The Affective Dimension of Social Representations: Donald Trump and the Social Representation of Illegal Immigration

SILVIA GUTIÉRREZ VIDRIO

Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Xochimilco

The purpose of this text is to present some considerations on the need to incorporate the study of emotions and affect as a dimension of social representations. A key trait of social representations is that they constitute processes through which new meanings and social identities are created and projected into the social world. In these processes, emotions are fundamental since they help us to interpret and judge social situations and objects. As indicated in this paper, the affective or emotional state of a person plays an essential role in social interaction, the construction of meanings, the selection of information and the way it is communicated. Since the role of emotions in social representational processes has undergone limited conceptual development within the field, I refer to some research studies that have suggested different lines of inquiry that may contribute to the understanding of social representations as emotional processes. In order to support the thesis that emotions play an important role in the construction of social representations, I present the analysis of an empirical study on Trump's social representation of illegal immigration, in which two processes are central: the creation of an emotional atmosphere, and emotional anchoring.

Keywords: social representations, emotions, Donald Trump, emotional atmosphere, emotional anchoring

Correspondence should be addressed to: sgvidrio@hotmail.com   6.1

Even though some researchers have recognized the importance of the affective dimension of social representations (Arruda, 2014; Banchs, 1996; Campos & Rouquette, 2000; de-Graft Aikins, 2012; González Rey, 2008; Gutiérrez, 2013; Höijer, 2011; Lhereux & Guimelli, 2009; Páez, Echebarria & Villarreal, 1989), there are very few theoretical and empirical studies dedicated to investigating the role that aspects of subjectivity such as needs, motivations, emotions and affect play in the construction of social representations.

As will be elaborated here, the topic of emotions is of great importance for the study of social representations, since emotions indicate, express or reveal the ideas, perceptions and beliefs that individuals develop concerning those topics that touch them in a sensitive way. Emotions experienced in collective interactive situations (i.e., in inter-subjective situations) promote the development of social representations.

It is the purpose of this text to present some considerations on the need to incorporate the study of emotions and affect as a dimension of social representations. First, I will point out the need to recognize that the emotional or affective state of a person plays an important role in social interaction, the construction of meanings, the selection of information and the way it is communicated (Banchs, 1996). Then I will summarize contributions from different disciplines to the study of emotions and affect, which allow us to recognize that they are inseparable from any subjective human production and, in that respect, are a constituent of social representations. I will also refer to the work of some research studies that have suggested different lines of inquiry that may contribute to the understanding of social representations as emotional processes. Finally, I will present an empirical inquiry on Trump's social representation of illegal immigration in which two processes are central: the creation of an emotional atmosphere, and emotional anchoring.

THE STUDY OF EMOTIONS AND AFFECT

The importance of affective or emotional phenomena has been highlighted by researchers from different disciplines[1]. Although emotions have become the focus of vigorous interest, there is no consensus on a definition of emotion, and establishing its boundaries and variables

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[1] In the humanities and social sciences, increased interest in affective phenomena has given origin to the so-called "affective turn" (Clough & Halley, 2007), a multidisciplinary approach that draws on some of the most innovative and productive theoretical and epistemological trends of the last two decades of the twentieth century: theories of the body and embodiment, psychoanalytical theories of subjectivity and subjection, poststructuralist feminist theory, critical analysis and the theorisation of melancholy and trauma.

is a complex task. This is due to the fact that the notions of emotion, affect, feelings and moods do not constitute a unitary class but a heterogeneous group of notions; even though they are closely related human experiences, they refer to specific psychological and physiological processes that are not exactly alike. This has led many researchers (Frijda, 1994; Gordon, 1981; Páez *et al.* 1989; Plantin, 2014) to work on the conceptual and definitional issues surrounding the specificity of each notion. Avoiding the discussion on the differences between these different concepts, I will use emotion as an umbrella term that embraces moods, feelings and affectivity. I will however respect authors' usage of specific terms.

Not only are there different definitions of emotions; there are also different approaches to its study. The following can be clearly identified: the Darwinian, the Jamesian, the cognitive and the constructivist perspectives and, more recently, the anthropology and sociology of emotions. Each of these perspectives has its own set of assumptions on the nature of emotion and how to carry out research in this field. There are, however, several areas of overlap among the five perspectives and their associated research traditions (cf. Cornelius, 2000).

The perspective I adopt here takes into account the social construction of emotions (Armon-Jones, 1986; Lutz, 1986), their understanding and explanation in social contexts (Collins, 1990; Durkheim, 1897/1997), their regulation and their expression (Hochschild, 1979), as well as their role in collective action (Barbalet, 1998; Flam, 1990). These different contributions, from my point of view, highlight the link between emotions and social representations, and the role they play in the production of social bonds that unite societies, organizations and groups. However, in order to thoroughly grasp the social causes and consequences of emotion, an integrative framework comprising of, and interfacing, the social, cognitive and biological dimensions of emotion is needed.

In 1989, Bernard Rimé pointed out that social psychology had concentrated on the cognitive dimension of social phenomena and had been radically aloof regarding its emotional dimensions. According to him, phenomena such as prejudices, social representations, attitudes, persuasion and communication, as well as aggressive feelings, have been diminished, by contemporary psychology, to some kind of conceptual abstraction that takes place in individuals during their interaction with others2 (Rimé, 1989, p. 459). However, private emotional experiences are generally followed by the social sharing of emotion – or

2 All translations of the books and articles in different languages have been done by me.

evocation of the episode in a shared language – between the person who experienced it and an addressee (Rimé et al., 1998). This led Rimé to dedicate himself to the study of what he calls the "social sharing of emotions" (Rimé, 2005). In its most common form, social sharing of emotion occurs in the course of conversations in which individuals openly communicate and discuss an emotional event and their reactions to it. In other words, the social sharing of emotions is the process of reactivating the emotion at a more symbolic level, within the context of ensuing interpersonal interactions. By socially sharing their emotional experiences, individuals can apparently modify their subjective perception of these experiences in a positive manner. Thus, the affected person will talk with others about the event's emotional circumstances and his/her experienced feelings.

Emotions play an important role in the evaluation of the world that surrounds us. It is precisely this role that allows us to explain why our emotional experiences mobilize "social knowledge enabling us to reinterpret the world and optimize transactions with the milieu (Jodelet, 2011, p. 241). Another key trait of emotions is that they may help us interpret and judge social situations and objects.

The different approaches I have outlined show the need for considering emotions as cultural phenomena that are embedded in beliefs, symbols and language, and for considering how they are inextricably linked to social and cultural processes as well as to power relationships.

The Nature of Emotions and Social Representations

In this section, I will present reasons and arguments sustaining the thesis that emotions are inseparable from any subjective human production. in this respect, they are a component of social representations. In order to do this, it is first necessary to highlight the symbolic, emotive and social aspects of social representations.

Social representations, as a concept, refers to "systems of values, ideas and practices" which orient individuals in the social world, and enable communication to take place between them by ''providing a code for social exchange" (Moscovici, 1973, p. xii). Social representations thus give meaning to our reality and mediate our communication.

As Kalampakis and Haas have argued, the representation of shared knowledge is "determined by the individuals using schemata of social thinking; these are integrated into their value systems depending on their history, previous experiences, belongingness and

social context" (Kalampakis & Haas, 2008, p. 452), and – it should be added – their emotional charge.

Social Representations Theory (SRT) enables us to detect the evaluative elements which guide the standpoint of a person in relation to the object being represented, as well as his/her actions towards it, thereby fulfilling an important function in the generation of points of view concerning social reality (Ibáñez, 1994). Social representations constitute processes through which new meanings and social identities are created and projected into the social world, and in these processes emotions play an important role since they help us to interpret and judge social situations and objects.

Different authors have argued that in order to identify social representations, besides their origin, content and functions, it is necessary to identify their emotional charge. "Social representations are a set of beliefs, attitudes in a structured field which links explanations, classifications, intentional behaviors and emotions" (Valencia, Páez & Echebarría, 1989, p. 190). That is why one can argue that social representations have an emotional component, and it is an important aspect to take into account in order to better understand their organization and their internal functioning (Guimelli & Rimé, 2009).

It is also necessary to mention that early in 1928, in the field of social psychology, Blondel (1928/1966) sustained the thesis that apparently internal processes, such as affectivity, were in fact collective phenomena. He argued that affective processes are not personal or individual phenomena – they are collective. The influence that the community exercises on what we feel and perceive is fundamental; thus, the intensity and the circumstances of an emotion depend on the sentimental canon of a group or a specific culture.

Another issue that needs mentioning is that, for a long time in the field of social representations, the study of emotions was confined to the attitude dimension. Even though a strong relationship exists between emotions and attitudes, these constitute different dimensions of emotional phenomena. Emotions are more complex, "…they have many facets. They involve feelings and experience, they involve physiology and behavior, and they involve cognitions and conceptualizations" (Ortony, Clore & Collins, 1988, p. 1). For human beings, the experience of emotions generally implies a set of cognitions, attitudes and beliefs about the world used to evaluate a specific situation. That is why one could argue that the concept of emotions embraces that of attitudes but not vice versa.

Some researchers have argued for the need to incorporate the conceptualization of social representations as emotional processes (Marková & Wilkie, 1987), and have pointed

out that their marginalization in SRT undermines full understanding of knowledge production and use (Banchs, 1996; González Rey, 2008; Flick, 1998; Marková & Wilkie, 1987). However, as de-Graft Aikins (2012) points out, these ideas have yet to be rigorously developed.

In 1996, Banchs, in a seminal paper on the topic, identified the different theoretical and empirical endeavours in the study of the relationships between emotions and social representations, and pointed out the lack of interest in affective phenomena. She wondered why "something so close to us as the fact that our lives, beyond everyday rituals, are impregnated by emotionality, appears to be totally neglected or formulated in a tangential way" (Banchs, 1996, p. 4).

From a different theoretical perspective, González Rey (2008) draws upon the concept of subjectivity, used within a dialogical, dialectic and complex framework, in order to approach the relationship between social representations and emotions. Subjectivity is defined by processes of meaning and subjective senses that configure the subject and the personality. According to him, subjective sense is defined as an inseparable unit between emotions and symbolic processes; it expresses the symbolic production and emotions that are shaped in the historical and social dimensions of human activities. He suggests that the different social dimensions in which the subject acts subjectively should not be understood as exclusively individual phenomena but as an important part of any social phenomena. The concept of social subjectivity is discussed in relation to its consequences for the development of social representations which, according to him, are shared symbolic-emotional productions (González Rey, 2008). He argues that the concept of social subjectivity can provide a more articulated understanding of the role of emotions in social representations by associating emotions to the subjective senses, rather than viewing them as "loose elements". By being associated to the subjective senses, emotions become a central feature that feeds social representations.

The Role of Emotions in Social Representation Processes

Social representations are complex and holistic. They may be seen as "theories", "network of ideas", metaphors and images that include emotions, attitudes and judgements. They are embedded in communicative practices, such as dialogues, debates, media discourses and scientific discourses (Marková, 2003).

Moscovici (1973, 1961/1979, 1988) has made frequent reference to the emotional character of social representations. Other researchers have highlighted the role of emotions in inter-group attitudes, identity construction and social thought (Duveen, 2001; Kalampalikis & Haas, 2008; Marková & Wilkie, 1987). However, the role of emotions in social representational processes has received limited conceptual development within the field.

According to de-Graft Aikins, socio-cultural theories of emotions suggest three ways in which emotions can be subsumed within the study of social representations: (1) emotions constitute a knowledge modality, with all the explanatory and functional power of knowledge and beliefs; (2) emotions are integral to thought and reflection; and (3) emotions are central to practice or action (de-Graft Aikins, 2012, p. 7.20). Another mode could be added: emotions are a key force in maintaining and forming social bonds (Turner & Stets, 2005).

De-Graft Aikins (2012) has claimed that within the SRT paradigm, social representations are defined technically as practical social knowledge that is produced when groups and individuals encounter the unfamiliar. Social representations therefore function to familiarize the unfamiliar. However, as she points out, to understand the motivations driving familiarization of the (threatening) unfamiliar, the formulation of the interdependent processes underpinning the 'principle of familiarity' needs to be revised. One of these principles is the need to incorporate cognitive-emotional dynamics.

She suggests that, in order to develop a systematic examination of the role of tension and its cognitive-emotional dynamics in the creation of social representations, a case can be made for cognitive-emotional polyphasia3 as a conceptual framework. This would constitute an expansion of Moscovici's hypothesis of cognitive polyphasia to include emotions as a valid system of knowledge that co-exists with other systems of knowledge (culture, religion, science). As de-Graft Aikins (2012) points out:

> Emotions such as hope, love and fear mediate social relationships, social behaviour and the production of social knowledge. At the second level, emotions would play a mediating role in the development, expression and transformation of the cognitive dynamics of social thought, reflection, communication and action (p. 7.21).

De-Graft Aikins (2012) questions the argument that the move towards the unfamiliar is driven by resistance to, or fear of, the "intrusion of strangeness" and she argues that

> it is more likely to be driven by emotional tension: a simultaneous process of being attracted to and alarmed by the strange. This tension may be driven by recognition or experience of the

3 The notion of cognitive polyphasia has to do with the coexistence, within a social group, of different and often incompatible cognitive styles and forms of knowledge employed by one and the same individual.

weaknesses, risks or threats inherent in self, intimate relationships, the immediate society and lived culture (p. 7.16).

Another line of thought concerning the relationship between social representations and emotions has been developed by Höijer (2011). Höijer (2011) has argued that emotional anchoring is an attachment mechanism that is not specifically pointed out in the theory of social representations:

> Emotional anchoring refers to a communicative process by which a new phenomenon is fastened to well-known emotions. In this way, the unknown becomes recognizable as, for example, a threat or a danger to fear, something to worry about, or as something nice and pleasurable (p. 9).

Social phenomena, events or courses of events are anchored in feelings of fear or an approaching threat, or in feelings of anger, pity or compassion. She takes the example of her research on climate change and the media (Höijer, 2010) to show that climate change is anchored by the media in a mixture of well-known emotions of fear, hope, guilt, compassion and nostalgia. Emotional anchoring may be embedded in the language used, and/or in the photographic pictures or illustrations. Höijer (2011) concludes that

> in short we may regard climate change as something to collectively fear but there is hope if we behave in a climate friendly fashion. If we do not, we should feel guilt. The media further invites us to feel compassion for endangered species and nostalgia for the idyllic past we are about to lose (p. 9).

To close this section, I want to reiterate the need to consider the role that affectivity in general, and emotions in particular, play in the construction of social representations, and also how the social representations we have on different topics and events, to a large extent, guide the emotions we experience. If one considers an event or a topic as something harmful, the way we express ourselves about it is by using negative terms and such representation will lead us to express or experience emotions with a negative charge (cf. Deschamps & Guimelli, 2002).

Donald Trump and the Social Representation of Illegal Immigration

To show the importance of the emotional dimension of social representations, I will present an analysis of Donald Trump's social representation of illegal immigration[4]. Migration represents one of the most controversial and noteworthy issues in contemporary societies and

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[4] This is part of ongoing research on Donald Trump's speeches on illegal immigration that I have been developing together with Marina Ariza, coordinator of the Sociology of Emotions Seminar, Institute of Social Research, UNAM, Mexico.

has become a phenomenon of increasing public concern in recent times because of massive flows of undocumented immigrants.

From the moment that Donald Trump competed for the Republican Party´s nomination as presidential candidate to the moment he won the election (November, 2016), he designed a programme based on nationalistic and protectionist ideas aimed at the recovery of "the wellbeing of the American people" (31st August 2016). In his programme, he assigned strategic importance to the topic of immigration policy and, specifically, illegal immigration to the United States, as a signature issue of his presidential campaign and one that generated much publicity. As a reaction to what he considers a threat to the country, "due to the deadly non-enforcement policies" (31st August 2016), he constructed a social representation of illegal immigration, particularly of Mexican immigrants, as an enemy of the American people, an enemy that brings chaos to the country, takes their jobs and threatens their borders and security. When he expresses the above-mentioned representation in his speeches, he creates an emotional atmosphere that can lead to the rejection and humiliation of immigrants.

Even though the social representation that I analyze here is portrayed by one individual (Donald Trump), it should be pointed out that social representations do not arise from isolated individuals but are socially generated. They refer to objects or social phenomena that are shared by the members of a group. In this case, they may be shared by the Republicans who assigned him as their presidential candidate, and by those who feel that illegal immigration represents a big problem for the country that needs to be solved. As do most politicians, Trump portrays not only a personal point of view, but also a shared point of view that can foster the emergence of a social representation in the sense that he suggests.

It can also be considered a social representation since, as Jovchelovitch (2007) points out, knowledge is not an individual property; knowledge is grounded in the intersubjective world of a community: "even if we think about knowledge as primarily produced by the individual subject, we need to think of this individual subject as herself a multidimensional context comprising a body and a psychological make-up that are socially, culturally and historically located" (Jovchelovitch, 2007, p. 48). This idea of knowledge as being grounded in the intersubjective world of a community may be useful for explaining how knowledge produced by an individual, in this case Donald Trump, constitutes socially shared knowledge as it does not represent personal knowledge or a personal point of view, but knowledge about an object that takes into consideration the concerns of other people who may share with him a certain set of beliefs, values and cultural pre-constructs (PCC).

To underline the role that emotions play in the construction of the social representation of illegal immigration as an enemy threatening the social and economic peace of US citizens, I will analyse first the main contents and arguments on which Trump has built that representation. Then, I will show how Trump builds up an emotional atmosphere that fosters the rejection and humiliation of illegal immigrants. Finally, I resort to the concept of emotional anchoring to show how the representation is anchored in some well-known emotions that work as catalysts that reinforce xenophobic and anti-immigrant attitudes.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used to analyze social representations and emotions is of a qualitative nature since it concentrates on the critical examination of the language and discourse strategies that politicians use in order to show how a representation is built up; it is concerned with how meaning is constructed, that is, with identifying the actors (who), the communicative practices (how), the objects (what), the reasons (why) and the functions of representations (what for) (Jovchelovitch, 2007, p. 102).

Due to the argumentative nature of political discourse, for the empirical analysis of the data, I will focus on the argumentative dimension of the data based on the natural logic of language (Grize, 1993), and its use in the analysis of social representations. Grize (1993) has suggested a specific logic that can be used to show the processes of thinking which combine form and content. It can be used to show the internal organization of social representations as well as to recover the speakers' points of view.

According to Grize et al. (1987, p. 35) if one aims to analyze the mental representations expressed through language, it is necessary to show their emergence "in situation" by studying the argumentative and semantic organization of discourse. Arguing involves providing reasons to defend an opinion and convince a receiver to think in a certain way. Conviction is much more effective when it is achieved by moving the interlocutor in the sense proposed by the speaker. That is why I have adopted an approach to the study of emotions that is also based on their argumentative nature. In argumentative terms, emotions are - at the same time - a resource, a sign, a strategically manifested signifying activity involved in a process of communication controlled and handled by the participants: "moving involves 'framing', in other words, demanding that the interlocutor position himself in relation to the formatted data as something that is exciting; "it is a way of making people feel something through the linguistic framework" (Plantin, 2014, p. 210).

The argumentative analysis of emotions combines their direct location (emotion sentences) with the indirect one, based on the indications of situation and expression. Insofar as emotions are argumentative constructs, the so-called "emotion sentences (ES)" become relevant. ES materialize the emotional orientation of a discourse (Plantin, 2014, p. 212). An ES links a psychological place to an emotional state ("I was furious"). It can also include the source of the emotion ("this infuriates me"). When emotions are not designated in the verbal, gestural or visual materials serve as indications that allow the inference of an emotion.

The corpus of study is constituted by four speeches delivered in strategic moments during Trump's campaign in which the topic of illegal immigration was central. The following speeches were analysed: 16th June 2015, when Trump formally announced his candidacy as the Republican nominee; 15th September 2015[5], a speech addressed to veterans on the aircraft carrier USS Iowa Battleship, in Los Angeles, California[6]; 21st July 2016, when he accepted his nomination for the presidency at the Republican National Convention[7]; and his speech delivered on 31st August 2016, during a rally in Phoenix, Arizona[8], in which he outlined his stand on immigration. However, when necessary, excerpts from other speeches will be quoted.

ANALYSIS: THE ROLE OF EMOTIONS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SOCIAL REPRESENTATION

Social representations are dynamic and consistent structures of knowledge that embrace various psychosocial phenomena such as beliefs, opinions, attitudes, stereotypes, social practices, behavioral repertoires and emotions that perform the social understanding of facts relevant in a given milieu. Given the importance of immigration in contemporary societies, the analysis of Trump's social representation of illegal immigration and the emotions he aims to arouse in his audience becomes essential since it may help to understand how public opinion on a polemic and sensitive topic can be emotionally constructed in order to guide certain actions.

[5] Donald Trump's Presidential Announcement Speech, 16 June, 2015, available online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apjNfkysjbM

[6] Donald Trump speech aboard the USS Iowa Battleship, 15 September 2016, available online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4BBNsUmDZI

[7] Donald Trump Accepts Republican Nomination for President, 21 July 2016, available on line: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42418toh02M

[8] Donald Trump immigration speech in Phoenix Arizona, 31 august 2016, available online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AdJUSdz2rrw

Main contents of the social representation

Throughout the 2015-2016 presidential election race, Trump's speeches were a source of outrage, controversy and enthusiasm across the United States. The topic of immigration was one of the key themes during his campaign and one that he keeps using as a means of rallying voters. Right from the beginning of his campaign, Trump identified illegal immigration as one of the main problems the country was facing. The main contents of this representation are shown in the following figure (Figure 1):
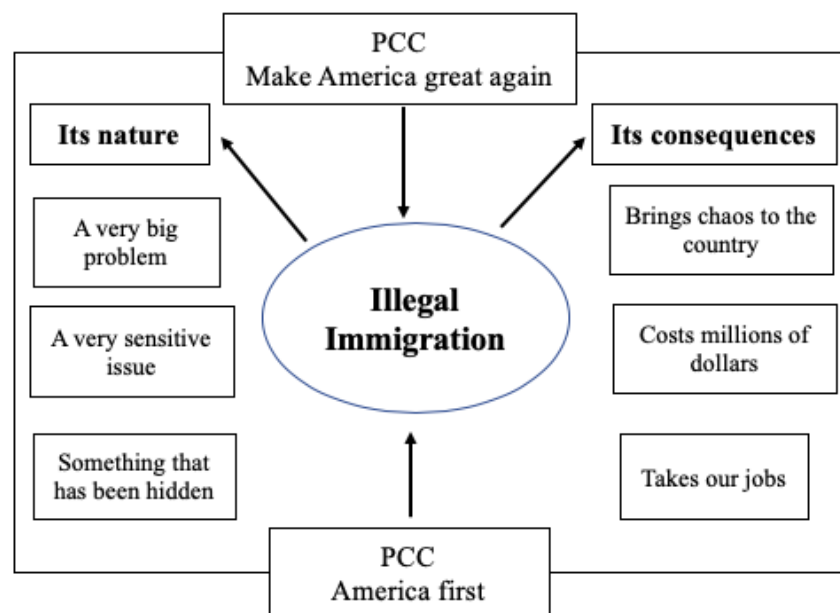
Note. PCC = Cultural pre-construct

Figure 1. Main contents of the social representation of illegal immigration

This representation is anchored in two PCCs that permeate Trump's reality of America: firstly, that America is weak; secondly, that foreigners are strong. These pre-constructs highlight the major messages of his political rhetoric: "Make America Great Again" and "America First".

The contents of the representation are articulated in two poles; on the one hand, the nature of illegal immigration (a problem, a threat, a challenge) – "I'm going to deliver a

detailed policy address on one of the *greatest challenges* facing our country today, illegal immigration" (31st August 2016); and on the other, its consequences (cost, loss of jobs, insecurity) – "On top of that, illegal immigration costs our country more than $113 billion dollars a year", "And they're hurting a lot of our people that cannot get jobs under any circumstances" (31st August 2016).

In most of Trump's speeches where the topic of illegal immigration is approached, he presents a representation of undocumented immigration relying on the arbitrary selection of its "negative" social effects to the detriment of the positive ones, and presents his arguments as facts that need to be assumed. As Moliner (1996) has pointed out, representations enable individuals to share an implicit whole of images and ideas, and these are assumed as given.

In the construction of this representation, the emotive or affective contents play a very important role since they make this representation more plausible and more persuasive. This is precisely what I want to show, by analyzing two processes though which this is achieved: the creation of an adverse emotional atmosphere, and the emotional anchoring that attaches what is said in some well-known emotions.

Emotional atmosphere

One of the main strategies used by Trump to construct the social representation of illegal immigration is to create an emotional atmosphere that predisposes his audience to conceive illegal immigration not only as a very problem but also as something that needs to be stopped.

Emotional atmosphere refers to the collective behavior that a community may manifest when it is focused on a common event (De Rivera, 1992). It constitutes an objective dimension of the context and refers to the type of emotional bonds that predominate in interpersonal relationships in response to the prevailing socio-political conditions (Bar-Tal, Halperin & de Rivera, 2007).

Trump builds emotional connections with his audience by enumerating certain issues that persuade them that illegal immigrants are a type of cancer that needs to be stopped and extirpated. An emotional connection is a bundle of subjective feelings that come together to create a bond among certain individuals with whom they share a particular set of emotions.

In order to create that adverse feeling towards them, illegal immigrants are sketched by using trigger words with enormous emotional resonance: terrible crimes, total chaos and lawlessness:

A 2011 report from the Government Accountability Office found that illegal immigrants and other non-citizens, in *our prisons and jails together*, had around 25,000 homicide arrests to their names, 25,000.

Nearly 180,000 illegal immigrants *with criminal records*, ordered deported from our country, are tonight roaming free to threaten peaceful citizens. (21st July, 2016)

The answer to this problematic is to build a wall on the border between Mexico and the USA. When he expresses this intention, his audience usually applauds and chants loudly 'build the wall, build the wall,' in a growing emotional convergence. References to the wall are generally the moments of greatest collective excitement.

We are going *to build a great border wall* to stop illegal immigration, to stop *the gangs and the violence*, and to stop the drugs from pouring into our communities. (21st July 2016)

The reference to borders and the security they provide serves to compare immigrants with invaders against whom the nation needs to be protected by the building of a border that separates them and keeps them at a safe distance.

Another of Trump's major themes on immigration that helps him build the adverse atmosphere towards immigration is that of the crimes committed by undocumented immigrants. He does this by presenting some short narratives. Narrated events have the power to move when their consequences affect the interests, norms and values of the (potential) experiencer (Plantin, 2014). They are able to induce emotions by the mere fact of showing that a particular issue will have decisive consequences (whether positive or negative) for listeners. One of Trump's favourite short narratives is the following:

One such border-crosser was released and made his way to Nebraska. There, he ended the life of an innocent young girl named Sarah Root. She was 21 years old, and was killed the day after graduating from college with a 4.0 Grade Point Average. Her killer was then released a second time, and he is now a fugitive from the law.

I've met Sarah's beautiful family. But to this Administration, their amazing daughter was just one more American life that wasn't worth protecting. One more child to sacrifice on the altar of open borders. (21st July 2016)

He constantly blames illegal immigrants for the deaths of innocent people. As Mangone and Marsico, have stated: "When an individual or a group blames another individual or group for his/her critical and/or suffering conditions, a situation is created in which we attribute a false blame to someone or a group defined as the "enemy" (Mangone & Marsico, 2011, p. 103). Even though many American lives have been taken by different individuals and groups, he directly blames undocumented immigrants since, in the social representation he disseminates, they are the enemy.

Trumps knows that the inclusion of this type of story causes a state of excitement in the audience that usually leads to indignation, which is why he included six short narratives in his speech delivered on August 31st, 2016 including the following two:

> Also among the victims of the Obama-Clinton open borders policy was Grant Ronnebeck, a 21-year-old convenience store clerk and a really good guy from Mesa, Arizona. A lot of you have known about Grant. He was murdered by an illegal immigrant gang member previously convicted of burglary, who had also been released from federal custody, and they knew it was going to happen again.

> Then there is the case of 90-year-old Earl Olander, who was brutally beaten and left to bleed to death in his home, 90 years old and defenceless. The perpetrators were illegal immigrants with criminal records a mile long, who did not meet Obama administration standards for removal. And they knew it was going to happen.

It is important to point out how these short narratives create this adverse emotional atmosphere. Telling stories can affect emotions: "Narratives can prevent possible counter-argument through functions of their emotional (sic) and entertainment and make the audience link their life with the story" (Chang, 2016, p. 23). No US citizen would like to experience the loss of his/her own life or that of a member of his/her family. The inclusion of these narratives can arouse two emotions; on the one hand, compassion for the innocent victims and their families, and on the other, indignation that such crimes at the hands of illegal immigrants take place.

Representations, attitudes and behavior towards other people depend on how they are perceived, the interpretation of their past and present actions, as well as the expectations of their future activities. Trump knows that by exploiting specific information about illegal immigrants, he can create an adverse atmosphere towards them and mould public opinion with regards to migrants.

Emotional anchoring

Emotional anchoring refers to a communicative process by which a new phenomenon is fastened to well-known emotions. In this way, the unknown becomes recognizable as, for example, in the case of a threat or some kind of danger to be feared, something to worry about, or, conversely, something pleasurable (Höijer, 2011).

In the representation of illegal immigration that Trump disseminates, it is important to reveal the PCCs on which this representation is anchored. PCCs are know-hows and cultural matrices of interpretations through which it is possible to understand many of the expressions that resound from one subject to another, since they form a type of collective memory (Grize,

1993). They are in a certain way "the sediments that social representations leave in the language; basically, they constitute the linguistic aspect of social representations" (Grize, 1993, p. 3). In Trump's discourse, these pertain to socio-cultural values as well as to previous experiences that his addressees share.

As Höijer (2011) points out, events or courses of events are anchored in feelings of fear or an approaching threat, or in feelings of anger, pity or compassion. What Trumps says about illegal immigration is emotionally anchored in feelings of anger and resentment that have been experienced with regards to immigrants during different episodes of US history (Yakushko, 2009).

The social representation of illegal immigrants that Trump portrays is anchored in xenophobic discourse, that is, discourse that constructs a sense of menace when talking about ethnic groups and intergroup relations in different contexts. The notion of xenophobia can help in the understanding of the roots and consequences of negative attitudes toward immigrants. It is a form of attitudinal, affective, and behavioral prejudice toward immigrants and those perceived as foreign (Yakushko, 2009, p. 43). Xenophobia, as a term, "seems to more clearly indicate the presence of attitudinal and behavioral hostility toward non-native individuals" (Yakushko, 2009, p. 44); it is intricately tied to notions of nationalism and ethnocentrism, both of which are characterized by belief in the superiority of one's nation-state over others.

This feeling of superiority linked to xenophobic attitudes can help explain why illegal immigrants are depicted as dangerous criminals whose presence in that country is unwanted and burdensome. Xenophobia finds legitimacy in the plausible nature of the concerns with which it associates the "risk" posed by immigration: violence, moral degradation, job loss, and erosion of national identity. The concerns of the risk that illegal immigration represents is anchored in a xenophobic perception that aliens, "the other", are a danger to the country.

Xenophobic attitudes are based on the invocation of symbolic boundaries between "us" and "them" where the tacit assumption is the irreconcilability between the attributes of the "superior" group and aliens, "others", who are morally inferior. Through the choice of semantic, syntactic, and rhetorical discursive structures, Trump depicts the negative "other" (the outgroup) as incompatible with US society (the ingroup), since they are dangerous, aggressive and inferior.

> When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of *problems*, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're

bringing *drugs*. They're bringing *crime*. They're *rapists*. And some, I assume, are good people (16 June 2015).

Nearly 180 000 illegal immigrants with criminal records, order deported from our country, are tonight *roaming free to threaten peaceful citizens* (21 July 2016).

The outgroup that he usually depicts is Mexicans. He describes Mexican immigrants as harmful because they deprive workers of employment opportunities, poison American youth and "kill and rape" US citizens. This description can arouse the feelings of fear and indignation by the use of so-called "fear appeals", that can be identified by the utilization of words such as "crime", "problems" "drugs", and "rapist", which predispose his audience to having a negative attitude towards them.

The representation of the counterpart, the ingroup, can help to understand hostility toward illegal immigrants. An ingroup is a social category or group with which you identify strongly. Identification with a nation, promotes, through a network of symbols, cultural references, rites and representations, intra-group adhesion with a strong affective content.

The ingroup association is achieved, among other mechanisms, by juxtaposing it to the outgroup. The members of this ingroup are portrayed as the "forgotten working people", "Vulnerable American workers", who have to compete with "illegal immigrants … lower skilled workers with less education". This way of portraying the in-group can give rise to feelings of indignation and resentment since they are placed in disadvantage.

Another strategy used to anchor the feelings described above is the use of metaphors. As Lakoff and Johnson point out, "The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 455). In other words, metaphor can be defined as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain. Metaphors evoke concepts learned and enable the brain to establish connections quickly, thereby ensuring the comprehension of a new concept in less time, saving effort and energy. Anchoring social phenomena in metaphors may serve ideological and legitimating functions (Höijer, 2011, p. 11). As far as emotional anchorage is concerned, metaphors can incite feelings that have already been experienced.

A metaphor used by Trump - of the US as a dumping ground - is used in order to incite the feeling of being vulnerable and being used by others while at the same time providing a reason for hating those countries: "The US has become a dumping ground for everybody else's problems" (16th June, 2015).

As far as the use of metaphors is concerned, Cisneros asserts that popular rhetoric about immigration "often operates by constructing metaphoric representations of immigrants that

concretize the social 'problem' and connote particular solutions" (Cisneros, 2008, p. 596). One metaphor used by Trump to emotionally anchor the social representation of illegal immigration that he projects is that of the Trojan horse:

> Most incredibly, because to me this is unbelievable, we have no idea who these people are, where they come from. I always say Trojan horse. Watch what's going to happen, folks. It's not going to be pretty. (31st August 2016)

This metaphor, in broad terms, is often used to suggest that a situation has the capacity to colonize a body (such as a society or nation) from within, and cause its destruction; in this case, it suggests that the surreptitious entry of illegal immigrants into US territory will end up causing the collapse of America.

As I have tried to show, the study of emotional anchoring could be of great use when analyzing social representations since it can indicate how a new phenomenon is fastened to well-known emotions, that is, how it can incite feelings that have already been experienced, thereby motivating the formation of a particular social representation.

DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this text has not been to discuss specific choices of methods for analyzing social representation and affective states but rather to emphasize the need for considering the importance of the emotional dimension in the construction of social representations. In the first part of the text, I have concentrated on the conceptual analytical level and presented arguments to sustain the thesis that emotions and affective phenomena should be considered as another dimension of social representations. These considerations were then linked through an empirical application; in this case through the analysis of Trump's social representation of illegal immigration in which two processes were central: the creation of an emotional atmosphere, and emotional anchoring.

As I have shown, Trump builds an inflamed *emotional atmosphere* against immigrants in general, and Mexicans in particular, that unchains the shared latent animosity of hatred, anger and rejection, in order to create an affective negative attitude towards immigrants. This is achieved through the depiction of illegal immigrants, using trigger words with enormous emotional resonance: terrible crimes, total chaos and lawlessness, as well as by the inclusion of short narratives that refer to their "crimes".

As far as emotions underline individual processes of positioning and adaptation to social reality, anchoring will be more specifically involved in the representational dynamics in relation to an emotional experience. As I have highlighted, the representation he promotes

is emotionally anchored on a series of values, beliefs, emotions, cultural and ideological pre-constructs that are shared and strongly established in the social imaginary of some members of the US nation. Some of the mechanisms through which this is achieved are, for example, through the reproduction of stereotypical images of "otherness" as well as extreme generalizations that are anchored in xenophobic discourse: the illegal immigrant is either the perpetrator of criminal acts or is taking the lead in events with dramatic implications. Another strategy is anchoring social phenomena in metaphors which play a very effective persuasive role by inciting feelings that have already been experienced.

I have pointed out that there are few empirical works that show the relation between affective states and social representations; these contributions could be grouped in two approaches: quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative studies (Bouriche, 2014; Campos & Rouquette 2000, 2003; Deschamps & Guimelli, 2002; Lheureux & Guimelli 2009; Lo Monaco, Rateau & Guimelli, 2007) follow the Central Core Theory and analyze such relationships by using characterization or association questionnaires, similarity analysis and tests of centrality, among others, in order to show the functioning of affective elements in the internal organization of social representations. These studies have revealed that there is a strong relationship between the central system and the affective elements and that these constitute a sociocognitive and affective coherent structure (Campos & Rouquette, 2003).

The qualitative studies (Höijer, 2010; Gutiérrez, 2013), on the other hand, concentrate not only on identifying the association of words with an emotional charge and their organization in the figurative field, but also on the processes that intervene in the construction of meanings, selection of information and the way it is communicated (Banchs, 1996). What I have presented here followed a qualitative approach since I was concerned in researching the actors (who), the communicative practices (how), the objects (what), the reasons (why) and the functions of representations (what for; Jovchelovitch, 2007, p. 102). The analysis aimed at showing the construction of the social representation as a symbolic and social process in which content and form play an important role.

One of the limitations of this study could be the fact that I centred the analysis on the social representation portrayed by an individual, a politician, Donald Trump. I have presented here various arguments to justify why Trump's representation of illegal immigration can be

considered as a social representation9. Even though it is recognized within the SRT field that social representations take different forms at different levels of analysis this assumption requires greater conceptual attention. As de-Graft Aikins (2012) asserts: "empirical SRT work has focused largely on group and structural level analyses. Individual (subjective) and inter-individual (inter-subjective) levels of analysis have received very limited empirical attention" (de-Graft Aikins, 2012, p. 7.21). In the case of emotions she makes a case for self-knowledge since it also fixes attention to the way social and embodied emotions mediate familiar-unfamiliar encounters whether they are unexpected or actively sought.

This text opens several lines of inquiry that require further investigation. As some researchers have argued (Campos & Rouquette, 2003; de-Graft Aikins, 2012), one of the difficulties in grasping the relationship between social representations and the social dimension is the absence of an affectivity theory or theory of emotional behavior that can be integrated. In that respect, as I have pointed out, certain theoretical insights on the affective phenomena could be useful. For example, the Sociology of emotions can contribute not only to the recognition of their social and constructed nature, but also to the understanding and explanation of their social contexts, and their role in establishing and maintaining social bonds (Turner & Stets, 2005).

Another line of inquiry would be to investigate the role of the affective dimension of social representations that circulate in media, political discourse and social media. More studies should be carried out in order to show how new phenomena are particularly channelled by the discourse and framing that the media disseminate in the public sphere, and how the emotions that those frames trigger can influence, strengthen or affect social representations. The study of social representations transmitted by political figures is also important since it can help specify a number of communicative mechanisms by explaining how ideas are communicated and transformed into what is perceived of as common sense. However, further research should be carried out to demonstrate the influence of emotions and social representation transmitted by political figures on social representations themselves and common sense.

Finally, research could also be carried out to study how emotions, sentiments, and affective phenomena, in general, move the individual to act in a certain way. The affective

9 One way to show empirically that it is a shared representation to study how people reacted to his speeches by analyzing the commentaries that people posted on the YouTube platform (page) after they watched the videos. See comments here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxD5QkzmVOA

components of social representations constitute affective schemas socially constructed that predispose individuals to experience some emotions and act accordingly. This line of enquiry has been opened by Rimé (2005) who suggests "the silent guidance of affects" to explain the idea that the valence of the past emotional experience (positive or negative) strongly marks the interaction with the milieu, and other social actors, to the point of becoming the "most powerful signals" for the guidance of action.

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SILVIA GUTIÉRREZ VIDRIO (Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana,-Xochimilco): PHD in Sociology, National Autonomous University of Mexico. Research interests: Discourse analysis, the study of emotions and social representations. Member of the National System of Researchers, second level. Founding Member of the Mexican National Network of Researchers on Social Representations (RENIRS). Email: sgvidrio@hotmail.com