# Residues and Derivations: Vilfredo Pareto and Affective Politics

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This essay revisits Vilfredo Pareto's attempt in his *Treatise on General Sociology* (1916) to classify the non-rational sentiments animating social and political life, considering implications for recent theories of affective politics. Long known for having combined an irrational psychology with a model of elite rule, Pareto has more recently been cited as a predecessor for behavioral economists. However, I show, Pareto described sentiments as sources of creativity as well as inertia and supposed they are modified by complex, reciprocal interactions with ideologies and environmental conditions. As I argue, Pareto's dynamic account of residues jeopardized his methodological aspirations, portending challenges for those seeking to identify and manage popular sentiments today. By the same token, it prefigured theories of "affect" developed by scholars who envision sentiments not only as determinants of preferences and alignments but also as sources of their undoing and transformation. In light of Pareto's problematic attempts to reconcile tensions in his study, I examine challenges facing those who align theories of affect with radical democratic programs. I conclude that radical democratic approaches to affective politics, like their managerial counterparts, are neither logically derived from nor precluded by human psychology *per se*, but instead compromised by prevailing configurations of sentiments, ideologies, and practices.

Keywords: Vilfredo Pareto, behavioral economics, affect theory

Today, few read Pareto's sociological writings. He is best known for pioneering mathematical models of economic behavior and the eponymous notion of "Pareto optimality," which designates an efficient allocation of goods based on rationally ordered individual preferences divorced from other measures of value.[1] However, in his early *Manual of Political Economy* Pareto had already recognized that such models did not account for the "non-logical" behavior he observed throughout social and political life.[2] In his sprawling, multi-volume *Treatise on General Sociology*,

1. The concept is not to be confused with the "Pareto Principle" predicting 80/20 distributions, originally of wealth.

2. Vilfredo Pareto, *Manual of Political Economy*, eds. Aldo Montesano, Alberto Zanni, et. al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014 [1906]), 59.

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he set out to identify the sentimental "residues" guiding human conduct, relegating conscious reasons to the status of secondary "derivations." Though Pareto was hardly alone in questioning the rationality of human behavior, his study was original in at least two respects: First, he made virtually no attempt to engage with other critics of rationalism (whether contemporaries such as Nietzsche and Freud or predecessors such as Spinoza and Hume); second, he aspired to a scientific classification of the sentiments animating social practices, promising nothing less than a comprehensive account of *Mind and Society* (the title of the English translation of the *Trattato*), encompassing economics, law, politics, religion, etc.[3]

By these measures, Pareto badly failed. As others have found, Pareto's taxonomies are inconsistently developed, and the greater part of his treatise consists of desultory discussions of the residues supposedly at work in everything from religious festivals to parliamentary debates. (Norberto Bobbio called them "ideologies chosen at random," warning that "the *Trattato* is and remains a work which ruins weak stomachs and paralyzes the strong.")[4] Those concerned with the political import of Pareto's *Treatise* therefore usually gloss its complex account of residues and focus on its last volume, in which Pareto developed a less convoluted—though hardly uncomplicated—model of historical oscillations between opposed configurations of psychic dispositions, socio-economic practices, and leadership types.[5] Taking a broader, albeit still selective view, mindful of Bobbio's warning, I highlight tensions between Pareto's aspiration to identify sentimental constants and his initial theory of residues, according to which human sentiments are characterized by an interplay of creativity and inertia and enmeshed in complex reciprocal interactions with ideologies and environmental conditions. As I argue, Pareto's dynamic theory of residues portends challenges for those seeking to identify and manage popular sentiments today. By the same token, it prefigures theories of "affect" developed by theorists who envision sentiments not only as determinants of preferences and alignments but also as sources of their undoing and transformation. In light of Pareto's problematic attempts to reconcile tensions in his study, I examine recent

3. Vilfredo Pareto, *The Mind and Society*, trans. Andrew Bongiorno and Arthur Livingston (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1935 [1916]).

4. Bobbio, Norberto, *On Mosca and Pareto* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1972), 58, 56–7. Pareto distinguished six classes of residues and four classes of derivations in what became the second and third volumes of his study, respectively, subdividing each into a larger series of sub-categories, respectively. However, these taxonomies provide only a superficial gloss of analytic clarity. See Pareto, *Mind and Society*, 868, 888; 1419.

5. James B. Rule defines residues as "standardized forms of social behavior," declaring Pareto's more complex analysis "tedious, and of no concern." James B. Rule, *Theories of Civil Violence* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988), 78.

attempts to harness theories of affect to radical democratic forms of politics, concluding that such politics are neither logically derived from nor precluded by human psychology *per se*, but instead compromised by prevailing configurations of sentiments, ideologies, and practices.

### *Ia. Class I and Class II Residues: Combination and Persistence*

Complications facing a reductionist approach appear from the outset of Pareto's enumeration of residues, the first two classes of which denote not particular patterns of behavior but instead tendencies that generate and sustain them, namely the "Instinct for Combinations" (Class I) and the "Persistence of Aggregates" or "Group-Persistences" (Class II), respectively. Let us consider them in order. In his editorial comments on the Italian term "*combinazione*," Arthur Livingston explains, "Synonyms of the 'instinct for combinations' in one connexion [sic] or another might be 'the inventive faculty,' 'ingeniousness,' 'originality', 'imagination' and so on."[6] In effect, Class I residues comprise an instinct to depart from instincts, being distinguished from "appetites" or "interests"—with which they interact in practice—by their indefinite and transferrable character, forming associations between all manner of objective and subjective phenomena, some patently absurd, others inscrutable. For instance, a day of the week or year may be associated with good or bad events, the crowing of a rooster at midnight or the appearance of a comet with the death of an important person, a happy state with a "good" object, etc. "Hence a thing A is linked to anything B provided it be a similar or an opposite, or exceptional, terrible, propitious, and so on."[7] Such combinations have both passive and active dimensions. "On the passive side the human being is subject to them; on the active side he interprets, controls or produces them."[8] In the former mode, perceptions elicit expectations of associated events imbued with corresponding sensations of excitement, dread, etc. In the latter, people seek to bring about an event by means of some associated action, making ritual sacrifices to the gods, using a number that appeared in a dream to make a lottery pick, etc. In a typical turn, Pareto assigned active combinations to their own Class (III), namely, "Need of Expressing Sentiments by External Acts."[9]

Pareto emphasized that although residues are not based on explicit hypotheses and systematic experiments, i.e., "logico-experimental" reasoning, the resulting combinations are not necessarily erroneous, much less useless. In the same manner,

6. Pareto, *Mind and Society*, fn. 889a.
7. Ibid., 985.
8. Ibid., 890.
9. Ibid., 888.

residues associate a good harvest with the use of fertilizers or with sacrificial offerings, and even seemingly absurd superstitions can yield social benefits, such as generating solidarity or preventing crime.[10] More radically, Pareto suggested that Class I residues need not be prompted by any particular interest or aim, and he mocked sociologists who hypothesized "logical" origins for practices where they could not observe them. As an illustration, he cited Salomon Reinach's perplexity concerning the domestication of animals, which would seem to require that men work towards a goal that had no basis in experience.

> 'Chance could never show him a domestic animal! There can be no domestic animal except as a result of training, received from man.' The reasoning would be excellent if . . . the only road to discovery were first to know what one wants, and then to look around for the best means of obtaining it . . . But most discoveries . . . were not made in that way. There is another way . . . in the instinct for combinations, which impels the human being to put things and acts together *without pre-established design* . . . much as a person rambles about in a forest for the mere pleasure of rambling about. Even when design exists, it oftentimes has nothing to do with the result actually achieved.[11]

For example, Pareto noted, a child will take in and care for a bird that has fallen from its nest simply for the pleasure of doing so.[12]

Pareto's strikingly Nietzschean description of creative, a-teleological Class I residues clearly jeopardized his supposition of sentimental constants underlying changing beliefs and practices, such as a "constant element [a feeling that moral pollution can be cleansed with rites], *a*, and a variable element, *b* [the rites or means of cleansing]."[13] Given his references to Darwin, one might expect Pareto to argue that haphazard combinations produced by Class I residues are refined and corrected through the feedback of experience, such that only the most "fit" survive, a view often implied by his examples. However, Pareto argued in effect that survival is also non-logical, inasmuch as combinations are sustained by Class II residues, i.e., habits or customs, regardless of whether or not they are conducive to health and fitness (choose your own example), albeit "within certain limits."[14] As Pareto explained, Class II residues

10. See Ibid., 896, 320, 361.
11. Ibid., 898–899, emphasis added.
12. Ibid., 900
13. Ibid., 863; see also 1000, 1402.
14. Ibid., 986. On Spencer, whose progressive model of evolution Pareto ultimately rejected, see Ibid., 885, 903, 1000. For Pareto's critical take on Darwin's account of fitness, see Ibid., 1770. See also Pareto, *Manual of Political Economy*, 47–8.

comprise self-sustaining tendencies that guide attention, adjust behavior, and massage the data of experience. "Whatever the origin of the belief that A is linked to B . . . once it exists and has become consolidated, stabilized, by the residues of group-persistence, it exerts a powerful influence upon the sentiments and conduct, and that in two directions, the one passive, the other active . . . It is a question of a series of actions and reactions . . . In reality the facts re-enforce the residue, and the residue the facts."[15] For example, family groups and "appendages of one sort or another" were constituted by feedback loops between enduring proximities and stabilizing affections.[16] Further jeopardizing his suppositions regarding sentimental constants, Pareto repudiated "the mania for logical interpretations and the gravely mistaken notion that sentiments have to precede acts."[17]

As distinct analytic categories, Class I and II residues denote contrary tendencies toward novelty or sameness. However, Pareto emphasized that in practice they intermingle, noting that "were it not for the persistence of certain relations, the combinations in Class I would be ephemeral, insubstantial things."[18] Conversely, he explained, group-persistences are neither substantive "things" nor "abstract" categories but rather flexible *processes* whereby various subjective and objective phenomena are recurrently combined. Even apparently simple drives such as hunger or wrath involve aggregation, or "groups of sensations."[19] One could say that for Pareto it was combinations all the way down. Complicating matters further, aggregates are more than the sum of their parts, which are modified in the process of combination. In Pareto's analogy, "the sheep, by the very fact that they are members of the flock, acquire characteristics which they would not have apart from it. A male and female thrown together at an age for reproduction are something different from the same male and female taken by themselves."[20] Likewise, wrath involves a combination of adrenaline, recollected injuries, hostile gestures, perceived slights, vengeful fantasies, etc., which seek out and mate with each other. In turn, wrath merges with larger social processes, each acting on the other. Consider "road rage" in rush-hour traffic. Pareto traced the subjective coherence of such processes to yet another residue—one could call it the instinct of reification—"which assumes that a name always has a thing corresponding to it."[21] Thus, through the

15. Pareto, *Mind and Society*, 986, 1013–14.
16. Ibid., 1021–22.
17. Ibid., 1021; see also 1091.
18. Ibid., 891.
19. Ibid., 993.
20. Ibid., 993.
21. Ibid., 991.

figure of Annona, the ancient Roman goddess of grain, "sensations associated with the maintenance of a food-supply . . . became a *thing*."[22]

Pareto's subsequent categories of residues confirm that individuals and collectives are both flocks, that is, patterns of association maintained by ongoing assimilations. Thus, Class IV "Residues Connected with Sociality" and Class V "Integrity of the Individual and His Appurtenances" preserve, or rather reproduce social and personal identity. Pareto's sub-categories for these classes of residues, which include both nominal entities and the sentiments that sustain them, illustrate the conflation of process and substance involved. In this respect, his perspective aligned with that of contemporaries such as Samuel Butler and William James, neither of whom Pareto referenced, who described both societies and individuals as "bundles of habits."[23] By the same token, Pareto's aggregations can be compared with the "assemblages" described by Deleuze and Guattari, who credited James and Butler, though not Pareto, for conceiving of habit as a creative power.[24] Below, I will consider the implications of including Pareto in this constellation of thinkers for those seeking to harness a radical democratic politics to a dynamic human sensorium.

### *Ib. Derivations: Signs and Sentiments*

While observers of social and political life recognize the power of sentiments, most suppose behavior is governed, however imperfectly, by conscious beliefs. In characteristic fashion, Pareto traced such beliefs, which he termed "derivations," to another residue, namely the "Hunger for logical developments." He explained, "The human being . . . wants to think, and he also feels impelled to keep his instincts and sentiments hidden from view."[25] For example, the sanction against murder and the theory that explains it (God punishes murderers) both derive from a *feeling* of horror raised by the prospect of killing.[26] Sparing no ideology, Pareto heaped sarcasm not only on pagan superstitions and the moral pretenses of Catholicism (the erotic basis of sexual asceticism was a special obsession), but also on appeals to Natural Law, whether used to justify patriarchy, Greek slavery, or modern European imperialism in Africa. "With a hypocrisy that is truly admirable, these blessed civilized peoples claim to be acting for the good of their subject races in oppressing and exterminating them."[27]

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22. Ibid., 996.
23. William James, *Habit* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1914 [1890]), 3. See also Samuel Butler, *Life and Habit* (London. A. C. Fifield, 1910).
24. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 75.
25. Pareto, *Mind and Society*, 972–75, 1398, 1400.
26. See Ibid., 162.
27. Ibid., 1050.

Pareto's descriptions of slavery and imperialism imply that moral discourses merely justified self-interested behavior, but while he approved Marx for supposing ideologies expressed underlying motivations, he denied that the human behavior was driven by "logical" economic interests. "There is a general recognition that, on the whole, sentiments tend to vary with occupation . . . It goes wrong, however, in isolating economic status from other social factors . . . and, further, in envisaging a single relation of cause and effect, whereas there are many many such relations all functioning simultaneously."[28] Again, this did not mean Marxism had no political value, but only that like all ideologies it derived its force from sentiments that it "stirred." Like his friend Georges Sorel, Pareto described Marx's theory of class struggle as a mobilizing myth, a derivation in his terms, serving "to awaken or intensify corresponding residues in the 'proletariat,' or to be more exact, in a part of the population."[29] Thus, despite his terminology (from which he insisted no meaning should be inferred), Pareto explicitly posited "reciprocal action" both among and between residues and derivations, adopting a dialectical perspective he denied to Marx.[30] He wrote, "Taking [*a*'s (i.e. residues), appetites and interests] all together we have the sum of things that operate to any appreciable extent towards determining the social order, bearing in mind of course that the social order reacts upon them, so that we are all along dealing not with a relationship of cause and effect, but with an interrelation or a relationship of interdependence."[31]

Pareto did not consistently describe, much less systematically account for such reciprocal actions. In some passages, he suggested that derivations simply evoke and amplify latent residues, as in the case of Marxist ideology: "Once the derivation is accepted it lends strength and aggressiveness to the corresponding sentiments, which now have found a way to express themselves . . . derivations exert influence only through the sentiments which they stir."[32] Elsewhere, he recognized more transformative interactions: "Certain individuals evolve a theory because they have certain sentiments; but then the theory reacts in turn upon them, as well as upon other individuals, to produce, intensify, or modify [*produrre, rafforzare, modificare*] certain sentiments."[33] Thus, a sign that evokes and modifies residues can become a

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28. Ibid., 1727; see also 1724. Like most anti-communists, Pareto neglected Marx's historical analysis of the emergence of class interests and consciousness.

29. Ibid., 1045. Pareto nonetheless criticized Sorel for disregarding the objective (in)validity of Marx's predictions. See Pareto, *Manual of Political Economy*, 57.

30. Pareto, *Mind and Society*, 1735.

31. Ibid., 861.

32. Ibid., 1747.

33. Ibid., 13; Vilfredo Pareto, *Trattato di Sociologia Generale* (Firenze: G. Barbéra, 1923 [1916]), par. 13.

"derivative," serving as a residue for subsequent derivations, a seemingly indefinite process.[34] For instance, a group of sensations linked to a river and its name can become "attracted by other similar entities," as in a "patriotic aggregate" that includes a national flag.[35] Always looking for a ground, so to speak, Pareto assigned patriotism to another category of residues, namely "Relations with places." However, he recognized that places, too, are comprised by aggregated sentiments evoked by symbols. "One might imagine that patriotism of the modern type is a matter of territory . . . But looking a little more closely, one perceives that in awakening sentiments of patriotism the territorial name suggests a sum of sentiments, language, religion, traditions, history and so on. In reality patriotism cannot be exactly defined, any more than "religion," "morality," "justice" . . . All such terms merely call to mind certain cumulations of sentiments."[36]

### *Ic. Heuristic Simplifications: Pareto's "Cycle of Elites"*

Pareto recognized that complex, interdependent relationships among residues, derivations, and facts posed major obstacles for his attempt to model the sentimental determinants of social systems, a task he took up in the final volume (chapters XII and XIII) of his *Treatise*. Societies, he explained, are composed by complex interacting factors, including not only sentiments, ideologies, and rituals, but also climate, geology, agricultural conditions, interactions with other societies, etc.

> In order to thoroughly grasp the form of a society in its every detail it would be necessary first to know what all the very numerous elements are, and then to know how they function—and that in quantitative terms . . . The number of equations would have to be equal to the number of unknowns and would determine them exhaustively.[37]

Alisdair Marshall suggests that "Pareto's abandonment of reductionism in favor of an assumption of complex variable interaction may appear, on the surface at least, well in tune with later advances in scientific methodology."[38] In particular, one could argue that Pareto anticipated scientific models of complex systems, according to which, to borrow a concise summary from the novelist Richard Powers, "The realm of real fact [does] not result from cranking through static functions, no matter how

34. Ibid., 877
35. Ibid., 994.
36. Ibid., 1042; see also 469.
37. Ibid., 2062.
38. Alisdaire Marshall, *Vilfredo Pareto's Sociology* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 38.

many variables those functions included. The world's events [emerge] as a resonance, the shifting states of mutually reshaping interactions, each fed back into the other in eternal circulation."[39]

Nonetheless, Pareto still aspired to a systematic account of social systems, an aspiration that, as Marshall puts it, "obligates the scientistic mind to make highly tenuous assumptions."[40] Marshall explains, "Pareto felt this interplay [of complex psychological and social forces] could be reduced to manageable proportions for the purposes of very general, yet meaningful description, at least where aggregations of large social groups are concerned."[41] Similarly, Joseph Femia argues that for Pareto, "cause and effect analysis represents an abstraction from the complexities of reality in order to gain a purchase on recurrent patterns within that reality. In this sense it is similar to the *homo economicus* of pure economic theory . . . An ideal world is created as a heuristic device."[42] Pareto offered his own justifications for his heuristic assumptions, arguing for instance that although residues and derivations evolve through reciprocal action, the former can be treated as constants because "forms change *more readily* than substance, derivations more readily than residues."[43] Elsewhere, having noted the "very important" influence of soil and climate, etc., he suggested their contributions were effectively baked into the residues of territorially circumscribed civilizations or "social systems," and so could be treated as invariant factors.[44]

Today, Pareto's presumptions of stable territories and climates appear quaint anachronisms, but even in his own time he made no attempt to identify culturally specific residues underlying the social systems he described in the last sections of his *Treatise*, much less model their interactions with prevailing ideologies. Instead, glossing the complexities he outlined earlier in his *Treatise*, Pareto mapped his key terms to a model of "undulating" political systems he had envisioned in earlier writings, describing self-correcting oscillations between Class I and Class II tendencies, now figured as distinct psychic types, linking each to corresponding economic, social, and political cycles whereby the destabilizing effects of social experiments and financial speculation would trigger corrective tendencies towards intolerance, repression,

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39. Richard Powers, *Plowing the Dark* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), 78.
40. Marshall, *Sociology*, 38.
41. Ibid., 40. Marshall describes Pareto's attempt to map the "psychic terrain where certain kinds of ideology will either flourish or find it hard to take root" as an early, "unsatisfactory" predecessor to the discipline of psychometrics. Ibid., 41.
42. Joseph Femia, *Pareto and Political Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 56.
43. Pareto, *Mind and Society*, 1008, emphasis added. See also Ibid., 991.
44. Ibid., 2064. See also Marshall, *Sociology*, 39.

and savings, and vice versa.[45] In doing so, he recapitulated the kind of simplification for which he chastised Marx, reducing a complex historical interplay of psychic and social forces to a struggle between binary types. However, whereas Marx drew on Hegel's philosophy of history, envisioning a process culminating in the triumph of one class, Pareto was inspired by Machiavelli's neo-classical model of historical cycles, which he combined with scientific models of equilibrium between counteracting forces.[46] Borrowing directly from Machiavelli, Pareto centered alternating socioeconomic periods in a "cycle of elites," figuring Class I and Class II leaders as foxes and lions, respectively.[47]

As I emphasized earlier, Pareto's well-known conception of a "cycle of elites" was not logically derived from his prior theory of residues, and his retrospective, anecdotal illustrations hardly met the standards of "logico-experimental" science. It is therefore tempting to interpret Pareto's political hypotheses in his own terms, that is, as derivations expressing underlying sensibilities.[48] Taking this approach, the next step would be to identify the corresponding political movement and elite type that attracted him.

### *Id. Pareto, Elites, and Fascists*

Pareto is often lumped in with other right-wing thinkers of his generation who linked irrational psychology to theories of elite rule, such as Gustave Le Bon, Robert Michels and Gaetano Mosca, figures Pareto derided for their non-scientific descriptions of irrational behavior. Relatedly, Pareto has been seen as a sympathizer or even an ideologue of fascism, an interpretation that is neither strictly logical nor entirely wrong. Pareto's attachment to the image of a self-correcting cycle of elites may help to explain his early, favorable misapprehension of Mussolini as a type II leader who would counteract the centrifugal tendencies of parliamentary pluralism, on one hand, and revolutionary movements, on the other, by appealing to sentiments of social homogeneity, recapturing the state from social elites, and taking coercive measures against

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45. On "The State of Equilibrium," see Pareto, *Mind and Society* 2067; see also Pareto, *Manual of Political Economy*, 43. For a detailed analysis, see Charles H. Powers, *Vilfredo Pareto* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1987). In his *Manual*, Pareto claimed history evinced rhythmic cycles of history that were "always the same," 26, 43. See also 52–53

46. On the influence of chemical model of equilibrium on Pareto, see Marshall, *Sociology*, 32. Pareto frequently posited opposed, counter-acting forces, such as instincts toward imitation and opposition. See for example Pareto, *Manual of Political Economy*, 52

47. See Pareto, *Mind and Society*, 2221–25

48. Seemingly innocent of the implications for his own case, Pareto traced beliefs in undulatory processes to residues associated with natural cycles, including phases of the moon, etc. See Ibid., 2330.

lawless counter-movements that could no longer be bought off.[49] Not insignificantly, Mussolini perceived the same affinities, and his approving citations of Pareto—whom he nominated an honorary Senator—cemented later impressions of Pareto as a proto-fascist thinker. Contending with those impressions, Renato Cirilio argues that Pareto's political sympathies tended more towards libertarianism and that his attitude toward the fascists was ambivalent, noting that he died before he had a chance to witness the full consequences of Mussolini's political ascendance.[50] Similarly, Femia interprets Pareto as a liberal thinker despite the "tone" of the latter's vehement criticisms of parliamentary democracy, arguing that "Pareto's evident satisfaction following the victory of fascism was inspired by intellectual vanity rather than theoretical affinity."[51] I will say more below about Femia's related proposals regarding a liberal-democratic adaptation of Pareto's theory of residues. Regarding Pareto's fascist sympathies, others have noted that he personally advised Mussolini to seize power.[52] In any case, as Pareto saw, the political effects of one's language derives more from its rhetorical tone than its logical implications. Pareto's contemptuous descriptions of parliamentary democracy, which he memorably labeled "demagogic plutocracy," clearly chimed with fascist polemics and the widespread sentiments they stirred.[53] Furthermore, if we accept Bobbio's assertion that "the kernel of fascist ideology was the historical and moral legitimization of bourgeois violence," then Pareto's derisive portrait of parliamentary pluralism was not his only rhetorical contribution to fascism.[54] Combining such legitimization with misogyny—another trademark of fascism—Pareto derided "fanatic humanitarian mystics" who were reluctant to impose harsh measures against civil disobedience on the part of suffragettes.[55]

## II. Affective Politics after Pareto: Containing Non-Logical Sentiments

However uncertain his actual contributions to Italian fascism, Pareto was tainted by association, and his analysis of residues and derivations was largely neglected

49. See Femia, *Pareto*, 70–74

50. Cirilio, Renato, "Was Vilfredo Pareto Really a 'Precursor' to Fascism?," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 42 (1983): 235–45

51. Femia, *Pareto*, 121. Femia argues that Pareto welcomed Mussolini as proof of his theories rather than the fulfillment of his policy preferences. In chapter 6 of his study Femia describes Pareto as a "sceptical liberal," 124

52. See Alastair Hamilton, *The Appeal of Fascism* (London: Anthony Blond LTD, 1971), 44–45; and Antonio Scurati, *M. Son of the Century* (New York: Harper Collins, 2021), 463, 478.

53. See Pareto, *Mind and Society* 2306 fn.1, 2268 fn.3

54. Bobbio, *On Mosca and Pareto*, 74

55. Pareto, *Mind and Society*, 1217, fn.1

in postwar thought.[56] Notably, although Joseph Schumpeter cited Pareto's economic works on several occasions in his highly influential book, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, he referenced Pareto's *Treatise* only as evidence of the relevance of non-rational psychology for social scientists.[57] Rejecting what he caricatured as the "classical doctrine," according to which democracy presupposes a coherent, articulate popular will, Schumpeter infamously declared, "If we are to argue that the will of the citizens *per se* is a political factor entitled to respect . . . it must be something more than an indeterminate bundle of vague impulses loosely playing about given slogans and mistaken impressions."[58] As this passage indicates, Schumpeter did not consider the political attitudes of democratic publics worthy of scientific analysis, either. Furthermore, having associated mass democracy with the catastrophe of European fascism, he placed his hopes not in undulating political cycles but rather in the rule of a scientifically informed bureaucratic elite insulated from an irrational demos. Relatedly, crucially, he placed more faith than Pareto in the rationality of everyday consumers and producers, the majority of whom evinced a tolerable degree of expertise and responsibility when making short-run economic decisions and only resorted to "primitive" and "infantile" judgments when entertaining larger political questions.[59] Although Schumpeter did not suppose participatory democracy could be eliminated, he hoped it might be restricted to the competitive election of relatively competent leaders, the public otherwise keeping to their (private) lane.

Schumpeter's predictions concerning the role of the administrative state soon proved misguided, even backwards. Rather than succumb to popular demands for social welfare, state bureaucracies in the West were largely placed in the service of corporate capital, a process rapidly globalized in the aftermath of the Cold War. Nevertheless, he set the tone for a generation of American political scientists who supposed the state could reconcile democratic politics with market economies by containing popular demands in stable institutional processes, and his vision of enlightened leadership still serves as a touchstone for prominent scholars.[60] Meanwhile,

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56. Critics seeking insights regarding the manipulation of irrational publics by political and commercial elites more often turned to Walter Lippmann's and Edward Bernays's harsh portraits of public opinion and propaganda, in neither of which Pareto's name appears. See Walter Lippmann. *Public Opinion* (New York: Free Press, 1997 (1922)); and Edward Bernays, *Propaganda* (New York: Ig Publishing, 2005 [1928])

57. Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York: Routledge, (2003 [1942]), 256

58. Ibid., 253

59. Ibid., 262.

60. Ian Shapiro credits Schumpeter for "the most influential twentieth-century approach to the democratic management of power relations," in Ian Shapiro, *The State of Democratic Theory*

policymakers informed by "behavioral economics" have envisioned a different role for elites, tasking them not with accommodating irrational popular demands but instead with rationalizing the behavior of private individuals. In this context, Pareto has reappeared in a new guise.

### *IIa. Managing Residues*

Nearly a century after Pareto, behavioral economists have proclaimed that people are not in fact the interest-maximizing rational actors posited by neoclassical economists. Largely neglecting their predecessors—another feature they share with Pareto—the new scholars of unreason refer not to residues and derivations but instead to implicit bias, priming, and cultural cognition. Yet although they employ more parsimonious methods—supplanting historical anecdotes with controlled experiments—and exhibit substantially less panache, their findings often align with Pareto's and in some cases even replicate his descriptions of particular residues. Thus, accounts of "confirmation bias" recapitulate Pareto's observations of group-persistences wherein "the facts re-enforce the residue, and the residue the facts," and one study finds that handwashing relieves feelings of guilt, echoing Pareto's description of a residue underpinning ritual ablutions (from baptism to pagan lustral waters), namely, "a vague feeling that water somehow cleanses moral and material pollutions."[61]

It seems fitting, then, that the Nobel prize-winning economist Richard Thaler prefaces his (auto)biography of the discipline, *Misbehaving*, with an epigraph from Pareto: "A day may come when we shall be able to deduce the laws of social science from the principles of psychology."[62] Thaler does not bother reviewing Pareto's earlier attempts at such a deduction, but the other occasion in which he references him

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(Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 55. It might better be called the most influential approach to managerial democracy. Citing Schumpeter's "realistic" account of irrational voter preferences shaped by a blend of crude heuristics, elite cues, and haphazard events, the lesson Christopher Achen and Larry Bartels take from Trump and Brexit is that "when professional politicians are reasonably enlightened and skillful and the rules and political culture let them do their job, democracy will usually work pretty well. When not, not." Christopher H. Achen and Larry M. Bartels, *Democracy for Realists* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), 3–4; and Christopher H. Achen and Larry M. Bartels, "Two Eminent Political Scientists: The Problem with Democracy is Voters" (June 1, 2017), https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/6/1/15515820/donald-trump-democracy-brexit-2016-election-europe.

61. Hanyi Xu, Laurent Begue, and Brad J. Bushman, "Washing the guilt away: effects of personal versus vicarious cleansing on guilty feelings and prosocial behavior," *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* 8 (2014): http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3937805. On confirmation bias, see Dan Kahan, "Cultural Cognition of Scientific Consensus," *Journal of Risk Research* 14 (2010): 147–74

62. Richard Thaler, *Misbehaving* (New York: Norton, 2015).

indicates some of the difficulties involved. There, Thaler identifies Pareto as a predecessor for economists such as Paul Samuelson (a student of Schumpeter's), whose models of economic behavior incorporated the psychological discounting of rewards based on their distance in the future, or "intertemporal choice."[63] According to Thaler, Samuelson recognized that a preoccupation with systematic modeling could give rise to a "theory-induced blindness" to real-world complexities.[64] Likewise, we have seen, Pareto acknowledged that his model of political systems glossed his earlier descriptions of dynamic interactions between sentiments, ideologies, and facts, which indicated not only that rationality is bounded by sentiments but also that sentiments are entangled with complex, historically variable forces. However, as was the case for Pareto, acknowledging such complexities did not prevent Samuelson from modeling economic behavior based on supposed psychological constants, and in Thaler's case it only spurs a slightly more sophisticated model of intertemporal choice, namely "quasi-hyperbolic discounting," illustrated once again with as-if scenarios cleansed of multifarious confounding variables.[65]

Academic criticism has done little to dampen the enthusiasm of would-be managers of popular sentiments eager to instrumentalize the heuristic simplifications of behavioral economists.[66] Under the auspices of "behavioral public policy," embattled state and municipal agencies around the world have supplanted taxes and regulations with "choice architectures" that "nudge" individuals towards interest-maximizing or prosocial behavior (depending on the preferences of the designers).[67] Although these choice architectures are not chosen by those who navigate them, Thaler and Sunstein insist that "libertarian paternalism is not an oxymoron" inasmuch as there is no legal penalty for climbing over the barriers they erect (you're welcome to opt out of that retirement plan, and to try to survive without it later).[68]

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63. Ibid., 209–10.

64. Ibid., 211.

65. Ibid., 206.

66. For criticisms, see Nathan Berg and Gerd Gigerenzer, "As-If Behavioral Economics: Neoclassical Economics in Disguise?," *History of Economic Ideas*. 18 (2010): 133–65; and John McMahon, "Behavioral economics as neoliberalism: Producing and governing homo economicus," *Contemporary Political Theory* 14 (2015): 137–58

67. Note the recently formed journal "Behavioral Public Policy" (Cambridge), and Harvard's program in "Behavioral Economics and Public Policy."

68. Richard H. Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein, "Choice Architecture" in *The Behavioral Foundations of Public Policy* ed. Eldar Shafir (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012). Less approvingly, John McMahon rebrands such policies in Foucauldian terms as instances of "neoliberal governmentality." See McMahon, "Behavioral economics as neoliberalism."

Considering Pareto's daunting description of the equations required to calculate interactions among psychic, social, and environmental factors, one might argue that the challenges facing paternalists are not so much logical as ontological. They are also practical. Would-be paternalists face stiff competition from methodologically sophisticated, well-capitalized, and decidedly less public-minded entrepreneurs of popular sentiments. Abetted by pervasive electronic interfaces and intensive data processing, marketing consultants promise to tailor the messages of their clients to ever-more nuanced and time-sensitive currents of sentiment and opinion, targeting rapidly updated user profiles generated by logarithmic analyses of online behavior gathered from web search and social media activity. They too manipulate (multimedia) choice architectures to shape and direct emergent preferences. The birth of a child, an event Hannah Arendt characterized as the prototypical "beginning"—signaling a disruption of routine and an interval of indeterminate potential—has been heralded by corporations as an opportunity for "marketing interventions" directed at parents who have not yet formed new purchasing habits or brand loyalties.[69]

Thus, denizens of capitalist states find themselves pressed by competing nudges to save or spend what for most are highly limited resources. Furthermore, saving or spending are not the only choices placed before them, and it would appear that attempts to depoliticize public policy by "[shifting] focus away from polarized politics in order to focus on empirical terms of actors, behaviors and interests" only cleared the ground for political entrepreneurs of national, racial, gender, and class antagonisms.[70] The new demagogues, too, employ consultants armed with the latest psychological studies and logarithmic analyses of "big data," tailoring their provocations to shifting demographic or "psychographic" populations sorted by television networks and social media silos.[71] Despite such novelties, many of the strategies by which elites stir non-logical residues would be familiar to Pareto, and he would hardly be surprised by resurgent authoritarian movements in liberal-democratic states. Indeed, his vision of a cycle of elites who mobilize the irrational sentiments of opposing constituencies, his caustic descriptions of demagogic plutocrats, and his misapprehensions of Mussolini as a reactionary corrective to a decadent liberalism appear all too timely today.

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69. Charles Duhigg, *The Power of Habit* (New York: Random House, 2012), 192.

70. McMahon, "Behavioral economics as neoliberalism," 144.

71. For a critical take on the promise of a "psychographic" profiling of the electorate, see David Graham, "Not Even Cambridge Analytica Believed its Hype," *The Atlantic* (March 20, 2018), https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/03/cambridge-analyticas-self-own/556016/. See also Shoshana Zuboff, *Surveillance Capitalism* (New York: Public Affairs, 2019), ch. 10.

## III. Liberal-Democratic Derivations

What is left for those not reconciled to political competitions among paternalists, advertisers, and demagogues over the manipulation of popular sentiments? In the book I referenced earlier—the only one to my knowledge that seriously considers the significance of Pareto for contemporary political theory—Joseph Femia argues that although Pareto's elite bias prevented him from contemplating the possibility, his theory of residues need not preclude a liberal-democratic politics. In particular, Femia argues that Pareto's proposals concerning the reciprocal determination of residues and social facts imply that "the extension of democratic practices and institutions could foster Class I residues in hitherto sluggish masses, making them capable of self-government."[72] Femia does not elaborate on the institutions and practices in question, and it is not immediately clear how an instinct for combinations enables popular rule. However, it turns out that Femia identifies Class I residues not simply with a preference for novelty but also with Pareto's critical perspective, linking that perspective to a liberal politics of the sort that, as noted earlier, he attributes to Pareto. "On the face of it," Femia suggests, "the view of values as subjective preferences would seem to be more naturally linked with individual autonomy than with the imposition of collective purposes."[73]

Femia's speculations concerning the popular dissemination of moral relativism, along with his distinctively liberal alignment of democratic self-government with individual autonomy as opposed to "the imposition of collective purposes," seem consonant with hopeful suppositions previously ventured by thinkers such as John Rawls, Jürgen Habermas, and Seyla Benhabib, namely that the cultural diversity and social mobility of "postconventional" societies might promote the kind of reflexive detachment from ideological commitments that enables compromises among diverse constituencies ruled by shared institutions, suppositions that gained plausibility for some amidst the momentary geopolitical triumph of Euro-American states after 1989.[74] Imputing to conscious beliefs a power Pareto denied them, Femia writes, "If we believe that there are no absolutely authorised values, only interpretations, then we are surely forced to recognise the inherent plurality of interpretations and to endorse a way of living that recognises the inevitability of 'difference.' People [like Pareto] who think of their own values as cultural constructs . . . are likely to embody tolerance, humility, and the spirit of compromise."[75] However, Femia admonishes

72. Femia, *Pareto*, 118.
73. Ibid., 121
74. See Seyla Benhabib, *Situating the Self* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 42.
75. Femia, *Pareto*, 141. On Pareto's toleration of "'difference,'" see 127.

Rawls for simply positing a population whose sentiments support his preferred political system, concluding with a rhetorical question bound to evoke liberal anxieties that prevailed at the time: "Can a civilization of immense liberality and forbearance find the psychological resources to defend itself against those who are less likely to countenance the idea of a meaningless existence? Ever mindful of historical impermanence, Pareto was far from optimistic."[76]

In his conclusions, Femia reverts to an image of opposed *populations* distinguished by preferences for pluralism, change, and progress, on one hand, and solidarity, homogeneity, and tradition on the other, reducing Pareto's already simplified model of oscillating Class I and Class II tendencies. In today's political environment such images have found new resonance. Whether or not one presumes that polemical oppositions between liberal and reactionary populations reflect contrasting biological types, they inhabit the same civilizations, and few liberal democrats are optimistic.[77]

## IV. Radical Democratic Residues?

Might Pareto's theory of residues, described above, provide purchase for a different kind of politics? As I suggested at the outset, Pareto's initial descriptions of residues conform in several respects with theories of affect recently adopted by radical democratic theorists.[78] Drawing variously on the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, the psychology of Silvan Tomkins, and other sources, thinkers such as

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76. Ibid., 141. Ten years before Femia published his book, Samuel Huntington depicted an embattled liberal civilization in similar terms. See Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996). The prosecution of a global war on terror in the name of liberal democracy in the interim seems not to have troubled Femia's speculation that a pluralistic civilization might lack the solidarity and intolerance required to suppress fundamentalist challengers. For Femia's criticism of Rawls, see Femia, *Pareto*, 139.

77. Consider Thomas Edsall's summaries of social-scientific studies that trace partisan constituencies of American party politics either to contrasting biologically grounded dispositions or to "feedback" between affects, social groupings, and partisan discourse. See Thomas B. Edsall, "How Much do Our Genes Influence our political beliefs?," *The New York Times*, Opinion (July 8, 2014), https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/09/opinion/thomas-edsall-how-much-do-our-genes-influence-our-political-beliefs.html; Thomas B. Edsall, "Liberals need to take their fingers out of their ears," *The New York Times*, Opinion (December 7, 2017), https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/07/opinion/liberals-conservatives-trump.html; and Thomas B. Edsall, "We're Staring at Our Phones, Full of Rage for the Other Side," *The New York Times*, Opinion (June 15, 2022), https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/15/opinion/social-media-polarization-democracy.html.

78. The thinkers I list here have diverse philosophical and political commitments, and many others could be included in this category. In highlighting shared features of their arguments, I necessarily gloss many intricacies of their concepts, readings, and proposals.

William Connolly, Eve Sedgwick, Romand Coles, Brian Massumi, John Protevi, and Jane Bennett describe political preferences and alignments as provisional assemblings of sentiments, discourses, and environmental processes.[79] Some also find support in new sciences of embodied cognition that have effectively essentialized anti-essentialism, indicating, as more than one author has put it, that "we are hardwired not to be hardwired."[80] Furthermore, affect theorists suppose not only that contingent assemblages of sentiments can be differently configured, i.e., that sentiments are culturally variable, but also that a multiplicity of contending, incipient inclinations move restlessly below the threshold of organized dispositions.[81]

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79. Silvan Tomkins described affect as an "amplifying co-assembly," part of a cybernetic system comprised by "multiple assemblies of varying degrees of independence, dependence, interdependence, and control and transformation of one by the other." Silvan Tomkins, "The Quest for Primary Motives," in *Exploring Affect* ed. Virginia Demos (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 32. Deleuze and Guattari employed similar terms, blending Baruch Spinoza's account of powers "to affect and be affected" with concepts from Henri Bergson, Gregory Bateson, Gilbert Simondon, and Alfred North Whitehead, among others (including William James and Samuel Butler, as noted above). See Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 158. Summarizing their view, John Protevi writes, "Deleuze and Guattari operationalize the complex notion of affect as the ability of bodies to form assemblages with other bodies, to form what dynamical systems theory would call emergent functional structures that conserve the heterogeneity of their components." John Protevi, *Political Affect* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 49. On the notion of an "affective turn," see Patricia Clough and Jean Halley, eds., *The Affective Turn* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007). For a critique, see Ruth Leys, *The Rise of Affect* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2017). Leys argues that Sedgwick misconstrued Tomkins's theory of affect insofar as he conceived of affect and cognition as "inherently independent" despite his reference to "interdependent" systems. Leys, *Rise*, 40. She accuses theorists influenced by Deleuze and Guattari of similarly misappropriating neuroscientific studies that trace emotions to "hardwired" brain systems. Ibid., 42, 339

80. The phrase is used—independently, it would appear—by Siddhartha Mukherjee and Darren Schreiber. See Siddhartha Mukherjee, "Runs in the Family," *The New Yorker* (March 28, 2016) and Darren Schreiber, "We are Hardwired not to be Hardwired," https://politicalscience.ceu.edu/darren-schreiber-we-are-hardwired-not-be-hardwired.

81. In an influential essay, Brian Massumi distinguishes "virtual" affective multiplicities, "where what are normally opposites coexist, coalesce, and connect" from emotions, "the conventional, consensual point of insertion of intensity into . . . narrativizable action-reaction circuits, into function and meaning." Brian Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect," in *Parables for the Virtual* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 30, 28. On "pluripotential" incipient inclinations below the threshold of explicit judgments, see William Connolly, *The Fragility of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), 16, 95, 120. Eugenie Brinkema accuses followers of Deleuze of envisioning affect as "a pure state of potentiality." Eugenia Brinkema, *The Forms of the Affects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), xiii. For a correction, see Deleuze and Guattari, *Plateaus*, 215. Leys argues that although philosophical conceptions of affective multiplicity conflict with scientific models of emotion in some respects, they converge in undermining the priority of cognition, meaning, and intentionality. Leys, *Rise*, 314–15. I do not have space here to discuss

Thus, theorists of affect conceive of human sentiments as environmentally conditioned and shot through with creative potentials akin to those Pareto attributed to Class I residues. How, though, do contemporary theorists harness dynamic *affects* to a radical democratic *politics*? Whereas Pareto transposed his classification of Class I and II residues onto a political model of regular cycles between counter-acting political movements and constituencies, affect theorists posit tensions between creativity and inertia *within* individuals and groupings, emphasizing the indetermination of political processes. They associate dynamic affects not with any particular constituency but rather with potentials for dis- and re-assembling distributed throughout the body politic. In turn, they propose to enhance those potentials. Brian Massumi identifies an "implied Deleuzean ethics," with the "multiplication of powers of existence, to ever-divergent regimes of action and expression."[82] Moving from ethics to politics, Connolly solicits strategies to "open the anticipatory habits and sedimented dispositions of more constituencies," Lars Tønder envisions a polity populated by "persons pitched on creative instability, joyful affirmation, and political pluralization," and Bonnie Honig asks, "What if we pluralized passion itself?"[83] Given such formulations, it could be tempting to interpret these thinkers as ambassadors for Class I residues. However, they do not identify a radical democratic politics either with a proliferation of desires and multicultural identities, or, like Femia, with an ideological commitment to cultural relativism and individual autonomy, but instead with heightened *sensitivities* to potential affiliations that enable improvisational cross-class collaborations.[84]

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Leys's arguments concerning tensions among various philosophical and scientific accounts of affect or her broader commitment to what could be called the autonomy of cognition, which she sees as the basis of universal truth claims.

82. Massumi, *Parables*, 34.

83. William Connolly, *A World of Becoming* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 56; Lars Tønder. *Tolerance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 126; and Bonnie Honig, *Democracy and the Foreigner* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 120.

84. Having identified democratic politics with "radical receptivity," Romand Coles proposes we "turn up . . . our receiving volume" and sensitize ourselves to "intercorporeal resonances." Romand Coles, *Visionary Pragmatism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 39. Along similar lines, Jane Bennet writes, "the ethical task at hand . . . is to cultivate the ability to discern nonhuman vitality, to become perceptually open to it" Jane Bennett. *Vibrant Matter* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 14–15. See also xii. William Connolly aligns an anti-fascist politics with "presumptive generosity." William Connolly, *Aspirational Fascism* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 74. Envisioning a kind of reflexive affection, Massumi writes of "some way perceiving . . . virtualities without their *actually* presenting themselves to your senses." Brian Massumi, "Affective Attunement in the field of Catastrophe," interview by Jonas Fritsch and Bodil Marie Stavning Thomsen with Brian Massumi and Erin Manning in *Politics of Affect* (Cambridge, MA: Polity Press, 2015), 118.

What lessons might Pareto's *Treatise* hold for these thinkers? Pareto may have validated Spinoza's observation—often cited by affect theorists—that "no one has yet determined what a body can do," but the dynamism and complexity Pareto attributed to residues did not preclude durable patterns of behavior in large-scale aggregations (think again of road rage in rush-hour traffic).[85] Nor did Pareto's recognition that passions are culturally and historically contingent trouble his assumptions concerning mobilizations of residues by elites, assumptions that have been updated by recent authors who argue, with varying degrees of nuance, that commercial and political entrepreneurs elicit culturally encoded emotional associations rather than generic biological instincts.[86] If the promises of market and political consultants described above are more than hot air (and they surely are, however overinflated), even highly motile sentiments can be targeted and channeled. People may not be hardwired, but you can still pull their strings.

Few scholars suppose affect as such confounds commercial or political manipulations. To the contrary, affect theorists informed by Foucault's and Deleuze's studies of biopolitical power and control have documented a variety of recent advances in the management of popular sentiments.[87] Contemplating political polarization in the United States today, William Connolly emphasizes that "instincts can be socially incorporated even if there is no master list of basic or primary instincts," and he describes the contemporary right-wing assemblage—which, like the patriotic aggregates Pareto described, mobilizes "cumulations of sentiments"—as an "evangelical-capitalist resonance *machine*."[88] Furthermore, those who heed Deleuze and Guattari's warnings concerning the potential for fascism in every "line of flight," have no illusions concerning the likely effects of social dislocation.[89] Indeed, Connolly warned in 2008 that "The growing sense of the fragility of things could intensify into a negative dynamic already in motion, increasing the prospect for a fascist version of

85. Benedict De Spinoza, *Ethics*, trans. Edward Curley (London: Penguin, 1996), 71.

86. See Sarah Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (New York: Routledge, 2004); Elizabeth Anker, *Orgies of Feeling* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014); and Dominique Moisi, *The Geopolitics of Emotion* (New York: Anchor, 2010).

87. Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control," OCTOBER 59 (1992): 3–7, at 7; John Cheney-Lippold, "A New Algorithmic Identity: Soft Biopolitics and the Modulation of Control," *Theory, Culture & Society* 28 (2011): 164–81; and Brian Massumi, *Ontopower* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015). This is not to say that the straw man dismantled by some critics of affect theory has no living relatives. See for instance Lone Bertelsen and Andrew Murphie, "An Ethics of Everyday Infinities and Powers," in *The Affect Theory Reader* eds. Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 66.

88. Connolly, *Aspirational Fascism*, 30, 38 fn.9; and William Connolly, *Capitalism and Christianity, American Style* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 40. See also x, 54–55.

89. Deleuze and Guattari, *Plateaus*, 9–10.

capitalism in America."[90] Thus, while they theorize a dynamic human sensorium, these thinkers do not presume contemporary publics are any more caring than they are rational. Rather than defer to the creative potentials of the masses, they promote a variety of practical reforms to cultivate hospitable sensibilities.[91]

Many (myself included) find the proposals of radical democrats moving, but, recalling Femia's worry, what about those who do not? Could antagonized partisans be nudged towards convivial, experimental collaborations? For that matter, who will do the nudging? Eschewing paternalism, radical democrats imagine popular constituencies as participants in their own self-transformation. Connolly emphasizes that interdependencies between democratic sensibilities, on one hand, and democratic institutions and practices, on the other, comprise "a tension to be negotiated . . . rather than a closed paradox."[92] However, like libertarian paternalism, a radical democratic affective politics is challenged less by logical contradictions than by practical complications and political opposition. To create capacities and opportunities for radical democratic assembling, radical democrats must dismantle deeply entrenched configurations of economic inequality, racism and misogyny, and other prejudices. They must also contend with well-funded, media-savvy commercial and political strategists who, abetted by social media architectures, provoke "affective polarization" (fear, rage, envy, contempt) between spatially and virtually segregated populations.[93]

Given these challenges, building infrastructures hospitable to radical democratic sensibilities will require large and sustained popular movements endowed with traits Pareto associated with Class II residues, namely persistence, solidarity, and sacrifice.[94] Even if we locate capacities for both creativity and persistence within radical

90. Connolly, *Capitalism and Christianity*, 115. See also 55, 98. 65.

91. For an example of the former strategy, see Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (New York: Harvard University Press, 2000). I do not have space here to review the various techniques and institutional designs others have proposed. Working at different scales, Massumi and Erin Manning have experimented with participatory artistic practices, Romand Coles has formulated strategies for social activists, and William Connolly has advocated for wide-ranging reforms to media regulations, food systems, child rearing, taxation, transportation, and residential geographies. See Massumi, "Affective Attunement," 117; Coles, *Visionary Pragmatism*, 82, 90–91, 116–18; Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 81, 84; Connolly, *Aspirational Fascism*, 26–27, 44; and Connolly, *Capitalism and Christianity*, passim.

92. Connolly, *Ethos*, 96. See also 80. Though he promotes horizontal collaboration, he nonetheless emphasizes that the role of charismatic leaders should not be discounted. See Connolly, *Aspirational*, 6.

93. See Jay J Van Bavel, et. al., "How Social Media Shapes Polarization," *Trends in Cognitive Science* 25 (2021): 913–16.

94. Jodi Dean highlights tensions between pluralization and solidarity, and promotes the latter, in Jodi Dean, *Crowds and Party* (New York: Verso, 2016), 21, 127.

democratic constituencies, we may wonder how these contrasting tendencies are to be distributed. Responding to this dilemma, Connolly has proposed a "double-entry" politics comprised of periodic alternations between "critical disturbance," on one hand, and "collaboration" or "governance" on the other.[95] Following his lead, Coles advises radical democratic activists to alternate between critical-reflexive and mobilizing strategies. "The key," he writes "is to learn how to cycle and oscillate between the two."[96] Connolly and Coles could thus be said to give Pareto's cycles a democratic spin. As was the case for Pareto's model of periodic oscillations, these are heuristic simplifications. Connolly and Coles neither specify the frequency of the oscillations in question nor provide a set of criteria for deciding when to be either receptive and collaborative or resolute and intolerant. Of course, unlike Pareto, these theorists promote rather than predict the oscillations in question. Nonetheless, they appeal to scientific models that harmonize with their visions (a combination that arouses many critics). Whereas Pareto's vision of oscillating political systems was inspired by scientific models of equilibrium, affect theorists often invoke Ilya Prigogine's and Isabelle Stengers's account of local systems situated in larger constellations of forces "far from equilibrium" and Coles compares political oscillations to chemical processes of "simulated annealing," whereby metals are hardened by repeated melting and cooling.[97]

To be sure, a radical democratic politics does not follow logically from scientific theories of punctuated equilibrium any more than Pareto's conception of political oscillations followed from his observations of chemical processes or the periodic phases of the moon. Yet the affect theorists I consider here would not claim otherwise. Even as they invoke scientific studies, they generally disavow scientistic pretentions of the sort Pareto adopted, recognizing their theoretical speculations as discursive acts, derivations if you will, that exert influence through the (assembled) perceptions and inclinations they stir.[98] Thus, these theorists of affect part with Pareto in two related ways: On one hand, they dignify rather than denigrate an affective sensorium immersed in social and ecological processes, seeing human affects as capacious but not exceptional components of a creative universe; on the other, they adopt a humbler view of their own theories, placing their discourses on the same plane as other material processes. Despite these differences, I have argued,

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95. See Connolly, *Ethos*, xxi, 21, 154–55; William Connolly, *Pluralism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 7, 129; and Connolly, *Aspirational*, 83–86.

96. Coles, *Visionary Pragmatism*, 145. See also 163.

97. See Protevi, *Political Affect*, 107–8, 43, 46fn.10; William Connolly *A World of Becoming* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 46; William Connolly, *Facing the Planetary* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), 66; and Coles, *Visionary*, 140–41.

98. See Connolly, *Aspirational*, 75.

such thinkers will find affinities with Pareto's theory of residues. That said, if Pareto's *Treatise*, like Machiavelli's *Prince*, contains resources not only for rulers but also for the ruled, it also confirms that, as Machiavelli emphasized, even the most ingenious can fail, a possibility that can be either dispiriting or comforting, depending.

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