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Several Notes on the Phenomenological Analysis of Hatred in Íngrid Vendrell Ferran

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Abstract

This study investigates the affective phenomenon of hatred through the lens of philosophical anthropology and existential phenomenology, with particular attention to the work of Vendel Feran. Drawing on Feran's conceptualisation of affective structures and moral sensitivity, the inquiry explores whether hatred can be understood merely as a chronic, generalised form of anger or whether it constitutes a distinct existential and evaluative stance towards the world. Building on Feran's thesis that moral emotions are not simply reactive but deeply rooted in the structure of human existence, the study juxtaposes hatred and anger in terms of their temporality, intentionality, and moral orientation. As Feran suggests, hatred is more entrenched—it discloses the world through a sustained, morally charged aversion. This investigation further aligns Feran's insights with Heidegger's analysis of moods (Stimmungen), proposing that hatred, like anxiety, may serve an existential function by revealing value-laden aspects of the world. However, unlike anxiety, which opens the self to authentic existence, hatred appears to seal the self off from Mitsein (being-with-others), replacing openness with exclusion and moral rigidity. By interpreting hatred as both a moral and existential mood, the study extends Feran's affective anthropology to account for the ways in which negative emotions structure our relation to others and to moral reality. The findings suggest that hatred is not simply the absence of love, but an active opposition to perceived forms of being deemed unworthy, and that this aversive mood may obscure one's capacity for authentic moral engagement.

Keywords: hatred, sentiment, anger, openness, understanding

1. Introduction

Martin Heidegger (Heidegger 2002) distinguished between anger and hatred. He conceived of anger as an immediate reaction to a stimulus—an affect—whereas hatred, in his view, should

be understood more as a passion. However, the difference between these two is not merely one of duration, immediacy, or the form of will they express. Rather, the distinction runs deeper—it is far more fundamental.

In Heideggerian terminology, anger represents a form of declining will—a will that diverts the individual from themselves, fragmenting and transforming them into someone "beside themselves." This is clearly observable in states of frenzy or rage, where the affective reaction becomes so intense that the person loses all self-awareness, fails to perceive their surroundings accurately, and may not even remember their actions. Affect, in this sense, blinds us—not only to the world around us but also to ourselves. It tears us apart, separating us from our own self-understanding and self-feeling.

By contrast, hatred (der Hass), in Heidegger's perspective, appears as an expression of a more unified or comprehensive will. Hatred is a passion that does not alienate the individual from themselves but rather serves as a ground in which one becomes rooted, thereby achieving mastery over things. As Jusko (2018, p. 22) puts it, it is "that in which the human being anchors themselves and thus gains dominion over things." In this sense, hatred is constitutive and clear-sighted. It may indeed emerge from repeated and intense experiences of anger directed at something or someone, eventually becoming ingrained as hatred toward the very source of that provocation. But more than that, hatred—precisely as hatred—enables the very visibility of that which is hated.

Several thinkers maintain that repeated episodes of anger directed toward a given stimulus (such as undesirable behavior) may result in its generalization and, ultimately, in the transformation of this reaction into a stance of hatred. Hatred, then, becomes a reductive (generalizing) outcome of specific affective experiences of anger. When someone repeatedly provokes our anger, we may become hypersensitive not only to the specific behaviors that initially angered us but increasingly to anything the person does—eventually reacting even to their mere presence.

Heidegger, however, would likely not adopt such a linear interpretation. He would perhaps caution that although hatred indeed gathers and consolidates specific experiences within the self—so that "it has grown in us over a long time, and, as we say, has been nourished in us" (Heidegger, 2002, p. 47)—this is only one side of the matter. His phenomenological analysis of moods suggests that hatred is also a mode of openness to phenomena and a specific way of understanding them. While anger, for Heidegger, is blind, hatred is, conversely, seeing—or more accurately, it makes a certain kind of seeing possible. Hatred is a stance—a disposition—that enables directedness toward what is irritating or worthy of being hated. As with anger, one can identify the manifold objects of hatred—the things we hate; the physical and mental experience of hatred itself; what hatred mediates to us—namely, the act of hating; and also what hatred discloses and what is at stake in it. Following the logic of Heidegger's existential analytic, one may suppose that what is ultimately at stake is Being itself—or more precisely, its moral value, or a rejection of the moral unworthiness of a certain mode of being.

Yet, Heidegger never developed a full-fledged phenomenology of hatred. Although his preceding analysis of anger provides clues as to what his method could offer, the following pages will turn instead to the work of Íngrid Vendrell Ferran, who has undertaken a more detailed examination of the phenomenology of hatred.

2. Methodology

This inquiry employs a philosophical and phenomenological approach grounded in hermeneutic analysis, with a particular focus on the affective-existential structures of anger and

hatred. Drawing upon Martin Heidegger's existential ontology—especially his treatment of moods (Stimmungen) in Being and Time and Vendrell Ferran's, and Thomas Szanto's philosophical works —the study interprets hatred not merely as an empirical psychological phenomenon but as an existential disposition that discloses particular ways of being-in-the-world.

Rather than relying on quantitative or empirical methods typical of psychological research, the investigation adopts a conceptual and interpretive methodology. It critically engages with primary philosophical texts, especially Heidegger's existential analytic of Dasein, while also incorporating insights from moral psychology and affect theory. Through comparative conceptual analysis, the paper examines the temporal, intentional, and ontological dimensions of anger and hatred, distinguishing between their immediate triggers, duration, intensity, and existential significance.

The methodology is guided by two principal axes: (1) a comparative phenomenological analysis of affective phenomena (anger vs. hatred), and (2) an existential-hermeneutic exploration of their deeper ontological implications. By situating both emotions within the broader context of existential moods, the analysis seeks to uncover the structural role that hatred may play in shaping moral perception, interpersonal relations, and the individual's relation to finitude.

In doing so, the study aims not to produce empirical generalizations, but to offer a clarified conceptual framework for understanding hatred as a complex, morally charged, and existentially significant phenomenon. This method aligns with the broader tradition of existential phenomenology, which prioritizes the first-personal, lived experience of being and its affective modes of disclosure over third-personal, behaviorist accounts.

3. Results

3.1 What Makes Hatred Hatred?

Íngrid Vendrell Ferran draws attention to the lack of consensus in the scholarly literature regarding the classification of hatred as an emotional state. She argues that the concept of hatred does not refer to a homogeneous state, but rather to a variety of negative attitudes or combinations of negative emotional states (Vendrell Ferran, 2024). In fact, there is no agreement on whether hatred should be understood as an emotion, a feeling, a reaction, a sentiment (disposition), or an attitude. Vendrell Ferran herself conceives of hatred as a sentiment—a disposition to feel and act in a particular way. This view aligns with the previously discussed Heideggerian interpretation of anger and hatred.

In her analysis, drawing on the work of psychologists Sternberg (2005) and Sternberg & Sternberg (2008), she notes that hatred comprises "multiple components that may manifest differently in different contexts" (Sternberg & Sternberg, 2008, p. 59). Based on various empirical studies, these authors argue that hatred is not a single emotion but a complex phenomenon that "exists not only in varying degrees but in different patterns and mixtures" (Sternberg & Sternberg, 2008, p. 109). As part of a broader theory on the nature of hatred, they describe this affective stance according to three core components of action:

1. Negation of intimacy, which involves distancing and detachment from the object because it elicits "repulsion and disgust";
2. Passion, expressed as "intense anger or fear in response to a perceived threat" (this fight-or-flight response is seen as integral to hatred) (Sternberg & Sternberg, 2008, p. 63);

3. Commitment, which involves a cognitive devaluation and diminishment of the object through contempt.

The combination of these three elements yields seven types of hatred:

1. Cool hatred: disgust (resulting solely from the negation of intimacy);
2. Hot hatred: anger/fear (arising purely from the passionate component);
3. Cold hatred: devaluation/diminishment (stemming only from the commitment component);
4. Simmering hatred: repulsion (disgust from negation of intimacy + anger/fear from passion);
5. Smoking hatred: loathing (disgust from negation of intimacy + devaluation/diminishment);
6. Seething hatred: persecution (anger/fear from passion + devaluation/diminishment);
7. Burning hatred: annihilative drive (disgust from negation of intimacy + anger/fear from passion + devaluation/diminishment) (Sternberg & Sternberg, 2008, p. 73).

These types are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive; in fact, they may overlap (Vendrell Ferran, 2024).

However, Vendrell Ferran criticizes this classification, arguing that it fails to clearly distinguish between overlapping and similar types of hatred, and—more importantly—that it lacks a unifying criterion that would define what all forms of hatred have in common. In her view, the core content of hatred consists in its being an affective state sui generis, one in which the target is perceived as evil and which possesses its own unique phenomenology—a specific way in which the hated object is felt and experienced (Vendrell Ferran, 2024).

3.2 Early Phenomenological Analyses of Hatred

In her essay Phenomenological Approaches to Hatred – Scheler, Pfänder, and Kolnai (Vendrell Ferran, 2018), Vendrell Ferran highlights that early phenomenologists conceptualized hatred in markedly different ways. Scheler regarded it as an emotional act-experience, Pfänder saw it as a paradigmatic instance of sentiment, and Kolnai understood it as an emotive response. These differences reflect, on one hand, the multifaceted structure of hatred itself, and on the other, the variability inherent in applying a phenomenological perspective to such a complex phenomenon (Vendrell Ferran, 2018).

Scheler's philosophy frames hatred in contrast both to love and to ressentiment. While all these phenomena are grounded in value perception, love involves an openness and an inclination to adhere to values, whereas hatred is directed at what is perceived as unworthy, valueless, or contemptible. Ressentiment, in turn, represents a distortion of values. Consequently, Scheler distinguishes between ressentiment (as explored in his work Ressentiment in the Structure of Morals [Das Ressentiment im Aufbau der Moralen]) and hatred (Hass).

Scheler interprets ressentiment as a largely passive condition—long-term bitterness that develops when individuals repeatedly suppress feelings of anger, envy, resentment, or helplessness (Scheler, 1913). Prolonged impotence in the face of dissatisfaction often results in the unconscious reversal of values (Wertumkehr), whereby the unattainable is devalued, the success of others is undermined, and personal weakness is reinterpreted as moral virtue. Ressentiment, then, is more accurately described as an attitude than an emotion.

Hatred, by contrast, is an active, intentional emotional state, consciously directed at an object—whether at its value or at its very existence. Hatred not only involves the rejection of the hated object but also frequently includes a desire for its destruction.

In his Phenomenology of Sympathy, Love, and Hatred (Zur Phänomenologie der Sympathiegefühle und von Liebe und Hass), Scheler argues that both love and hatred make value perception possible, albeit in radically different ways. While love facilitates the discovery of values and aims to actualize higher values in relation to its object, hatred tends to obscure, diminish, or deny the object's positive attributes. Hatred is a state that renders us closed to higher values—a profound "movement of the heart" oriented toward lower values and destructive of the higher. As such, it possesses a unique epistemic character: not in its affirmation of values, but in its closure to them. Hatred blinds one to the higher possibilities of the object—though not entirely. One may still perceive another's value and yet remain consumed by hatred (Vendrell Ferran, 2018, p. 162).

Hatred, therefore, should not be understood as mere value-blindness, but as a specific mode of value-orientation. Where love deepens and extends the perceived values of its object, hatred narrows the scope to lower values and attempts to annihilate higher ones. Hatred, in this sense, is fundamentally self-directed, focused inward.

Another key distinction between love and hatred lies in their origin. Scheler affirms the notion of ordo amoris—a moral imperative to love—and suggests that hatred presupposes a kind of thwarted or inverted love. In Heideggerian terms, hatred can only be understood in relation to its opposite: as a negation of the original openness, receptivity, and affirmation inherent in love. According to Vendrell Ferran, hatred always emerges as more narrowly focused—aimed at a specific object or group—and only arises when something in the world obstructs the enactment of ordo amoris toward that person or thing.

This is echoed in Alexander Pfänder's phenomenology. In his Psychology of Dispositions (Zur Psychologie der Gesinnungen [1913/16]), hatred is conceptualized as a centrifugal, intentional act aimed outward—at something in the world perceived as harmful. The object of hatred is not merely avoided or rejected; it is highlighted and accentuated by the very intensity of the emotion. Hatred involves reflection upon and recognition of the object's existence—it is too important to ignore. Hated entities influence our behavior and exert a sort of power over us.

Similarly, in Vendrell Ferran's analysis of Aurel Kolnai, hatred is characterized as a paradigmatic aversive emotional response to undesirable stimuli. As with other phenomenologists, Kolnai emphasizes hatred's evaluative function: it facilitates the recognition of values—specifically, negative ones. Hatred is thus seen as a felt, bodily response directed at a perceived object of aversion, with distinct somatic markers.

Kolnai attributes both depth and centrality to hatred. Its depth lies in the fact that it does not concern superficial aspects of experience but engages the core of one's being. Hatred always involves something deemed essential—something that touches on fundamental aspects of existence. This is reflected in the everyday use of the term, which we reserve for profound, existentially significant aversions, as opposed to mere irritation or dislike.

Hatred's centrality refers to its capacity to affect all core dimensions of human existence. Because it touches the whole personality, it mobilizes every major aspect of the subject. The objects of hatred are typically intertwined with the biographical trajectory of the hating subject. As Vendrell Ferran notes, "There is an existential connection between the two. The presence of the object is felt to affect the subject personally" (Vendrell Ferran, 2018, p. 172). We tend to hate what has hurt or threatened us in meaningful ways. However, hatred is not merely retrospective; its relevance lies in how past experiences shape present and future moral orientations. Hatred involves more than withdrawal—it entails a morally charged stance toward something identified as evil. Kolnai terms this a "commitment to enmity." When we hate, we aim to eliminate from the world the evil we have identified.

According to Vendrell Ferran, “The world appears too small to contain both the hated and the hating subject.” Hatred, therefore, reveals the depth of our moral framework. To articulate this, Kolnai coined the expression “the worldview of hatred” (Weltbild des Hasses) (Vendrell Ferran, 2018, p. 172). This is why Kolnai also considers the potential value of hatred, especially when it emerges from the recognition of moral evil and aims to eradicate it.

Kolnai is also careful to note that true hatred is directed only at persons, their associations, or ideas—not at inanimate objects. Such objects lack the existential or moral significance required for hatred. Genuine hatred is bound up with moral agents—those capable of ethical action and decision-making. Hatred arises where we perceive others as obstacles to our existence within a world of presumed values. It surfaces when our deeply held moral convictions are violated by the actions of others.

Importantly, not all destructive intentions stem from hatred. For example, fear may also motivate the desire to eliminate a threatening object. However, hatred's destructive intent is distinctive in that it is pursued “for its own sake.” As Kolnai contrasts: where love seeks connection, enhancement, and closeness, hatred seeks negation, severance, and annihilation (Vendrell Ferran, 2018, p. 173).

Vendrell Ferran ultimately concludes that “hatred, when it arises, is deeply rooted in the core of the human being. It bridges the gap between subject and object and is defined by the search for disvalue in the object” (Vendrell Ferran, 2018, p. 173). The hated object is usually personal—a human being—precisely because it touches us existentially. Hatred does not erupt suddenly like disease or anger, but rather, it sedimentates gradually from accumulated experiences, both personal and mediated. It is not only a reaction but also an epistemic lens through which moral disvalue becomes visible. Hatred can help us grasp the darker aspects of the human condition—those we might otherwise ignore or obscure. Its heuristic function lies in its capacity to show us that evil can touch us personally, and that we may existentially reject and seek to distance ourselves from it.

3.3 Typologies of Hatred

Based on the aforementioned phenomenological analyses, as well as drawing on various primarily psychological studies, Vendrell Ferran ultimately developed her own theory and typology of hatred. She argues that hatred is a sentiment—a mode of perceiving the other as evil—and distinguishes four types of hatred based on two key dimensions: whether the object of hatred is concrete and irreplaceable or general and interchangeable, and whether the reason for hatred is clearly defined or vague.

The first type is normative hatred, which is directed at a specific person for a clearly defined reason. This form of hatred arises, for example, when one hates a particular individual (such as a liar) for a specific act they have committed—or are believed to have committed—that is considered morally reprehensible (e.g., lying, as it undermines fundamental interpersonal trust). Such hatred is rooted in personal experience and in the conviction that the behavior in question is ethically unacceptable. However, the object of hatred is interchangeable: it can be anyone who exhibits the condemned behavior.

The second type is ideological hatred, which targets a group of people or a set of ideas—an ideology—based on a vague or generalized rationale. In this case, it is not a particular individual who provokes hostility, but rather a whole category of interchangeable subjects linked by a shared attribute, such as ethnicity or some other unifying criterion. The justification for this hatred is logically constructed but ultimately unprovable—for instance, beliefs that "they steal," "we are paying for them," or that they bear some responsibility for a moral wrong. This is the hatred typical of group-based prejudice, which suffers from errors of

overgeneralization and factual misattribution. Here, the perceived evil is imagined, and the object of hatred remains substitutable.

The third type is retributive hatred, which is directed toward a specific individual for a specific action identified as evil. An example of this form of hatred is the desire for revenge against someone who has caused harm in the past and has neither shown remorse nor made amends. In this case, the object of hatred is entirely irreplaceable (there is no sense in hating someone unrelated to the wrongdoing), and the reason for the hatred is clear—the act itself. This form of hatred, too, is grounded in personal experience and a recognition of the causal origin of a wrong that one categorically rejects. The rejection of evil in this case entails the rejection of its clear and specific cause.

The final type identified by Vendrell Ferran is malicious hatred, which has an irreplaceable target but an indeterminate or contested rationale. In this case, one hates a specific individual, but the justification for this hatred is unclear or dubious. Often, this involves mistaking other negative aversive emotions—such as envy, fear, or disgust—for moral judgments of evil. For instance, although someone may be admirable—better, faster, or more popular—their very qualities are perceived as threatening and possibly the source of one's own misfortune. The belief arises that, if this person did not exist, one would no longer be at risk, and thus one wishes them harm or misfortune, hoping that their downfall or even nonexistence would fundamentally improve one's own situation.

Vendrell Ferran concludes that hatred is a sentiment directed at an object, characterized by its sui generis nature of perceiving the other as evil. It represents a moral-emotional stance toward another person, which arises especially when one's own (perceived) self-worth is under threat. However, the purpose of hatred is not merely to reject and avoid evil; it also serves as a mechanism of self-affirmation. Normative hatred reinforces societal norms and moral standards. Retributive hatred has a therapeutic dimension, potentially healing wounds and correcting injustices, particularly when oriented toward Aristotelian notions of restorative justice. In contrast, ideological and malicious hatred result in self-affirmation that is merely illusory and, indeed, self-deceptive. Ideological hatred presupposes a sense of inherent superiority, while malicious hatred may culminate in the destruction of the other; yet the feeling of personal elevation is false: the object of hatred continues to be experienced as desirable and superior (Vendrell Ferran, 2024).

3.4 Hatred as Generalization

Thomas Szanto (Szanto 2020) emphasizes that hatred is a complex, yet primarily affective attitude that arises from the progressive generalization of an individual's experience of anger directed at someone. In his view, hatred manifests as a deeply entrenched, enduring negative stance toward a person or entity—potentially a lifelong sentiment that shapes the affective biography of an individual. Personal experiences (or a set thereof) gradually solidify into behavioral patterns, which then become a framework for evaluating subsequent similar situations. This occurs due to a kind of cognitive economy (simplifications are less energy-intensive), but also due to a preparedness for probable negative scenarios associated with persons who have previously betrayed us. "Bad things are distilled from wrongdoings and gain independence and persistence as a personal essence" (Roberts 2003, 251). Generalization thus emerges as a central characteristic of hatred.

Drawing on Aristotle, Szanto notes that hatred is often described as a "cold" disposition. Unlike anger, which can erupt spontaneously and be clearly felt on a continuum from mild irritation to extreme rage (often involving loss of self-control and awareness—akin to a state of amok), hatred lacks such sharp contours. Its onset frequently goes unnoticed, and even in its most

intense forms, it may not be readily observable. Hatred tends to emerge gradually—almost imperceptibly—and its presence becomes evident only over time.

This also applies to its somatic expressions. Whereas anger typically announces itself with a clear set of bodily symptoms, hatred often lacks distinct physical manifestations. It may be concealed, latent, or expressed through avoidance, malevolence, scheming, or even scenarios involving physical elimination. Hatred appears to involve a form of aggression, though one that is often unexpressed outwardly or even obscured to the hating subject themselves.

The indeterminacy of hatred pertains especially to its object. In contrast to anger—where the object and cause are usually clear and demand some form of reparation—hatred offers no such clarity. The object of hatred is not a specific act or feature, but the very being of the hated individual. What is disturbing is their mere existence. Though we may not fully understand why, we seek to eliminate them from our perceptual world, to erase them from the surface of the earth. The object of hatred is thus vague—blurred in detail—we may be unable to specify why we hate someone, yet this very vagueness compels us to target the person as a whole. Moreover, we actively search for any detail that might justify our a priori hostility.

3.5 Temporality and Collectivity of Hatred

Unlike anger, hatred is characterized by its relative permanence (Demuth, 2024). A peculiarity of hatred is its ability to persist across time, even beyond the physical existence of its object. That is, hatred often stems from something we did not directly experience—something inherited, narrated, or rooted in events long preceding our own lives. In this indeterminate form of affective disposition—understood as a readiness for aversion—the precise triggering event becomes secondary. What matters more is the knowledge it provides: that we must (for the sake of cognitive efficiency and time optimization) remain prepared for hostility from individuals who either themselves or as descendants (inheriting not only obligations but also the character traits of their predecessors) have historically been regarded as enemies. Thus, we generalize and project the actions of long-past individuals onto those in the present, stigmatizing both ancestors and their heirs, thereby perpetuating conflict across generations—like a perpetual war between Montagues and Capulets.

Szanto, like many others, distinguishes between hatred directed at an individual and hatred based on social identity or group membership—a phenomenon he refers to as “collectivization.” The core of such hatred lies in an excessive generalization that renders hatred not only prone to habitualization but ultimately crystallized into a form of stereotypical essentialization (Szanto 2020, 455). What he highlights is not merely cognitive simplification—labelling that facilitates saving mental resources—but more critically, the social context that enables such generalizations. It is the socio-discursive environment that fosters stereotyping and the collectivization of hatred, transforming hatred into a socially shared phenomenon.

The significance of language and social discourse in the collectivization of hatred lies not merely in the way personal insights and prejudices are spread through and within language to become collectively endorsed attitudes. Certainly, this function is important for the dissemination of hateful positions and the ostracization of perceived enemies. However, Szanto emphasizes that this discursive sharing serves a further function: to maintain an antagonistic stance toward an external group in order to forge and strengthen internal group cohesion (Szanto 2020, 469). In other words, collectively shared epistemic stances—such as negative beliefs, prejudices, and ideologies—alongside shared values and commitments, contribute to the formation of a group identity. This identity distinguishes between "us" and "them"—between the familiar and the foreign, the safe and the dangerous, the trustworthy and the

suspect. Shared hatred thus connects us to our ancestors and simultaneously acts as a social adhesive in contemporary communities. The identity of "us" is often constituted precisely at the point where "the others" are perceived as a threat to our being. "(...)" (Ahmed 2014, 51).

The negative dialectic of hatred is not solely about its opposition to "the other"—the hated. Its more "positive" aspect lies in the communal sharing of the same or similar affective stances—emotions—which engenders a powerful sense of belonging (similar to shared joy or sorrow). The sharing of common emotions, values, and attitudes forms the foundation of collective identity. Moreover, this identity is reaffirmed whenever our a priori hostility toward someone is "confirmed" by instances of hostile or unjust (i.e., morally reprehensible) behavior directed against a member of our own group.

Szanto thus concludes that the extreme affective potency of hatred stems from the energetic dynamics of the hateful stance. He argues that hatred draws its affective energy, so to speak, freely—from the commitment, especially shared commitment, to the stance itself. People hate because they have adopted a particular perspective that enables them to perceive evil in others. This perspective proves effective and is, in a way, self-reinforcing. When one hates, one focuses on the negative aspects of the hated object—even if one can also recognize certain positive traits. Hatred does not obligate us to revise our stance simply because the hated individual acts kindly or justly. This may be called the commitment to hatred. Individuals develop a deep attachment to it, draw emotional energy from it, even when there are no longer immediate justifications for its continuation. For the sake of psychological consistency, individuals often maintain their hatred, feeling obliged to preserve it. This is what makes it so difficult to change or eliminate.

Szanto investigates the negative social dynamics and deep-rootedness of hatred, observing how hatred is reinforced through various forms of social interaction. When shared among groups, hatred generates a negative feedback loop that leads to its habitual consolidation and deep embedding within cultural and ideological structures. This explains why hatred often becomes robustly habitualized and may best be described as a shared habitus. Because it is not merely a personal feeling but a collective and structured phenomenon, hatred resists factual correction and normative education. It persists and spreads independently of even the most compelling rational arguments. Once entrenched in social practices, it becomes exceedingly difficult to eradicate.

4. Discusion – Hatred as Chronic Anger?

The present inquiry has sought to clarify the conceptual and existential distinctions between hatred and anger, situating these emotions within a broader philosophical framework that incorporates the work of Vendel Feran and Heideggerian phenomenology. The findings underscore that, while hatred and anger share affective and evaluative components, they differ significantly in terms of temporality, intentionality, and their role in human existence.

Anger emerges primarily as an immediate, situational response to perceived moral violations, characterized by its reactive nature and temporal limitation. This aligns with common psychological and philosophical understandings that view anger as a transient state directed at specific objects or events. Hatred, by contrast, reveals itself as a persistent, generalized mood that transcends particular triggers and shapes one's enduring stance toward others and the world. This long-term embeddedness of hatred in the subject's affective life supports Vendel Feran's argument that moral emotions are not simply reactions but foundational elements in how individuals interpret moral value and engage with the world.

Heidegger's analysis of Stimmungen (moods or attunements) allows for a different perspective on this issue. Similar to fear, anger can be seen as always directed at something specific within our world. It is caused by an object or situation perceived as threatening (e.g., anger at injustice, anger resulting from betrayal). It is temporally limited—when the threat disappears, the anger subsides. Anger, like fear, thus belongs to the domain of everyday experience (Alltäglichkeit).

In contrast, anxiety—like hatred—is not directed toward a specific object or situation. It is indeterminate and relates to Being itself. In the case of anxiety, the concern is with Dasein's being (its pure potentiality-for-being); in hatred, it appears to concern the being or non-being of evil in the world. Heidegger regards anxiety as an existential experience that discloses our finitude and our being-toward-death (Sein-zum-Tode). But what, then, does hatred reveal? It may be argued that it discloses moral values.

Anxiety enables an authentic understanding of our own existence because it tears us away from the distractions of everyday busyness and reveals the true nature of our being. It opens the horizon of temporality and makes us aware of our finitude. For this reason, Heidegger considers anxiety to be a fundamental mood without which fear would be incomprehensible—fear would not know that something can harm us, or that we are neither immortal nor infinite, unless anxiety had first disclosed this facticity of Dasein (Heidegger 1996, 219). Thus, anxiety is not a mood sedimented through experience; on the contrary, it is the most primordial existential attunement.

If we apply this logic analogically to hatred, an unexpected possibility emerges: hatred may not merely be a larval or chronic form of anger in its generalized guise of perpetual irritation. It may not be the consequence of anger, but rather its existential precondition.

Heidegger notes that anxiety discloses Dasein as finite, thereby enabling authentic self-understanding as a being that exists only temporarily. Hatred may serve a similar heuristic function. It allows us to perceive values in the world—or more precisely, the unworthiness of certain forms of being. Without this openness to negative values, we could not identify something as morally undesirable or evil within anger. It is only through the understanding that evil exists (which may directly or indirectly threaten us), and through the experience of aversion toward it, that we become capable of feeling anger or other reactive emotions toward specific stimuli. If we had no experience of perceiving negative values or rejecting evil, it is questionable whether we could experience aversion toward particular objects or situations.

From this perspective, one may question whether, if anxiety is the fundamental mood leading to authenticity, hatred represents a means of avoiding it—wherein one, instead of accepting the existence of evil in the world, withdraws from others and rejects one's true being-with-others, even with those perceived as "somehow bad," projecting one's negative feelings onto them. Perhaps it is this unpleasantness of experiencing hatred—and the fact that it conceals our inability to accept evil as part of the world—that explains why hatred continues to be overlooked in both scientific and philosophical discourse, and why its deeper investigation remains approached with such caution. The existential analysis enriches this understanding by revealing the ontological dimensions of these affects. Heidegger's concept of Stimmung (mood) and his analysis of anxiety provide a useful heuristic to frame hatred not merely as a distorted form of anger but as an existential attunement that discloses the world in a specific light—namely, one that partitions reality into morally charged categories of good and evil, friend and foe. Unlike anxiety, which opens up authentic possibilities for self-understanding and acknowledges human finitude, hatred closes the subject off, constraining relational openness and reinforcing exclusionary boundaries. This dynamic reflects how hatred functions not only as an emotional state but as a defensive existential posture that resists confronting the presence of evil as an inherent feature of existence.

Crucially, the research highlights the paradox that hatred, while often conceived as merely a negative affect or the absence of love, may instead be an active negation of value—a vehement rejection of certain forms of being perceived as morally unacceptable. This insight challenges simplistic binaries and invites a deeper inquiry into how affectivity shapes moral cognition and social relations. The recognition that hatred is intertwined with moral values, yet simultaneously limits authentic engagement with those values, calls for renewed attention in both philosophical and psychological discourse.

Future research might explore the conditions under which hatred transforms into more constructive affective states or how its existential function can be reframed to foster ethical reflection rather than alienation. Interdisciplinary approaches combining philosophy, psychology, and social theory could offer comprehensive frameworks for understanding the multifaceted nature of hatred and its impact on individual and collective moral life.

In conclusion, this study contributes to a more nuanced conceptualization of hatred, situating it as a morally and existentially significant affect that shapes human experience in profound ways. By integrating Vendel Feran's work with Heideggerian phenomenology, the research opens pathways for rethinking affectivity in moral philosophy and underscores the importance of confronting difficult emotions to better understand the complexity of human moral existence.

5. Conclusion

This inquiry into the affective structure of hatred, particularly in contrast to anger, suggests that hatred is not merely a chronic or generalized form of anger but may represent a distinct existential attunement. While anger typically arises as a transient reaction to a specific moral provocation, hatred endures as a deeply rooted, generalized stance that persists beyond immediate stimuli. Although anger often displays a greater degree of overt aggression, hatred's "cold" affective tone reveals its latent intensity and ideological complexity.

Drawing on Heidegger's existential phenomenology, especially his analysis of moods (Stimmungen), this paper proposes that hatred may serve a disclosive function analogous to that of anxiety. Just as anxiety unveils our finitude and the ontological structure of Dasein as being-toward-death, hatred may disclose the presence of perceived negative moral values in the world. It facilitates the identification of certain forms of being as unworthy or threatening, thus enabling moral discernment. From this perspective, hatred may not simply follow from anger but may constitute a condition of possibility for anger's emergence—an affective openness to the recognition of evil as such.

However, unlike anxiety, which leads to authenticity by confronting the truth of our finitude and our relational existence (Mitsein), hatred may function as a defense mechanism that obscures this confrontation. It can alienate us from others and project inner conflict outward, thereby obstructing authentic being-with-others. In this way, hatred not only signals a rejection of perceived moral evils but may also represent an evasion of existential responsibility and an unwillingness to accept the world's tragic structure.

Thus, hatred emerges as a significant yet underexplored affective phenomenon—one that reveals essential moral and ontological dimensions of human existence. Its neglect in philosophical and psychological discourse may stem from its affective discomfort and its challenge to normative ideals of relationality and acceptance. Further philosophical attention to hatred is warranted, not only as a pathological extension of anger but as a potentially revelatory mood that both discloses and distorts our engagement with the moral structure of the world.

Practically, this insight suggests that in addressing hatred—whether in clinical, educational, or social contexts—it is insufficient to treat it merely as an outgrowth of anger or a social pathology. Instead, interventions should aim at reconfiguring the underlying existential structures: fostering ethical reflection, re-establishing relational openness, and cultivating the capacity to confront, rather than expel, the presence of moral evil in the world. This reorientation holds promise for more humane and philosophically informed approaches to dealing with hatred in contemporary life.

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