Emotional Management in Spanish Institutions: when Institutional Trust Draws New Horizons

By Simone Belli

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I. Introduction

Emotions are a perceptual construction of complex situations (Roberts, 2013). When emotions meet social movements, the situation is even more complex. We observe how people challenge the authority of “traditional” (political and economic) institutions, and where distrust in these institutions can evoke anger, anxiety, resentment, despair, depression and loss of self-esteem. A lack of trust in mainstream institutions often helps to explain the grievances and emotional dispositions that bring people to participate in movement-based communities and events, such as those affiliated with the Indignados movement in Spain.

The case-study is based in the Spain area between 2011 and 2014 on social institutions and emotional processes involved in what normally is referred to as social movement. We present narratives by activists from these institutions because they embody a type of innovation and creation in the Spanish scenario in the last years. They offer different examples of how trust is managed through narratives and actions in horizontal infrastructures (social institutions). This study allows us to introduce institutional trust as a second-order emotion in emotional management practices of the social movements. We show how trust funnels in other first-order emotions, which represents emotional ties between activists, allowing them to achieve other emotions, where emotions are perceptual constructions of complex situations, as Roberts (2013) explains. Along this paper, we will propose the concept of a second-order emotion as a tool for social analysis in social movements.

II. On Trust and Emotion Management

Second-order emotional practices have an important role in emotion management in social movements, considering that emotion management is not a conclusion to a process, but a phase of a continuing cycle of activity (Barbalet, 2011). Second-order emotional practices represent a tool (Jakupcak, 2003), “an instrument of freedom rather than a tool of self-oppression” (De Sousa, 1990: 446), where we cease to think of our emotions as inevitable and to view them as open to modification. A person may ‘regulate’ anger against an institution, constructing trust, promoting rewarding actions, sharing knowledge and information, etc.

For Barbalet (2011), emotions can be regulated in an implicit social regulation and through processes of self-monitoring, in an explicit way. Emotions can only be regulated in interactionally with other subjects and so require cooperation among individuals in trust relations as a social movement, hundreds of persons fighting together for the same cause. The regulation of the person’s activism draws on other emotions, such as anger or love, and is composed by other second-order emotions such as sincerity, trust or blame.

People rarely express fear, anger, jealousy, chagrin, joy, and so on, by using the corresponding words in a self-description (Harré, 2009). An angry person might verbally show anger by shouting “F##k the politicians!” but not “I am angry with them” without turning red in the face. First- and second-order emotions in our narratives emerge in multiples ways, rarely using the corresponding words. This matters for how we recognize our usage of these second-order emotions in our narratives. Spiraling out first-order emotion, there are all sorts of second-order emotions which depend on tacit knowledge of the first-order emotions. Harré (2009) suggests analyzing which words are common in the expression of emotions. What do the uses of the words “rage” and “anger” have in common? What about “anger” and “love”? Second-order emotions help us answer these questions, analyzing what words and expressions have in common in the context of these emotions. The latter is a prime ingredient in the grounds for describing one’s emotional experience. The first-
order emotion is always a kind of process where this emotional process is composed by second-order emotions.

III. METHODS TO TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS AGAIN

The case-study is based in the Spain area between 2011 and 2014 on social in stitutions and affective processes involved in what normally is referred to as social movement. These are the institutions: Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH - Movement of Mortgage Victims); 15Mpedia/ Informa Sol/Padl/People witness (from indignados movement); Candidatura d’Unitat Popular (CUP - Popular UnityCandidates); and Asamblea Vivienda Centro (AVC - Housing Center Assembly). The four cases represent different types of social institutions with a strong component of militancy and responsibility for the citizens. We present narratives by activists from these institutions because they embody a type of innovation and creation in the Spanish scenario in the last years. They offer different examples of how trust is managed through narratives and actions.

In narratives, epistemic trust constructs and “fabricates” these micro-institutions composed of subjects, because claims of the participants an explicit assent to the aim of sharing knowledge with a form of joint actions which require explicit sources of knowledge, a form of trusting someone in large crowds and subjected to contagious face-to-face interaction contact. They shared the same practices of occupying public space to fight against traditional institutions (Author XXX1&, 2014). This represents a democratic mobilization in which people have challenged traditional institutions of neoliberal capitalist ideology and practices (Benski and Langman, 2013).

As we observed in the previous section, trust and institutions are highly interrelated. An activist says that is not possible to live in a democracy without trust in the institution of democracy. This is why democracy needs rules, and trust and confidence are two of them. Young adults in Spain have lost trust in traditional institutions for different and precarious reasons (economically, politically and socially). Being assembled in large crowds and subjected to contagious face-to-face processes promoted the emergence of a common collective identity (Melucci, 1989), in a We-mode way (Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, 2006; Perrugoria & Tejerina, 2013; von Scheve & Ismer, 2013).

In the next section, we will present a model for observing this epistemic trust as a second-order emotion in institutions from the data collected.

IV. FROM INDIVIDUAL NEGATIVE EMOTIONS TO COLLECTIVE POSITIVE EMOTIONS

In research on the social movement, second-order emotions play an important role in achieving the movement’s intended purpose. In the African-American Civil Rights Movement between 1954 and 1968, black pride was one of the most important elements in constituting a collective action and in achieving equal rights in US society. Black pride was not the purpose of this movement, but it is the second-order emotion which allowed the creation of the community and a collective action to achieve their shared purpose. In Britt and Heise’s (2000) essay on LGBT movement, they trace the emergence of pride and shame through emotional control processes involving fear and then anger. This social movement revolves around efforts to transform shame into pride. Pride and shame are second-order emotions in this context, and fear, anger, joy and empowerment represent the first-order emotions. Shame and pride in this context are elements of sharing other emotions in groups and achieving equal rights in society. The purpose of these actions is not to show pride, but pride is the second-order emotion which connects these subjects.

In the Spanish scenario of the last years (Author XXX1, 2013, 2014; Author XXX1&--, 2013; Author XXX1&--, 2014), we have observed how people challenge the authority of “traditional” (political and economic system) institutions. A multitude of subjects which shared the emotions in the same place (Puerta del Sol in indignados movement), caused face-to-face and interaction contact. They shared the same practices of occupying public space to fight against traditional institutions (Author XXX1&--, 2014). This represents a democratic mobilization in which people have challenged traditional institutions of neoliberal capitalist ideology and practices (Benski and Langman, 2013).

Daukas (2006) gives us a good example of how epistemic trusts in social interaction and in institutions work. In a multidisciplinary group of social scientists, their goal is to understand the social problems of a given community. This investigating group should be socially and socio-economically diverse, because their diversity represents different perspectives and are shaped through individual epistemic histories.

In the next section, we will present a model for observing this epistemic trust as a second-order emotion in institutions from the data collected.
in 2010–2011 began, people started to lose trust in banks, firstly, as physical space of the economic system, and later they lost trust in the political system. The banks were saved, the people were screwed (Langman, 2013). Trust was broken between people and these old institutions; bank offices had to physically change their position in Spain to try to reconstruct this trust with society, the same activist explains. When citizens feel threatened, their emotions lead them to seek additional information and process it more thoroughly. Distrust in these institutions caused by the crisis evoked negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, resentment, despair, depression and loss of self-esteem as emerged in narratives collected.

For Bennett (2013), the reasons for changing the terms of the relationship are prudential, reasons of a subject’s self-protection from an institution. This is why subjects revise their expectations and intentions in a relation, so as to change or modify the relation with that subject or object. The relation between citizens and these institutions was now broken and it was impossible to repair. So these social movements in Spain have their origin in the loss of trust regarding traditional institutions and the political mismanagement of the socioeconomic crisis. This authority and institutional system are defined as ‘unjust’, and it is this frame of injustice which has generated this loss of trust. When this second-order emotion of trust between society and institutions is violated, it generates a lot of negative first-order emotions such as fear, anger, anxiety and resentment (Jasper, 2011; Marcus et al. 2000; Neuman, 2007). Given this distrust in economic and political authorities, persons managed this second-order emotion toward another object, a different way of understanding democracys we activists describe in their narratives.

These institution swore to manage this second-order emotion between citizens in Spain. In 2011, people’s trust in other people allowed them to occupy public spaces together and to express their individual negative emotions in a collective way. Negative emotions expressed in I-mode were shared in these public spaces and transformed into positive emotions expressed in We-mode.

People started to build alternative institutions together, in a public space, establishing emotional ties between themselves. Activists explain that protestswere led under the slogans: “We are not commodities in the hands of politicians and bankers”, “They don’t represent us”, etc. Collective emotions emerged with the use of “We” (citizens) against “They” (bankers and politicians). People trusted members of their in-group, and experienced resentment toward the out group (institutions, politicians, bankers, and so on).

For Melucci (1995), collective emotions, like collective identities, are constructed and negotiated in a dialectical interaction with historical events and networks of groups and individuals. Anger, fear and anxiety are a strong force in creating a sense of collectivity in the street and an attractive force in collective actions (Eyerman, 2005). Individual negative emotions force people to occupy a place together and share positive emotions. People recover institutional trust, as a relationship between an individual and an institution, and share happiness and empowerment. In these four institutions, trust was negotiated in a dialectical interaction between subjects in order to achieve different positive emotions collectively. Management of this emotion is important for understanding how subjects have changed their negative emotions expressed in an I-mode to positive emotions expressed in a We-mode. Subjects have moved from their private spaces to a public space thanks to a change of the object which they direct their second-order emotion of trust toward.

Emotions and joint actions play together when sharing trust. Institutional trust connects positive commitments to people, ideas and places, forming a solid basis between subjects and more persistent emotional management with the action. ‘We’, bound by bonds of trust in persons, the heart of the process of emotion management – a change of language, of words, from people to person, indicating a change toward engaging in politics, a narrative of becoming persons and the trust between them asa collective identity (Polletta, 1998).

As we have seen in the cases of the LGBT and African-American Civil Rights movements, as in these four institutions too, people share and manage emotions to achieve a purpose. Emotions in the social environment crystallize in narrative experiences which structure individual emotions. When people interact with each other in specific situations, they construct narratives to generate a shared understanding of the situation through shared emotions. For Clark (1996), linguistic categories provide the common ground which allows for efficient communication and enables people to coordinate joint action, as in social movements. The four activists confirm that banners, slogans, manifestos and tweets constitute these narratives and allow the management and organization of their social actions. One of the deepest satisfactions of collective actions in this social movement is a sense of trust and confidence, an end that in turn becomes a means to further action. These four institutions have created a pre- and a post- in social movements in Spain, where these collective emotions and joint actions facilitate the development of participatory habits in democracy and trust in it again.

V. TRUST CONTAGION FEEDBACK LOOP

“When the government is against the people, the people are against the government” An activist interviewed.

For Jasper (1998), trust is an example of basic affects which have important political implications. Lack
Second-order emotions are contagious because they are embodied and internalized in our social practices. The chain reaction in different places in Spain has caused the facility to construct and manage these second-order emotions in an epistemic way: a trust reaction, where citizens have decided to place their institutional trust in this form of protest and to adopt the same strategies. Socially shared emotions are not just an aggregation of individual emotions, but represent unique holistic qualities of social collectives as an emergent phenomenon (Bar-Tal, 2001). Physical proximity may substantially amplify and reinforce emergence by way of facial mimicry and contagion; hand signals and verbal communication contributes to the symbolic transmission of appraisal outcomes and the descriptive labeling of emotion (von Scheve & Ismer, 2013). Trust in these social institutions represents the new social ritual of living together post-indignados movement. In the next section, we will describe how these social institutions and these new social rituals work thanks to the second-order emotional institutional trust management.

VI. DEMOCRACY AND INSTITUTIONAL TRUST

We have observed that new collective forms of understanding democracy allow us to recover institutional trust in it. The infrastructure in the indignados movement implies a flat plane upon which to communicate, which requires the use of direct tools against hierarchy. This is an anti-authoritarian creation rather than reaction, where the vertical methods of top-down organization and relation are broken, according to Sitrin (2006). Trust is the basis of this horizontal institution – a type of democracy where community being together and sharing collective emotions is based on trust in each other as citizens of this democracy. Town-meetings, working groups, and assemblies are the structures of horizontal decision-making and nonhierarchical social relationships as they promote civic involvement, innovation and transparency.

Horizontal democracy was based on social institutions of cooperation and knowledge, stabilized as a valuable good for society and individuals (Sennett, 2012). Cooperation and knowledge requires positive emotions in social interactions. Institutional trust, as we have observed before, represents an important source of sharing information and knowledge because it contributes to extending in an effective way the knowledge among the members of a community. People share emotions, common problems and being together in an inclusive, horizontal, non-violent, and participatory fashion (Perrugoria & Tejerina, 2013).
Horizontal democracy is a social contract to establish a new social order in society and it becomes a habit where one abandons all hope of being represented. Representing second-order emotional ties between family, friends and one’s neighborhood for surviving at the micro level and in micro institutions. So the most promising way to restore social order seems to be the “bottom-up” way, according to Srbijinovic and Bozic (2013). Horizontal democracy is composed of these bonds, because trust is an essential part in everyday social relationships. When trust changes between people and institutions, often it changes their relationships with others and wider social structures. Micro-, open and social institutions represent a new beginning for recovering this trust, leading to an all-pervasive social change at the macro level too. These processes, Srbijinovic and Bozic (2014) argue, are inherently complex and frail, just as first-order emotions. Emotions may prove to be the missing piece in a variety of puzzles with which political scientists have struggled with for decades (Groenendyk, 2011). Horizontal democracy in the Spanish scenario poses collective actions which have resulted from old problems in traditional democracy. Because these new types of institution are concerned with the restoration of trust, they fulfill social rituals, practices and infrastructures which can connote a sense of participation in social life.

The regulation of second-order emotional ties is the first step to transforming society from distrust in the old democracy to trust in the new democracy. This is why democratic society cannot function without trust and loyalty of the people (Rawls, 1993). Democracy starts with citizens caring about one another and acting responsibly from that sense of care, taking responsibility both for themselves and for their community (Lakoff, 2011). As we have observed in the previous section, these second-order emotional ties work as a feedback loop between individual, society and the polity. Often these second-order emotional ties are social norms or social contracts between citizens and institutions – the basis of the democracy.

These second-order emotional ties happen for the same reasons that Daukas (2006) argues that trust is a second-order epistemic competency, where our ability to rightly judge and be judged as trustworthy is in the social interaction and expressed as epistemic trust. Trust is a second-order emotion in this sense, because it doesn’t emerge in a direct way in our narratives. Examples include hand signals in Indignados movement for the negotiation of a consensus in a universal and open language1. Everybody can participate in horizontal democracy using these signals to agree, to oppose, etc., with other persons in the square. Epistemic trust is managed in this way too.

The institution of democracy has adjusted to modes which can be designed by the citizens. A new space was opened up by a series of negotiations, interactions and actions between subjects and objects. Horizontal democracy is a traditional institution adjusted to the modes which can be designed, following Latour’s concept (2013). Institutional trust is managed in these processes by occupying a public space in order to reestablish these institutions, a collective action to design new forms of sharing knowledge and authority between subjects.

VII. Discussion

In the 1960s, observers used the obvious emotions of protest to dismiss protestors as irrational or immature; later analysts denied any and all emotions in an effort to demonstrate that protestors are rational (Goodwin et al. 2000; Jasper, 2011). We have presented the case that social movements are in large part emotionally conditioned and originate from interaction rituals. Democracy provides the infrastructure for these interactions and stimulates positive emotions in citizens; the failure of this institution leads to the collapse of these interactions and produces negative emotions in citizens.

We have observed how social order is socially constructed through interpersonal interactions in everyday life by cooperation and positive emotions. Citizens know this set of emotional beliefs, which are formed in every interpersonal encounter in their life in society. In the four institutions, often initially negative emotions are collectively expressed in an individual way, or I-mode. We may think like individuals, in I-mode, but our brains have evolved to allow us to feel as part of groups, in We-mode (Hermann et al., 2007). People have constructed networks where they elaborate and manage these emotions. These networks are constructed thanks to the second-order emotions of trust, a second-order emotional tie between subjects for achieving a purpose or an emotion. These emotions prompted many to engage in protests and mobilizations as an expression of contentious politics which become mediated through interpersonal networks. We-mode represents the heart of the process of collective identity construction being conducted. Collective emotions, collective context and collective action represent a new area of study of emotion in the coming years, and the second-order emotion of institutional trust is the basic structure for studying these complex processes.

Second-order emotion account allows an understanding of how emotion regulation and emotion management generates collateral emotions. In our view, the central aspects of institutional trust are emotional and epistemic. Trust as a second-order emotion constitutes an epistemic space for people to share knowledge. Trust is not just needed to gain access to knowledge goods, but it is essential to becoming a

1 More information: http://www.nycga.net/resources/general-assembly-guide/
socially situated self, to engaging in more public conversations with others. Institutional trust as a second-order emotion is internalized through social practices, in our discourses and in our practices. In the model explained, we have observed that trust is essential to becoming a socially situated self. Authority migrates to the subjective level of these horizontal and open institutions. People cannot feel strong emotional experiences without trust in the other people that participate in the same movement.

Although trust and distrust are the fundamental social ties, it is not yet quite understood how it works or how to figure out its nuances and distinctions. Trust becomes a second-order emotion which tames the future into horizons of the expected, of that which we count upon, of that which we feel more or less sure about. Institutional trust contributes to taming and narrowing the horizons of the expectable so that our social life becomes possible. The construction and maintenance of the emotion and bond of trust appears to be crucial in our daily relationships, and we suggest that it appears as a crucial question far beyond the system of democracy. In our analysis, these second-order emotion of institutional trust forges the bond between subjects, where an emotional constellation is produced by this emotional tie.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**