

# The concept of "fraternity" as a democratic value in Mexican politics

El concepto de "fraternidad" como valor democrático en la política mexicana

O conceito de "fraternidade" como um valor democrático na política mexicana

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## Resume

**Introduction:** it is intended to demonstrate that fraternity as a democratic value and as a concept that should be applied to Mexican reality is not so. **Objective:** to show that, by not applying fraternity fully, the other two values of democracy (freedom and equality) are harmed to the detriment of Mexican democracy as a form of government. **Materials and method:** analysis in the national political context, starting from the ineffective action of the state authorities that has caused social discontent and citizen distrust and is based on the conceptual analysis of the values mentioned as units of both theoretical and legal discourse. **Results and conclusions:** although fraternity is not expressly codified in law, the concepts of freedom, equality, respect, dignity, general interest, non-discrimination, solidarity, human rights, etc., refer to it directly, in addition to the fact that it may have more importance than freedom and equality and that ethical and moral aspects may be the basis for considering the other and thus avoid individualism, ambition and selfishness derived, generally, from capitalist policies.

Palabras Clave: Fraternity; Democracy; Politics; Democratic values; Democratic state.

## Resumen

**Introducción:** se pretende demostrar que la fraternidad como valor democrático y como concepto que debe ser aplicado a la realidad mexicana no lo es así. **Objetivo:** evidenciar que, al no aplicarse cabalmente la fraternidad, los otros dos valores de la democracia (libertad e igualdad) se perjudican en detrimento de la democracia mexicana como forma de gobierno. **Materiales y método:** análisis en el contexto político nacional, partiendo de la ineficaz actuación de las autoridades estatales que ha provocado descontento social y desconfianza ciudadana y se parte del análisis conceptual de los valores mencionados como unidades del discurso tanto teórico como jurídico. **Resultados y conclusiones:** a pesar de que la fraternidad no está expresamente codificada en la ley, los conceptos de libertad, igualdad, respeto, dignidad, interés general, la no discriminación, solidaridad, derechos humanos, etc., la refieren directamente, además de que puede tener más importancia que la libertad y la igualdad y de que los aspectos ético y moral pueden ser la base para considerar al otro y así evitar el individualismo, la ambición y el egoísmo derivados, generalmente, de políticas capitalistas.

**Keywords:** Fraternidad; Democracia; Política; Valores democráticos; Estado democrático.

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## Resumo

**Introdução:** o objetivo é mostrar que a fraternidade como valor democrático e como conceito que deveria ser aplicado à realidade mexicana não o é. **Objetivo:** mostrar que, ao não aplicar plenamente a fraternidade, os outros dois valores da democracia (liberdade e igualdade) são prejudicados em detrimento da democracia mexicana como forma de governo. **Material e métodos:** análise do contexto político nacional, partindo da ineficácia do desempenho das autoridades do Estado, que provocou descontentamento social e desconfiança dos cidadãos, e partindo da análise conceitual dos valores acima referidos como unidades do discurso teórico e jurídico. **Resultados e conclusões:** embora a fraternidade não esteja expressamente codificada na lei, os conceitos de liberdade, igualdade, respeito, dignidade, interesse geral, não discriminação, solidariedade, direitos humanos, etc., referem-se-lhe diretamente, além de que pode ser mais importante do que a liberdade e a igualdade e que os aspectos éticos e morais podem ser a base para considerar o outro e evitar assim o individualismo, a ambição e o egoísmo derivados, geralmente, das políticas capitalistas.

**Palavras-chave:** Fraternidade; Democracia; Política; Valores democráticos; Estado democrático.

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## Introduction

In a State that by mandate of its Constitution and by regulation of its internal laws must have a democratic form of government, it must also, consequently, possess the characteristics that are inherent to democracy, which includes its principles (such as tolerance and plurality) and values (such as liberty, equality and fraternity). Therefore, these characteristics must be present in its state structure, which should not only be taken into account from a theoretical or conceptual point of view, but also in political reality, since it is of little or no use for a state to be structured and organized with this form of government from its expression in legislation if in fact it does not fully comply with them. Democracy as a concept should not be an idea distant or detached from the concrete facts, but should serve as a true rule of the form of government and also of political conduct in a State. However, the ineffective performance of the governmental structure has caused social discontent and citizen weariness, for example, in terms of public safety the Mexican State has failed to meet its objective of providing its inhabitants, the above considering the crime incidence rates of occurrence (number of individual events of criminal victimization reported per one hundred thousand inhabitants) that have been increasing: a) year 2010/1, 30 535 events; b) year 2011/2, 29 200 events; c) year 2012/3, 35 139 events; d) year 2013/4, 41 563 events; e) year 2014, 41 655 events; and f) year 2015, 35 497 events (INEGI, 2017). Another example is the aggressions against journalists that transgress and violate human rights: in the six-year term of Felipe Calderón 1092 aggressions against the press, 48 murders of journalists and 15 disappearances of journalists; in the six-year term of Enrique Peña 1502 aggressions against the press, 47 murders of journalists and 4 disappearances of journalists (Article 19, 2018). According to some media outlets

...the deployment of more members of the Guardia

National Guard throughout the country will not translate into a decrease in crime (...) pacification in Mexico is far away, and proof of this is that in the last three months 11,373 homicides have been registered. In the first eight months of the government of Andrés Manuel López Obrador there are already 30,137 murders (...) although there are more than 50,000 elements of the National Guard in security tasks, this new body still does not exist, because in fact they operate in the same way they did in recent years.(Arista, 2019)

Some international organizations have catalogued the situation in Mexico as very serious, even positioning it at the level of "war", only similar to countries such as Afghanistan, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Egypt and Turkey (HIIK, 2019). The above only as an example, without mentioning other relevant events that have also occurred in Mexico, such as the cases of Ayotzinapa, San Mateo Atenco and Ciudad Juarez. All this causes doubts about the true application and observance of the values and principles of democracy, especially that of fraternity, since this means friendship, affection, respect, justice, dignity, union of wills, correspondence, alliance between people, which makes it a universal value applicable in any society that boasts of being democratic. However, with all these conflicts that have arisen in the political and social reality of Mexico in recent years, the conceptualization of democracy with these values included, and secondly, the true application of fraternity as a democratic element that should be present by constitutional mandate, are put in doubt.

If fraternity is one of the values of democracy, then it must also be considered as one of its characteristics, which means that every State that formally claims to be democratic must include this quality not only from a formal point of view, but also in terms of social reality, since

fraternity as a characteristic of democracy should be present in all the actions of all people, especially those directly related to politics and public service. Fraternity must be included not only from the formal point of view, which would already be from the outset a congruence between what is established in norms of higher hierarchy with others of lower hierarchy or regulations, within a legal system, but also from its effective application in the social reality. This means that, in addition to the formality and congruence of the legal norms in a normative system, there must be congruence with the concrete acts emanating from the application of the formally foreseen qualities. One of the most important foundations for the above is that fraternity implies a moral duty of self-protection, but also of protection to the other members of the community, of the society or of the State in which they are immersed.

## DEMOCRATIC VALUES

Democratic values cannot be approached only from the perspective of the theory that sustains democracy, since they are concepts of a philosophical nature that deal more with the axiomatic aspects of democracy, which should not be reviewed only from the perspective of the form of government, since it permeates many aspects of social and political life. It is a matter of adopting a conceptual position from which to analyze the idea of "fraternity" as a democratic value, that is to say, it is necessary to adopt an axis from which to begin to reflect on this fraternity in the context of political action in Mexico. Axiology, as a branch of philosophy, allows us to know the analytical guidelines of values, since it is focused precisely on the study of their nature and characteristics, as well as the various theories that constitute their study (González, 2005, p. 279). People consider as "valuable" something that is good for someone or for everyone.

we give people to something or to an action. Thus we say that this or that object is valuable or that this or that behavior is valuable, to the extent that they are good or just for oneself or for other people. Therefore, values are qualities that refer to thinking and rational subjects capable of making a judgment about what surrounds them and also refer to the objects that surround them in social reality, such as things or actions. As a consequence of the qualification that the subject makes on an object, a graduation of value arises, which depends on the temporal and spatial circumstances in which this or that object or action is "valued", in such a way that the behaviors (as well as the things) that occur in social reality can have a greater or lesser "value" depending on the amount of benefit or justice it provides to people or society. The closer a thing or an action is to that ideal of benefit or justice, the greater its "value", so that something with more value is more appreciated by the community and, therefore, that something should be procured and protected.

This is one of the reasons why legislation and law in general are based on values, since the general purpose of the legal system is to regulate the life of people in society so that they can achieve their personal and community objectives and goals. Hence, legislation, as one of the manifestations of law, is based on the values that have been universally accepted and recognized in order for society to have minimum parameters for coexistence and development. Therefore, legal norms have (or at least must have) an axiomatic basis that gives them support and *raison d'être* so that they can be legitimately applied and so that society receives the benefit of situations and social and political actions endowed with value. In this sense, insofar as it refers to the subject matter addressed in this paper, democracy as a form of government stipulated in both fundamental and regulatory legal documents, is also an aspect of political and social life that must be supported by values, especially when it is part of the framework

legal system of a constitutional and democratic state. The regulatory guidelines of a State and of a government, both in their form and in their structure and functioning, also have their basis in law and in the legislation that derives from it, which in turn have their basis in values, in such a way that the democratic form of government (and the legal codification that underlies it) also has an axiological underpinning. Democracy is a form of government that has various characteristics and qualities that make it a desirable and applicable political and social system in contemporary societies, which are, among others: sovereignty, majority, pluralism, tolerance, etc., identified as democratic principles, but also others that because of their importance are considered values: liberty, equality and fraternity, the latter being the one of interest for the present work.

Fraternity", in one of its most basic meanings, means "brotherhood", that is, in an environment in which fraternity is considered as one of the values (and, consequently, characteristic) of political and social relations, the treatment should be similar to the treatment that occurs between people who are related as brothers, and with this parameter (which seems to be simple) different actions should be produced, the subjects who are immersed in that ideal should direct their behaviors to fulfill the objectives of a brotherly relationship, in which the moral intentions are, minimally, of respect and help, which means emphasizing values (not anti-values): "To affirm the value of fraternity, that is, to affirm that all human beings should treat each other as brothers means, in the first place, to emphasize the values (...) of freedom and equality of citizens..." (Salazar and Woldenberg, 2012, pp. 32-33), but we must not forget the other principles (or characteristics) of democracy, such as that of plurality, which implies the existence of a multiplicity of positions, thoughts, ideologies, etc., all of them coexisting in the same democratic environment with the only limitation of not harming the rights of others.

third parties, such differences should be respected (and even promoted) in a democracy, but that does not mean that conduct governed by fraternity (which includes plurality and its diverse effects) should be similar to the treatment that an enemy deserves: "But it means something else (...) that despite their differences and conflicts of interest or opinion, the members of a society should not be seen as enemies, that is, as divided into opposing and irreconcilable sides, but, if anything, as partially conflicting co-participants in the formation of the national political will..." (Salazar and Woldenberg, 2012, pp. 32-33).

However, the conceptualization of democracy and its democratic values also requires to be considered as a conceptual system, but, more than that, as an axiological framework that forces us to visualize fraternity not as an isolated concept or idea, but as part of other categories belonging to the genus "democracy" and that, therefore, share certain conceptual connotations, in such a way that the study of fraternity should not be approached without first considering the other two values that share its axiomatic position. Historically, the motto "Liberty, equality and fraternity" was coined during the French Revolution and, although at the beginning it did not have the expected repercussion, it gradually acquired validity and use:

Inheritance of the century of the Enlightenment, the motto "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" is proclaimed for the first time during the French Revolution. Often questioned, it ended up imposing itself under the Third Republic. It is enshrined in the Constitution of 1958 and today is part of our national heritage... (France Diplomatie, n.d.).

Until finally each of his three concepts were accepted as axiological characteristics of democracy:

Of the three principles of the French Revolution

-freedom, equality, fraternity-, not only is fraternity the least studied and the most abandoned, but also the most enigmatic, philosophically speaking (...) not only has it had an uneven historical-real destiny, but the very notion, the meaning and scope of it are *prima facie* vague. (Domènech, 2013, p. 15)

Freedom", according to the dictionary of the language, is that natural faculty that man has to act in one way or another, and not to act, so that he is considered responsible for his actions, it is also a state or notion of one who is not a slave or one who is not a prisoner or a right of superior value that ensures the free determination of persons, it is likewise, a prerogative, privilege or license and considers it as that condition of persons not obliged by their state to the fulfillment of certain duties (RAE, 2019). Regarding "equality", the same dictionary states that it is the conformity of something with something else in nature, form, quality or quantity, it is the correspondence and proportion that results from many parts that uniformly compose a whole and it is also a principle that recognizes the equalization of all citizens in rights and obligations (RAE, 2019). Hence, equality is a value for democracy, for democratic states and, in general, for everything that is presented or qualified as democratic, especially because it has implicit certain concepts and ideals of a legal nature that are comparable to equity and justice, In such a way that modern democracies (and also incipient ones) have included equality in their catalog of rights and prerogatives, relating it to the form of government and including such concept as an ideal in the legal-normative codification, both in the fundamental documents (Constitution) and in the secondary or regulatory ones (federal and local legislation).

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As a whole, democratic values (liberty, equality and fraternity) tend towards a larger moral and legal objective: justice.

In effect, the aspirations and desires that people have about well-being, development, security, etc., can be achieved thanks to the practice of justice, not only in the jurisdictional sphere, but also in the most basic sphere of the daily coexistence of human beings, with which the necessary conditions can be established so that the effects of justice can be included in individual conduct and in the general actions of society, all under the auspices of an adequate juridical and social order. Therefore, justice is also one of the values of democracy that must be included together with liberty, equality and fraternity, since this concept alludes to a principle of Law that consists of giving to each one what corresponds to him, which clearly has a close relationship and a great congruence with those other three values of democracy (fraternity included, It is also clear that in a democratic State the legislator -and the constituent- must produce the legal norms with a content in accordance with those values and, even, as a guiding axis of the content of the laws, as an axiom of the same, so that society and all those to whom the legal norm is addressed are part of the necessary link between liberty and equality, but also between fraternity and, consequently, of justice. This will contribute to create a kind of democratic institutional zeal whose affinity for humanism and what it implies will be for the benefit of society and in favor of the interests of the homeland; for this it is essential that these values be a real foundation, applicable and applied in politics. All this will be, ultimately, a way for the State and its components to become more and more democratic.

Democratic values, like all values and ethical and moral principles, must be exercised, practiced and disseminated, but they must also be defended from those who deny them or who downplay their importance, whether they do so with their expressions and ideology or whether it is reflected in their actions as a consequence of capitalist behaviors in which the most important thing is immediate profit regardless of the harm done.

caused to others. We must not renounce these values and principles, nor should we allow ourselves to make an apology for their renunciation; on the contrary, we must remove the obstacles that prevent us from exercising them.

## DEMOCRACY AND FRATERNITY

In Mexico, the third article of the Political Constitution establishes the right to education and in its section II, paragraph a), states that the guiding criterion of education "Shall be democratic, considering democracy not only as a legal structure and a political regime, but as a system of life founded on the constant economic, social and cultural improvement of the people..." (CPEUM, 2019), this alludes to the way in which the concept "democracy" should be considered, and distinguishes precisely two postures: one in which it refers to the legal system that grants the basic guidelines for the functioning of the State and the political system that provides the general conditions by which people can access public power, and another in which it alludes to a system of life. It means that it should not only apply to situations or circumstances related to political or legal matters, but, according to the constitutional definition, it goes beyond that: it is applicable to everything in which the citizen has contact, to every circumstance in which the activity of people has an influence, wherever the human being has a relationship and contact with another human being, there will be democracy and, of course, its inherent values. That is to say, democracy, more than a form of government and an instrument for decision making in the public life of a State, is a way of life, which implies that its characteristics (values and principles) should not only be present in the State or governmental activity (for example, for the renewal of public positions in the government), but should also permeate all the conduct and daily activity of people, without it necessarily being a sine qua non condition that those persons or citizens hold any public office. Consistent with the above,

if we consider that the citizen is the subject whose daily social conduct must be influenced by these democratic principles, and if we take into account that all rulers, holders of public power, public and state officials and servants, as well as political groups and parties (ultimately also made up of people), are citizens (with the political rights and obligations inherent to that quality), then also -and with greater reason- democratic characteristics must be present in all their actions. That same precept, in its section II, paragraph c), establishes that education

It will contribute to better human coexistence, in order to strengthen the appreciation and respect for nature, cultural diversity, the dignity of the person, the integrity of families, the conviction of the general interest of society, the ideals of fraternity and equal rights for all, avoiding privileges of races, religion, groups, sexes or individuals. (CPEUM, 2019).

To "coexist" means to live in the company of another or others and alludes to a coexistence of people, to a necessary compatibility and understanding of human beings by other human beings. Improving human coexistence implies that people reinforce these bonds of compatibility and improve the positions of understanding that are necessary to be able to exist with each other. In a society it is unavoidable to coexist with the other members of that same society, so that everything that attempts to the best way of relating among them mutilates fraternity and everything that helps it is in fact a more democratic circumstance. Coexistence can only be improved by applying other values or principles (which are also of democracy), such as respect for the other, tolerance, etc., all of which leads to a peaceful interaction among the human beings that make up society. Appreciation" implies an affectionate esteem for someone. It means to raise the price or increase the value of something or someone, but,

above all, recognizing and estimating the value of something or someone through their merits. This cannot be achieved without a feeling of affection or esteem for that thing or person. For the above it is necessary to perceive the merits of people in order to be able to estimate them, so that it is possible to appreciate them, and this cannot be achieved without paying due attention to the person whose merits are intended to be appreciated. Respect" is the consideration or deference given to other people, it implies attention given to others, that they are not only people whose actions are omitted or ignored, but that they are attended to and taken into account in relation to how valuable their participation or actions might be. A little courtesy could be beneficial, as long as it does not compromise the necessary strictness in terms of legality or in relation to respect for legal norms. The "dignity of the person" means that the person is deserving of something and that something is or should be proportional to the merit of his or her actions. The "general interest of society" is something that can be useful to the majority of the members of society, it is about actions or behaviors of the members of society that are useful to the same society for the most part. When something is done in the general interest of society, it means that there is a gain or value for society itself and not, on the contrary, that society - and its members - have to remedy the damages or pay for the deficiencies of actions or behaviors that are not directed to that general interest. For this aspect to be developed, it is not enough for citizens or members of a society to direct their conduct for their particular benefit (which, *prima facie*, could be considered as an initial requirement for a society to function and, above all, to progress), but it is also necessary that in the conduct of individuals there is a special and particular mental inclination towards the utility, benefit or gain (in general a benefit) of society and/or of the majority (or many) of its members. The effect that the existence of the general interest of the society must have is that a new situation of the persons must be produced

or of the majority of people (of society in general), that is convenient or beneficial, either from a moral point of view or from a material perspective.

In addition to the Political Constitution, there are other regulatory laws that congruently regulate education and provide for democracy in it, emphasizing the value of fraternity (although sometimes this is not done expressly), for example, the General Law of Education in its Article 16 states that "Education (...) will fight against (...) servitudes, fanaticism, prejudice, stereotypes, discrimination and violence..." (LGE, 2019). servitudes, fanaticism, prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination and violence..." (LGE, 2019), which is already linked to the ideas of fraternity, since the idea of "fighting against servitudes" implies avoiding aggravated subjections or non-legal non-excusable obligations to do something, but such subjection could also be caused by certain circumstances that restrict freedom (another of the values of democracy). The idea of "fighting against fanaticism" means rejecting an excessive passion to defend beliefs or opinions of a political nature, when there is no scientific basis for it. "To fight against prejudices" means to prevent people from prejudging, to prevent qualifications and opinions - unfavorable or not - about something that is not fully known. "Fighting against stereotyping" implies not incurring in the acceptance of an ideology simply because it is accepted in an unmodifiable way in a group or society. "Fighting against discrimination" means not giving unequal treatment to a person or a group of people on racial, religious, political, sexual, etc. grounds. Finally, "to fight against violence" means to prevent the use of force (whether physical or moral) against the will of others, with the purpose of infringing what is legally established. In addition to the above, this precept establishes that education shall respond to certain criteria, and the first of these is precisely democracy, and defines it -in its section I- in the same way as the Political Constitution does, while in section II of the Constitution it is defined by the Constitution.



fraction III expands the criteria catalog by which education is governed: "It will be humanistic, by fostering appreciation and respect for the dignity of persons, based on the ideals of fraternity and equal rights, promoting the improvement of human coexistence and avoiding any kind of privilege of races, religion, groups, sex or persons..." (LGE, 2019).

In this normative portion we can observe the existence of an additional concept to those already established, "humanism", which refers to everything that is related to the human being, to his development in the world and in society and to everything with which he has contact and is the product of his activity. Humanism implies the knowledge of what is human, but not only that, it also obliges to cultivate what is human, that is, everything that serves and benefits the human being, everything that helps him to be, to develop and to produce. Humanism obliges to restore values and to avoid their demerit and non-observance. It must mediate an interest on the part of the human being and not only remain as a social necessity, with the purpose that the man continues being the center of beneficial attention for the same man. Section IV of the same article continues in a similar sense by providing that it will "Promote respect for the general interest of society, above particular or group interests, as well as respect for families, in order to recognize their importance as the basic nuclei of society and constitute themselves as spaces free of any kind of violence..." (LGE, 2019), and finally, in article 30, section XVIII, of the same legal codification, it refers to the fact that the contents of the study plans and programs will include "The promotion of the values and principles of cooperativism that favor the construction of solidary and fraternal relationships..." (LGE, 2019).

Cooperativism" understood as that trend towards the practice of cooperative regimes which, although it refers more to economic situations, in this case the social aspect is also important.

Likewise, the article 6 of the Regulatory Law of Article 3 of the Political Constitution establishes the principles of the Mexican educational system and the most important and related to the subject of this paper is the mandate that there be "... concordance with the approach of human rights, substantive equality and unrestricted respect for the dignity of persons..." (LRA3CPEUM, 2019). All these ideas derived from the concept of "fraternity", together with the citizen's weariness in Mexico (derived from many phenomena of insecurity, frauds, aggressions, human rights violations, and a long etcetera), make us conclude that fraternity has been a concept that, although it is referred to (although not expressly codified) in the Mexican Constitution and legislation, has not been duly observed or applied in the political reality, which is detrimental to the democratic form of government. This also applies to some other democratic states, since this value is a distinctive aspect of the democracy they intend to implement and sustain in their respective societies. As this is not the main purpose of this paper, I will only mention as an example of the above the French Constitution, which in the final part of its preamble reads as follows:

By virtue of these principles [referring to human rights and national sovereignty] and that of the self-determination of peoples, the Republic offers the Overseas Territories that express the will to join it new institutions founded on the common ideal of liberty, equality and fraternity and designed to strengthen their democratic evolution (CF, 2008).

Likewise, in Article 2, corresponding to the first title "On Sovereignty", it states, among others, that "The motto of the Republic is 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity'..."; and in Article 72-3 it states that "The Republic recognizes the overseas populations as part of the French people, sharing a common ideal of liberty, equality and fraternity..." (CF, 2008).

Now, according to the dictionary of the language, "fraternity" is the friendship or affection between brothers or between those who treat each other as such (RAE, 2019). It also means "brotherhood", which refers to the relationship of kinship between brothers, intimate friendship or union of wills, correspondence between several things, league, alliance, or confederation between several people, allied or confederate people (RAE, 2019). Concepts such as "respect", "dignity", "equality", "solidarity" intervene, hence fraternity must be considered as a universal value and not as a localized or particularized characteristic, in such a way that its effects must permeate in all the actions and conduct of human beings, and in saying this it includes, of course, political activity and all that related to and derived from the public function of those who hold public power. Thus, fraternity also obliges politicians and rulers to be supportive, respectful and, incidentally, empathetic with all other people. Perhaps empathy is where all human beings should start, since by having a feeling of identification with other people it would be very difficult not to think about their problems and needs and, therefore, it would be unlikely not to take care of them. Perhaps what is needed is to generate or practice the ability to identify with others in order to understand their needs and, from there, to be able to carry out behaviors aimed at solving the problems of others or, at least, that the behaviors are not carried out with the purpose of harming or, in the extreme, to increase their misfortune.

Therefore, the other two values of democracy (liberty and equality) are not opposed to that of fraternity; on the contrary, they complement and become congruent with each other, since some of the concepts that are an integral part of fraternity affect some others that are analogous to liberty and equality, such as "respect" and "dignity". In reality, the value "fraternity" is not lost or confused in a tangle of moral or even religious concepts, but rather they reinforce each other.

Mexican political and social policy has not had an adequate and desirable application of this value, since it has been almost scorned even from its origins as a moral precept and as a revolutionary slogan, although in modern times it has been widely used, perhaps more for propagandistic or media purposes than for practical and realistic ones.

This has had an acute effect on society, which has led to the commission in the application of values such as honesty, solidarity, compassion, justice, responsibility, kindness, respect, loyalty, sincerity, love, discretion, dignity, altruism, modesty, etc. However, leaving aside these demagogic intentions of including fraternity in the official speeches, the true essence of its ideological content must be rescued, since it affects those ideals also contained in the other values of democracy (such as freedom, equality and even justice). The legitimate intention of fraternity is to sensitize and humanize humanity more and more, even if this sounds commonplace (or even official discourse, once again), about the other values and fundamental rights of people, without which it is not possible (or it becomes very complicated) to sustain a society. Democracy (and its characteristic components included) can be considered from two points of view: the eminently theoretical and the practical. Sometimes theoretical positions can become too utopian because of the separation that their definitions can represent with respect to their applicability in social reality, but this should not mean that the conceptual content of the concept in question should change to adapt to that reality, but rather that reality should be the one that adapts to the content of the concept. Otherwise, we would be facing a situation in which the concepts and ideas that should sustain a State cease to be a support to be modified and adapted to a system and a practice that could be corrupt. It is therefore important to review the extent to which fraternity can be considered as an integral part (specifically as

value) of democracy, or if it is only part of an elegant discourse coined with the purpose of making an impact in the media. This is because the political events that are the product of the actions of those who hold political power make us doubt that fraternity is an axiom that is truly applied in political (and in general in social) activity.

The existing relationship between the concepts "democracy" and "fraternity", beyond the obvious existing one and derived from the fact that the latter is a value of the former (that is, that "fraternity" is a species of the genus "democracy"), is given by virtue of the fact that both concepts appeal to ideas of freedom and equality, since, for example, one cannot be democratic without being free and egalitarian or without protecting these conditions, and one cannot be fraternal without protecting, respecting and practicing freedom and equality. The concept "fraternity", in its essence, contains in turn other concepts to safeguard coexistence, inclusion, dialogue, respect for the other, etc., all of them aspects that tend towards the protection and practice of freedoms and equality. Perhaps the most important meaning of fraternity is that people do not want to have greater advantages unless such advantages represent a real benefit for those who are in a worse situation. Maximizing the sum of benefits is an attitude that is encouraged by capitalist and neoliberal policies, whereas with fraternity (and with democracy) people do not want to benefit in an advantageous way unless such benefit promotes the interest of other people; in contrast, people whose actions are based on capitalism and neoliberal policies seek precisely the opposite: to obtain an advantageous benefit even at the expense of the interest of other people.

If we consider solidarity as an adherence of people to the causes or circumstances of other people, then we must consider the moral impact that this represents, such that some of the postulates on

social justice has application, since there is a certain responsibility of human beings with respect to others (provided that certain conditions exist), all of which implies a certain degree of solidarity practice (Rawls, 2004); therefore, with fraternity (and also with solidarity and, in general, with social justice) those people who are in a better political, social, economic, etc., circumstance are in a position to take advantage of that situation to obtain greater advantages as long as their conduct represents a benefit for the less fortunate, are in the disposition to take advantage of that situation to obtain greater advantages as long as their conduct represents a benefit for the less fortunate, while with capitalism and neoliberal policies it is the opposite: the more privileged the position and circumstances of the people, the only disposition they have is to take advantage of those advantages and to be able to increase and improve that privileged situation without caring that the actions derived from it are to the detriment of the less fortunate:

...the industrial revolution and the vigorous development of the capitalist economic culture that followed it brought with it the progressive dissolution of the old pre-industrial "demos", and in exchange, the exponential growth of one of its components: the urban wage laborers (the new "part-time slaves"). The capitalist dynamic was not only cumulative; it was also expropriatory: it tended to dispossess millions and millions of people of their traditional bases of social existence. (Domènech, 2013, p. 21)

On the other hand, democracy in its essence has an implication of competition, of struggle and clash between two or more positions, between various ideologies which, by their very nature and by their disparate origin, have as their own characteristic the establishment of certain limits and certain divisions between such ideological positions, which could be thought to be detrimental to the essential idea of "fraternity"; even in a democracy, the limits established by legality must be kept well in mind, and this implies the prohibition of individuals, institutions or governmental bodies to exceed them, since in a democracy the limits established by law are not to be exceeded.

If this were to happen, it would be an infringement of one of the foundations of democracy itself. However, fraternity should not mean the demolition of those democratic and legal barriers or limits, but should imply a certain degree of peace in human coexistence and in the democratic confrontation of the ideas that arise from that coexistence, which could occur if all people were willing to renounce a certain degree of what is considered a fair and strict requirement in order to place ourselves in a sphere of "fraternity".

### MEXICAN POLITICS AND DEMOCRACY

In Mexico, constitutionally, the people exercise their sovereignty through the powers of the Union and also through the powers of the states and Mexico City and establishes that the renewal of the legislative and executive powers will be carried out through free, authentic and periodic elections for which political parties have an important participation, although they are not the only means for a citizen to be elected to occupy an elected position, they are the most usual for the nomination of candidates. Likewise, this fundamental document refers very directly to the political activity of the Mexican citizen, so much so that even its own denomination is "political" Constitution, and throughout its text there are references to this human activity related to various topics of the social life of the country. Only as an example of the above can be mentioned the following (CPEUM, 2019):

I. Political institutions and internal forms of coexistence and political organization as one of the elements of the indigenous peoples, as well as the political-electoral rights of their citizens and the respect for political participation and representation according to their traditions and internal norms, social policies for the protection of their migrants, (article 2); II. Ideology based not only on the political regime but as a system of life in terms of a parameter of democracy in education, which should be tending to the independence of the indigenous peoples (article 2); II.

The establishment of inclusive and cross-cutting policies, the specialization in educational policy of some educational officials and the policies of inclusion and permanence in higher education as an obligation of federal and state authorities (article 3°); III. Public policies aimed at children (article 4°); IV. The prohibition of waiver, loss or impairment of political or civil rights with respect to employment contracts (article 5°); V. The public nature of the information in possession of the political parties, for the exercise of the right of access to information (Article 6); VI. The right to petition, which in political matters may only be exercised by the citizens of the republic (Article 8); VII. The right of association or assembly, which in political matters may only be exercised by citizens of the republic (Article 9); VIII. Political asylum (Article 11); IX. Public policies regarding the commission and prevention of crimes (Article 21); X. The prohibition of the exercise of freedom of worship for political purposes (Article 24). XI. National development planning for political democratization and social development policies (Article 26); XII. The prohibition of foreigners from interfering in the political affairs of the country (Article 33); XIII. The right of political parties and independent citizens to request the registration of candidacies for elected office and the right of the latter to take part in the political affairs of the country (Article 35); XIV. The character of political parties as entities of public interest, their purpose of promoting the participation of the people in democratic life, contributing to the integration of the organs of political representation and making possible the access of citizens to the exercise of public power, the prohibition to slander people by means of political propaganda, a system of means of challenge to guarantee and protect the political rights to vote, to be voted and to association (Article 41); XV. The proceeding of the impeachment trial (Article 109).

But it is not only the Constitution that is the document that embodies the

political activity of the members of the State, since also the secondary legislation makes reference to this aspect, for example, the General Law of Political Parties regulates "The basic guidelines for the integration of their directive bodies [refers to political parties], the nomination of their candidates, the conduct of their activities in a democratic manner...." (LGPP, 2014), it also states that political parties have as their purpose "... to promote the participation of the people in democratic life..." (LGPP, 2014, Article 3, paragraph 1), that they will promote "... civic values and democratic culture among children and adolescents..." (LGPP, 2014, article 3, paragraph 3), but also regarding political groups it says that "... they contribute to the development of democratic life and political culture, as well as to the creation of a better informed public opinion..." (LGPP, 2014, article 20), they must also conduct their activities and adjust their conduct "... to the principles of the democratic State..." (LGPP, 2014, article 25), and as for their propaganda, it must be to disseminate the "... democratic consolidation campaigns..." (LGPP, 2014, article 72, paragraph e).

As can be appreciated, the legislation does not directly provide for fraternity, perhaps because it is a concept that implies more a circumstance of a moral (or even religious) nature than of a legal nature, however, the moral affects the juridical, shaping it for its subsequent applicability. Perhaps for this reason fraternity as a democratic value has fallen into disuse in an eminently juridical and political environment, however, in essence it should not be left aside to practice politics, since one of the parameters that the politician must comply with is ethics:

What should a politician be like? Or better yet, how should politics be done? Initially it can be said that politics should be done with an unrestricted attachment to ethics; that this should be its main parameter and that its minimum postulates should be respected and exercised by whoever does politics - that is, by the politician-. (Ordóñez, 2014, p. 69).

However, the political and social reality indicates the existence of a different situation, when considering, for example, the frauds that have occurred in the exercise of public power in Mexico; Just as an example of this, it is enough to refer to the so-called "Estafa Maestra", through which the federal government used 128 ghost companies to divert millions of dollars in resources (Animal Político and Mexicanos Contra la Corrupción y la Impunidad, n/d), with this it is clear that the actions of those who hold public power in Mexico have not been adjusted to the parameters of fraternity and, consequently, what is theoretically, constitutionally and legally required to be a true democracy has not been fulfilled.

It is necessary that political and governmental activities adhere to the values that democracy proclaims, especially that of fraternity. It is indispensable that politics in Mexico be seen as an opportunity to exercise those democratic principles and values and to be able to be fraternal with other people. It is urgent that Mexican politics be animated by a feeling of willingness to do good to other people and also to fulfill the primary task of all those who hold public office: to serve the people. For this to be a reality, there must be a correspondence between the morally good purposes that the politician poses to the population and the means he/she uses to achieve not only those of a public nature, but also the personal ones that suffer from doubtful morality:

In the attainment of the goals that the politician sets for himself, goals that at least in discourse agree with the category of "good", there are many other factors that constitute an obstacle to the achievement of these goals, which can be solved by making use of other goals of lower rank or of less importance, but with a morally bad content; with this we have unfailingly one of the circumstances that lead to the means not being as "good" as the means themselves.

purposes that the politician has even legitimately posed to the population (Ordóñez, 2014, p. 71).

Capitalism is an economic and political system based on the private ownership of the means of production and on the free market which, in many ways, is incoherent and even contradictory to some democratic principles, for example, those that proclaim equal rights and, of course, fraternity. At present, the neoliberal policies that obey those capitalist interests have caused a distancing from the humanitarian (and, therefore, fraternal) sense that public service and the exercise of an office, both popularly elected and assigned, should have, in such a way that it has not only influenced the global and local economy, It has also affected the way people act in general, but even more so those in power in particular, by making them more ambitious with respect to public and economic power to the detriment of the fulfillment of their primary and substantive function of serving the people. It has even reached the extreme of disguising as democratic many actions of those who exercise Mexican politics, which in reality are acts aimed at satisfying those particular interests of a privileged class that wants to possess even more privileges thanks to the excessive ambition that these neoliberal and capitalist policies provoke. As Weber said, they live from politics instead of living for politics (Weber, 2004). Neoliberal and capitalist policies, due to the essence of their ideology, move away from the values of democracy, especially fraternity, especially considering that this last value has not been taken into account as freedom and equality have been. They also move away from the four cardinal virtues of which Plato spoke, since in Mexican politics the appetites are not moderated and the excessive use of the senses is not repressed, subjecting them to reason in order to procure the good of society and the State; on the contrary, they encourage them more and more to satisfy those vices and, consequently, to move away from fraternity and all that it entails to the detriment of what should be done in favor of society. Hence there are two

The first is attached to the canons of morality (i.e., the value of fraternity) and the second is far from it:

But since there are two other ways of becoming prince which cannot be attributed entirely to fortune or virtue, it is appropriate not to overlook them, although they are discussed at greater length in the discussion of republics. I refer, first, to the case in which one ascends to the principality by a path of perversities and crimes; and then, to the case in which one b e c o m e s prince by the favor of one's fellow citizens. (Machiavelli, 1989, p. 14)

There are two ways of conceiving ethics when it comes to applying it to the actions of politicians: 1) from the point of view of conviction and 2) from the perspective of responsibility (Weber, 2004, p. 67). According to the ethics of conviction it is necessary to act well but the result of this "good" action is left under the consideration of a supreme entity, so that in case the consequences of an action turn out to be bad, the one who executed it does not feel responsible for them and thinks that another entity is responsible, such as society, the system, luck, etc., whereas with the ethics of responsibility, people must act without losing sight of the consequences expected as a result of that action, so that all their own defects are considered and the executing subject is aware that people are not, by default, good, so that the consequences of their action that are reasonably foreseeable cannot be attributed to other people. According to some authors, the motto of 1789 ("Liberty, Equality, Fraternity") contained a

...essential statement of a philosophy of life (...) happiness is a human right and the pursuit of happiness is a universal human tendency (...) and to achieve happiness human beings have to be free, equal and fraternal. (Bauman, 2007).

Happiness, although it is an important

This eminently personal circumstance is strongly linked to the construction of favorable social conditions for its achievement by the same individuals that make up society, so that the pursuit of happiness, besides being a purely private activity, also constitutes a series of actions that must be verified in the public space, since it is not possible to be happy individually when the person is immersed in an unhappy society (Bauman, 2007). In this way, there are other concepts that contribute to the achievement of happiness, which are closely related to some personal attitudes that occur in people's daily lives, but which have a decisive impact on interpersonal relationships (whether between citizens or between citizens and politicians or rulers), such as avoiding indifference and overcoming enmity:

The call of fraternity must not only overcome the viscosity and impermeability of indifference. It must overcome enmity (...) and the key problem of the fulfillment of humanity is that of enlarging the "we", of embracing, in the earthly matri-patriotic relationship, each "ego alter" and of recognizing in it an "alter ego", that is, a human brother. (Morin and Kern, 1993, p. 178).

It is a matter of overcoming the social indifference that has been produced by decades of selfish and capitalist practices, in order to give a sense and a justification to the true attitude of responsibility and fraternity, so that the latter can be a positive value, but also a category of coexistence indispensable for a society immersed in capitalist policies to function properly. However, there are those who consider that fraternity strictly applied exceeds the legal (and desirable) limits established by democracy itself and that it can only have a useful application when extreme cases arise in which fraternity is "... the last plank of salvation in a situation of acute social crisis or acute political conflict..." (Orrego, 2007, pp. 133), since, he says, it is not a matter of

...something that is perceived as a political category

to operate on a continuous basis. Rather, it seems that, once the emergency is over, the fraternity ends again. Or perhaps the "cloistered" fraternities [referring to the fraternity that effectively operates and must operate within compacted social nuclei, such as the family or the members of a given social group, such as a state or a homeland] resurface with greater force, and the agonal aspect of politics begins again. (Orrego, 2007, pp. 133).

However, we must not lose sight of the fact that conflict is a circumstance inherent to democracy and also to politics, but it must be compatible with fraternity and not contrary to it, that is to say, it must develop under the protection of fraternity and not against it in order to avoid destroying or nullifying it. Sometimes it is better to express our personal ideas and positions in front (and with a certain degree of conflict) and contrary to those of the others, than just to limit ourselves to nodding all the time with the intention of not breaking the "fraternal balance". In this agonal aspect of politics is immersed -ineludibly- the concept of sovereignty, since all power (including, of course, public power) implies the existence of a tension between two elements, one that acts in a certain sense and another that resists in the opposite, and such a situation occurs in a democracy at the moment of making a decision by the majority principle -which is one of the democratic principles and also an instrument for decision making-, since the majority acts with its decision in an adverse sense to that in which the minorities act. Citizen sovereignty derived from democratic environments, which is the way to legitimize the validity of decisions, contrasts - for example - with the right to property (and, specifically, with the right to private property), so that the practice of politics with fraternal characteristics can be complex, even more so in a capitalist-mercantilist environment where the search for personal benefit is carried out to the detriment of the benefit of others, and the enjoyment of such benefits for some is concretized on the diminution of the benefits of others, since in the greater enjoyment of equality, the inequalities of the rest of the people are exacerbated.

Consequently, in an attempt to safeguard and guarantee the unity implied by fraternity, those who do not belong to the heart of the society that proclaims it are excluded. This is another agonal and antagonistic circumstance, since interpersonal relations (inter-citizen and inter-citizen-ruler) are sometimes sustained by the respect and guarantee of individuality and independence, and sometimes by the narrowness of the administrative link generated by a paternalistic and guaranteeing government:

The modifications in the different subsystems, their differentiation and autonomization, sometimes speak to us of anomie, of a weakening of the bonds of mutual relationship, of a lack of referents. The individual seems to live this situation in a paradoxical way: on the one hand, he seems to celebrate the conquest of spaces of independence and self-determination; on the other hand, he seems to need -in order to sustain that same freedom-, assurances, certainties, bonds at least as potential horizons, in the face of suffering, lack of work, violence or lack of meaning (Salvat, 2007, pp. 133-157). (Salvat, 2007, pp. 133-157).

The problem arises when this intervening government needs to make a more excessive and atypical use of the power it enjoys in order to be able to comply with the paternalistic protection that the citizen demands, but in contradiction to the individuality and independence that it requires on other occasions (or perhaps it is not because of the moment in which this occurs, but because of who it is applied to, or even a combination of both reasons), which generates an insurmountable incongruence derived from the tension between this individuality and the co-responsibility of mutual protection that all citizens have:

How could everyone feel as a brother of the other also in the public space once the tendencies described above are consolidating? Frater, that is, co-responsible for his situation and that of everyone else beyond himself? How would this be possible if we have more and more individuals (not to be confused with a person or a subject), and less and less

society? This theme of co-responsibility for the fate of others has historically been brought up to date by the consequences of the systematic violation of human rights (Salvat, 2007, pp. 133-157).

Therefore, for fraternity to be fully practiced as a democratic value in Mexican politics requires, more than political and institutional structures, an ideology in which these two situations of society (individuality and co-responsibility) can be reconciled in an environment in which citizens and rulers are immersed in a social environment and, consequently, are aware of it. That when the necessary political enmity emerges, it is not with qualities derived from ambition but from the need to improve the social environment through the discussion that generates new ideas, which in turn gives the possibility of making public decisions, so that the impassable limits in a discussion or in the exercise of politics are very clear, are well defined and we can speak of a necessary political enmity and of a fraternity as a category not only of democracy, but also of the *res publica*. This would also be an impulse so that the concept of fraternity is not of momentary application nor obeying individual interests and to avoid its practice only in extreme situations and encouraging it in the ordinary ones, in such a way that there would be a fraternity as a democratic value in the Mexican politics acting constitutionally and legally, but also in the moral level in all the actions of the population as well as of the rulers.

## CONCLUSIONS.

The concept of democracy in the Mexican constitutional regulation adopts two positions, one related to the legal system and the other as a system of life. The latter is in terms of the applicability in everything in which the citizen has contact, in every circumstance in which the activity of people has an interference, where the human being is related to another human being and has the need to interact, which in general is produced when being



inserted in a society. It should not be omitted that all rulers and all those who hold positions of power in a society

or who hold a public office, either by appointment or by appointment

or by election, are first of all citizens with all that the concept of citizen implies (political rights and obligations inherent to this quality). In the secondary juridical regulation, fraternity does not have an express codification, however, the concepts found refer to it directly, for example, freedom, equality, respect in general and also for the other, appreciation, dignity of the person, general interest of society, placing oneself above particular interests.

The concept of "fraternity" is a concept of humanism, cooperativism, solidarity, empathy and, finally, human rights, which implies humanism, cooperativism, solidarity, empathy and, finally, human rights. Although the concept of "fraternity" was not adequately developed due to various doctrinal and political circumstances, the fact is that, in essence, it is even more important than the other two concepts that make up the triad of democratic values, i.e., freedom and equality, since they are immersed in it. Beyond the legal level, the ethical and moral aspect is important, so it is also necessary to develop the ability to put ourselves in the place of others in order to avoid the ambitious and selfish individualism caused by capitalist policies and to stimulate the ability of people to avoid the desire to have greater advantages, unless such advantages represent a benefit in real terms to other people who are in a worse situation.

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