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# BRINGING "TOGETHER": EMOTIONS AND POWER IN ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSES TO INSTITUTIONAL COMPLEXITY

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**The theoretical puzzle of how organizations deal with contradicting logics has been extensively investigated during the past two decades. This stream of research has focused on the cognitive, but has overlooked emotions and power, which are fundamental to the lived experience of logics, and to their constitution. Drawing on a 15-month ethnography of "Together," a Jewish–Palestinian organization in a mixed city in Israel, we explore how the organization succeeds in challenging societal dominant notions of ethno-nationalism by stimulating universalistic notions, and how it occasionally fails to do so, as ethno-nationalism creeps in. Our findings indicate that emotional control allows organizations to deal with contradictory logics and achieve their desired constellation, while unbidden emotions disrupt local efforts and enable changes in desired constellations of logics. Further, systemic power mediates the very experience of logics and the prospects of changing their constellation: Social asymmetry necessitates harder emotion work on behalf of the underprivileged, differentiating their experience of logics, and limiting the extent to which emotional eruption is a viable option. Thus, our study highlights the intersection of logics, emotions, and power, and how logics are managed and failed to be managed.**

The theoretical puzzle of how organizations deal with multiple contradicting logics has been investigated extensively during the past two decades (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta, & Lounsbury, 2011). While this literature has stressed cognitive mechanisms such as sensemaking (e.g., Jay, 2013), negotiations over meanings (e.g., Battilana, Sengul, Pache, & Model, 2015), and selective combination and separation of logics (e.g., Pache & Santos, 2013; Smets, Jarzabkowski, Burke, & Spee, 2015), it has mostly disregarded emotions (with the exception of Toubiana & Zietsma, 2017) and socially entrenched power dynamics (Hudson, Okhuysen, & Creed, 2015). This neglect is surprising given that emotional tensions and power struggles at the intraorganizational level are to be expected when conflicting logics are simultaneously present.

We attend to this gap through an ethnographic study of "Together," a Jewish–Palestinian organization in a mixed city in Israel. Together challenges the societal dominant logic of ethno-nationalism, which stresses monolithic membership in a particular social community (Bashir, 2015; Tamir, 1995), separate identities (Maoz, 2012), and ethno-national-based interests, preferences, and loyalty (Cohen, 2019; Morris & Cogan, 2001; Tamir, 1995). As an alternative, the organization stimulates a logic of universalism, emphasizing inclusion (Bashir, 2015; Shafir & Peled, 2002), equality (Samooha, 2013), intergroup harmony, and common identity (Maoz, 2012). Despite its purposeful efforts, however,

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organizational intentions occasionally fail as ethnonationalism creeps in. The focus on emotions in relation to logics emerged from the data as we encountered intense emotions that affected the institutional drama in the organization, and which we could not explain using the cognitive-oriented mechanism identified in the literature. The focus on related power dynamics emerged from our surprise at finding great resemblance between the emotional manifestations of Jewish and Palestinian members, expressed during the same periods of time, even though their circumstances differed.

Our systematic exploration suggests that to maintain the desired "constellation of logics" (Goodrick & Reay, 2011), in which the universalistic logic was the dominant one, the organization and its members employed emotional control: eliciting emotions that are related to the logic of universalism and inhibiting emotions that are related to the logic of ethno-nationalism. In routine times, efforts to maintain universalism as the dominant logic inside the organization succeeded. However, once external political or violent events ensued, unbidden emotions made the ethno-national logic more salient. Both the management of emotions and their eruption was enabled due to the social power-relations between Jews and Palestinians, and further preserved them.

Based on this study, we develop a theoretical model that explains when and how organizations may succeed (or fail) in shielding themselves from the pressures of institutional logics from the outside, and maintain (or fail to maintain) a unique constellation of logics within. Our model highlights the controlled and unbridled dynamics within organizations that face multiple institutional pressures. Specifically, it highlights the role of disruptive events, and material, textual and interactional mechanisms that affect logic-related emotional contents and emotional processes, experienced differently by powerful compared to powerless members, in organizational responses to logic complexity. In developing our arguments, we make three contributions. First, we highlight the role of emotional control in institutional complexity. Emotional control, provoked by internal energetic triggers (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018), allows organizations to deal with contradictory logics and achieve a desired constellation. Second, we illuminate the role of erupting emotions in institutional complexity. Unbidden emotions, elicited by external events, may lead to changes in the constellation of logics, at least temporally. Analyzing emotions and their triggers provides an explanation for the perseverance of contradicting logics and their shifting dominance, and enriches understanding of how multiple logics are managed and failed to be managed. Finally, we show that controlled and erupting emotional-institutional dynamics are not neutral, but are embedded in power relations. Even when emotion rules are prescribed for all members equally, the emotion work that emanates differs between subgroups, reflecting their privileged or underprivileged positions. Therefore, members experience logics differently. Power relations also determine when and to what extent emotional eruptions are displayed, hence mediating the effect of eruption on institutional consequences, so that the latter reflect the interests of the privileged group. All in all, our study stresses the role of emotions, mediated by power relations, in strategic efforts to promote desired logics, and in the failure of such efforts.

## EMOTIONS AND INTRAORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSES TO INSTITUTIONAL COMPLEXITY

### Intraorganizational Responses to Institutional Complexity

Institutional logics are macro-level systems of material and symbolic prescriptions for individual, organizational, field, and societal life (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012). Serving as scripts for thought and action (Friedland & Alford, 1991), institutional logics specify which issues are salient, the standards by which individuals and organizations are evaluated, and personal and organizational identities and goals—all of which materialize into organizational forms, strategies, and everyday norms of behavior and interaction (Thornton et al., 2012).

Organizations often function in a complex institutional context, as multiple logics affect them simultaneously (Greenwood et al., 2011; Thornton et al., 2012). Organized in a particular constellation (Goodrick & Reay, 2011), logics have different levels of compatibility (Besharov & Smith, 2014), jurisdictional overlap (Raynard, 2016), or permeability (Jancsary, Meyer, Höllerer, & Barberio, 2017), and various degrees of dominance over each other (Raynard, 2016). The configuration of logics at the societal or field levels is reflected within organizations as well (Raynard, 2016, e.g., Yu, 2013; Zilber, 2002).

Organizations have been found to strategically respond to institutional complexity in various ways, ranging from an "either–or" approach—choosing specific logics to which actors adhere while denying others (Hargrave & Van De Ven, 2009, e.g., Czarniawska & Wolff, 1998)—to integrating them through compartmentalization (Kraatz & Block, 2008; Martin, Currie, Weaver, Finn & McDonald, 2017; Varlander, Hinds, Thomason, Pearce, & Altman, 2016) or logic blending (Kraatz & Block, 2008; e.g., Binder, 2007).

Studies that have unraveled the internal mechanisms through which organizations and their members cope with complexity have shown that organizational members engage in sensemaking (Jay, 2013; Tracey, Phillips, & Jarvis, 2011), and negotiations over meanings (Battilana et al., 2015; Smith & Besharov, 2019) and identity (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Christiansen & Lounsbury, 2013; Glynn, 2000), to deal with the tensions that may be caused by complexity. They may also treat logics as "cultural toolkits" (Swidler, 1986) from which they borrow at different times (McPherson & Sauder, 2013) or spaces (Smets et al., 2015), separating, integrating, or selectively combining elements of logics (Pache & Santos, 2013; Smets et al., 2015). Though we have learned a great deal from these studies, their overly cognitive focus has missed out on emotions and power—which are fundamental to the lived experience of logics, and to which we now turn.

## Emotions and Institutions

A cultural approach to emotions (Bericat, 2016) accentuates that emotions, which we seemingly feel in private, are actually grounded in larger social forces. *Emotion rules*[1] (Hochschild, 1979; Jarvis, 2017) determine what should be felt (emotional experience) and how this should be expressed (emotional display). To follow emotion rules, people employ emotion "work" (Hochschild, 1979), ensuring that private feelings are suppressed or concealed "so that we can attain the socially acceptable emotional face" (Fineman, 1996: 546).

The fast-growing perspective bridging emotions and institutions (Lok, Creed, DeJordy, & Voronov, 2017; Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018) has pointed to the role of emotions in the reproduction or change of the institutional order. Particularly, *discrete emotions*, such as love (Friedland, Mohr, Roose, & Gardinali, 2014), shame (Creed, Hudson, Okhuysen, & Smith-Crowe, 2014; Toubiana & Zietsma, 2017), hope, betrayal, and anger (Toubiana & Zietsma, 2017), stimulate institutional work (Gill & Burrow, 2018; Ruebottom & Auster, 2018; Wright, Zammuto, & Liesch, 2017) and disruption (Toubiana & Zietsma, 2017), and inspire participation within emerging fields (Grodal & Granqvist, 2014) and the construction of new logics at the intersection of fields (Fan & Zietsma, 2017). Institutional dynamics are also linked to *emotional processes* (Voronov & Vince, 2012; Voronov, 2014). For example, denial—the unconscious and deliberate avoidance of emerging disruptive emotions—may protect collectives from "uncomfortable truths or disconfirming information" (Delmestri & Goodrick, 2017: 241), thus maintaining the institutional hegemony.

Emotions are generated by "the energetic... what fosters, maintains, fuels, defines and diminishes emotional energy" (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018: 8). Interactions that include shaming (Creed et al., 2014; Toubiana & Zietsma, 2017), "fear work" (Gill & Burrow, 2018) and "bullying" (DeJordy & Barrett, 2014) elicit emotions that lead to institutional control. Other energetic mechanisms include: Facebook, which serves as an "emotional echo chamber" where negative emotions amplify (Toubiana & Zietsma, 2017), "interstitial events"—distancing actors from their daily lives and bringing them together in a new setting (Ruebottom & Auster, 2018), and perceived violations of professional values (Wright et al., 2017). All of these mechanisms generate emotions that lead to institutional work or disruption.

While the institutional literature has highlighted the restrained aspect of emotions (Jarvis, 2017; Voronov & Weber, 2016), the emotion literature has also referred to their untamed nature. Emotions carry an unbidden, erupting quality, and can be "uncontrollable as a sneeze" (Damasio, 1999: 49), providing "spectacular demonstrations of the limits of human agency" (Wetherell, 2013: 221). Therefore, examining institutional complexity via an emotional lens carries the potential to expand our understanding of the uncalculated and unexpected collective processes that underlie organizational responses to multiple institutional pressures (Voronov, 2014; Voronov & Vince, 2012). Alongside the missing attention to the erupting qualities of emotions, the growing body of literature connecting

[1] Hochschild (1979), being the first to have written about the concept, referred to "feeling rules." However, since a major part of the "emotion" literature has used the term "emotion rules" in the same manner, we use the latter.

institutions to emotions has also neglected the investigation of intraorganizational responses to complexity. A study by Toubiana and Zietsma (2017) is the only exception; this showed that different logics carry different emotional "registers"—"prescriptions about appropriate emotional content and expression" (Toubiana & Zietsma, 2017: 927)—which may clash in states of complexity, leading to internal conflicts and institutional disruption. Toubiana and Zietsma's (2017) study is a clear testimony to the significance of emotion in understanding organizations facing multiple logics, and the need to further explore it.

### Power at the Intersection of Emotions and Institutions

The literature on institutions and emotions has brought power dynamics to the fore, and especially the more neglected aspects of systemic power: the "power that works through routine, ongoing practice to advantage particular groups without those groups necessarily establishing or maintaining those practices" (Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017: 480). Rather than locating power in self-interested actors, the concept of systemic power emphasizes that social, technological, discursive, and bureaucratic systems serve as transparent structures that support those in privileged positions (Alvesson & Willmott, 1992; Clegg, 1989; Foucault, 1979; Lawrence, Winn, & Jennings, 2001). Such systems are unconsciously and routinely accepted, and are "the backdrop against which all organizational actions and decisions take place" (Hardy, 1996: S8).

While institutional theory strives to punctuate concealed formations that generate actions and interactions, this form of power has mostly been neglected or neutralized (Hudson et al., 2015; Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017; Munir, 2015; Wijaya & Heugens, 2018), particularly in the literature on intraorganizational responses to institutional complexity. In the latter, the handful of studies that have empirically examined power dynamics (Bjerregaard & Jonasson, 2014; Yu, 2013) have predominantly conceptualized it as episodic, the "relatively discrete strategic acts of mobilization initiated by self-interested actors" (Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017: 480). On the other hand, the literatures on emotions, and institutions and emotions, has brought systemic power dynamics to the fore, and thus may help sensitize us to its effects. These literatures have outlined two pathways linking emotional-institutional dynamics to systemic power.

First, the preservation of institutional arrangements through emotional control is not neutral, and most often preserves the power and control of elites. Through shaming acts (Creed et al., 2014) that set the boundaries of social inclusion and exclusion (Moon, 2013), people are socialized to feel and express adequate emotions that sustain the social order, including its power arrangements. Nonetheless, discomforting emotions (e.g., anger) may also motivate people to challenge dominant beliefs and social norms that sustain social inequalities, thus taking part in the disruption of social orders (Creed et al., 2014; Jokikokko, 2016; Zembylas & McGlynn, 2013).

Second, emotion work maintains social divisions and the inequality between social groups through its effect on the construction of social identities. Emotions serve as vessels through which people construct and limit their subjectivity (Moon, 2013) according to institutional prescriptions (Voronov & Weber, 2016). Such emotion work keeps disadvantaged social groups complicit in the order of domination (Bericat, 2016). For example, when social constructions of masculinity and femininity prescribe different emotion rules for men and women—cultivating men to feel anger and pride, and women to express submissiveness via fear, shame, and humiliation, masculine domination perpetuates (Bourdieu, 2001; Emirbayer & Goldberg, 2005).

Given that emotions and systemic power have both surfaced from our bottom-up investigation of institutional complexity, and with the help of the theoretical toolkit we presented above, we ask two sets of questions:

(1) What is the role of emotions in (de)stabilizing constellations of logics in organizations? And what spawns emotions that lead to the maintenance or change of logics' constellation inside organizations?
(2) How is systemic power involved in the emotional generation of institutional stability and change inside organizations?

## RESEARCH CONTEXT AND METHODS

### Research Context

To attend to the above questions, we base our findings on an organizational ethnographic study conducted in Together (pseudonym) during 2012–2013. Located in a mixed city in Israel and in a larger context of intractable conflict between

Jews and Palestinians,[2] Together aims at uniting the two nations and providing them with community services. It hosts cultural events, and operates educational, youth, dialogue and sports departments, as well as a restaurant and a hotel. Together's employees and target populations are Jews, Muslim and Christian Palestinians, including citizens and residents. The high emotionality characterizing long-term ethnic conflicts (Halperin, 2014), and the asymmetric power relations between Jewish and Palestinian populations (Abu-Nimer, 1999; Maoz, 2012) make Together especially suitable for our inquiry, through which we hope to shed light on less extreme cases as well (Yin, 2003).

The Israeli–Palestinian conflict, in which the organization is embedded, is an ongoing confrontation between Israeli-Jews and Palestinians over the legitimacy of their existence in the geographical space they both inhabit (Kelman, 1987; Nyhan & Zeitzoff, 2018). Palestinians and Jews live mostly in separate towns or neighborhoods, study in separate education systems, and in some cases use separate transportation systems (Samooha, 2013). Their historical and contemporary narratives diverge, assigning the other nation the role of villain (Rouhana & Bar-Tal, 1998). Ongoing violent events and media coverage maintain and accentuate these narratives.

The political culture in Israel is comprised of ethno-national (also labeled national or particular) ideals, as well as universal (also labeled universal-liberal, liberal-democratic, liberal, humanistic-universal, or humanist) ones (e.g., Dekker, Malová, & Hoogendoorn, 2003; Shafir & Peled, 2002). Israeli society and state are established on the commitment to Jewish ethno-nationality. This commitment is reflected in the lack of separation between state and religion and in various state practices, such as the endorsement of Jewish settlements in occupied Palestinian territories, land confiscations used for the benefit of Jewish needs inside Israeli internationally recognized borders, and the unequal application of the "welfare state" for Jews and Palestinians (Samooha, 2013; Shafir & Peled, 2002). However, universalism has also been an inseparable component of the citizenship discourse in Israel (Cohen, 2019; Shafir & Peled, 2002), which is apparent in the self-definition of the state in liberal terms—as a democracy (Hermann, Cohen, Omar, Heller, & Lazar-Shoef, 2017)—in the presence of public discourses about individualism and human rights, and in the rules and policies intended to gradually apply equality and integration to the Arab citizens of Israel (Samooha, 2013). The voices of the well-established Peace Education Movement in Israel (Salomon, 2000) are also grounded in notions of universalism, transpiring through efforts to promote intergroup encounters under conditions of equality, emphasizing cooperation and intergroup harmony (Maoz, 2012).

Still, since the failed attempts to end the Israeli–Palestinian conflict during the 2000 Camp David Summit,[3] ethno-nationality has become dominant in Israel (Shafir & Peled, 2002). Its domination is apparent, for example, in the recent adoption of legislative initiatives that harm Arabs and reduce their democratic rights (Samooha, 2013), in the pursuit of a more nationalistic agenda in education (Cohen, 2019), and in the high levels of threat that both Jews and Arabs report in relation to each other (Samooha, 2013). Thus, although both ethno-nationality and universalism are prominent institutional logics, their position vis-à-vis each other is not equal, with ethno-nationality being contemporarily more dominant.

## Data Gathering

Data were gathered during 15 months of participant observation (Van Maanen, 2011). The first author attended formal and informal meetings, interviewed many members of Together, conducted numerous informal interactions, and collected written and visual materials (See Table 1).

***Participant observation.*** The first author observed the sport, education, youth, dialogue, restaurant, hotel, and cleaning and maintenance departments both in their daily routines and during festive activities and formal meetings. She also attended interdepartmental activities, such as management meetings and organizational celebrations. The nature and the level of participation differed in those daily observations, depending on the working norms of each department and our estimation of

[2] Throughout this paper we use the word "Palestinians" to refer to citizens of Israel or people holding residential status, also called "Arabs" in some cases by organizational members.

[3] The Camp David Summit (July 2000) between US, Palestinian, and Jewish leaders, aimed at ending the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. The summit ended without an agreement. Three months after the negotiations, intense Palestinian uprisings began (Al-Aqsa Intifada, October 2000 events), resulting in many casualties.

**TABLE 1**
**Data sources between March 2012 and June 2013**

| Source | Number |
|---|---|
| *Interviewees* | **72** |
| Organizational membership | |
| Insiders | 61 |
| Outsiders who keep close contact with Together | 11 |
| Nationality | |
| Palestinian | 28 |
| Jewish | 41 |
| Other nationality | 3 |
| Gender | |
| Male | 40 |
| Female | 32 |
| Organizational hierarchy | |
| Senior management | 8 |
| Medium managerial ranks | 12 |
| Professional workers | 32 |
| Cleaning, maintenance, and security employees | 8 |
| *Observations* | |
| Formal meetings | ***59*** |
| Team meetings | 21 |
| Various organizational events | 9 |
| Ongoing observations | Sporadic 93 days |

the best way to gain access to as much information as possible, with as little interference as possible. Participative observations included unstructured conversations with members and clients. Extensive field notes written up during observations or immediately afterward provided detailed accounts of the activity attended, and of the first author's emotions and initial interpretations.

***Interviews.*** During fieldwork, the first author interviewed 72 people from all departments and hierarchical strata. The interviews were semi-structured, and explored positive and negative experiences at work; relational dynamics; organizational structure; the effects that the joint Jewish–Arab work had on the organization; and relationships between Together and its environments. Seven of the 72 interviewees were central informants, with whom the first author conducted repeated interviews at different points of time throughout the research period. All in all, 117 interviews, an hour and a half long on average, were conducted.

***Archival data.*** The first author also collected written materials, such as email correspondence between organizational members and between them and people in the organizational environment; protocols of meetings, including ones she did not attend; letters from the CEO to the employees; letters and requests from donors; and official documents.

## Data Analysis

The analysis proceeded in four stages:

***First stage: Capturing institutional logics.*** We chose to study Together as it seemed to work under conditions of institutional complexity. We used the pattern-inducing technique (Reay & Jones, 2016) to capture the relevant logics. To begin with, we conducted content analysis (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998), systematically generating, verifying, discarding, combining, and revising coded groupings into main categories. Initially, we identified two logics—coexistence and conflict. Later on,[4] we came to understand these logics in more general terms, reflecting the logics of universalism and ethno-nationalism.[5]

To make sure that these logics are an accurate framing of our data, and to establish the "elemental building blocks" of institutional logic (Thornton et al., 2012) that were enacted in Together, we iteratively compared our empirical data against the literature on nationalism and universalism. (e.g., Bashir, 2015; Dyrsad, 2012; Shafir & Peled, 2002; Tamir, 1995). One of the first new elements that emerged, which we had not anticipated when we planned our study, was that intense emotions were tied to the ways universalism and ethno-nationalism manifested in Together. Thus, we turned to a systematic analysis of emotions.

***Second stage: Exploring emotions.*** We engaged in an extensive analysis of the emotional dynamics in Together. Since emotion is regarded as a particularly elusive and multifaceted phenomenon (Rogers, Casey, Ekert, Holland, Nakkula, & Sheinberg, 1999), we used multiple analytical tools. We analyzed experienced emotions (shared with us during interviews or with others in daily interaction); overt emotional displays, such as laughter, crying, speech rate, tone of voice, and emotional trajectories within interactions (Godbold, 2015; Samra-Fredericks, 2004); covert emotional expressions,

[4] We thank the editor and the three anonymous reviewers for pushing us in this direction.

[5] The dialogue department was the only one that did not act according to the universalistic logic, but rather on a version of the multiculturalist approach (Bashir, 2015), which also attempts to replace ethno-nationalism. The functioning of this department was loosely coupled (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) with the organization as it was detached, structurally and normatively, from the rest of the organization. At the time of our field observations, it was closed. Hence, we do not bank our interpretations on the functioning of this department.

including emotionally charged metaphors (Boudens, 2005), nonverbal communication (e.g., gestures, gazes, and body postures), and what was not said (Rogers et al., 1999). We interpreted these markers by situating them in their context, examining their related content, the object (person, issue), the interactional sequence that led to or stemmed from the emotional display (Sawyer, 2003), and the logics that emotions were related to. This analysis resulted in an understanding of the ways emotions were elicited and controlled to promote universalism, and erupted, manifesting ethnonationalism.

***Third stage: Comparisons of emotions and logics across nationality and time.*** To develop a more nuanced understanding of the relations between emotions and responses to complexity, we analyzed the enactment of logics and emotions while breaking them down by nationality (Jewish or Palestinian), and time (event or daily routine). We also systematically analyzed external events versus routine times, as in previous analytical stages it had become apparent that emotional dynamics changed around external events. Creating a timeline that included all national, political, and religious events that occurred during the research period (see Figure 1), we checked how, if at all, these events resonated in the organization. The comparisons revealed the role of events in generating emotions that changed the constellation of logics, and highlighted the ways power relations mediated the emotional impact on responses to complexity.

***Fourth stage: Developing a theoretical model.*** In this stage we experimented with various representations of our emergent insights regarding the theoretical constructs and dynamics that emerged from the previous stages of the analysis. The theoretical model we offer is designed to capture the complex and messy, only partially controlled, process by which intraorganizational emotional dynamics, embedded within societal and organizational influences and power relations, account for how organizations cope with contradicting logics.

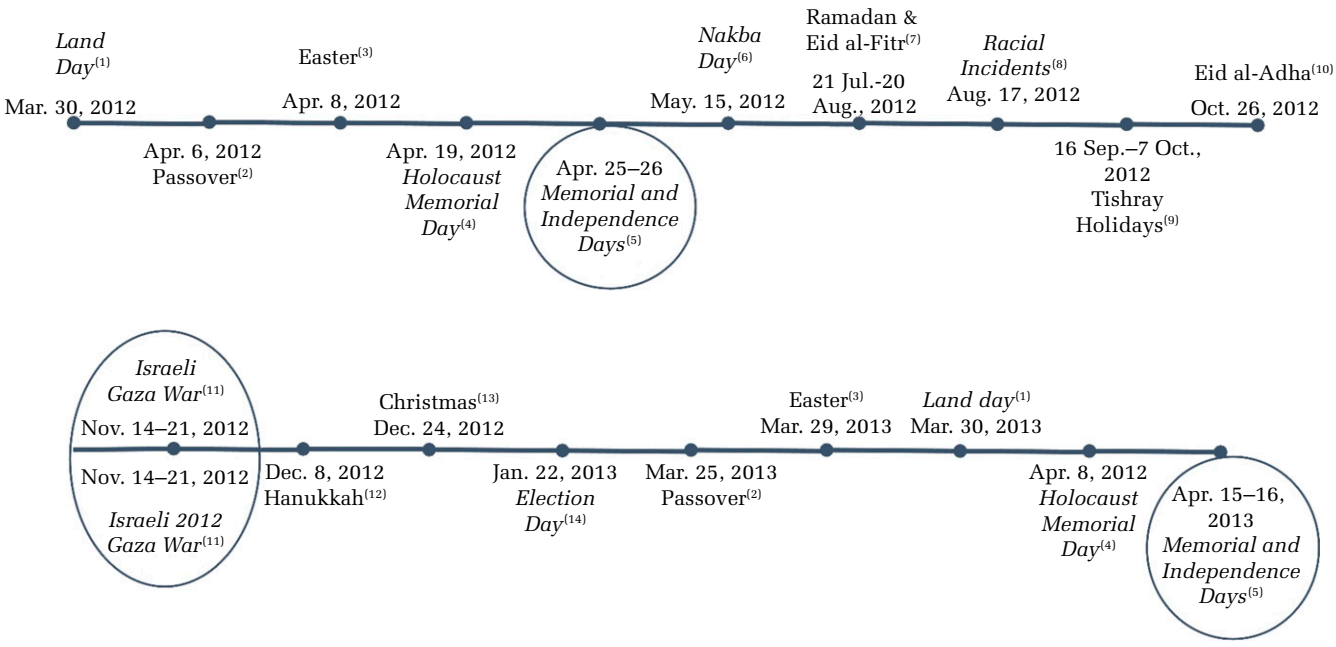
During both data collection and analysis, we attempted to take our identities as Israeli Jews into account, and be reflective about the political and national context of inequality within which the data were gathered and interpreted. Most of the interviews took place in English or Hebrew, and only two were in Arabic due to the first author's limited knowledge of the language. During observations, this limitation hindered her understanding of what went on and restricted her communication with the people in the organization who spoke solely or mainly Arabic. The first author's exposure to Palestinians' emotions during routine times and intense events was especially hindered by her Jewish identity, which is part of the fabric of the societal-level power relations, and of the conflict between the nations. Hence, the ability to communicate with, see, understand, and depict the "other" was and remains limited. Despite the limitations, the first author's background, including five years of facilitating dialogue encounters between Palestinians and Jews, and her ability to speak and understand at least some Arabic, assisted her in the power-laden and culturally biased situation of studying this mixed organization. The first author shared with her Palestinian interlocutors her critical understandings of the conflict, which led almost immediately to their expressing themselves more openly. With time, trust was built, allowing the author to learn about the experiences and emotions of both Palestinian and Jewish members. Still, Palestinian members were also guarded, adhering to the emotion rules we write about to different extents.

Given this limitation, we employed a variety of validating mechanisms (Tracy, 2010; Whittemore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001). We were sensitive to textual markers of power relations, such as "the languages of the unsayable" (Rogers et al., 1999). We used the first author's reflections from her field notes, such as her experiences of being avoided, in order to better understand the emotion work that the more reserved Palestinian members undertook. Finally, we took advantage of the fact that the first author collected the data and the second author had a more distant relation to it, discussing interpretation between us (Evans, Huising, & Silbey, 2016). We hope that giving voice to people at Together, and providing insights regarding the struggle of an organization that strives to bring change amid strong counter-pressures, makes this research worthwhile.

## BETWEEN UNIVERSALISM AND ETHNO-NATIONALISM: EMOTIONAL, POWER-LADEN RESPONSES

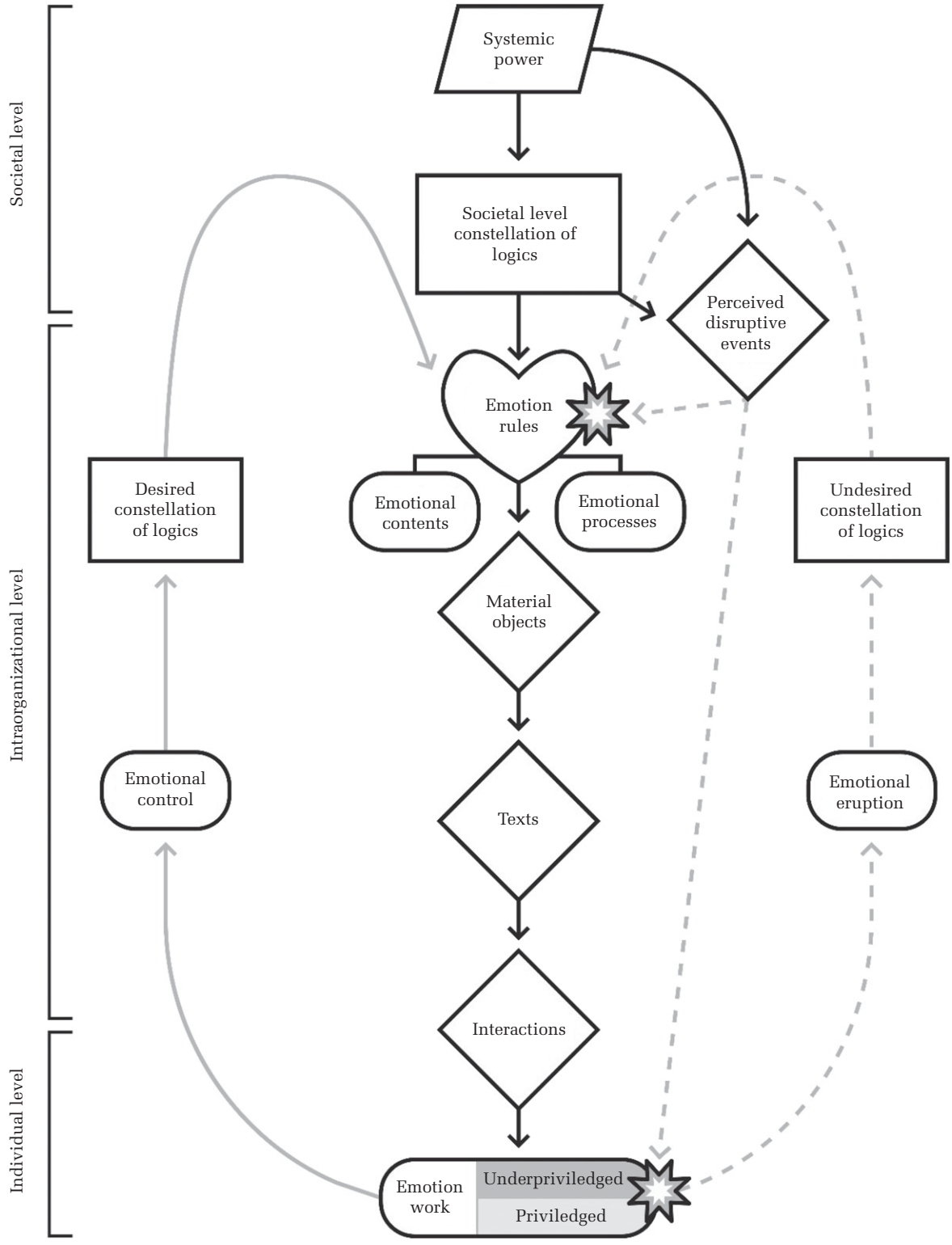
Our model of the emotional, power-laden dynamics that participate in organizational responses to institutional complexity, which emerged inductively from our bottom-up analysis, is shown in Figures 2.

**FIGURE 1**
**Time Table Of National, Political, and Religious Events**




*Notes:* Jewish-Israeli events are marked below the timeline, and Palestinian events (which include both Christians and Muslims) are marked above the line. National-based events are marked in Italics, and religious holidays in regular font. (1) Land Day: Marked annually by Palestinians in Israel in protest of the land dispossession policy, home demolition, and continuous discrimination toward its Arab citizens. (2) Passover: An important Jewish festival commemorating the liberation from slavery in ancient Egypt and the freedom of the nation. (3) Easter: A central Christian holiday celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus Crist from the dead, described in the New Testament. (4) Holocaust Memorial Day: A day of remembrance of the Holocaust, its Jewish victims, and the heroism within it. (5) **Memorial and Independence Days**: "Memorial Day for the Fallen Soldiers of Israel and Victims of Terrorism" is a national remembrance day commemorated annually, a day prior to the state's Day of Independence, by two sirens heard throughout the country. Independence Day is a formal national holiday in Israel, commemorating the establishment of the state of Israel and marked via national and local ceremonies, the waving of flags, and more. (6) *Nakba* Day: *Nakba*, meaning "catastrophe," or "disaster," is noted once a year, the day after the Gregorian calendar date for Israeli Independence Day. It commemorates the displacement, dispossession, and dispersal of the Palestinian people. The event is often marked by speeches and rallies by Palestinians in Israel, in the occupied territories, and around the world. (7) Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr: The month in which Muslims believe the Quran was revealed. The month is spent fasting during daylight hours from dawn to sunset. Fasting in that time is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. Eid al-Fitr is also called the "Feast of Breaking the Fast." It is an important religious holiday celebrated by Muslims worldwide. (8) Racial incidents: This is a time when Jewish youth bullied Palestinian youth countrywide. Among the incidents was one that was dubbed "The Lynch," in which Jewish youngsters beat an Arab youth in the presence of hundreds on witnesses, and another incident in which a big group of Jewish youngsters beat two young Palestinians with hammers and bats. Around this date there were several additional incidents that reached the media and concerned bullying by the Jews of Palestinians in Israel. (9) Tishray Holidays: Religious Jewish holidays that occur within a time span of a month, including: the Jewish New Year, believed to be the anniversary of the creation of Adam and Eve; Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), in which many Jews fast for and delve into the concept of forgiveness; and Sukkot, which lasts seven days in Israel, during which all meals are eaten inside a sukkah. (10) Eid al-Adha: meaning "Festival of the sacrifice," is celebrated by Muslims in honor of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his young first-born son Ishmael, before God then intervened to provide Abraham with a lamb to sacrifice instead. (11) **2012 Israeli–Gaza War**: Military operation (also named "Cloud Pillar" or "Amud Anan") conducted by the Israeli Army in the Gaza Strip, throughout eight days during November 2012. In the course of the operation thousands of attacks targeted the Gaza strip, wherein 169 Palestinians were killed, of which 68 were civilians, and many more were wounded and displaced. At the same time, and in the period preceding the attack, hundreds of rockets were shot from Gaza toward Israeli localities every day by the Hamas military wing. During the attack, six Israelis were killed, of which four were civilians. In Together, an alarm was sounded twice during this time, during which organizational members and clients went downstairs to secure areas. (12) Hanukkah: An eight-day Jewish holiday in memory of the Maccabim victory at the time of the second temple. (13) Christmas: Annual commemoration of the birth of Jesus Christ and a widely observed cultural holiday. (14) Election Day: The day set for the general elections of the Israeli Knesset (Parliament), resulting in the appointment of the prime minister. This is considered a sabbatical day for citizens.

**FIGURE 2**
**Theoretical Model of Intraorganizational Responses to Complexity as Affected by Emotional and Power-Laden Dynamics**



We use the model to structure the presentation of the findings. We commence by outlining how the two highly incompatible logics that govern the society within which Together resides—the universalistic and ethno-national logics—are enacted within it. We then proceed to show that emotion rules about proper emotional contents and processes that relate to the logic of universalism, established via intraorganizational-level efforts (the physical structure, texts, and interactions), take part in stabilizing the dominance of the desired universalistic logic in the organization (Figure 2, left loop, which depicts how the organization shields itself from the constellation of logics in the wider environment). We go further to show that some external political or violent events disrupt organizational efforts, echoing the dominance of the ethno-national logic in the wider society. Although the stabilizing mechanisms of the physical structure, texts, and interactions prevail, disruptive events prescribe different emotion rules concerning emotional contents and processes that relate to the ethno-national logic. Under such circumstances, emotional eruptions temporarily undermine the strong organizational commitment to the logic of universalism and make the ethno-national logic more salient (Figure 2, right loop). Lastly, we show that systemic power determines which events are perceived as disrupting in Together, thereby bringing about emotional eruptions, and the intensity of emotion work required from Jewish and Palestinian members. To indicate the origins of the data, we label formal interview quotes as "Int.", quotes from informal conversation as "Convrs.", quotes from documents as "doc.", and verbatim extracts from the field journal as "Obs."

## The Internal Constellation of Logics in Together: Enacting Universalism and Ethno-Nationalism

Functioning at the seam of Israeli and Palestinian societies, Together attempts to marginalize the ethno-national logic through a strong commitment to the preferred universalistic logic. However, organizational efforts do not fully succeed, and ethno-nationalism continues to prevail. Thus, the "elemental building blocks" (Thornton et al., 2012) of both the universalistic and the ethno-national logics are apparent in the organization (See Table 2).

Guided by the logic of universalism, Together's identity and goals are to serve as a peaceful space where coexistence among multiple religious, ethnic, and national groups is made possible. A 2.5-meter sign, carved in stone at the entrance of the building, and reiterated on the homepage of Together's website and on numerous signs inside the building, reflects this understanding and organizational commitment:

> Here is a place in which brotherhood of nations and an atmosphere of peace prevail, a place where the conflict is forgotten and unity fostered.[6]

These identity and goals are shared by all members, Jews and Palestinians alike, who view the organization as an "oasis of peace. A bubble. A bubble of tranquility" (Int., Palestinian manager. See Table 2, Cell 1U for more examples). In congruence, the organizational strategy is based on the promotion of inclusiveness, reflected in constant efforts and explorations of how to make the organization approachable to members of both nationalities (Table 2, Cell 2U). The logic of universalism also constitutes the basis of attention, as national divisions are mostly blurred for the sake of a sense of similarity and coexistence (Table 2, Cell 3U), and as members stress common humanity as the salient source of their personal identity. As one interviewee said: "Listen, they're human beings. I'm a human being. We're all human beings" (Table 2, Cell 4U). Universal values accentuating diversity and common grounds set the norms in Together as well. Formal organizational communication is held in Hebrew and Arabic or in English; interactions among Palestinian and Jewish staff members are widespread and frequent; peacebuilding events, including community, policy, and art-related projects, are hosted; and services to the wider communities are designed, and indeed manage to attract both nationalities (Table 2, Cell 5U). Unlike most organizations in Israel, both Jews and Palestinians are represented at the different levels of management and professional positions, demonstrating that it is organizational hierarchy, rather than national or religious-based hierarchies, that is the relevant source of authority (Table 2, Cell 6U). Finally, legitimacy—evident in the expectations of internal and field-level stakeholders—is conditioned upon neutrality, inclusiveness, and equality (Table 2, Cell 7U).

While the universalistic logic is well-established in Together, the ethno-national logic also persists, albeit offstage. Sometimes, the same members move between universalism and ethno-nationality, demonstrating how multiplicity and contradiction

[6] Names and other information (e.g., location) that may expose Together have been disguised. This quote is a paraphrase of the original one, in order to maintain the anonymity of the organization.

**TABLE 2**
**Representative Indicators of the Universalistic and Ethno-National Logics in Together**

| Root Metaphor | Universalistic Logic | Ethno-National Logic |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Org. identity and goals | **(1U[a]) A place for everyone**<br>"Together believes in fostering brotherhood and friendship between Jews, Christians and Muslims and will continue to act in fostering relations between peoples." (Doc)<br>"We just need to be true to who we are. And being true to who we are is just making sure that, you know, you keep that balance of Arabs and Jews, Muslims, Christians, and Jews. And you continue to talk about diversity." (Int., Palestinian manager) | **(1EN) A place for one national group**<br>"The Jews are afraid to come here. . . Do you think the motto is working? I don't think so. Everything is going in an Arab direction." (Int., Jewish manager)<br>"Everyone says here: "this is *my* Together. . . no one likes the other side. You see someone turning his back and the other begins to curse. This is not the truth. We don't meet and this is sad." (Int., Palestinian employee) |
| 2. Basis of strategy | **(2U) Promoting inclusiveness**<br>"The beauty of this institution, the magic of it is when the different populations come together. The only way to do it is to make it accessible. Physically, that's easy. Mentally, is when this place has been branded as a Jewish organization: OK, what can I do to open it up for the Arab population? First of all, by the virtue of being an Arab . . . Two, by enhancing the cultural programs that are attractive to Arabs." (Int., Palestinian CEO)<br>"They don't want to do anything that involves Jews. We have no interest in doing anything which isn't [Jews and Palestinians] together." (Obs.). | **(2EN) Promoting the hegemonic national identity**<br>"In some classes (in the education department) every artifact demonstrates Jewish dominance: The names of the months hung on the walls are the Jewish months, not the Islamic, the stories, the songs, the Jewish instructor's dominance as compared to the Palestinian's, the dominance of the Hebrew language." (Obs.)<br>"'Together' is an Israeli organization . . . (with an) official protocol that calls for an Israeli flag to be hung on the front of the building three times a year." (Doc., Published letter to the press from CEO) |
| 3. Basis of attention | **(3U) Similarities, unity**<br>"Here you see true coexistence . . . These are your work buddies, you laugh with them, you curse your boss with them. So it's an amazing experience." (Int., Jewish employee)<br>"You walk into the showers and you hear these Jewish-Arabs, these Jewish 70-, 80-year-olds who grew up in Iraq, Egypt, singing Umm Kalthoum [a famous Arab singer], and—holy shit, you don't know who's Arab and who's Jewish. . . It's amazing! . . . You see how their minds shift:.. 'Hold on, we thought that you're this, this, this and that. And look—you sing Umm Kalthoum. You speak more Arabic than me.'.. you realize the common humanity in the other. . . You see that the other is just a human being." (Int., Palestinian Manager) | **(3EN) Differences, intergroup conflict**<br>"Just look at who is in management positions here: You have an Arab bookkeeper, an Arab CEO, American man managing the pool and an American woman managing the gym, a French woman manager of the youth department, an Arab restaurant manager. Only I and maybe one more woman are pure Israelis [lowering her voice]." (Int., Jewish manager)<br>"As much as they say 'here you don't feel it' [the Gaza–Israel War], when it comes to such things, a Jew remains a Jew and a Palestinian remains Palestinian." (Int., Palestinian employee) |
| 4. Sources of personal identity | **(4U) Humanity**<br>"Listen, they're human beings, I'm a human being. We're all human beings." (Int., Jewish employee)<br>"For me politics isn't interesting. I like to treat people as people. . .Together is a place in which you can actually leave your political and religious opinions behind and treat *everyone* as people." (Int., Palestinian employee) | **(4EN) Nationality**<br>"At the end of the day. . . this is my people, this is your people." (Int., Palestinian employee)<br>"I told them that they should handle their Christmas party on their own. . . do I need to take care of their holiday?. . . eventually I won't help myself and place the Hanukah lamp outside. . . It [Hanukah] is one of my favorite holidays." (Int., Jewish manager) |

**TABLE 2**
**(Continued)**

| Root Metaphor | Universalistic Logic | Ethno-National Logic |
|---|---|---|
| 5. Basis of norms | **(5U) Intergroup contact among equals**<br>"Saber is my best friend today. It's like this experience of—wow, that's so fun, we're all together." (Int., Jewish employee)<br>"People who come here. . . they know the other side as an equal, a colleague. OK? So, this in itself gives birth to an encounter . . . the one practicing next to me in the gym may turn out to be my best friend. And then bonds are forged." (Int., Palestinian manager). | **(5EN) In-group contact, discrimination against particular groups**<br>"The Jewish employees are with each other, the Arabs are with each other." (Int., Jewish employee)<br>"Gila (Jewish manager) always makes sure she mentions every Jewish holiday or event. And never remembers to mention any Christian or Muslim holiday." (Obs., Palestinian employee) |
| 6. Sources of authority | **(6U) Administrative hierarchy**<br>"The board—You've got a third out of 21—so seven Arabs, Muslims, and Christians, seven Israelis, mostly Jews, and seven Internationals. A mix." (Int., Palestinian CEO)<br>"Amal and Ruthi were appointed to run the camp. . . Every group in the camp is led by two instructors: A Jew and an Arab." (Obs.) | **(6EN) National affiliation privileging Jews**<br>"Kathy: We're all Jews, managing the programs./Debbie: But we have an Arab boss./ Talya: Yes, but he's not a professional /. . .Ruthi: The equality gap here is of the biggest I know." (Obs.)<br>"All the menial employees—cleaners, rooms maintenance—there's not a single Jewish employee there . . . There won't be equality in these things." (Int., Palestinian employee) |
| 7. Sources of legitimacy | **(7U) Neutrality**<br>"We hereby wish to strengthen you, not to give in to the pressures imposed on you by right-wing political parties that don't mind setting the city on fire, as long as there is an Israeli flag hanging above the building. Your organization is a jewel in the city, a nature reserve in which Jews, Christians and Muslims work together in harmony, a rare cooperation in our divided city. . . No flag is more important than coexistence. If only there were less flags and more spaces for cooperation between the three religions." (Letter from members of the city council) | **(7EN) Loyalty to one side**<br>Palestinian organizations boycott Together for receiving municipality funds, considered as a collaboration with military occupation: 'I approach them [organizations from the Arab part of the city], saying look—I have the funds to create a program and to serve these people [Palestinians]—either here [at the Together building] or take it to you. And their question, first question, is: Is the money coming from the municipality? . . . And no, we cannot cooperate with you, because [of that]." (Int., Palestinian CEO) |

*Notes*: Data extracts are marked "Int." for interview, "Obs." for field notes, and "Doc." for document; categories derived from Thornton et al. (2012).
[a] Each cell in the table is marked by the dimension (row number) and logic (column, U for universalistic logic, EN for ethno-national logic).

lie within. During interviews or private interactions, members stress the primacy of one religious or national group, and religious and national affiliations serve as the basis of attention and personal identity. Just as Arieh, a Jewish manager, experiences Together as a place where "there's no room for Jews ... the Muslims are not willing to accept anyone" (Int.), Ibrahim, a Palestinian employee, believes that "at the end of the day, he [Palestinian CEO] is a puppet. And on the other side [referring to the chairman of the board of directors] sits a Jew, controlling everything he does" (Convrs.) (Table 2, Cells 1EN, 3EN, 4EN). When observing covert aspects of behavior and structure, it becomes apparent that national affiliations are at the basis of norms and authority in Together too. Communication between members of the same nationality is more frequent than across nationalities, even when the nature of the task requires bi-national collaborations. Although formally Hebrew and Arabic receive an equal status, Hebrew is far more dominant in organizational communication, including formal and informal meetings; internal written materials (e.g., training guides and procedure booklets); marketing pamphlets; Facebook pages; and the interior decoration of several departments (Table 2, Cell 5EN). Additionally, although management and professional-level employees consist of both Palestinians and Jews, almost all department heads—in charge of decision-making and working practices—are Jews. Organizational blue-collar employees, on the other hand, are all Palestinians. Thus, despite the commitment to equal representation, national affiliations also function as a source of authority and echo social-level inequality (Table 2, Cell 6EN). Finally, many Palestinian and Jewish external stakeholders condition legitimacy on loyalty to their own groups, and at times, some organizational strategic responses capitulate to such pressures (Table 2, Cell 2EN, 7EN).

Given the strong organizational commitment to promote a universalistic logic, it may seem surprising that the ethno-national logic perseveres as well. However, given the dominance of the ethno-national logic in the larger Israeli society within which the organization resides, it is the success of the universalistic logic that may seem surprising. What is it, then, that influences the constellation of logics within Together? How is each preserved, and when? Our data indicate that in order to understand the micro-dynamics of institutional complexity in Together, we need to take emotions, and their energetic triggers (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018), into account.

### Assuring the Dominance of the Desired Universalistic Logic via Emotional Control

Universalism is the dominant logic inside Together during routine times. Its dominance is an ongoing achievement in which emotional control plays a central part. Emotional control is achieved through emotion rules—that prescribe which emotional contents and processes are legitimated. In relation to emotional content, emotion rules represent the demand to feel discrete emotions that constitute the logic of universalism—hope, closeness, care, love, and safety—in relation to all national groups. Together's CEO Hasan, for example, declares his active role in the management of emotions: "My role, our role as an institution, is to produce hope" (Int., Palestinian). Emotion rules also guide members toward an ongoing emotional process of avoidance—avoiding "disturbing or potentially disturbing thoughts, information or event[s]" (Delmestri & Goodrick, 2017: 239) that may lead to emotions that are prevalent in ethno-national conflict zones[7] (Halperin, 2014, 2016). Thus, emotion rules at Together deem the display of animosity, anger, suspicion, and fear in relation to members of the other nationality, as well as helplessness, alertness, and stress, illegitimate. Insinuating this, Rada, HR manager, says:

> We work on people—on our members, on the participants, on everybody—to neutralize this tension and make something more positive come out of it. (Int., Palestinian)

These emotion rules are formed and maintained through the design of the physical surroundings, the production of texts, and the give and take of interactions—all of which generate emotional contents and processes that preserve the dominance of the universalistic logic during routine times.

***The material and textual generators of emotions preserving universalism.*** The physical design of the Together building is the most visible, long-standing, and durable stimuli of universalistic-related emotions. Located close to the hectic downtown, and adjacent to a busy road, a big, oval, well-kept garden welcomes Together's visitors. A marble staircase then leads to an expansive patio,

[7] We build on Delmestri & Goodrick (2017: 239), who stressed avoidance as "stemming from our need to avoid pain," and therefore understand it as relating to emotions, cognition, and behaviors that may lead to such pain.

followed by a colonnade connecting several sections of the building. The building itself, designed at the beginning of the twentieth century, houses a combination of Neo-Byzantine, Neo-Roman, and Romanesque styles and is inundated with decorations—sculptures, cartographies, and inscriptions, all including symbols of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. The layout design channels individuals in the organization toward specific emotions and evokes desired emotional processes (Wasserman, Rafaeli, & Kluger, 2000): The gradual entrance to the building and the colonial style—representing a spirit of a different era and culture—create an atmosphere foreign to the conflictual locality. The combination of symbols of the three religions, known as "a sermon in stone" (Together website), echoes a sense of harmony between the nations. The organizational motto at the entrance (cited above) attaches explicit meaning to all of these. Referring to a "brotherhood of nations and an atmosphere of peace," where "conflict is forgotten," it directs members toward a collective emotional state of harmony and closeness that cross national borders, in tandem with the logic of universalism. Indeed, the building and the organizational motto are mentioned spontaneously by nearly all of our interviewees, who connect feelings of hope and love, as well as avoidance of potentially threatening emotions and related contents, to the inspiration of the building and its guiding motto. For example, Tehila, a Jewish employee, says during an interview:

> There's something in this building. It's long lasting. Of course, that's also an illusion; it can be struck by a missile, but there's this feeling that whatever the vicissitudes, the building will remain. And that's something stable and certain and full of inspiration.

Hung at the entrance hall under the title "Two Men, One Vision," next to portraits of the building's donor and John Arc—to whom the planning of the Together building is attributed—the following is another exemplary text generating appropriate emotions:

> Dr. John Arc was a builder, a dreamer and a believer. On his first visit to Mount Abraham [a sacred place in the city where Together was built] he had a vision that some day he would return to this land to do good work. Arc wanted to build the most beautiful building. . . right here in this city as a focal point to promote peace and understanding and a forum for interfaith and intercultural dialogues serving all the people in the city. (Doc.)

The depiction of Arc as a "dreamer" and "believer" alongside the depiction of Together as a "focal point to promote peace and understanding" suggests that hope is crucial for the promotion of the universalistic logic. Arc's description and the organizational motto join many other written, visual, and oral texts that evoke emotions related to the universalistic logic, and convey emotion rules that stress their desirability. Engraved in the stones of the building and in permanent signs scattered around, these texts interlace with the spatial design and are part of the enduring structures that evoke universalistic-related emotions, even without further actions.

***The interactional generation of emotions preserving universalism.*** Alongside the physical design and texts, interactions—mostly during formal organizational and group meetings—continually generate an emotional process of avoidance, through which political neutrality is also maintained. A routine meeting of department heads, held over two weeks before Memorial and Independence Days,[8] reflects this emotion process of avoidance. Although tension between Jews and Palestinians is particularly high during these days, both outside and inside Together, conflictual emotions are hardly ever discussed openly in formal meetings. And when such a discussion emerges—as in the following example—it is quickly muted:

> Chezi (deputy director-general, Jewish, leads the discussion): On Memorial Day, the building is closed on principle. It's a day off.
>
> Liam (director of a subunit in the sports department, Jewish): The building is closed! Throughout the years,

[8] Memorial day for the Fallen Soldiers of Israel and Victims of Terrorism is a national remembrance day, commemorated annually a day prior to the state's Day of Independence by two sirens heard throughout the country. Independence Day is a formal national holiday in Israel, commemorating the establishment of the state of Israel and marked via national and local ceremonies, the waving of flags and more. Both days are symbolic reflections of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. For Jewish-Israelis they symbolize their own casualties in wars against Arab countries and Palestinian resistance, and their victory in building and sustaining the Israeli state. Palestinians in Israel, in the occupied territories, and in other places around the world note the "Nakba" Day to remember the loss of their independence and lands. For Palestinians within Israel, the national Remembrance and Independence Days also stress their continuing suffering as a discriminated minority in Israel.

the building operated normally, without classes. But you said it is closed, and it is also written in the policy that it is closed.

Chezi: Yes, closed, a day off.

Liam: So, the question is why we pay people in the sports department 200%...

Melanie (director of the sports department, Jewish): There are classes until seven in the evening[9]... Quiet lessons... We cancelled classes like Zumba and moved others before and after the siren sounding...

Amal (director of the cleaning and maintenance department, Palestinian): Are you doing anything special with the children?

Debbie (director of the educational department, Jewish): The truth is that it troubled me very much. I asked and it turned out that Edna (who managed the department five years ago) tried to talk about this. It didn't work out and a status quo was kept although no one feels comfortable with it. I'm really looking for answers. I'm not happy to be an Arab nor a Jew in the department these days...Everyone gets hurt, even when it has nothing to do with them. We started thinking about what we can do in the future.

Chezi: It has always been a difficult process. It's part of the educational process to learn about the other. There's no need to agree with him, but you have to learn about him. The restaurant?

Dani (director of the hotel and restaurant, Jewish): The restaurant continues functioning as usual. Without music.

Chezi: Is there a law for it?

Avi (in charge of security): You can't [play music] in public spaces.

Chezi: So only inside. Just check it to make sure we act within the law. (Obs.)

The discussion among the department heads begins and ends with technical coordination regarding work procedures. Only Debbie, a new manager, raises issues concerning the employees and target population's ability to cope on these days, while insinuating the negative emotions involved ("troubled"; "no one feels comfortable"; "not happy"). Heading the meeting, the most senior manager, Chezi, assumes the role of gatekeeper. As is his practice in all other meetings, he does not allow the discussion to deviate to sensitive and principle matters, such as practices that the education department may utilize during the siren in memory of Israeli soldiers, or the policy regarding the presence of national flags. Instead, he uses his official authority to evade these issues, which may "bring more hatred"—as he previously explained (Int.).

"There are loads of cockroaches at the gymnastics classes. It seems they're coming out of every hole on this hot day," says Melanie excitedly to Chezi, as they come out of a board meeting on a different occasion, in the midst of a media storm regarding Together's decision not to hoist the Israeli flag for an "around the world" camp activity. The issue was mentioned during the board meeting, but was rapidly silenced. Melanie continues telling Chezi about customers' tumultuous reactions to recent occurrences, but then concludes, "OK. We'll concentrate on the cockroaches." "Very well," answers Chezi. "Focus on the cockroaches and not on inflating the whole thing." The decision to focus on the "cockroaches," rather than on more principal issues, is replicated daily throughout the organization, particularly during formal interactions. Ethno-national emotions occasionally "come out of their holes," but during 54 out of the 58 formal meetings we attend and analyze, the law of avoidance is a strong. Highly important decisions are supposed to be made at formal meetings, yet cockroaches, and other cleaning, maintenance, and logistical matters, are at the heart of the discussion. Controversial issues and the expression of threatening emotions associated with them, come up occasionally, but are rapidly blocked. Through passing the speaking turn to a different person; changing potentially conflictual topics, cutting off the person speaking—or, more directly, indicating the illegitimacy of the conversation and its hazards—new members such as Debbie learn that emotions and issues that bear the danger of raising the ethno-national logic are to be avoided, and veteran members reinforce this tacit knowledge. Although in the latter examples it is Chezi, the veteran manager, who enforces emotion rules through interactions, we find that all members are complicit in defining and defending the emotional and discursive boundaries of interaction.

Daily routine in Together indicates that these internal efforts, to generate universalistic-related emotions through the physical design, texts and interaction, are successful. Nonverbal communication within and across nationalities is frequently caring and warm. Spontaneous emotional expressions are displayed through intimate personal

[9] According to the Jewish tradition, a day ends and another begins at sunset.

conversations between coworkers, and nonverbal signs such as hugs, kisses, and touching. During interviews, inhabitants, mostly Palestinians, share their sense of inclusion, belongingness and safety, which is not taken for granted given that Together is located in the Jewish part of the city (although close to the unofficial border with Palestinian neighborhoods). Love and hope are also occasionally declared. For example, Ibtisam, a Palestinian employee, says: "I really love working here, I'll spend every summer that I can here" (Int.), and Neta, a Jewish member, says: "This place is amazing. . . This place gives me hope" (Int.). Palestinian and Jewish employees also internalize the rule of avoidance and justify it overtly by talking about the negative emotions that may otherwise arise, as seen in the following narrations by Ron (Jewish) and Rawan (Palestinian):

> It is covered with dust, full of dust. And someone just needs to open this Pandora's Box. But it can't happen during camp. 'Cause it will hurt the children, and it'll hurt the way people carry on. (Int., Ron)

> I treat the relationships with my Israeli colleagues as work relations, but I can't be their friend. Reality says I can't. But I don't talk about this, so it doesn't become a barrier. . . There's a saying in Arabic that if you have a problem and you bring it up—it can hurt! (Int., Rawan)

Thus, emotional contents and processes that relate to the logic of universalism seem to be part of individuals' experiences during ordinary times. Such emotions reflect the success of organizational control, and are the infrastructure on which other building blocks of the universalistic logic are cultivated.

### Amplification of the Ethno-National Logic via Emotional Eruption

Despite the strong commitment to the logic of universalism in Together, at times ethno-nationality becomes the dominant logic, as unbidden emotions allow it in. Whereas emotions that constitute the logic of universalism are actively generated inside the organization, emotions that constitute the ethno-national logic are generated externally, via intensive political or violent events at the societal level, and materialize inside the organization via informal interactions.

In the course of our 15-month-stay at Together, three external events brought about emotions that led to a change in the internal constellation of logics: Memorial and Independence Days, which were noted twice during our fieldwork; and the 2012 Israel–Gaza War (see Figure 1).[10] Emotions that constituted the ethno-national logic during these periods included animosity, fear, suspicion, and anger felt in relation to members from the other nationality, as well as helplessness, alertness, and stress.[11] These were accompanied by an emotional process of splitting, whereby members divide their interlocutors into two subsets, with one subset—comprising mostly members from the other nationality—viewed as threatening or unpleasant, and another—mostly same-nationality members—viewed as ideal (Halton, 1994). During informal interactions, this process of splitting emanated through a repeated demand to identify with only one party and distance oneself from the "other." The rise in ethno-national emotions led to a change in the constellation of logics inside Together, making the ethno-national logic more salient around the time of the events. In what follows, we focus on the period of Memorial and Independence Days to exemplify this dynamic.

***Disruptive events as generators of emotions amplifying ethno-nationalism: The case of Memorial and Independence Days.*** Despite the wish to remain "an island" (Int., Palestinian manager), during the period of Memorial and Independence Days, emotions are stirred and tension is high in Together. As a two-minute siren, sounded annually on the morning of Memorial Day, literally penetrates the organization, the thick membrane isolating the outside from the inside in Together is pierced. The moments of the siren are political moments. Organizational members are faced with the societal level demand to literally and symbolically take a stand: To stand in memory of the Israeli soldiers, or not to stand?

Three days prior to Memorial Day, the first author documents her unusual experience in the Education Department, where she usually receives a warm welcome:

> I arrive at the department, thinking I have a meeting scheduled with Duaa (a Palestinian instructor), but Duaa is nowhere to be found. I ask another instructor about her whereabouts, and she tells me that Duaa left

[10] No changes occurred during religious holidays, suggesting that national—rather than religious—divisions are more central and challenging for the universalistic ideology in this context.

[11] The one emotion mentioned in the literature to be a most powerful affective barrier to peace (Staub, 2005), but very rarely expressed in Together, is hatred between Jews and Palestinians—signaling the possible beneficial influence of the universalistic logic.

> for Jordan. Nadia (another Palestinian instructor) moves around from one room to another. I ask her if she has time to talk (as the children are asleep). She says she is nervous today and is not in the mood for talking. I keep sitting in the corridor. No one wants to talk to me! Aside from Nadia who shows her anger, they all avoid me gently, making all kinds of excuses. (Obs.)

The atmosphere outside the education department is similar: "This week, the smallest spark can set this place on fire," says Rachel, a Jewish employee, conveying the sense of danger that people experience. At the time of the siren "many [Palestinians] try to vanish, hide in the toilets or beneath tables," says Rada, a Palestinian manager, illustrating the rise in tension and alertness. Although these days are set in the year's calendar and known in advance, unbidden emotions surface, and seem to catch members by surprise.

Although both Palestinian and Jewish-Israeli identities are supposed to be legitimate under the universalistic logic, on these days there is a constant demand, made by both Jews and Palestinians, nourished by an emotional process of splitting, to take sides and support only one identity. For example, as the annual national days approach, Liam, a Jewish manager of over 20 years, is attentively examining whether the place is "his":

> I expect the Arabs to be respectful of this occasion. There were times when the flag wasn't hoisted, but now it will be... I am scheduled to meet Hasan [Palestinian CEO] on Wednesday, 11am [the time of the siren]. I'm looking forward to seeing what he'll do. Will he stand or not. I think he will. In what order do you rank your identities? (Convrs.)

Liam's demand for "respect" suggests that national pride is in danger, and stresses the tension he experiences, and the suspicion that lays in its foundation. As these emotions awaken, loyalty becomes the prominent source of legitimacy for Liam, and he demands that the CEO and the first author take sides in relation to the various national-identity symbols: the hoisting of the flag, the decision to stand or not during the siren, and the ranking of identities by order of importance. Such common demands reflect a process of splitting because they are built on a taken-for-granted dichotomy between good and bad, loyal and disloyal, and are accompanied by feelings of fear, suspicion, and sometimes anger that are directed toward members of the other nationality, or those who are viewed as their supporters.

A year later, around the same period of time, new circumstances in the education department uncover the intensity of ethno-national related emotions, and their unbidden quality. In a rare attempt, Debbie, the new head, initiates a four-meeting workshop for the staff, to make room for both Palestinian and Jewish historical national narratives. Just before the final session, the first author participates in the following interaction:

> I'm sitting in the department's yard, together with Karina, a senior Jewish instructor, and Mona, a junior Palestinian instructor. The children in their care are playing nearby. During the conversation, held in Hebrew, Karina talks incessantly, whereas Mona keeps quiet. Karina asks her questions, and Mona does not answer, as if she has problems with the language, or some cognitive disability. She nods and twists her lips, but the meaning of these gestures remains obscure. The moment Karina turns to the children, Mona's face changes unrecognizably, and she speaks in perfect Hebrew.
>
> I say: It seems hard to celebrate Independence Day with Arab children.
>
> Mona replies: It is. But they don't understand what they're celebrating.

The moment Karina is back, Mona is silent again. Karina says:

> There's a lot of tension in the air. [The workshop is] going to be very hard because I don't know what they think. I'm going to say what I think because I'm old. I'm not afraid... She [Mona] won't talk to you, she won't say anything. And I understand her. They are afraid of losing their jobs. I'm old. I'm not afraid. (Obs.)

The "tension in the air" in the education department is unequivocally described by Karina, and is reflected in the triadic interaction, alongside fear, expressed in Mona's silence and in Karina's speech. Such strong emotions create a dividing wall between Jews and Palestinians.

Following the final meeting of the workshop, a new proposition emerges—to go on a "*Nakba* tour" in a Palestinian neighborhood, where most Palestinian instructors come from. For most Jewish staff members this is the last straw. In an attempt at rebellion, they approach the HR manager, trying to get Debby fired. Two Jewish instructors resign. Shortly before her resignation, Shelly approaches Debbie, who later describes the conversation and her feelings:

> It turns out that there's bitterness among the Jewish staff. I was personally told that I favor Arabs in the department... Shelly told me: "all these years the Arab was in the closet, everyone was very careful not

> to say 'Arab.' This year the Arab came out of the closet. It's like a slap on the face." My message to them [the Jewish staff]: I'm Jewish, I'm a Zionist. But we are a Jewish department that shows tolerance to the Arab as long as he's a neutral Arab. We don't even see their "Arabness" [tone rising]! That's how enlightened we are. And then Nadia comes, and Mariam comes [Palestinian veteran instructors], and they start going nuts from all this. They say: "No! We're proud to be Arabs. Nobody will take that away from us." Shelly mentioned: "in the past we used to go out, all the staff, on Independence Day. And on Memorial Day everybody used to go down [to the yard, to stand during the siren in memory of the fallen solders]. The Arabs keep conquering yet another territory, and after a decade they say: OK. This was good for the past 10 years, now we want more." And I really get that. I really understand the Jews saying—"they're stealing our country."... I'm willing to work hard for Shelly to feel better in the department. (Int.)

Jewish instructors understand their own resistance as a defense against a takeover rather than the preservation of their privileged position. As such, they are caught in a myriad of emotions that reflect and reproduce the ethno-national logic. As is evident from Debbie's depiction, these include surprise, and even insult ("slap on the face"); fear of losing control or certainty, perhaps existential fear of losing one's place or legitimacy; and anger toward the "other'—expressed by both Jewish and Palestinian staff members. Such emotions are accompanied by a split between "us" and "them," and a demand from Debbie to choose sides. The attempt to get Debbie fired, as she is viewed as responsible for the current state of affairs, signifies the threat that Jewish instructors experience. Their resignations imply that they have reached a state that is no longer tolerable to them. This emotional turmoil is experienced as emerging without intent or expectation, bursting out spontaneously. It echoes the profound sense of vulnerability, existential fear, and denial of the other that are considered the psychological core of the ethno-national conflict (Kelman, 1987; Nyhan & Zeitzoff, 2018). Table 3 provides more examples of the emotional dimensions of the universalistic and ethno-national logics, and their energetic triggers.

Through our description of the events one may observe how the change in emotional dynamics constitutes a change in the constellation of logics in Together: During these periods, nationality is at the basis of personal identity, national divisions are at the basis of attention, contact within groups is the basis of norms, and legitimacy is conditioned upon loyalty to one side. Despite the intense emotions and the change in other elemental categories of logics (Thornton et al., 2012) during disruptive events, these effects are short-lived, and the desired constellation of logics is restored soon after the events pass. Yet the hampered organizational commitment during intense political and violent societal events is of particular importance, as it hinders the organizational end goal of peaceful coexistence among diverse national groups in times when this role in society is perhaps most needed. Moreover, emotional eruptions expose what is routinely covered up by emotional control: the limits of the universalistic logic in enhancing understanding and knowledge about the other, and in challenging power relations.

### Power Relations at the Intersection of Logics and Emotions

Palestinians and Jews at Together face the same material, textual, and interactional context that generates universalistic-related emotions, as well as external events that trigger ethno-national-related emotions. Yet we find that emotional control does not necessitate equivalent emotion work from Palestinians and Jews at Together, and that emotional eruption is not equally affordable for both groups. Both emotional control and eruption depend upon the power relations between Palestinians and Jews at the societal level.

***Asymmetric emotion work sustaining the logic of universalism.*** While emotion rules that enforce universalism are ratified by all members, we find that the work they require from Palestinian and Jewish inhabitants is not equivalent. The following extract, from the first author's field journal, demonstrates the intensity of emotion work carried out by Palestinians:

> I arrive at the restaurant for the morning shift. Nabil (a Palestinian bar tender) makes himself coffee which he names "Obama Coffee." He seems in a good mood, chatting with me vibrantly about (US president) Obama's and (Israeli prime minister) Netanyahu's current policy concerning Iran.... "Bibi (Benjamin Netanyahu) wants to attack Iran, and eventually, if he does, Iran will strike back. Who will suffer from us attacking Iran? We will! Us Israelis, all of us." He continues talking about current affairs. His talk unites him and me under the same Israeli umbrella of interests and capacities, making him part of the discourse and norms of Jewish-Israeli society: "People think we have a strong army. Bibi thinks it's a strong

**TABLE 3**
**Representative Indicators of the Emotional Dimensions of Logics and Their Energetic Triggers**

| Root Metaphor | Universalistic Logic | Ethno-National Logic |
|---|---|---|
| Emotional contents | **Hope:** "Maybe the grandiose. . . way that I'm talking about Together—I think it's good for people to dream big. . .it's way too easy to lose hope." (Int., Jewish volunteer)<br>**Closeness**: "Here we are all together. When the siren is sounded we are all together here. Gaza is there, Tel-Aviv is there, but we are all together." (Int., Palestinian employee)<br>**Love or care**: "We don't clash at work. Everybody loves each other." (Int., Jewish employee)<br>**Comfort or safety**: "This is the only place in this part of the city that I feel comfortable coming to." (Int., Palestinian employee) | **Fear, angst, or threat**: "The truth is that this threatens everyone. We walk on knives here." (Obs., Jewish manager)<br>**Suspicion**: "People here are not truthful. They won't tell you the truth." (Int., Palestinian employee)<br>**Anger**: "Saber speaks rapidly about a situation at work, with hardly any pauses between his words. Then he says: "I take out my anger at the gym, not at work." (Obs.)<br>**Tension or alertness**: "Lately, there was electricity in the air. Everyone was so charged it was hard to speak." (Int., Palestinian employee) |
| Emotional processes | **Avoidance of emotions**<br>"I learned that when there's a storm, you better keep your head down and wait for it to pass. You don't always need to keep your head up, to fight. When it [the storm] passes, you find out what needs to be done." (Convrs., Jewish manager)<br>During Election Day: "On my way. . . I encounter Yusef (Palestinian): 'Most here vote for Bibi (Benjamin Netanyahu Israel's right wing Prime Minister)'. . .He makes a face, as if to say: 'what can you do'? But does not show anger, pain or disappointment. Sophian (also Palestinian) passes by and overhears us. He joins our conversation saying: 'Bibi is good for the people' (a slogan that promotes Benjamin Netanyahu for the position of Prime Minister). I frown at Sophian, but he keeps a straight face, not exposing any emotion." (Obs.) | **Split between "us" and "them"**<br>"I spoke to one of the camp leaders today [a Jew]. We opened this Arab–Jewish issue. She said: I like the leaders working with me. . .But if we really get into their hearts. . . they hate the Jews and think bad stuff about us." (Int., Jewish employee)<br>"He's not really an Arab, not really Muslim [referring to Hasan, Together's CEO]. He's in-between. . . Perhaps he switched sides [smiles]. Yes. You know his secretary? On Facebook she has this photo of Temple Mount without 'Al-Aqsa' [an Islamic mosque, the third most important religious site]. You also see a soldier petting a dog, a cat, and a child, but you see a Palestinian kid with an explosive belt around him. So that's Hasan's secretary. . . What does that say?" (Int., Palestinian employee) |
| The energetic production of emotions and their rules | **Materiality**<br>"Entering the building, a luxurious, colonial style entry hall welcomes visitors, ornamented with marble tiles in varied colors. . .among other decorations. Adjacent to it is 'the lobby,' a spacious room with antiques, serving as the meeting point. . . Young children; pimply adolescents; muscular young men and women, elderly ladies and gentlemen [wandering] with towels and sportswear; and diplomats and tourists from around the globe—all [wander] in this space. Arabic, Hebrew and English are [heard] on a regular basis." (Obs).<br>Chezi, a Jewish manager, explains: "Whoever builds a new building won't build a broad lobby. There are many spaces here to hang out and converse. There's a lot of money invested in this, in spaces that have no specific purpose, just aimed at meeting the other. It's something very natural that's happening. There's nothing like it to meet the other." (Convrs.) | **Events (the 2012 Israeli-Gaza War)**[a]<br>"Monday evening Ruthi [Jewish manager]. . . told me [her Palestinian co-manager] and Hasan [Palestinian CEO] that her daughter is in the army, in a base down south [where many rockets were fired from Gaza at the Jewish population at the time when the Israeli Army entered Gaza], and that she is heading over there, bringing fresh fruits and cooked food. Hasan nodded his head. Later on Ruthi told me that he hates Jews." (Convrs., Palestinian manager) |

**TABLE 3**
**(Continued)**

| Root Metaphor | Universalistic Logic | Ethno-National Logic |
|---|---|---|
| | **Texts**<br>"With a unique legacy of peace-building. . . 'Together' is constantly working to build connections between people. . . As they spread their message of hope and peace. . .these teens. . . are already contributing to securing the best possible future of the city." (Doc., monthly newsletter) | "The Jewish employees are with each other, the Arabs are with each other. The situation is getting worse. We went back 10 years. Until there are two years of quiet, and then it all comes back [referring to the war] and brings you down. You can't rehabilitate, every time there's another reminder that slaps you on the face." (Int., Jewish employee)<br>"I am certain that it was difficult for them [Jewish suppliers] to come and say hello. . . [They think] 'You shoot rockets at me and I bring you the merchandise?' They didn't say it, but I'm sure that when they left they cursed me right away. They could shoot me. This is the way it is with many folks [Jews]. The Israelis are becoming extremists. . . people you've known as nice people, all of a sudden show a different face: 'Arabs are OK. I like them,' and then you hear: 'We should continue the fighting and hit them hard.' It's strange." (Convrs., Palestinian employee) |
| | **Interactions**<br>"You can't always get the genie back into the bottle. That's why the smart thing to do is not to get the cork out. . . My responsibility is not to distribute the message! My responsibility is to keep things quiet [tone and rate of speech rising]!" (Obs., management meeting).<br>In this meeting, Chezi, a Jewish manager, uses a recent event to demonstrate the danger lurking in the organization when the political "genie" is "out," establishing this danger as motivation for avoidance. While his communication pattern is usually distant and calm, challenging remarks by two new managers change Chezi's speech. It is in these moments that Chezi spells out the emotion rule "to keep things quiet," which is connected to his opening message about the genie, to refrain from potentially disturbing issues. His distinct emotional performance, although straying from this message, is in its service. | "How can they [Jewish employees], for one moment stay in touch, drinking coffee together, working together. And the next moment laugh about it, scream 'death to Arabs' . . . talk behind your back." (Int., Palestinian employee)<br>"For me it's hard. Every day we hear about the little Palestinian children dying, the Jews are dying, they don't go to work, to school. We—the Palestinians in this city—when we want to go to a place where there are Jews we're afraid, so it's hard." Convrs., Palestinian employee)<br>In regular times we have Jewish friends. We talk. But now it's hard" (Convrs., Palestinian employee). |

*Notes*: Data extracts are marked "Int." for interview, "Convrs." for *ad hoc* conversations, "Obs." for field notes, and "Doc." for document; categories derived from Thornton et al. (2012).

[a] Since the energetic production of emotions and their rules relating to the ethno-national logic are constituted through external events, we do not elaborate on the societal-level work generating ethno-national related emotions, but instead elaborate on members' referrals to such events.

army. But the army isn't what it used to be. Soldiers are interested in finishing their army duties and going to chill out somewhere in the Far East. . . No one really cares about sacrificing their lives for our country. Who does that nowadays?" After a while Nabil says: "I'm getting off at 14:00 today, I have a meeting with special friends tomorrow and I need to prepare. . . it's absolutely vital that I finish at 14:00 and not at 14:30 or 15:00. If I leave late I get stuck in traffic and can only reach home by 21:00." It turns out that Nabil lives outside the separation wall.[12] He explains exuberantly about how he passes the checkpoint: "After the checkpoint you reach a roundabout, but you can't continue straight to the area where I live (6 miles from the city where Together is located), you need to make a U-turn, pass through another roundabout and go from there. When you pass the second roundabout, all the Palestinians coming from Hajar (another district) actually pass there too. So, they (Israeli army) direct all the Palestinians coming from this area, and those coming from Hajar to the same roundabout, creating this giant bottleneck for tens of thousands of Palestinians passing through it every day. When I leave after 14:00, sometimes I just leave my car somewhere and come back to get it at midnight.

. . . Close to 14:00 the restaurant is packed. Nabil is busy getting the tables at the conference hall ready for an event that takes place later on, and asks me to find the manager. As I come back empty-handed, Nabil raises his hands: "I won't do it. I want the complaints from our clients to reach him (the manager)! To understand that I can't do everything!" Suddenly Nabil looks sad. "I'm not getting off at 14:00. I won't get home until 21:00." Saber, another Palestinian bar tender standing there with us, says to him: "Go, it'll be OK. I'll stay here." Nabil stays in the hall as Saber goes to the bar. I leave at 15:15. Nabil is still there working. (Obs.)

Although ethno-nationalism is a dominant societal-level logic for both Palestinians and Jews, their points of departure differ. The national identity of Jewish members is transparent and taken for granted in their daily lives, as it corresponds with the identity of the state and the majority of the population. Their privileged position as Jews is grounded in Israeli law and the state's Jewish identity. Only rarely do disruptive personal experiences arise, relating to military reserve duty or personal loss, making this transparent identity prominent. Contrarily, Palestinian members experience their national identity and related underprivileged position on a daily basis: through restrictions of movement; problems with sanitation, housing, and education; and crime.[13]

In the context of unequal experience of ethno-national conflict, the demand for political neutrality and avoidance requires more intense emotion work by Palestinian members, compared to their Jewish counterparts. This is apparent in Nabil's emotional expressions when interacting with the first author: At first, despite talking about feasible military attacks between Iran and Israel, Nabil's rhetoric creates a sense of closeness. He includes himself in the Israeli collective and relates to inner debates within Jewish-Israeli society, such as the level of commitment that Israeli soldiers have today in comparison to the past. Thus, to conform to the emotion rule guiding him to feel care and closeness, Nabil expresses identification with the Israeli army and the Israeli collective, to which he conveys hatred on other occasions:

> The city is filled with racism. The energy here is very bad. Every morning you wake up, become charged with hatred, go to work, and come back home with this hatred after going through the barriers, the traffic. (Int.)

In the second part of the conversation, when Nabil proceeds to talk about movement restrictions, he uses the pronouns "I" and "them," instead of "we"—situating himself and the first author in two different and conflicting groups. However, his emotional tone is neutral, and the emotional implications of his story are not elaborated. The tale of his life circumstances remains detached from both Nabil's work circumstances and his relationship with the first author. It is only when Nabil cannot leave the premises by 14:00, as he has planned, that anger and sadness come into sight, aimed at the manager for not enabling him to depart early.

[12] The separation wall, built by the Israeli government, separates the West Bank from Israel. Among other things, it restricts the movement of many Palestinians and leaves some Israeli residents of Palestinian nationality outside of their urban centers.

[13] The Palestinian population in Israel spreads across various parts of the country, with particular groups experiencing the Israeli–Palestinian conflict in different ways. In order to maintain the anonymity of Together we cannot provide complete details of the particular experiences of its Palestinian employees. At the same time, the experiences that are mentioned do not reflect the exact problems of Palestinians throughout Israel.

Similar emotion work was apparent in other interactions between the first author (a Jew) and the Palestinian inhabitants. Complying with the universalistic emotion rules, Palestinian members tended not to share with her, as with other Jews in the organization, experiences and emotions that concerned their discriminated position. Those who did had done so only after she had insinuated her own criticism about the occupation and discrimination of Palestinians in Israel. Even then, emotional detachment and the disconnection between personal experiences and the organizational context perpetuated.

Hence, societal-level asymmetry between the Palestinian and Jewish employees at Together renders emotion rules to be much more demanding for the Palestinian employees, requiring greater efforts on their behalf. Given our knowledge of the consequences of emotional labor (Grandey & Gabriel, 2015)—Palestinian inhabitants pay a greater toll for such efforts.

***Asymmetric eruption of emotions related to the ethno-national logic.*** Emotional eruptions leading to changes in the constellation of logics are also bound by power relations, as is evident when sorting out the external political or violent events that affected the constellation of logics within the organization (see Figure 1). External events that relate mostly to Jewish society in Israel resonate in the emotional dynamics within Together, changing the constellation of logics in it. External events that involve mostly Palestinian society in Israel, however, do not resonate inside the organization. The yearly cycle includes several remembrance days marked by Palestinians, such as the *Nakba* Day and Land Day (see notes in Figure 1). Moreover, during our observation period, several violent events against Palestinians took place throughout the country, and were broadly covered by the media. One of those events, named "The Lynch," took place on the eve of a major Muslim holiday. In the presence of hundreds of witnesses, Jewish youngsters beat a young Arab until he lost consciousness. It happened not far from Together. These events and remembrance days did not leave traces within Together, dismissed by both Jewish and Palestinian inhabitants as "irrelevant." For example, when the first author deliberately inquired about *Nakba* Day, Margalit, a Jewish receptionist and tour guide at the Together building, said: "I forgot it's today [her face squirms in an apologetic manner]. I wouldn't have thought about it if you hadn't mentioned it" (Convrs.). Iman, a Palestinian receptionist said: "Oh, here we don't mark it. In Arab cities, on Facebook—yes. Here—no" (Convrs.).

Hence, while emotions may erupt, not *all* emotions erupt. Systemic power (Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017)—stemming from the social power of Jewish majority in the country and the existing inequalities and discriminatory power relations between Jews and Arabs (Abu-Nimer, 1999; Maoz, 2000; Sonnenschein, Halabi, & Friedman, 1998; Suleiman, 2000)—serves as the infrastructure on which particular emotional dynamics are built. Systemic power influences the way external events are perceived in Together, determining whether emotional eruptions will be expressed at the organizational level, or whether greater emotion work will be required of the Palestinian employees, to split their social circumstances from their work relations and doings.

As we have shown, emotional eruptions in Together are experienced as spontaneous and overwhelming, lacking control and manifesting in spite of substantive efforts. At the same time, by influencing the meanings given to events, systemic power shapes the "range of options available for actors" (Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017: 485). It operates "as if significantly independent of any particular agent," so that it is not the active doing of particular individuals that maintains particular events extraneous to the organizations, and others as collectively influential. Instead, emotional eruptions that change the constellation of logics during some events and not others lean on the compliance of all organizational members—Jews and Palestinian alike—with taken-for-granted structures of inequality.

## DISCUSSION

Our study drills deep into the emotional, power-laden dynamics involved in organizational responses to multiple institutional logics. Together, the organization we studied, is committed to the logic of universalism, while at the societal level it is the opposite logic of ethno-nationalism that dominates. We find that its substantial success is linked to its constant efforts to keep emotions in check. Yet emotions, particularly their unbidden nature (Wetherell, 2013), also assume a central role in disrupting such efforts. We further find that the emotion work that is required of Jews and Palestinians to sustain the desired constellation of logics is connected to their systemic power, as is their very ability to allow emotions to erupt.

Generalizing from this case, we offer a theoretical model (Figure 2) that connects organizational-level

outcomes—whether the organization succeeds in keeping a desired constellation of logic within—with factors that concern the societal (upper part of the model), the intraorganizational (middle part of the model), and the individual (lower part of the model, focused on emotion work) levels.

The model depicts two processes: The left loop underlies the organization's success in maintaining a desired constellation of logics. While the constellation of logics at the societal level affects the internal constellation as well, intraorganizational-level efforts to maintain particular emotion rules through material objects, texts, and interactions set in motion individual-level emotion work that then affects the constellation of logics in the organization. Systemic power influences this course of action as it prescribes which societal-level events will be perceived as important to the organization, keeping in the shadow events that may be considered disruptive to the underprivileged organizational members. Systemic power also affects the intensity of required emotion work by privileged and underprivileged members, which sustains the desired constellation of logics.

The right loop describes the temporary failure of organizations to maintain a desired constellation: Disruptive events change the emotional dynamics inside the organization as enacted emotion rules reflect not only the internally desired logics, but also the externally dominant ones. Thus, although material, textual, and interactional mechanisms that establish desired logics-related emotions prevail, disruptive events lead to emotional eruptions that change the internal constellation of logics. Disruptive events are located in between the societal and intraorganizational levels to emphasize that disruption occurs beyond organizational boundaries, but is filtered in by local interpretations that determine which outside events are perceived as disruptive. In the following, we highlight our contributions concerning the role of emotions in a stabilizing or changing constellation of logics, and the mediating role of systemic power, in intraorganizational responses to institutional complexity.

## The Role of Emotions in Stabilizing the Constellation of Logics

Our study indicates that emotional control is part of organizational responses to complexity. Organizations' commitments to specific logics (Ocasio & Radoynovska, 2016) do not end with the formation of organizational goals and strategies (e.g., Ocasio & Radoynovska, 2016), meaning-making processes (e.g., Jay, 2013), or identity construction (e.g., Battilana & Dorado, 2010). To manage complexity, emotions are cultivated, navigated, and overtly prescribed to strengthen a desired constellation of logics. As shown in our theoretical model (Figure 2, left loop), emotional control is accomplished through the use of emotion rules (Jarvis, 2017, Hochschild, 1979) that define legitimate and illegitimate emotional contents and processes. Emotional contents are discrete emotions that are thematically associated with the logic. In Together, the universalistic logic was associated with hope, care, comfort, and safety, whereas the ethno-national logic prescribed emotions such as fear, suspicion, anger, and tension. Emotional processes concern the specific emotional dispositions of one's relations to others. In our study, the universalistic logic intertwined with the emotional process of avoidance, and the ethno-national logic with the emotional process of splitting. We show that through their influence on emotional contents and processes, organizationally enforced emotion rules can effectively stabilize a desired constellation of logics in routine times, even when such a constellation is antithetic to the constellation of logics in society.

Further exploring the so-far dispersed understandings of what generates logic-related emotions inside organizations (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018), we find that emotional control reflects internal, continuous efforts, manifested through material design, texts, and interaction. Joining recent work on material spaces and materiality (Höllerer, Daudigeos, & Jancsary, 2018; Jones, Boxenbaum, & Anthony, 2013; Stigliani & Ravasi, 2012), our findings suggest that material elements can disembed members from the dominant logic in society through their effect on emotions. In Together, the physical design of the building, and the written texts that gave it meaning, enabled members to detach from their existing, ethno-national dividing environment, and elicited emotions that endorsed the logic of universalism. Our findings also join recent literature indicating that interactions may serve as emotional generators that lead to institutional stability (e.g., DeJordy & Barrett, 2014; Gill & Burrow, 2018). We show that interactions maintained emotion rules, reminding veteran members and socializing deviant or new ones to follow appropriate emotional displays. Interactions therefore limited emotional energy that stemmed from the rejected logic and preserved stability. The enduring characteristic of the material generators of emotions, and the widespread

interactional patterns that sustained emotion rules, made these generators so powerful in the organization we studied that the desired constellation of logics was reestablished soon after the episodes of emotional eruptions, even without additional active efforts.

### The Role of Emotions in Changing Constellations of Logics

Our study also shows that intraorganizational responses to complexity involve more than emotional control. As shown in our theoretical model (Figure 2b, right loop), when triggered by disruptive societal level events, emotional eruptions that resonate with the rejected logic may lead to changes in the constellation of logics inside organizations. In Together, during excessive political or violent times, latent ethno-national emotions awoke, drawing institutional inhabitants away from the internally dominant universalistic logic. Thus, our study implies that logics work through their experienced-in-the-body, emotional dimension, which is so profoundly immersed in individuals that it becomes transparent, emerging at times without, and even despite, conscious maneuverings. The unbidden nature of emotions (Wetherell, 2013) explains, at least partially, unintended manifestations of institutional complexity (Voronov, 2014) and highlights the limits of the disciplinary use of emotions.

The eruption of emotions raises the question of how organizations can remain faithful to the logics they are committed to when external triggers threaten to change these commitments. This question is relevant to social change organizations (e.g., Zilber, 2002), multinational organizations promoting a global mindset in a local culture (e.g., Ailon & Kunda, 2009), and hybrids struggling to maintain a new combination of logics (e.g., Pache & Santos, 2013)—all of which face difficulties in preserving specific constellations within them, against a more prevalent constellation of logics in the outside. Our study suggests that socially dominant institutional logics are powerful in emotion-evoking manners, and that organizations that try to replace them with alternative ones have to bear this power in mind. In the context we studied, the organizational long-term mission to promote peace in a conflict-ridden area makes its response during extreme political and violent events core to its mission. Its failure to maintain the desired constellation of logics, during these times of all times, shows the limits of the commitment to the societal, less dominant, logic. Similarly, organizations that choose, and dictate, a contradicting logic (or combination of logics) to the one governing society may find themselves overpowered by inadequate emotions, periodically changing the constellations of logics within them.

One avenue to counter such emotional eruption may be cognitive processing. In Together, avoidance of ethno-national-related emotions left no room for a joint reinterpretation of unbidden emotions (Friedman, Arieli, & Aboud-Armali, 2018) or for collective sensemaking—"the process through which ... groups attempt to explain novel, unexpected, or confusing events" (Maitlis, Vogus, & Lawrence, 2013: 222). For the people of Together, it was avoidance that enabled them to keep their objectives and stay together. At the same time, the fear of "explosive" emotions did not allow them to make sense of such emotions even when they surfaced, leaving organizational members without the means to handle such emotions.

Based on prior research, we suggest that the *lack* of collective sensemaking is connected to an unwanted change in logics' constellation once disruptive emotions erupt. Studies have shown that collective sensemaking affects behavioral dynamics (Friedman et al., 2018; Jameson, Bodtker, Proch, & Jordan, 2009), and is especially potent when coherent representations break down (Maguire, Maguire, & Keane, 2011; Maitlis et al., 2013). Furthermore, collective sensemaking in the form of negotiations and open expressions of contradicting logics facilitates organizations to cope with the tensions that multiplicity brings about (Battilana et al., 2015; Fan & Zietsma, 2017; Smith & Besharov, 2019; Reay, Goodrick, Boch Waldorff, & Casebeer, 2017).

In the case we studied, collective sensemaking could have moderated or changed the effects of emotional eruptions on the constellation of logics via several routes. First, revealing the hidden logic (Reay et al., 2017) of ethno-nationalism through information and opinion-sharing (Heverin & Zach, 2012), Jewish and Palestinian members could have potentially constructed a new account (Cornelissen & Clarke, 2010) of their daily conflictual reality and of disruptive events, thus enabling a more complex, multivocal understanding (e.g., Reay et al., 2017) of it. Such an understanding could have lessened the effect of surprise during external events, and may have changed emotional reactions to them (Friedman et al., 2018). Moreover, negotiations and open expressions regarding the contradicting, universal, and ethno-national logics may have given rise to the creation of a new logic (Fan & Zietsma, 2017) or the reframing of

the chosen logic (Reay et al., 2017), which, over time, may have built a more resilient stance to the dominant societal logic of ethno-nationalism. Thus, the *absence* of cognitive processing of events and emotions in the setting we studied, and its consequences, brings us back to the cognitive as the missing link that may moderate emotional eruptions and institutional consequences. While we join efforts that have highlighted the role of emotions in institutional complexity (Fan & Zietsma, 2017; Toubiana & Zietsma, 2017), we suggest that collective sensemaking may moderate the effect of emotional eruptions on logics' constellations. We call for future studies to specify the conditions under which collective sensemaking has such moderating effects, and, more generally, to uncover the interrelations between the emotional and the cognitive, and how they jointly affect organizational responses to institutional complexity.

### Systemic Power as Mediating Emotions and Logics

As shown in our theoretical model (upper part of Figure 2), the exploration of emotions in institutional complexity brought to the fore how systemic power (Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017) is implicated in both emotional control and its eruption, thus influencing institutional dynamics at the intraorganizational level (see also Wijaya & Heugens, 2018). Domination, which is one form of systemic power (Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017; Lawrence et al., 2001), is the power that works through a take-for-granted range of available options—embedded in discursive, technological or other forms of social systems. Such power is ratified through routine, ongoing practices (Clegg, 1989; Willmott, 2015) and patterned relations (Emirbayer & Goldberg, 2005) that involve both those in privileged and those in underprivileged positions (Amis, Munir, & Mair, 2017; Dacin, Munir, & Tracey, 2010), rather than discrete acts of particular agents (Lawrence & Buchanan, 2017). When examining efforts of emotional control that serve as means for dealing with institutional complexity, as well as unbidden emotions that disrupt such efforts, we show that such emotional institutional dynamics are not neutral, but are embedded within systems of domination.

First, we show that systemic power is involved in the emotion work that persons engage in, thereby influencing their experience of local institutional arrangements. In recent theoretical formulations of emotions and institutions, the former have been perceived as preserving the power of elites by prescribing emotions that safeguard the unequal status quo (Creed et al., 2014; Delmestri & Goodrick, 2017; Lok et al., 2017; Voronov & Vince, 2012), and by prescribing them differently to diverse social groups (Emirbayer & Goldberg, 2005). Based on our empirical analysis, we propose that even when the same emotion rules apply to members of all subgroups in the organization, their implications differ. In the context we studied, being a Palestinian means experiencing the hardships of being a discriminated minority in Israeli society on a daily basis. Being Jewish in Israel, on the other hand, means sharing the identity of the privileged majority outside the organization's boundaries. Therefore, harder emotion work is needed on behalf of Palestinian organizational members, to put aside their external reality and adhere to the logic of universalism. Since emotion work has detrimental effects on employees' well-being (Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Grandey, 2003), functioning as a source of stress (Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini, & Isic, 1999), differentiated emotion work also means a different experience of logics. Thus, since people are not "blank slates," but are "members of various social groups" (Voronov & Weber, 2016: 472), the experience of logics is not neutral, but depends upon the power relations between these groups.

Although social asymmetry between Palestinians and Jews is an extreme example, many hybrid organizations are constituted on the encounter between carriers of institutional logics that are not equally dominant in society, or by groups that do not have the same power—be it organizational, professional, or social power. For example, therapists had greater social legitimacy compared to feminists in the rape crisis center studied by Zilber (2002); social workers in the micro-financing banks investigated by Battilana and Dorado (2010) may have suffered from a lower social prestige stemming from their profession compared to the economic experts working with them; and family physicians may have enjoyed privileges that nurses, dieticians, and pharmacists in Reay and colleagues' (2017) study of a reform effort at the Canadian Health Care system did not enjoy. Our study suggests that such differences in power may give rise to more excessive emotion work on behalf of the less privileged or legitimate members, in order for them to abide by the status quo of logics' constellation. Consequently, their experience of the status quo of the logics' constellation may differ as well.

Beyond the subjective experience of logics by members of different groups, which is worthy of investigation in and of itself, power relations may also determine the extent to which members carry the emotional burden that results from their experience of logics, juggle between logics, or struggle to change the

internal constellations of logics. In our study, avoiding the experiences that Palestinian inhabitants went through on their way in and out of work in the name of universalism meant protecting the organization from entering disagreement and conflict between Jews and Palestinians. However, it also meant that the opportunities to find paths for change in which this peace-building organization could have been involved were lost. A more balanced relation between Palestinians and Jews may have instigated open conflict—as documented, for example, by Glynn (2000) in her study of the conflicts between musicians and administrators in the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Thus, the preservation of Together as an "oasis of peace' was enabled due to the transparent emotion work of Palestinian inhabitants. To date, the literature has identified various determinants explaining internal dynamics that result from institutional complexity at the intraorganizational level. These include the levels of compatibility and centrality of logics within organizations (Besharov & Smith, 2014), "the depth of emotional commitment to different logics" (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018), and the use of guardrails—affiliations with external stakeholders that assist hybrids to maintain a desired balance between various logics (Smith & Besharov, 2019). Our interpretation suggests that power relations may explain, at least partially, why organizational members manage internal conflicting logics in certain ways and not others—entering persistent conflicts (e.g., Glynn, 2000), engaging in social interactions (Reay et al., 2017), juggling between logics (Smets et al., 2015), or employing emotion work, as we have shown.

Finally, our study also enriches understanding of how systemic power is involved in emotional eruptions, proposing that the extent to which discomforting emotions gain influence inside organizations and are able to change the constellations of logics is dependent on the relative power of institutional inhabitants. While emotional eruptions may be spontaneous and reflect a sense of being overwhelmed, they are not equally affordable to all persons in the organization. In Together, external events that concerned Jewish society directly led to the eruption of forbidden emotions, changing the constellation of logics from within, whereas events that were related to the Palestinian population alone were marked as "irrelevant" and did not echo in the organization. Hence, emotional eruptions depended on societal understandings and expectations that reflected power relations between various social identities.

As we have shown, emotion work always aims to alter unwanted emotions, thus laying the foundations of different experiences of logics by those in privileged and underprivileged positions. And the prospects of challenging emotion rules when disruptive events occur are dependent on taken-for-granted meanings that are entrenched in systems of domination. All in all, then, our study suggests that emotions and systemic power are intertwined, and together they provide a useful lens through which we may better understand organizational responses to institutional complexity.

## LIMITATIONS

Our ethnographic approach has allowed us to zoom in on the emotional aspects of responses to institutional complexity, yet it has its limitations as well. In particular, as it is based on one organization, our analytic generalization (Schwandt, 2001: 5) is bound by the contextual characteristics of our study. We have studied an organization that embraces an institutional logic that challenges the dominant one at the societal level. We speculate that when emotion rules are aimed at adjusting the organization to a dominant societal-level institution, other institutional forces may be easier to reject, compared to the case we analyzed. Future research should therefore examine how emotional dynamics influence intraorganizational responses to complexity in different degrees of dominance between the logics. A second contextual characteristic to consider is the high incompatibility between logics. Whereas most existing scholarship about organizational responses to complexity has delved into how logics can be combined to maintain hybrid forms (e.g., Pache & Santos, 2013; Smith & Besharov, 2019), cases of highly incompatible logics have been neglected. This made our context an important one to study, while at the same time limiting its generalization. For example, emotional eruption may be less relevant when logics have a high degree of compatibility, and when the organization aims at their integration. Hence, the controlled and unbidden aspects of emotions should be empirically examined in contexts characterized by a higher degree of compatibility among logics.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The recent move of institutional theory toward micro-foundations (Powell & Colvas, 2008) is both exciting and challenging. It requires one to "look both ways at once" (Haedicker & Hallett, 2017), maintaining a delicate balance between treating actors as

persons (Voronov & Vince, 2012) while not neglecting the larger social and cultural contexts within which they are embedded. This challenge is readily apparent when we add emotions to an institutional investigation, as conceptualizations of emotions often contrast between felt, impulsive, "psychological motives" and strategic, "institutionally rationalized motives" (Jarvis, 2017: 308). Our interpretation blurs this distinction, treating emotional control and eruption as an institutional-, organizational-, and individual-level phenomenon. Further studies on the affective and political will complement current cognitive studies in institutional complexity, and help us answer recent calls to ensure that institutional theory is relevant to daily experiences within organizations (Reed & Burrell, 2019), while still remaining committed to the study of institutions (Meyer & Höllerer, 2014).

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