

LIFE AND POLITICS WITH EMOTIONS

An approach



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Abstract:

The idea of emotions and affects in politics has been rejected by a significant majority of philosophers and social researchers instead, an instrumental and formal perspective prevails. Emotions and affects are considered as resources to incite actions of change within a regime or as forces that can ruin institutions. Emotions are produced in risky situations or stimulated by desires, they are expressions of a state of security and basic balance that, when entering a social dimension, needs to be formalized. Emotions are considered triggers of actions linked to natural satisfaction, therefore, when passing to the processes of social coexistence, and particularly those of political action, they become considerably dangerous, and the authors tend to suppress them. Here we argue that it is difficult to omit or deny the presence of emotions in political action processes, they are present from the beginning to the end of the political process, therefore, the study of political phenomena needs to consider the role and impact of emotions in our political life. To achieve our objective, we are first going to define the causes that make the introduction of emotions in politics problematic. Later, we will review the emotional and affective approaches that revalue the emotional component. Finally, we will review some ideas that allow us to understand the conjunction between emotion and reason in public life.

Keywords: emotions, affects, politics, rationality, citizenship

A Starting point

The common view of politics usually distinguishes its field from others like science or economy; we can talk about political events and political processes from everyday language and understanding. This knowledge is very useful to communicate our thoughts to others; the common political knowledge helps us transmit our personal experiences, concerning issues such as government or rights. This knowledge encounters a difficulty, it contains a lot of confusing expressions; to clarify the meaning of a political idea, especially when there are several meanings in dispute, we use a method to dispel ambiguities, then we establish the justification of what we are interested in com-

municating. The latter is hardly achieved with common knowledge; therefore, we leave its place to empirical, technical, scientific, or philosophical knowledge, which will have the purpose of establishing the clarifications that lead us to the most pertinent explanation. Thus, everyday knowledge is valuable, but not helpful in finding the reasons and causes of a political fact. What has been said so far, matters to us because of the importance of the relationship between politics and emotions. Emotions such as knowledge of politics in everyday language, it is said, contain vagueness and prevent a correct explanation of a political event based on its foundations. However, for this reason, it is necessary to seek an empirical or scientific explanation to understand it properly. The fact that politics cannot be reduced to common language or emotions derives from the specificity and differentiated character of politics¹.

One of the distinctions that the Italian philosopher Giovanni Sartori points out when explaining what politics is, is not to confuse its “springs” with individual actions. Politics, according to this approach, has a base, the *demos*, from which political phenomena arise, this base is accompanied by a structure and a set of mediations that give rise to decisions². Within this scheme, emotions have a marginal value in the phenomenon of politics, making it difficult to give them a substantive weight in politics.

Arise emotional condition

It was from the French Revolution that the certainty generating source for political activity was established from the relationship between the people and the State³; From the first arises social activity, as well as the conflicts that are taken as inputs; from the second, the referent of government action is taken and from there arises the structure that gives its character to the political organization. In societies in which politics is exercised democratically, a state institution with open rules for access to power (Constitution) is present, this defines the main condition of political activity⁴. Democracy politics imposes extending its forms of processing conflicts between spheres of social life beyond politics.

1 G. Sartori, *Política: Lógica y método en las ciencias sociales*, Fondo de Cultura Económica, México, 1999.

2 *Ibidem*.

3 P. Rosanvallon, *La consagración del ciudadano. Historia del sufragio universal en Francia*, Instituto Mora, México, 1999.

4 K. Knight & J. Harnish, *Contemporary Discourses of Citizenship*, in “Review of Educacional Research”, vol. 76, No. 4, 2006, pp.653-690.

A systemic explanation would expect that the political activity after encountering the different social activities produces an orientation, that is, that the potential or conflictive actions are conducted along institutional paths. The foregoing marks a difference between societies that practice politics in a democratic framework and those that do not, in the latter there is a continuity between power and a social life that does not change⁵. In this sense, any solution to conflicts within a non-democratic regime is understood as a privilege.

The American philosopher Martha Nussbaum⁶ has pointed out that the transition between a regime in which the solution of a conflict arises from a place other than the law and the welfare interest of the community always leads to a social organization that extends the violence and the feelings that go with it (anger or revenge) making them their response pattern. In this sense, for Nussbaum it is important to understand what emotions are and how they work, likewise, to offer an explanation that allows us to understand how emotions can be adequately processed to move to a normative framework that allows coexistence without resentment.

What is important for this text is that Nussbaum’s idea is part of a wave of disagreement against anti-emotional philosophical positions. She recovers points of view like the Stoics. The Stoicism defending the dignity of human being too affirmed the importance of emotions by considering them forms of judgments, and value judgments about things⁷. Nussbaum defends the thesis that emotions are not simple physiological responses, but rather contain an intentional component of which it is possible to understand them as evaluations of an object⁸.

According to the American philosopher, emotions account for different aspects: the circumstances in which emotions occur, the meaning they have in life and the context they have for each individual⁹. Seen globally, the author’s purpose is to show that emotions should not and cannot be suppressed, because in such a case the individual is mutilated from experiencing a dimension of human life that prevents individuals from recognizing the importance of the experience of others.

5 E. Kantorowicz, *Los dos cuerpos del rey. Un estudio de teología política medieval*. Madrid, Akal, 2012.

6 M. Nussbaum, *La ira y el perdón. Resentimiento, generosidad, justicia*, Fondo de Cultura Económica, México, 2018.

7 M. Nussbaum, *Emotions as judgments of value: a philosophical dialogue. Comparative Criticism* 20, 1998, pp. 33-62.

8 M. Nussbaum, *La ira y el perdón. Resentimiento, generosidad, justicia*, cit. pp. 387-390.

9 M. Nussbaum, *Emotions as judgments of value: a philosophical dialogue*, cit. pp. 40-41.

Next, we will offer an exposition of the importance of emotions that at some points coincides with that of Nussbaum and in others delve into the relevance that these have for human life.

Emotional condition of the Human Being

During the Enlightenment, social and political action began to focus on the cognitive component of the subject, leaving their desires and needs in a secondary place¹⁰. As Sartori pointed out, a current perspective of politics emphasizes the knowledge of the means-ends, what and how to do to fulfill its objective¹¹. That said, intervention in a democracy needs to be subjected to the dynamics of instrumentalization of politics, becoming “an institutionalized activity with relatively clear limits”¹², therefore intentions derived from emotions are not very relevant.

The citizens should be in correspondence with their interests following calculation guidelines, that is, the citizen should be in control of their affections and critical of their intentions¹³. This conception places political behavior directly concerning calculated behavior. The previous feature, despite having greater influence among scholars, was harshly criticized throughout the last 20th-century decades. Different approaches have expressed a clear skepticism to the hegemonic idea of political activities in democracy as the rational individual subject’s decision, instead, they propose to understand rationality activity more as a distributed interaction process of wills.

For Nussbaum, emotions are components present in all animals, including human beings, emotions have a cognitive and intentional content, this means that emotions provide estimates composed of principles and beliefs¹⁴. Nussbaum argues that emotions do not generate expressions in the form of logical propositions but can transmit an evaluation about the object they refer to¹⁵. In accordance with the above, it is recognized that emotions are an integral part of human communication and what they tell us produces a type of argumentative structures¹⁶. In

this regard, says Gilbert: “Emotions themselves are not usually statements of fact ... but accurate or useful ... When we move into the emotional realms we find evaluation to be not so much with truth as with whether or not an emotional expression is genuine or counterfeit”¹⁷.

In this regard, H el en Landemore¹⁸ suggests understanding life in democracy not only as a set of regulated procedures but also functions as a process of collective cognitive and emotional interaction under construction, where the procedure should not suppress the voters’ feelings. On the other hand, there is also the need to modify the procedural perspective¹⁹, giving greater weight to the emotional component, which favors the construction of judgments and the ability to appraise²⁰. And on the other hand, this vision proposes to admit that the products of emotions, in this case affects, improve our understanding of how we acquire information about objects. The turn affective introduce a new point of view, in it we observe how the affects help us to explain both the emotional and rational decisions²¹.

Beyond Nussbaum, the neuroscientists Jaak Panksepp²² and Antonio Damasio²³ developed important theoretical advances on the neural mechanisms of emotions, they found that the motivational systems that allow the execution of human acts are accompanied by emotions, for which, trying to suppress them would be equivalent to eliminating our way of understanding how we choose and decide. Emotion, contrary to those explanations that put weight on rational life, includes emotions, feelings, and emotional states. Emotions are an integral part of human communication and in that sense, they are part of the components that allow choosing, deciding, and justifying²⁴.

10 D. Innerarity, *La transformaci n de la pol tica*, Pen nsula, Bilbao, 2002.

11 Cfr. G. Sartori, *Pol tica: L gica y m todo en las ciencias sociales*, cit. pp. 220-222.

12 N. Lechner, * Qu  significa hacer pol tica?* Fondo de Cultura Econ mica, FLACSO, M xico, 2013, p.213.

13 Cfr. G. Sartori, *Pol tica: L gica y m todo en las ciencias sociales*, cit. pp. 188-189.

14 Cfr. M. Nussbaum, *La ira y el perd n. Resentimiento, generosidad, justicia*, cit. pp. 387-392.

15 *Ibidem*

16 Cfr. Gilbert, M. (2004). *Emotion, Argumentation and Informal Logic*. In “Informal Logic”, Vol. 24, No. 3, pp. 245-264.

17 Ivi, p. 250.

18 H. Landemore, *Democratic reason. Politics, Collective Intelligence, and Rule of the Many*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2017.

19 M. Sandel, *Filosofia p blica*, Debate, Madrid, 2020.

20 Cfr. Gilbert, M., *Emotion, Argumentation and Informal Logic*, cit.; cfr. Ben-Ze’ev, A. *Emotions, Responsibility and Morality*, in Van den Beld, Ton (Ed.) *Moral responsibility and Ontology*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Amsterdam, 2004; Ben-Ze’ev, A. *The Subtlety of Emotions*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2000.

21 D. Dukes; K. Abrams; R. Adolphs, et al. *The rise of affectivism*. “Nat Hum Behav” 5, 816–820, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-021-01130-8>

22 J. Panksepp, *Affective neuroscience: The foundations of human and animal emotions*, University Press, New York, Oxford, 1998.

23 A. Damasio, *Descartes’ Error*, Avon Books, New York, 1994.

24 Cfr. Gilbert, M. (2004). *Emotion, Argumentation and Informal Logic*, cit., pp. 250-253.

In contrast to the hegemonic political theories that focus on participation centered on self-interested and deliberative reasoning, as the main regulatory mechanism of politics²⁵, the affectiveness' approach is beginning to emphasize the emotions' role and the unconscious predisposition to process information and react to events in particular ways²⁶. These perspectives attempt to explain individual differences in decisional functioning based on emotional experiences that influence personality formation and the establishment of neural networks and processes, which, in turn, are unavoidable and affect the way the citizen processes information.

Actions can occur outside of emotions, but most of our actions are not like that; it is the case of political decisions, in which we find traits of "emotional knowledge", which is intuitive, and not necessarily goes through the artificial process of logical reasoning²⁷. Already in classical Greece, Aristotle²⁸ had proposed a characterization of human discourse defined by a tripartite expression: character, emotion, and argument (ethos, pathos, and logos), thus establishing the limitations of the logical argumentative activity and its intertwined relationship with the activities focused on conviction and persuasion, which make emotion one of its most valuable components.

Whether it is because our decisions are motivated or because the motivations cause our actions, it is essential to begin to understand how emotion is inseparable from rational act. Antonio Damasio proposes that, following Spinoza in many aspects, emotions are based on three components: an external stimulus, an internal physical reaction, and a set of ideas that accompany the reaction, feeling being the first result derived from the combination of such items. This description recognizes the presence of two phases. The first, where emotion arises in our body derived from external stimuli, the reaction encounters our ideas and generates what we call feelings. Then, there is a second phase, where the feelings' effect affects our way of responding to the reaction and we convert that feeling into an *affect*, which is linked to feelings. The consequence in our mind will generate different types of reactions to the stimuli from outside.

25 J. Bohman & R. William (eds.), *Deliberative Democracy: Essays on Reason and Politics*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1997.

26 Cfr. D. Narvaez, *The Social-Intuitionist Model: Some Counter-Intuitions*, in W. A. Sinnott-Armstrong (ed.), *Moral Psychology, Vol. 2, The Cognitive Science of Morality: Intuition and Diversity*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2008a; Cfr. D. Narváez, *Triune Ethics: The Neurobiological Roots of Our Multiple Moralities*, in "New Ideas in Psychology", 26, 2008b.

27 Cfr. A. Ben-Ze'ev, A. *Emotions, Responsibility and Morality*, cit.; cfr. A. Ben-Ze'ev, *The Subtlety of Emotions*, cit.

28 Aristóteles, *Retórica*, Gredos, Madrid, 2000.

That is why we respond in specific ways to things that we do not know, for example, feeling fear or being prone to be attracted to what produces pleasure.

Darcia Narvaez²⁹, takes a step forward, looking for a consistent explanation, and posits the existence of three correlated nuclei in decision making, which are not exclusively rational. Narvaez³⁰ suggests the identification of an intuitive decision nucleus related to the sympathetic nervous system, where immediate responses to situations that alter our state of well-being originate. A second nucleus is related to what is known as the emotional brain³¹, in which the limbic system is involved, especially the amygdala and the hypothalamus. Finally, there is a core of imagination, related to the neocortex and thalamus structures. Its importance has to do with the imagination development in the functioning of the prefrontal cortex. The frontal lobes are fundamentally involved in situations that enlave making decisions under conditions of ambiguity or free choice, through two powerful tools: impulse control (instincts) and automatic intuitions.

Decision-making involves both the modulation of the will and the ability to insert behavior in a particular life context, through the tools provided by the deliberative mind, basically through the activation of the functions of the left hemisphere of the brain, which allows interpreting one's and other's behavior in a group context³². Under this horizon of understanding, then, we must accept that there is not enough evidence to support the idea thrusting one's reasoning is sufficient to define someone's destiny. This is because not only the emotional component transforms our way of thinking about the world; but it also transforms our way of doing things in the world, which implies that we see what we do in the light that emotions offer us: this admit reflexivity.

The idea that we propose faces the rationalist scheme of politics, which in some way would be at the base of the idea of citizens as rational voters: there is in them an emotional and affective being contained with strong implications, not only because decision-making often depends on them, but, most interestingly, from them arises an important flow of motivations that delineate the political act itself.

Following our thread of argument, we can establish that there is an internal relationship between judgments (logical,

29 Cfr. D. Narvaez, *The Social-Intuitionist Model: Some Counter-Intuitions*, cit.

30 Cfr. D. Narváez, *Triune Ethics: The Neurobiological Roots of Our Multiple Moralities*, cit.

31 Cfr. A. Damasio, *Descartes' Error*, cit.

32 Cfr. Narvaez, *Triune Ethics: The Neurobiological Roots of Our Multiple Moralities*, cit., p. 95-119.

ethical, aesthetic, political) and motivation, which calls into question any dichotomous position, both those that arise in ethics and those that emerge from the philosophy of the mind. A first dualism that must be eradicated is the one that insists on separating consciousness, the cogito, from the corporeal and therefore from any other experience; but, in addition, we need to insist on a problem intrinsic to the traditional division that derives from the mental: that is, the idea that there are two types of internal logical attitudes. On the one hand, that connected with cognition - paradigmatic belief - that is guided by the world and has an “appropriate object” that is apodictic truth; while on the opposite side would be the connotative -the paradigmatic desire- that is also guided by the world and has its “appropriate object” that could be something close to goodness. This distinction, according to the traditional approach, exemplifies the idea that all action is open and creates a meaning, where the desire is directed to a certain goal or extreme of the agent, while beliefs have some meanings that approach the end. Without desire and belief, there would be no action.

The emotions conceived by philosophers as states that give rise to disturbance against what could be called the correct way of thinking led to the idea that both practical reasoning and theoretical reasoning should and could be dispassionate, in such a way that emotions do not interfere with correct reasoning. Bringing the latter to our subject, the process of building political participation should be aimed at pursuing the link between emotion and reason. Antonio Damasio³³ suggests that political philosophers and theorists frequently ignore the affective world because they have a wrong conception of it, they assume that emotions have the power to diminish our reasoning capacity, in such a way that it is easier to do without them.

Emphasizing the value of reason over emotions has meant in the modern history of political thought a loss rather than a gain, while, as Martha Nussbaum³⁴ points out, the sphere of public life and decision-making spaces need a certain generosity from emotions so as not to poison the desire to find better ways of living.

Crossing emotions and reason

The current discussion among those who consider emotions dangerous gives way to a reductionist characterization of politics, which depends exclusively on institutionalized procedures. The foregoing leads us to consider the following if in democracies everything depends on a system of rules, how do we build new ideals of justice that prevent exclusion, statelessness, or invisibility born of difference? One approach would be to start proposing ways to integrate emotions into politics and in this sense, it is worth considering whether the meaning of politics that democracies currently have, helps us achieve virtuous conjunction between emotion and reason. Certainly, global, and technocratic trends make a new understanding difficult, at least as long as we continue to consider politics as a procedural task to reduce fears and risks to the future.

Although the calculated exploitation of fear or, as happened at other times with feelings such as patriotism, has been one of the causes of emotions' bad reputation, it is important to consider again what it means to do politics and how we could incorporate the emotional dimension to this activity. Doing politics in democracies is carrying out regulated activities that channel their participation, particularly towards electoral processes. The value given to political activity in the whole of social life is marginal. Certainly, as Habermas³⁵ states, the citizen's task does not begin and end with the casting of the vote, it is constituted throughout the moments in which it is deliberated in the public square, however, in a strict sense what has been consolidated in parliamentary democracies is that the consummate act of political exercise happens when, through an institutional process, I rationalize my decision.

Opening the world of emotions to public life requires, from my perspective, rebuilding the meaning of politics and removing it from the different domains of privatization in which it has been pigeonholed. Politics must remove its instrumental vision with state-lead features that deprive the inclusion of emotions. Politics stands out for being a type of activity marked by its condition of constituting order³⁶, and for making such order compatible with others³⁷, and favoring a non-restrictive “us”³⁸.

33 A. Damasio, *Descartes' Error*, cit.

34 Cfr. M. Nussbaum, *La ira y el perdón. Resentimiento, generosidad, justicia*, cit. pp. 21-25.

35 J. Habermas, *La Constelación Posnacional. Ensayos políticos*. Paidós, Barcelona, 2000.

36 C. Lefort, *Democracy and Political Theory*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1988.

37 Cfr. A. Cortina, *Ciudadanos del mundo. Hacia una teoría de la ciudadanía*, Alianza Editorial, Madrid, 2009.

38 E. Balibar, *Ciudadanía*, Adriana Hidalgo editora, Buenos Aires, 2013.

Given the minimum conditions expressed above, the first act of the citizen as a subject of politics is to democratize democracy, points out Étienne Balibar. For this to happen, it is essential to begin the “search for continuity through a significant order, but an order that is always problematic in the face of the discontinuity of life”³⁹.

Carrying out these tasks is of course not easy, it requires effort, and it involves imagining paths, shaping new perspectives that allow expanding the identity of the communities. As Victoria Camps stated, to start, incorporating principles such as happiness into the idea of order may be unimaginable, but if that idea is part of the collective interest and if this interest is assumed as justice, it may be viable. Viability includes the idea that it is worth expanding the margins of our conceptions of community, identity, and political action. The resignification of the political will always implies a tendency to close the meaning, defining what is and what is not political, but it must avoid definitively indicating what will always be or be avoided⁴⁰.

However, the proposals that advocate giving greater weight to emotions within the decision-making and deliberation processes maintain that this is necessary because human nature itself is nurtured by adaptive emotional schemes, which, rather than being mere mechanical structures, make possible the modeling of behavior in various directions. So, what does this have to do with the idea of politics? Well, if the human structure processes the stimuli to produce emotion and convert it into an affect, that same structure can translate it into an affective state; the above is feasible because our nature is a flexible structure.

Human beings have the possibility of favoring patterns or forces that are transmitted over time⁴¹ and these are spread to a community through conditioning, contagion, imitation, or simulation, these patterns favor the processing of emotions and their subsequent translation into affective states⁴². Of course, these patterns have been used to massively generate states of hatred towards people or groups. Hence, when a community develops a specific type of feelings and affects as a response to certain experiences, this can be rationalized to such a level that these

feelings become affective states. However, as Asma and Gabriel pointed out, despite the rigidity that the rational brain can cause, it does not disable its affective side, the emotional brain. In fact, it just takes an opportunity to express itself and change. The possibility of modifying affective states depends on the ability of the subjects to find other more powerful affects that propitiate a change. Spinoza had already pointed out that a dominant emotion that controls a person’s way of deciding can only be transformed when it encounters a more powerful emotion. In terms of contemporary neurobiology, the possibility that one emotion replaces another depends on switching the aimed goal to a new function⁴³.

Then, if emotional responses are not automatic, in the sense of always generating the same response, the affective system may be able to disengage from its dominant state and adopt and adapt other types of behavior to replace it. In this sense, if politics is the constant activity of reconstructing a significant order, it is possible to generate conditions that allow the expression of emotions to break present cultural circumstances that foster paralysis and indifference.

The preparation of these possibilities of building order in conditions of discontinuity, as Lechner suggests, can only occur if we favor different connections between emotion and reason, practices that do not deny compassion, love, or shame, in both private as well as in public domains. The recovery of the right to feel before the dispositions of the political regime has to do with changing our procedural sense of politics, also putting aside its strong burden located in the formal duty, obligation, and mandate, and taking it to the level of cooperation through experiences such as caring for the other, which not only happens when someone puts himself in another’s shoes. For Alberto Mellucci⁴⁴, evasion and the role of emotions in the formation of collective life is a symptom of the anomie of the modern world, which is part of the eminently complex scenario of our societies. A scenario where it is admitted to suppressing affects to avoid exacerbating the violent traits of our culture, showing off our theoretical ignorance because by suppressing that emotional component of the political system, rather than reducing social complexity, an implosion phenomenon is produced in response to the containment of the emotions, called violence. This generates an endogamous effect of insecurity and risk that instead of benefiting generates dependency, frustration, disgust and paralysis in the individual.

39 N. Lechner, *¿Qué significa hacer política?* cit, p. 211.

40 Lechner, *Ibidem*; cfr. A. Cortina, *Ciudadanos del mundo. Hacia una teoría de la ciudadanía*, cit; cfr. V. Camps, *Virtudes públicas*, Espasa Calpe, Madrid, 1990.

41 J. Panksepp, *Affective neuroscience: The foundations of human and animal emotions*, cit.

42 S. Asma & R. Gabriel, *The Emotional Mind. The Affective roots of Culture and Cognition*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, London, 2019.

43 Ivi, p. 91-95.

44 A. Mellucci, *Acción colectiva, vida cotidiana y democracia*, El Colegio de México, México, 2002.

Mellucci also points out that the effects of contained frustration incubate a perverted society that not only deforms the value of the political, but also accompanies it with highly dangerous sociopathy phenomena, such as the naturalization of discourses that degrade life in all its expressions. The challenge is to re-interpret political life, political interaction, and reason in a broad and multifactorial environment from another order because "... contemporary societies carry their power of action on themselves, towards frontiers never reached by any culture of the past"⁴⁵.

The collective experiences in which it is possible to transform the affective state of society arise from the need to create new order coordination ways that admit different collaboration forms between the civil society and the government. In this case, government intervention has a moderate or low level and citizen participation acquires high levels of involvement. In this scheme, citizenship takes the form of networks that collaborate with local or regional organizations, although the participation of international agencies is common to create a broad public agenda and new spaces of activity recognized by the regulations⁴⁶. Such is the case of solidarity support organizations, which mainly work in communities to promote the capacities of vulnerable groups. It is these forms of articulation and recreation of order that give greater importance to affects on political life. Some experiences are the so-called Participatory Budgets, and organizational planning systems for municipal development in Mexico, but there are also similar ones in Argentina, Ecuador, and Brazil.

Conclusion

The demand to build new citizenship approaches where the interaction of collective affections and political rationality are allowed, must have at least three supporting reasons: 1) The construction forms of social order require the care, established by the aim of seeking always public social benefit; 2) the presence of emotions is justified based on the defense of a public *philia* that affirms the notion of the individual rather than suppressing it, since attitudes emotions' recognition require individuals take responsibility and acknowledge their commitments with the community, highlighting the achievements and the limits they face; 3) favorable affective states for the

construction of an active civic and political subjectivity have as their mission the search for coincidences in the divergence, thus sustaining the need to make common values, social goods that tend to become public goods. Building new ways of coexistence requires effort, it puts into action a significant number of affective components that largely drive desires and, consequently, choices. Feelings not only accompany thoughts, because, in fact, they play a determining role, as we have seen, in decision making, to this extent they are not a subsidiary factor, they need to be integrated with a logical reason to formulate paths for successful decision making in a collective sense, it is nothing else, but to walk towards a dimension of justice and equality in society⁴⁷. The distinctive feature of a formation for collective life in a democracy must start from the growth of citizens who value these dispositions to accept to discuss publicly, everything that interests and concerns us.

Therefore, we cannot avoid the fact that citizen development, to be consistent with a more participatory approach, includes emotion, an ethic of commitment, and well-being, each one playing its role. The ethical questions, then, are those related to planning lifestyles that admit the coexistence between concrete and more plural ways of living.

There is, then, an area of exploration of our life, constitutively ethical and political, which not only waits to be done, but any individual or collective life project, that intends to address it, will also have to be configured it around integrated ideals. The mesh of values is supported by affective motivations. A productive and satisfactory life demands efforts to achieve happiness. If happiness includes the community, it requires assuming a principle of justice and equality, maintaining agreements regarding norms such as respect, recognition of others' dignity, the possibility to negotiate dignity with the community, and the possibility to discuss in the public space. Assuming a commitment to the community entails, therefore, a certain virtue. The recovery of dispositions as virtues changes the meaning of ethics, sets aside its restricted sense of obligation and the starkest bureaucratic mandate, changing it into a wish for habit, an object of the desire of the will.

Bisquerra⁴⁸ points out that to find new forms of collective realization, it is necessary to build a strategic framework for compliance with the rules of the civic game, which introduces a type of civic obligation but does not exclude the contingent character of the political.

45 Ivi, p. 152.

46 J. Santos y F. Porras, *Participación ciudadana y gobernanza local como formas de gobierno en México*. En G. Zaremborg (coord.), *Redes y jerarquías. Participación, representación y gobernanza local en América Latina*, FLACSO-IDRC, México, 2012.

47 A. Cortina, *Ética mínima*, Madrid, Tecnos, 1986

48 R. Bisquerra, *Política y emoción*. Ediciones Pirámide, Madrid, 2017.

Finally, it will be necessary to delve into a third dimension called integration with people where the alternatives to new forms of emotions' socialization and their approaches to politics are reviewed.

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