person singular shifts to first-person plural, i.e. "mutual engagement where we immediately affect each other" (Zahavi 2015). It is crucial that we adopt a stance with the other, which might be called second-person engagement[3]:

> Second-person engagement is a subject–subject (you-me) relation where I am not only aware of and directed at the other and, at the same time, implicitly aware of myself in the accusative, as attended to or addressed by the other, but where the attitudes of mutual address establish a form of 'communicative connectedness', (Zahavi 2021: 16)

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2   There have been several different contributions in the tradition of continental philosophy that explore the formation of collectives in situations where prior common knowledge is absent. For instance, Hannah Arendt's analysis of plurality (refer to Loidolt 2018) and Badiou's analysis of the becoming of a political subject (Badiou 2003) offer valuable insights in this regard. I would like to express my gratitude to the anonymous reviewer for bringing this to my attention.

3   Cf. Schilbach et al. 2013.

Further, I will investigate the possibility that emotional engagements with others (such as trust) may be crucial in the situations of uncertainty, because the knowledge about the event and relevant norms are unstable.

Trust as an Invitation to Introduce New Norms or Change the Existing Ones

In his book *Communities of Respect* (2017), Bennet W. Helm explores the normative grounding and the role of reactive attitudes in human societies. It is based on his earlier considerations of plural agents, which I cannot address here (Helm 2001, 2009; see also Cvejić 2016). He understands reactive attitudes as emotions which manifest themselves as forms of praise and blame. Their foundation lies in the norms which constitute our society. Thus, when making a call of reactive attitudes, I put myself in a position of authority and, at the same time, I am holding the addressee as well as witnesses responsible for reacting. I assume my authority to react because I am actually expressing my commitment to the norms and values we share. In other words, I am calling upon the norms that constitute our society. For example, when I express dissatisfaction with the corruption in Serbian institutions, I am actually expressing my commitment to the norms which (should) constitute our society. In such a situation, my calling upon the norms and values that bind us at the same time presses the relevant *import* (significance) of both the circumstances and the norms on fellow members, thus inviting them to react correspondingly (Helm 2017: 84). And it is important to note that the function of these calls is not only to make the recipient take the message, but also a normative one:

> to understand what I have termed the "call" of reactive attitudes in terms of communication – the function of getting the recipient to take up one's message – is to miss the idea that they are forms of praise or blame and so are ways of holding someone responsible or, in the case of self reactive attitudes, of taking responsibility. (Helm 2017: 62)

Elaborating the issue further, Helm focuses on the concept of trust, understanding trust as a form of reactive attitude and forward-looking emotion. Moreover, Helm provides us with a possibility that trust, as a reactive attitude, can sometimes be an invitation to introduce new norms or change the existing ones:

> As forward-looking, the call of trust can be an invitation to a delineation of how it is proper for us to show respect in the face of particular circumstances of dependency, even when this is not simply a part of our normative expectations in advance. In such a case, trust presents a view of the import of these circumstances of dependency that purports to be our view, and it calls on the trustee as well as witnesses to take up this invitation and respond accordingly – it presses this import on them. (Helm 2017: 108)

This, of course, requires further elaboration. What is important to notice is that it is not solely to the *content* of a normative recommendation to which the

"trustees" are invited to respond. As a positive forward-looking reactive attitude, trust (even therapeutic) would immediately give an *entitlement* to a trustee. A trustee is, above all, invited to feel as a respected fellow member. At the same time, the call pushes the significance of the event on the trustee. Moreover, it also discloses the circumstances of *mutual dependency*, circumstances in which it is at the same time important that each one of us reacts individually, and that "we" react as a collective. Accordingly, the importance of the event taken together with the presupposed inability of the system to respond to the situation makes the necessity of social engagement intelligible. However, this does not mean that the new communal norms are predetermined in the invitation. Trust, in such cases, is above all an invitation to delineate the norms:

> We may not antecedently have a norm for how it is proper to respond with respect to this kind of dependency, and my trust invites us to see how this might go, in much the same way that your kind offer of help does. Of course, this call of trust, this delineation of our view of what we expect of each other in such circumstances of dependency, is subject to review by the 'appeals court' of others' reactive responses to my trust […] and it may be rejected by them. (ibid.)

There could be no better example of such a scenario than the widely spread call for trust in its primal form in the recent pandemic: "*#beresponsible*". This call, although it could hardly be connected to any determinate cognitive content, immediately entitles everyone to feel as "one of us" (who are responsible). But it also pushes the import of the circumstances of mutual dependency on everyone, circumstances in which every one of us should recognize that we should *collectively* react to the situation.[4]

Being Moved

In the previous paragraph I discussed how trust can function as an invitation to delineate communal norms in the new circumstances of uncertainty. Accordingly, by being trusted by other(s), the addressee is entitled to the expected responsibility for a situation: (1) the addressee is entitled as a member of a group (of us who are responsible in the situation); (2) the addressee is exposed to pressure to respond to a situation with responsibility. Trust presses the import of the situation of mutual dependency upon the trustee. Furthermore, as

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4   My intention in this paper is not to assert that "we-formation" and calls for engagement in such situations are necessarily positive, progressive, or emancipatory. On the contrary, societies in such circumstances are highly vulnerable to various forms of exploitation (see Losoncz, Losoncz 2020). This article focuses solely on the possibility of "we-formations" that remain fragile and do not necessarily entail progressiveness. In other words, the question of which communal norms are desirable for us is a separate yet significant question, one that may not have a definitive answer but deserves to be posed in advance. For a deeper understanding of how complex domination can suppress emerging "we-formations" see Cvejić, Ivković, and Prodanović (2023). I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for highlighting this aspect of the issue.

a positive forward-looking emotion toward other(s), trust can play a significant role in the trustee's rational motivation. However, trust in this case is, at least initially, an asymmetrical engaged act. The ground of this trust is questionable, and it could even be unwarranted or merely therapeutical, providing that the norms are yet to be established (Helm 2017). Thus, it can easily be rejected. On the other hand, the trustee is exposed to the pressure of responsibility without prior acceptance. What fails in this picture is the readiness of the trustee to engage in the reorganization of values in the new circumstances of mutual dependency. To address this issue, I suggest introducing the emotion of being moved into the wider picture. I will argue that being moved prepares individuals to act in the reorganization of values in response to a situation.

The emotion of "being moved" has only recently gained the attention of researchers. Being moved is a complex emotional experience characterized by a sense of deep emotional resonance or a feeling of being affected in a profound way. It can arise in response to a variety of stimuli, such as witnessing acts of kindness, hearing powerful stories, or experiencing acts of beauty or excellence. The emotion of being moved is often associated with experiencing art, such as music, literature or film (Konečni 2005). It can often lead to tears when we are touched by positive values. However, being moved is not limited to art experiences.

Florian Cova and Julien Deonna have claimed its status as a distinct type of emotion. According to them, it has a unique formal object, phenomenology, relation to action tendencies and personal as well as social functions (Cova, Deonna 2014). The formal object of an emotion defines the type of emotion it is. It could be understood as the logical limitation of the types of object emotions can have (Kenny 2003: 132) or as the evaluative property that we ascribe to the object of emotion (e.g., the object of fear is dangerous). Common situations that elicit the emotion of being moved can be associated with a strong presence of something positive in a generally negative framework, such as reconciliation between two estranged old friends, the sacrifice of a soldier or unexpected kind gestures, etc. However, it is the presence of the positive in the negative, or emergence of the positive which elicits our emotional reaction. Moreover, we are also and often moved by the presence of positive values without there being any background of negative values at all, e.g. the birth of a child. Cova and Deonna argue that situations that evoke the emotion of being moved are "instances in which positive values are brought to the fore and manifest themselves in a particularly salient way" (Cova, Deonna 2014: 453). Accordingly, the formal object of being moved can be described as "a certain positive value standing out" (ibid.: 454).

The emotion of being moved can be particularly evident during major societal crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. There are several examples of such elicitors. Healthcare workers are risking their lives to care for patients with COVID-19, often working long hours and sacrificing time with their families. Many people have been moved by the bravery and selflessness of these individuals. Another example are communities who came together to support

one another during lockdowns and other restrictions. For example, people have organized food drives for those in need, or have volunteered to deliver groceries and other supplies to those who were unable to leave their homes. We witnessed numerous acts of kindness and generosity, such as people leaving care packages for healthcare workers, or offering to walk dogs for those unable to do so themselves. In the time of crisis, we are especially prone to being moved by instances in which positive values are brought to the fore.

According to Cova and Deonna, "being moved operates first as a powerful reminder of the values that we hold most dear and take ourselves to be governed by" (Cova, Deonna 2014: 458). When being moved, we respond to the values we did not expect to see, or which have not been realized for some reason. These values might be "suspended" or "forgotten" during the course of our hectic and anxious lives. Thus, Cova and Deonna conclude that the general function of being moved "consists in the reorganization of one's hierarchy of values and priorities" (ibid.). Furthermore, they suggest a social function of this emotion. Firstly, the emotion of being moved is often related to the values that promote cooperation, such as solidarity or benevolence (in spite of the unfavorable circumstances) and, by expressing this emotion, one signals that they are a good cooperator: "the experience of being moved could lead individuals to reorganize their priorities in a way that reinforces attachment to values such as generosity or friendship and thus encourage the organism to continue to cooperate" (Cova, Deonna: 459). Secondly, the emotion of being moved represents our commitment to the values we share and one's readiness to act on behalf of them, i.e. it has the "power to reinforce the links that tie a community together by signaling to its members the importance that a given individual attaches to the most fundamental values sustaining that community" (ibid.).

This social function is of particular importance in times of crisis. From an empirical standpoint, the focus on cooperative values, such as generosity and friendship, could be crucial. However, I want to emphasize the role of readiness to reorganize the hierarchy of values. When one is being moved by some act during a crisis (e.g. the sacrifice of health workers or volunteers), one practically accepts the invitation or appeal to adopt a specific stance in the new circumstances, one is being engaged. It is important to note that the values to which we are reacting commonly refer to the values relevant to the crisis, values which we now find more important than ever, but which might be less relevant in a normal situation. This is because the crisis requires the reorganization of the hierarchy of values. In other words, one expresses the recognition of the new circumstances of mutual dependency and the *readiness*[5] to reorganize the hierarchy of values and act on behalf of it. This expression can also encourage others to cooperate, as Cova and Deonna have argued. In that sense, the expression of this emotion can count as an engaged act.

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5   For the difference between action readiness and action tendencies see Frijda 2007: 39.

Readiness to Reorganize the Hierarchy of Values

In this paper, my aim was to discuss the specific roles of trust and the emotion of being moved in a major societal crisis. I did not have an intention to address the general role, or all roles, these emotions might have in situations of crisis. My focus was on the role of these emotions in we-formation, presupposing that mutual engagement between the actors is the crucial constituent through which first-person singular shifts to first-person plural. To be more specific, I discussed the readiness to reorganize or change communal norms and values in the new circumstances of mutual dependency.

I addressed Helm's argument on how trust can function as an invitation to delineate communal norms in the new circumstances of uncertainty. Accordingly, by being trusted by other(s), the addressee is entitled to the expected responsibility for a situation: (1) the addressee is entitled as a member of a group (of us who are responsible in the situation); (2) the addressee is exposed to pressure to respond to a situation with responsibility. However, the relation between trust-giver and the trustee remains asymmetrical. Further, I adopted Cova's and Deonna's argument about the function of the emotion of being moved. They argue that its main function is the reorganization of one's values and priorities. Moreover, it has the power to reinforce the links that tie communities together. This emotion is particularly salient in situations of major crisis. In the previous paragraph, I suggested that in such a situation being moved expresses the readiness to reorganize the hierarchy of values in the light of new circumstances of mutual dependency. Thus, being moved might fill the gap of asymmetrical relation between trust-giver and trustee. Taken together, trust and being moved portray the outline of mutual engagement between the actors in a crisis situation to establish new communal norms and values.

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Igor Cvejić

Poverenje i ganutost kao forme angažmana u situacijama neizvesnosti

Sažetak

Glavna namera ovog teksta je da naglasi ulogu poverenja i ganutosti u kriznim situacijama. Neću se baviti opštom ulogom, ili svim ulogama ovih emocija u krizi. Fokus će pre biti usmeren na ulogu ovih emocija u formiranju „mi", pretpostavljajući da je uzajamni angažman između aktera suštinski faktor putem koga prvo lice jednine prelazi u prvo lice množine. Oslanjaću se na argument Beneta Helma o tome kako poverenje figurira kao poziv da se iscrtaju komunalne norme u novim okolnostima neizvesnosti. Prema ovom argumentu, kada mu drugi veruju, primalac poverenja je oslovljen za relevantnu odgovornost u datoj situaciji: (1) primalac poverenja je oslovljen kao član grupe (nas koji smo odgovorni); (2) primalac poverenja je izložen pritisku da odgovori na datu situaciju sa odgovornošću. U drugom delu članka prilagodiću argument koji su izneli Kova i Deona o funkciji ganutosti. Sugerisaću da u kriznim situacijama ganutost izražava spremnost da reorganizujemo hijerarhiju vrednosti u svetlu novih okolnosti međusobne zavisnosti. Uzete zajedno, emocije poverenja i ganutosti ocrtavaju skicu uzajamnog angažmana između aktera u situacijama krize, kako bi se ustanovile nove komunalne norme i vrednosti.

Ključne reči: angažman, poverenje, ganutost, neizvesnost, emocija