

Ethical–normative possibilities of citizenship and the idea of freedom

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Abstract: *The analysis focuses on the idea of freedom, the concept of citizenship and the experience of the civic as guiding categories for the foundation of a proposal for normative reconstruction of society. The working hypothesis states that the reconstruction of society will be ethically oriented, insofar as citizenship are resignificated by an idea of freedom that is understood in their individual, reflexive and social dimensions. The tension provided by this idea of freedom positions ethics, insofar as a being, as a guideline of the normative, insofar as a duty. As a result, the civic experience will be constituted as a contextual framework where individuals recognize each other and expand their understanding of those vital problems that concern them as citizens who interact horizontally, respecting the purpose of the subject itself and its contribution and social relevance.*

Keywords: *Citizenship, Freedom, Ethics, Normativity, Resignification.*

I. Introduction

In every democratic order, the social aspect is given by individuals, who exhibit certain behaviors when interacting with others in public and private parameters. For its part, the political aspect is about the representativeness and legitimacy of the decisions taken in the conduct of society. And while the social and political can be analyzed separately, it seems to us that this partition is rather theoretical. It is in citizen practice where a common conceptual scheme is distinguished that tenses and guides the democratic order and provides possibilities for social reconstruction.

In the context of civil society, this citizen practice could be defined according to an intersubjective rationality and the discursive participation of individuals (Habermas, 1985, 1993); according to the relation of power, context and conflict (Foucault, 2000, 2001); in relation to its limits and borders (Keane, 1992), or in terms of its structure and organization (Walzer, 1998). However, if Foucaultian contextualism and the discovery of its own civic *ethos* is not based on a principle of freedom, the concept of citizenship can lead to a weak notion, or otherwise, in the ascription to a political theory – in this case, one based on power – that would not be distinguished from definitions covered by other traditions (Cf. Walzer, 1997). Likewise, discursive ethics, by prioritizing the normative aspects over the ethical values of a particular citizenry, can sin of contextual insensitivity. And since this is a procedural definition that serves democratic-liberal objectives, the elimination of freedoms exposes the impossibility of civil society to sustain voluntariness in the interaction of subjects (Flyvbjerg, 2012). As a consequence, individuals may be left at the mercy of definitions coming not from ethics, but from law and political theory – or what is the same to say, at the mercy of definitions based on appearances and conventions (Gayet-Viaud, 2015).

For its part, the possibility of citizenship being defined extrinsically, for example, limits with the state, imposes limits on the expression of human complexity and the pluralism that characterizes civil society; this pluralism is limited by the restructuring of the state with reference to the demands of citizenship and by the definition of the civic with reference to the state. What would be required in these circumstances is to broaden the definition towards a reflective horizon in which individuals develop citizen experiences within a democratic institution (Keane, 1998) and not only in a scenario of relativism-prone scenarios (Walzer, 1997).

If the aspiration is to develop a proposal that addresses the dialogue between contextual elements and internal aspects to the individual, then the inquiry into the possibilities of reconstruction of society should be discussed around three categories that we consider nodal. Namely, the idea of freedom, the concept of citizenship and the experience of the civic. *A priori*, according to the prevailing idea of freedom, citizenship will correspond to one or another area of action, public or private, and will be interpreted individually or collectively. At this point, civic experience refers to everything that is combined in a certain type of citizenship and to the definitions that the individual makes as a self-determined subject, who reflects on himself and others, and who is able to develop a type of social belonging through which to recognize the importance of interaction with others.¹

¹Given the criticism of the theoretical and practical appropriation observed in these interpretations, the idea of freedom that guides our reflection has as reference the individual and the ethic-normativity duality of their

The conjunction of these categories will allow us to understand and guide the ways in which individuals interact in a social and political space characterized as civic experience. Given our original intuition, in the societies of liberal democracy this space is owned by an idea of negative freedom, which defines the individual as a citizen if their development possibilities are not compromised by resistance from other individuals; in this type of societies, the citizen interacts with others in order to meet their own needs based on a will not mediated extrinsically. We propose that this scenario can be ethically redefined with a resignification of the concept of citizenship based on the idea of freedom. In this way, the category of citizenship will move from an atomistic argument to another of a social nature, aspiring to reach a time when the definition of citizenship implies objectives that are both intrinsically and extrinsically. And it is for the achievement of these objectives, that the individual will need the participation of others not instrumentally, but reciprocally. As a result, the concept of citizenship that has been resigned from the ethics provided by the idea of freedom, may contain the diversity of interpretations of legal-legal, global, intercultural and ethical-normative order –whose systematization, however, will not be worked in these lines–, so that individuals can broaden their understanding of those vital problems that concern them as citizens who relate horizontally.

II. Presenting the problem

In the origin of the social, the *polis* is the place where citizens decide by deliberation, what meanings they will give to the ideas that will guide their public and private interactions, which makes the city the nerve center where the individual and the house they subsist thanks to the political order that this delivery.² Civic experience reveals a guiding power regarding how stable the structure of society can be: the notion of democracy, the assumption of rights and duties in the *polis* and the political conception of shared life, would be keys that illustrate the role of the citizen subject in the social future and whose work can be interpreted in both legal-legal terms, such as ethical morals.

For this reason we say that citizenship is a concept that can be studied in its social and political dimensions, by connecting with qualities related to the individual. However, if from the Aristotelian *politike koinonia*, even the intentions of understanding civil society as the protagonist of the shared definitions of contemporary society (Jeffrey, Staeheli and Marshall, 2018), the civic work has been semantically enriched, we also observe in it the predominance of a political-reductionist interpretation that circumscribes its definition and scope to the guidelines posed from a particular theory or perspective and restricting the possibilities of a civic *ethos* as a guide for the construction of the social. Therefore, the choice of this treatment is based on the fact that in the essence of the civic it has remained the claim to describe the ability of a political community to organize, regardless of the specific direction of state power (Calhoun, 1993).

When inquiring into the budgets that guide citizen action, the value of individual freedom is positioned as a factor of predominance over other values that can be conceived in societal terms. With this personal value,

interaction with others (Honneth, 2014). For an interpretation of the idea of freedom with reference to political traditions, see Reyes, 2019a.

²Aristotle, *Politics*, I, 1, 1252a1.

different principles are defined to those that would be defined in a society guided by a sense of belonging or where spaces for participation are provided. We mean that individual freedom gives a different meaning to that provided by a type of reflective and social freedom, in terms of the meanings that are built on identity, the relationship with other subjects and the way in which it contributes to the conformation of the social (Dahlgren, 2006). Likewise, individual freedom provides a direction and a regulatory framework that places the subject as the main protagonist of its future, as opposed to positions that appeal for a correspondence between it and the context in which it is situated. We do not ignore this, the complexity of the relationship between individuals who exercise different roles in their social interaction; more precisely, we recognize the undeniable link between the consideration of individual freedom and the consideration of how represented they are, morally and legally.

However, we have observed that as a result of a negative interpretation of individual freedom, the concept of citizenship has derived from a generic-naturalist conception of an Aristotelian nature, to a theoretical and practical appropriation unilaterally promoted by the political dimension of a particular ideology. From this appropriation arises a type of citizenship in which “a tendency to establish norms of association that respond to the principles indicated by a theory predominates” (Reyes, 2019b: 28). A theory that seen as externality, defines citizenship as an extrinsic category to the individual and to this as a subject who lives in society watching because in his interaction with others, he can meet the needs of his natural movements, without counting on it, with restrictions outside the will. This Hobbesian conception of citizenship, based on an idea of freedom as non-interference, coincides with an individual who exhibits a preference to conceive of others as potentially opposing individuals and with the capacity to restrict their possibilities of development and fulfillment of objectives. We refer to an individual who performs his actions based on a judgment about what happens at the specific moment in which he performs them, guided by how advantageous the result of such a trial is (Hobbes, 1987).

If the assumption of citizenship is determined by individual objectives that do not have external oppositions, other than the will of the subject, the conditions that are guarantors of a legal citizenship will aim to observe the public media, the external to the will of the subject, without meddling in the private world. And this coincides with the constitution of a minimum standard of rationality based on the law. But at the same time, we observe that the type of individual freedom based on non-interference has reduced in the subjects the expression of a capacity to discuss matters of shared interest. This harms the legitimacy of itself that a society carries out, while it deals with matters that concern it (Parsons, 1983). And in terms of the structure and organization of civil society with this assumption of citizenship, it is possible to notice how citizenship is understood as the institutional incarnation of negative freedom (Cf. Chambers and Kopstein, 2008).

This finding problematizes the possibilities for the individual to determine himself, by not considering negative freedom as the exclusive reference for citizen interaction. So, if with a negative freedom, citizenship is understood as the establishment of certain duties and the guarantee of certain rights, what kind of citizenship is defined by the incorporation of those relational aspects not legally mediated?

In this frame of reference, the transition from a notion of atomized citizenship towards a relational citizenship and based on a type of freedom other than the negative one, is understood from a modern reading of the Hegelian ethics. Modern, in the sense that it is no longer in the figure of the state where the individual finds exclusively the source of a respectful bonding and the guarantee of the ethical spirit as a substantial will that is revealed (Hegel, 1988: 318, § 257). If from the negative freedom the assurances that the independent individuals receive for their particular interests are highlighted, the same does not happen in relation to the common interests. The ethical aspiration of this transition involves a recognition that has a normative potential. This potential develops as individuals experience a certain type of freedom and consequent attachment to a defined citizenship both intrinsically and extrinsically. In this line, an autonomy not anchored to the context where the interaction is located, would correspond to a form of minimal recognition, which is treated in a positive sense, belongs to the field of personal relationships, and which in terms of contempt, is presented in the form of violence (Honneth, 1997). Therefore, while the state loses its universality in comparison to civil society, citizen experience makes visible the current social problems (Morales, 2017).

And if with Hegel, a second stage of recognition corresponds to the law, it is through citizen experience that the individual will be able to see their identity confirmed as a differentiated self and holder of particular interests. But given the resistance provided since the exercise of a negative freedom, in this confirmation the subject's awareness as a social actor is limited. Therefore, to carry out their practices in society, the subject must know how these practices are known to others. And at the same time, it must be able to control the effects they have on the behavior of their co-actors: "to be able to "control the behavior of others", an actor must already know the meaning attributed to his own behavior in the practical situation by the occasional interaction partners" (Honneth, 1997: 93).

Given a citizenship defined in purely legal terms, the recognition that can be identified in the interaction would be of a strategic type, since in the affirmation of himself, the individual is subjected in his intentions of participation and civic association, to the influence of liberal order guidelines. As a consequence, civil society discourse is severely unprotected, observing in the exercise of citizenship a relational capacity that empowers the individual to instrumentalize others (Cf. Lane, 2010).

We refer to the fact that, even in consideration of the existence of other subjects, the behavior is guided by the possible consequences on the individual who expresses it and not by the impacts that such behavior may have on others. Therefore, a nodal aspect in the provision of new spaces for civic exercise and forging a different type of freedom to that indicated, is to redefine the conditions by which the subject understands guaranteed self-determination. This process extends the limits of the merely egocentric will towards the verification of the existence of other individuals. In addition, it places the individual in action systems other than the one protected by the satisfaction of their own natural needs. Within these new limits, the individual assumes a responsibility based on reflection and the incorporation of horizontality in the relationship established with others. Then, citizenship is legitimized, no longer as a guarantee of non-interference in the achievement of egocentric

objectives, but as a bidirectional relationship that may contain other spheres of action other than personal relationships.

III. Deepening the problem

The influence that the idea of predominant freedom exerts on the civic manifestation of the social nature of people, results in the domain of particular values that are characteristic of atomized individual freedom. With this, the structure of a society can act as a generality that is imposed on life forms on a personal level (Durkheim, 2018). At this point, a question could be whether civility is one of the values present in liberal democracy societies. For now, there are certain values whose claim of self-realization indicates the spheres that constitute society and what principles are relevant to each of them. If each sphere is the incarnation or representation of a value, this value would indicate which principles correspond to each one, so that if in modern society the values merge into individual freedom³, then, in the case of citizen expressions, the individual and collective is subject to the capacity that this atomized individual freedom imprints on each of the subjects. We understand that this represents the predominance of an idea of negative individual freedom that leads to a meager civic expression and to limit the possibilities of social and political development in ethical terms. Now, in the future of an ethically oriented citizenship, what is the degree of understanding of freedom in each of the institutions that guarantee self-realization? Is this degree of understanding unique in society as a whole?

On the one hand, the interpretation of human nature affirms the role of man in the future of the world and restructures it as a purely political scenario. In this scenario, the ultimate goal of the ruler's and the ruler's actions is the common good pursued. But so too, the state arises as a result of this alteration of nature, as an artificial phenomenon articulated by man to model human action based on the needs and desires that arise in this process (Machiavelli, 1998). This means that human nature is interpreted more by what you want to achieve with it than by the understanding of man himself.

In this case, the individual's actions will be defined externally, according to the values that are more firmly positioned in society. The normative aspect of this position indicates that the subject is a citizen as long as it adapts to the values that in social reality acquire greater representativeness. The inner world of the subject, their plans, desires and needs are modeled from the outside, but they cannot replicate the influence by orienting society's values towards a reality that is different from that posed in terms of the values that are maintained. The ethnicity that in principle welcomes the regulations, is in a legal citizenship, contained by duty. This, with the sustenance that provides a negative freedom, leads the subject *to have to be* a citizen in order to interact in a certain way with others. Thus, if the definition of citizenship is made from the legal level, it would be observed as a solipsist; the individual will seek to determine himself without considering as valid and necessary for himself and for others, the purposes of these.

³Freedom that manifests itself in a multiplicity of meanings, so that "each constitutive sphere of our society embodies a certain aspect of our experience of individual freedom" (Honneth, 2014: 10).

In this sense, the fact that in a negative conception of freedom, ethnicity is contained in the normative level, would be nothing other than the legitimacy of the legal as a reference in the constitution of the civic. That is, the legitimacy of the legal would be the threshold from which one subject is recognized by another in their social interaction. But this does not mean that the normative should be suppressed in favor of an ethical exaltation that risks being irrational. Ethics as a *being* must contain and guide *duty*. Therefore, the meaning of the proposal is not the mere adaptation of normative principles, but the inquiry into its content and the evaluation of how rational and justified are in accordance with social reality. At this point, the criticism based on the ethics forged in the interaction of individuals in their spheres of public and private action, implies on the one hand interpreting the current reality and its practical potentialities, and on the other, it raises possibilities of building a desired state that combines duty and want. An act that is expressed as an *ethos* that makes visible the set of practices and obligations conducive to the moral development of individuals. We believe that in this way you can verify the rationality of the citizen individual, both in their self-determination –in relation to their dreams, hopes and fears–, and in their relationship with others.

With this argument, recognition is positioned as guarantor not only of the realization of individual freedom in interaction with others, but also allows ethics to be established as a guide of duty, by granting the subject the task of configuring the moral aspects in the interaction. Does this mean that morality is relative? We propose that it is subjectively experienced and intersubjectively oriented, so that the moral continuity that every rational institution guarantees finds its impulse in the ability of individuals to *provide* guidelines on the prudential nature of their choices. In this regard, a category of citizenship other than legal –but that contains it– shows us the existence of three types of morals. First, an old moral, typical of past generations and therefore, not necessarily updated. Then, a new and innovative moral, related to the circumstances that are projected but not yet happening and that depend for its realization, on the advances that are generated in the different branches of knowledge. And finally, a *provisional* moral; a moral that guides actions in daily life, stressing it according to the definitions that individuals perform in their interactions. The characterization of these three types of morality acquires greater value when describing the new tasks that have social, moral and political philosophy in a scenario where knowledge about the limits of citizenship is determined by a negative conception of freedom. It is here that it is interesting to reach an ethical moment that provides the necessary rational confidence in the relational capacities of the individual and achieve the constitution of a citizenship that is located between theory and praxis.⁴

Therefore, it is required that the limits of recognition be extended to all those who participate in the affirmation of the citizen individual, considering, however, that each one can satisfy their need for autonomy and self-determination (Honneth, 1997). With this interaction you can respond to moral inheritance differently from that given in an atomistic way. Different in the sense that the processes of definition and action in society are not

⁴We refer to the provisional moral that described in Domingo (2017), who following Descartes (1974) and then Gadamer (1981, 1991), inquire into the role it has in the social future, the action of planning the future. Although in its approach, this work is confined to science, situating it as an obligation of the state, we apply it to the question regarding the kind of moral to work on the action plan for the future from the citizen's perspective.

only specific to the individual that experiences them, but also related to the interaction with other individuals that are recognized as collaborators in the achievement of rationally defined objectives. And in this, the complexity of achieving these objectives forces the individual to consider the participation of those who exercise different, but complementary, social roles.

Because the chances of becoming deconstructors subjects in their social interaction from a resignificated citizenship, inherited involves the assumption of a general responsibility assigned itself to fulfill the objectives. And at the same time, this responsibility is assigned from the externality. Upon receiving the moral inheritance, the citizen reflects on legal respect of a legal citizenship and also appreciates the recognition for its social value; evaluates the contributions of other individuals to achieve socially shared objectives (Basaure, 2016). Then, a moment arises in which “only intersubjective interaction in discourse enables the kind of rational self-control that constitutes the innermost core of [a reflexive freedom]” (Honneth, 2014: 64).

IV. Possibilities after the problem

As a counterargument, it could be argued that “the rights and freedoms of the individual are not inherent in the nature of the individual as such” and that being the owner of these and those “has been superimposed by society” (Durkheim, 2006: 74). However, we recognize in the individual a reflective quality that draws new limits on their idea of freedom. The individual, when interacting no longer with another depending on the resistance he experiences, but with himself in attending to the nature of his needs and particular objectives, legitimizes a will that is self-regulating and empowers him to abide by the law that he himself it has been given. With this Rousseauian argument, the concept of freedom is redefined to transform it into a quality inherent to the human being; freedom is part of its essence and is therefore irrevocable, with which man is in the exercise of his freedom a being of good and that in order to achieve his desires he does not need to commit deception, but on the contrary, it is necessary that meet with others to achieve the common good (Rousseau, 1988). The importance of this reflexive freedom lies in the understanding of the role of relationships between men in the configuration of the social order and the power that exists in them to agree on the means and ends of human behavior (Vergara, 2012). However, against the risks that the alienation of the individual to citizen sovereignty do not guarantee a sustenance for your own individuality, the reflection brought to the civic experience must imply that “self-government cannot be reduced to a power exercised only by a part of the political body, but rather is inherent to all members of society” (Reyes, 2019a: 91). It is in this sense that the final step towards social freedom is the possibility that each individual has the validity and participation of others to achieve their own objectives, developing this process from intersubjectivity.

If, from the predominance of the political component of an ideology, collaboration can be misunderstood as an instrument for purposes that encompass the individual, the reference to recognition is not only understood as the attribution to a conception of the human being as a naturally relational subject, but which includes the acceptance of different positions that are based on the search for consensus and the search for power (Cf. Flyvbjerg, 2012; Honneth, 2014). One of the pillars is the presentation of the human being as a unified subject

that expresses itself in diversity; as a being that from the division as a means, reaches a higher unified end, not remaining his way of relating to others or his work in the world, consecrated to a unique and taxative posture. There would be an original self that expresses itself, but not because it is, it is atomist, but it is co-constructed in the interaction with other individual expressions (Honneth, 1997).

In this co-construction we find a redefinition of the civic as a field in which the subject can reach a higher and fuller expression of his social nature thanks to the instances in which he is legitimized as a being that can be exposed to the environment and that shapes its work from this and with the participation of others. And it is in this process that the subject recognizes himself and understands the possession of a human nature common to all (Taylor, 2014). But if, from a post-Hegelian interpretation, social reality is analyzed according to criteria of equality, we understand that attributing it only leads to a conception of freedom in individual terms, as a product of the atomization of the individual's expressions in public space (Taylor, 1990; Gracia, 2011).

On the other hand, if the premise of a normative proposal is based on the intersubjective nature of social reality that is ethically oriented, the identity forge of the subject who becomes a citizen in the interaction with others is understood as a process of psychological and social roots, in which people must, at some point in their civic develop, to be objectify to propitiate an intersubjective identity. Thus, it is observed in the civic experience an identity that is constructed from opposites, each of these being the individuals who exchange their roles in the dialectic objectification-subjectivation; there would be a self as a subject and a self as an *other-different-to-self* (Mead, 1991). Identity, when constructed from intersubjectivity, is a socially legitimate practice that, as a subjective aspect, is objectified in the interaction with others, allowing the modification of behavior by virtue of social reality and, specifically, depending on what happens in the societal sphere where the interaction takes place (Brewer y Gardner, 1996; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy y Flament, 1971).⁵

The inconvenience arises when we ask about the ultimate reality of individuals in their belonging and social interaction. Previously, we have observed that the influence exerted on the subjective world of each individual, results in the prevalence of external factors that determine the future of people in different ways to the social way that is inherent to each of them. With this, the citizen exercise is postponed and with it, the ideals of communion, to give way to a commonality between, for example, globalization, the financial economy and the regimes that delimit and restrict individual action in social changes. If in the provision of recognition instances, the civic is located below these factors that act from externality, it is because in the theory the granting of power by citizens to these artificial factors has been established –artificial, but real, as long as they have been created by the human being.

A position based on the ethical-nodal quality of civic experience implies that citizens can effectively grant some power so that aspects of life in common are controlled from externality, but without losing their discursive potential, the provision of recognition and the generation of spaces for discussion and regulations beyond formal

⁵From psychology, a link has been observed between the behavior of individuals and the characteristics of the sociocultural reality in which they operate (Berry, 1997) and how external influences facilitate the generation of different behaviors based on belonging and not belonging to a given social group (Blake and Mouton, 1962; Sherif and Sherif, 1953).

politics. The main argument for this is born with the observation in practical experience and with empirical knowledge, of the contribution that those external factors make to the achievement of the general objectives set by the individuals. We note that if, on the one hand, the impulse of tradition in the political dialectic is conceived as an official theory that although it does not have the social reality on its side, it does have moral reason (Honneth, 2014: 15), on the other hand, we warn that the political dialectic unilaterally defines morality, singularizing it. We resume, then, the question for a provisional, flexible and contextual moral; a moral situated and ethically normative. If from the predominance of an individual freedom, society is understood as a sum of individuals, from a relational matrix where individual, reflexive and social freedoms are combined, society is considered as a unified and superordinate whole to its constituent parts.⁶Therefore, in the search for the convergence between moral reason and social reality, the authority of the individual as a citizen, is established as a central figure in social becoming by presenting himself as the holder of an identity constituted from self-determination, from his work in society and according to the relationship it develops with others in this action (Giusti, 2012). With this knowledge, the civic can be constituted as a socially legitimate practice and provide sustenance for citizens to acquire institutionality as a field of knowledge and rational expressions and guarantors of freedoms (Löwith, 2008). The Hegelian appreciation described is that the philosophical transformation that is generated as a result of the change in the circumstances of society is resumed; conditions that invite to attend to the need of a certain moral continuity with ascription to the change, while all contextualized morals are susceptible of becoming an old moral that is inherited in a certain way, according to the predominance of apparatus and regimes, or according to the prevalence of a certain *ethos* that is built thanks to the self-determination of individuals in and with society. And it is at the core of a model of argumentation about the ethical tension and orientation that is provided from the horizontality of citizenship, that we find the foundations of a provisional moral theory of citizen influence and the basis for a self-defined, flexible and dialogic civil society (Reyes, 2019b). In this sense, based on the distinction between institution as a social and apparatus as legal aspect, the positioning of the civic as a normative axis refers to the flexibility that is recognized in the action systems, while being a citizen implies that social and political issues can be otherwise (Honneth, 2014; Cortina and Martínez, 2015). And with the *encounter* between social and personal structures, between the (relatively) stable and the (continually) changing, this *other way in which matters are*, refers to the type of responsibility to be assumed.

Eventually, a subject whose freedom is interpreted in negative terms may be responsible for the origin of social and political phenomena, for the phenomena themselves and for their future implications, but their responsibility will be limited by the guidelines of non-interference, committing in this way, the deployment of opportunities for the reconstruction of society. At the same way, any legal framework could attend to these retrospective, respective and prospective dimensions of responsibility, but always as a representation of a citizenship based on

⁶We rely on the idea that “it is necessary to study not only isolated parts and processes, but also to solve the decisive problems found in the organization and the order that unify them, resulting from the dynamic interaction of parts and that make their behavior different, when they are studied in isolation or within the whole” (Bertalanffy, 2018: 31).

the notion of freedom that each one has. Therefore, the responsibility that can be reached with a social freedom does not only translate into overcoming the interference in the individual work, but in the recovery of the human root of the democratic order, in the careful observation of the here and now citizen and in the order for the future of the subjects.

V. Brief conclusion

The approach of the budgets of a citizenship that is resignified, requires a continuous deepening in its quality as a legal construct that defines civic action as a relationship between the individual and the state. Accordingly, the individual will be effectively a citizen to the extent that their options are represented in a political apparatus or as long as they can meet certain requirements given extrinsically. And this interpretation of citizenship will be legal, being its main sphere of action, formal policy. But when a recognition is not mediated that manifests itself in other planes than the legal one, the consideration of the other individual will be determined by a respect limited to the law, so that in the face of the non-guarantee of reciprocity, the interaction in the field of personal relationships it will be susceptible to instrumentalization. In this case, the political apparatus can become a source of contempt that motivates social confrontation.

In another interpretation, citizenship understood as a construct defined according to a criterion of horizontality, as a relationship between individuals who interact in a given field and whose constitutive aspects are established according to the ways of being and doing of the subjects in question, will have as key budgets participation, self-realization and the notion of how the civic arises from “the synergy between the social and the political; of the complementarity between the collective -the intersubjective- and the decisions that are made for the optimal conduction of the space to which it belongs -for example, the polis” (Reyes, 2019c). This category of citizenship, which we adjective as *horizontal*, does not aim to eliminate legal citizenship, but rather to contain it. It is in the conjunction of the areas of political action of public life, personal relationships and economic action (Honneth, 2014), that citizenship based on both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of the individual, will allow him to opt for greater possibilities of self-affirmation and of interaction with others.

Ethics, as a practical philosophy, would prioritize the citizen subject from the assumption that “there is a moral that serves as a common reference for people and that it is from it that the individual, by virtue of their personal experiences, develop a subjective moral ”(Reyes, 2019a: 98). A moral that, not being radically external or purely objective, stresses and orients relationships in every sphere of action, without this translating into an impersonal morality or the assumption of an atomized responsibility. And in this, the reciprocal recognition is conceived as a link that is natural and at the same time historical, upon which the emphasis given to the democratic relationship and the sense in terms of the meaning and direction of civic responsibility will depend.

As a route from an individual freedom to a freedom of social order is conformed, the concept of citizenship can effectively become the guiding nucleus of the civic act performed by the subject, being the main contribution of this resignification, the affirmation of horizontality as guarantor of the conditions for self-realization and intersubjective recognition of individuals.

Then, from the observation of social and political institutions and from the possibilities of achieving general objectives in interaction with others, individuals will be able to understand to a greater extent those vital problems that concern them as citizens who relate horizontally, being subject to their respect not only the purpose of the subject itself, but also its contribution and social relevance⁷.

In sum, the positioning of the civic as the ethical core of societies will be substantive as individuals experience the freedom to interact and co-construct an individual and collective identity. It is necessary to have a tension that directs them towards the manifestation of their capacity to express and know through reason, the issues of public-shared order that correspond to them. And in turn, there is a need for a space manifest this attribute. The normative ideal of this space conceived as civil society and the theoretical and contextual framework suitable for its gestation and improvement, are nodal aspects in this respect.

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⁷In our analysis, his contribution and social relevance as a civic actor in full right to achieve a social welfare that contains individual freedoms and participation in the formation of identity, (Marshall, 1997).

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