

# Emotions and Society in Difficult Times



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Edited by

Adrian Scribano

and Juan A. Roche Cárcel

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# INTRODUCTION

## EMOTIONS AND PANDEMIC

ADRIÁN SCRIBANO

AND JUAN A. ROCHE CÁRCEL

This book explores how emotions have been modified in various areas of the planet since the COVID19 pandemic, taking as a horizon of reflection the contributions of the sociology of emotions, taking them from a multi-paradigmatic perspective.

From the classic reflections of Mauss on the “techniques of the body” to the biopolitics of Foucault, up to the present state of studies, explorations of the human body as the centre of processes for production and reproduction of society have been institutionalized in the social sciences.

There are diverse ways to systematize the theoretical orientations on which the studies of the body/emotions are based. A possible one, without intent of exhaustiveness, is the following: a) a line of work connected to Foucault and his concepts of control, discipline, and technologies of the self; b) an approach connected to Bourdieu and his notions of habitus, body hexis, and social fields; c) a set of investigations in the field of biopolitics referring to Esposito and Agamben on the one hand, and to Negri and Hardt on the other; and d) the investigations that, from a post-colonial vision, take up corporality on a track toward anti-hegemonic thought.

A different perspective toward understanding the theoretical traditions that usually support the studies in this field of inquiry is to turn to the classic authors on the theme: Nietzsche, Merleau-Ponty, Spinoza, and Marx. An additional view is gained in the presence of contemporary authors of sociology such as Goffman, Simmel and Elias, from the philosophy of Derrida, Butler and Deleuze, or the psychoanalysis of Freud, Lacan, and Žižek.

From another perspective, it is necessary to also indicate what Lisa Blackman and Mike Featherstone have stated. As publishers of *Body and Society*, they have emphasized the need to repair the multiple connections between life and affects:

“In our role as editors, we have identified a number of emergent themes that are shaping the field, and these include a renewed interest in relation to life and affect across the social sciences and humanities. The paradigms of both life and affect break down the distinction between humans and other life forms, as we find in various forms of vitalism (Bergson, Deleuze, Massumi) and echo in debates across the biological and ‘environmental’ sciences (Varela, Oyama, Lewontin, Margulis, Rose). This is a new post-humanism that examines our communality with other forms of creaturely life and companion species (Haraway), and the need for a non-anthropocentric ethics (Derrida). The focus upon life recognizes the governance and regulation of bodies (biopolitics), as well as investments across diverse practices (media, consumer, biotechnological) in both the materiality and immateriality of bodies as biocapital and biomedica (code, information)” (Blackman and Featherstone 2010: 3).

As is often seen in Latin America, as well as in other regions of the world, body(ies) and society(ies) are systematic objects of research where affectivity and sensibilities are strongly present.

Along the same lines, social studies regarding the emotions have also been the object of diverse treatments, from Darwin through Sartre and arriving at the proposals of Collins, Hochschild, Kemper and/or Illouz, just to mention a few of their best-known reference points.

Smith and Schneider (2009) maintain that the numerous theories on emotions can be grouped within a tripartite classification: determinism, social constructionism, and social interaction.

Gross and Barrett (2011), with the intent to evaluate the differences of perspective on the “generation” and/or “regulation” of emotions, classify current perspectives for studying emotions into four broad areas: models of basic emotions, evaluative models, models of psychological construction, and models of social construction.

Another way to inquire about emotions is found in the neurosciences. There are also different ways of understanding neurosciences, such as neuroanthropology, as the result of a cross between the humanities and the sciences. Domínguez Duque, Turner, Douglas Lewis and Egan describe this diversity as follows:

“The first generation of cultural neuroscience studies has yielded a number of important insights. First, culture seems to have a pervasive effect on all levels and dimensions of neural activity: from low-level perceptual (Gutchess et al., 2006; Goh et al., 2007; Sui and Han, 2007) and attentional (Hedden et al., 2008) processes to high-level cognitive, affective and social functions including language (Shaywitz et al., 1998; Paulesu et al., 2000; Temple et al., 2003; Mechelli et al., 2004; Siok et al., 2004, 2008; Tan et al., 2005; Hoeft et al., 2007), music (Morrison et al., 2003; Nan et al., 2006,

2008), mental calculation (Tang et al., 2006), emotions (Chiao et al., 2008), mental attribution (Kobayashi et al., 2006, 2007) and self-knowledge and awareness (Zhu et al., 2007; Han et al., 2008; Chiao et al., 2009; Chiao et al., 2008)” (Dominguez Duque et al. 2010, 138).

From the perspective of Warren TenHouten, who inaugurated and named the subfield of *socioneurology* in 1972, the current situation of disciplines connecting the brain, emotions and society can be understood as follows:

“The neurosciences chiefly concern the brain and central nervous system, and investigate the interrelationships between mind and brain. Social neuroscience adds a third level of analysis, as it “addresses fundamental questions about the mind and its dynamic interaction with the biological systems of the brain and the social world”(Cacioppo and Berntson 2002, p. 3, emphasis added). These three levels of analysis - of mind, brain, and the social world - also characterize the emerging interdisciplinary fields of *neuropolitics* (Connolly 2002; Vander Valk 2012), *neuroeconomics* (Glimcher et al. 2009), *neuroanthropology* (Laughlin and d'Aquili 1974; Lende and Downey 2012), and *neurosociology* (TenHouten 1997, 1999, 2013; Franks 2010; Franks and Turner 2013; Kalkhoff et al. 2012; Verweij et al. 2015). Relationships among the phenomena of mind, brain, and society, and the scientific disciplines that address them, are illustrated in figure 1. Social neuroscience, neurosociology, neuroanthropology, neuroeconomics, and neuropolitics share the central location in this figure, as their common topic spans mind, brain, and society” (TenHouten 2017, 1).

As can be seen in Table 1, McColl-Kennedy and his colleagues have recently offered an interesting classification of theories of emotions systematized according to their explanation of what stimulates these emotions or how they are regulated.

In the synthesized analytical framework, it is possible to inscribe the set of inquiries that this book proposes in its intention to address the situation of emotions in the context of a pandemic.

The expansion of COVID-19 on a planetary scale, the WHO declaration of said process as a pandemic, and the measures taken by States for “defending” their citizens from death, made 2020 a year that we experienced as “historic”, special, complex, strange, of a peculiar cruelty and with strong and unpredictable social, cultural, economic, environmental and political consequences that affected especially the bodies and emotions.

**Table 1: Summary of key emotion theories (McColl-Kennedy et al. 2017, 249)**

	<b>Theory</b>	<b>Theory originator</b>	<b>Academic discipline</b>
<b>Emotion elicitation</b>			
	Cognitive Appraisal Theory	Philosophy	Psychology later Marketing
	Conservation of Resources Theory	Theory of stress and coping	Psychology later Service Research
	Affective Events Theory	Theories on job satisfaction, emotion theories	Org. Behaviour
<b>Emotion regulation</b>			
	Emotion Regulation	Dramaturgical theory, theory of alienation	Sociology later Org. Behaviour
	Emotional Contagion	Emotion theories, neuroscience	Social Psychology later Org. Behaviour and Service Research
	Affect Control	Theory Symbolic interactionism	Psychology

The crisis caused by the pandemic is strange, because it redefines uncertainty and risk by widening and deepening them. In this regard, it should be remembered that, since the pandemics of the Middle Ages, medicine has been recommending the same preventive measures: social distancing, mouth covering, mass confinement, and the maintenance of hygienic conditions. The current pandemic has accentuated these measures,

in such a way that the world became silenced and streets, squares, gardens, stadiums and cultural and entertainment buildings, as well as audiences in small or large cities, were emptied across the earth, which were now without its human beings and its activities: walkers, music, cars, cinemas, shopping malls, beaches.

Furthermore, the coronavirus has produced other important social, cultural, economic and political damages. Thus, adult human beings over 65 years of age have suffered the most from the mortality of the virus and the millions of people who, unexpectedly, were left without work or without the possibility of being able to cover their basic needs, were also suffering the terrible consequences, including securing enough food to eat.

In return, the population was forced to intensify family relationships, on the one hand, and social relationships, on the other, particularly through daily coexistence –in the first case– and, in the second, of social networks and from the *mass media*: *Instagram*, *WhatsApp*, *TikTok*, *Zoom*, *Google Meet*, *Facebook*, etc. This explains why, in this context, a set of emotions that appear, although they are lived in “isolation”, were shared at home and from video to video, from the balcony to balcony and from *WhatsApp* to *WhatsApp*.

We live in times of change. The pandemic has revealed what we are, it has made clear the situation of cognitive-affective “pornography” in our societies, and put statistics and medical knowledge in the foreground of TV, newspapers and social networks, marking the fragility of knowledge.

The pandemic appeared shortly after the notion of “post-truth” became a global discussion point, understanding this as a criterion of action where, given certain circumstances, feelings and beliefs are more important than facts, according to the Oxford Dictionary’s definition.

But, as with so many other topics, COVID-19 shifted its gaze on what to do, transforming the question into a political debate based on epidemiological statistics: the source of the “truth” is the analysis of the frequency of events and its “normal” distribution.

The language of politicians, doctors, journalists, the military and public opinion, in general, adopted the expression “we must flatten the curve” referring to at least three things, a) that while there is a flat curve (fewer cases of contagion in more time) the health system would not collapse, b) that, implicitly, this curve expressed the probability of a lower number of deaths and c) that it showed an efficient management of the effects of the Pandemic by States. It is obvious that statistics become a truth value and a political instrument, while the narrations associated with them are the result of their social construction.

In the next section we try to outline some features of the emotional ecology and politics of sensibilities in force in the pandemic.

### **Emotions in difficult times**

Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic has expressed itself in the complex web of sociabilities, experiences and sensibilities. This was reflected in the spread of new habits of proximity and distance between subjects, that is, a new bodily geometry which implies a number of acronyms of massive and global diffusion which modified social uses. On the other hand, the ways of living the pandemic also multiplied, the experiences were multiple and this experientiality produced both individual and collective sensations and emotions that configured personal modalities of living in a pandemic. At the same time, at the intersection of these sociabilities and experientialities, the politics of sensibilities emerged in line with the geopolitics and geoculture of the people and groups amongst whom the pandemic was spreading.

On the other hand, emotional ecologies were formed in relation to three basic factors: the material conditions of existence prior to the pandemic and the sensibilities policies associated with them; the historical intersections between public policies and emotions in each country or region; and finally the scenario and particular context of fear as a globalized emotion of mass and intersectional extinction.

In the above context, the set of interstitial practices and connective practices that emerged as a response to helplessness, inequality and social pain should not be forgotten.

A central theme of the pandemic was the reconfiguration of the rules of coexistence which had been in place for more than a century, thereby imposing mandatory confinement on us, social distancing, and hygiene rules as the logic of social interaction. A central theme of the pandemic was the reconfiguration of the rules of coexistence, for more than a century since mandatory confinement, social distance and hygiene rules were not imposed as a logic of social interaction. These sociabilities involved, among other things, the explanation of the malfunctions of many pre-Covid rules. An example was the connection/disconnection of health policies as a clear demonstration that there were redefinitions of roles and restructuring of institutional links. This re-socialization was also observable in the articulation of levels of care. Thus, what was thought to be efficient was not at all efficient or at least not up to the challenge that was faced, among many other characteristics, the trust in expert systems, the feeling of coverage/care and the impossibility of being listened to. In some places they collapsed and in others they functioned precariously. Sociologically, in this context, three

emotions emerged that we could say had a global reach, such as fear, uncertainty and anguish. Three emotions that clearly any form of sociability tries to reduce to its minimum expression.

On the other hand, the modalities of personal experience of at least three qualities of the social structure were very clearly modified: the disconnection between body and health; in the individual experience of risk, understanding this in the dialectic of the individual body, the social body and the subjective body; and finally, ways of connecting with others. The pandemic became a location in which to rediscover the fragility of corporality, the point where the vertigo of immediate enjoyment through consumption in a self-centred perspective stops. The speed, intensity and volume of enjoyment prior to the pandemic was a perfect setting to discover very quickly the fragile and unstable constitution of a healthy body. The pandemic forced us to be more aware of the various ways of inhabiting the body and its intrinsic relationship with tension between affects, sensations and emotions. In addition, the pandemic brought with it a higher level of experience of the risk society; we all experience at some point the possibility of death in a potential or real way, but the millions of deaths challenge us to experience such death as a personal risk. The third feature of this experientiality in this way of experiencing the pandemic from the subjective is the forced relationship with others that implied confinement, distance, testing and vaccination. We find various others, and even those others that we should have known.

In terms of sensibilities, the pandemic has been a scenario for the reconstruction of the devices for regulating sensations and the social bearability mechanisms.

On the one hand, the thresholds of individual and collective risk have been modified, at least partially, and with this there have been alterations in the perception of threat coming from an external agent or at least categorized as the one that is no longer the nuclear fear of extinction. The planetary gear if not the colonization of the individual body of an unknown agent which it is only possible to identify through a vigilance of the health systems. The surveillance power of the political system through the health system transformed the relationships between impressions and sensations, incorporating one of the high degrees of uncertainty regarding the possible determination of an effective risk. Therefore, the first point of the altered sensibilities is that people had to give up the possible autonomy both as an individual being biologically threatened, as an actor fulfilling the role indicated by society according to the official script, as an agent redefining survival strategies, as a subject transforming moments of criticism and reflection and as an author recreating new expressive spaces of the person.

In this sense, the pandemic transformed the regulation devices of sensations, assigning two novel values to practices associated with non-normality. In this context, we can understand the way in which the social bearebility mechanisms were modified due to news reconstructing, at least partially, ghosts and fantasies that, although they were associated with the particular stories of each place, were inscribed in a space of sensibilities that is much broader regional and or nationals. Thus, the phantom of death and the phantom of poverty were associated with the fantasy of health operated by a system and scarcity and managed by politics.

In this context, a plot of “learning to wait” and “having patience” was promoted, which,

among other things, revealed the strong pedagogical nature of the pandemic, wherein the definitively moral policy imposing a hygienist imperative guaranteed a centralized administration of the problems of the shortage.

Within the framework of the above, we can see also the planetary scale homologation of a set of emotional ecologies, which, as already noted, are expressed and experienced according to the various geopolitics and geocultures of emotions.

Beyond the multiple possibilities, it is possible to recognize three fundamental ecologies:

1. The first is made up of fear, sadness and suffering, knowing that the family resemblance that these emotions have also implies their differences. An emotional ecology is characterized precisely because the experience cannot be expressed in an absolute way with a single practice of feeling. In this sense, the suffering experienced by people or by others led, in some of its extremes, to experience the languor of deep sadness in the face of the possibility of death, which was constitutively part of the fear experienced in the first person or by others, in which the dialectic of suffering, becoming sad and fearing was inscribed again.

2. A second ecology can be identified at the intersection of serenity, calm, and pause. The pandemic interrupted the unbridled movement of enjoyment through consumption; the self-centred race to obtain ever-greater volumes of gratification was interrupted. In this framework, an unusual serenity outside the script of the actor who had to execute the imperative must be found. The foregoing produced the first sensation of calm, where life ceased to be agitated by the sudden interruption of movement, of the transfer of displacement. In this sense, in serenity and calm as antidotes to the anxiety and anguish caused by the frenzy of enjoyment, a large part of the planet felt paused.



3. Finally, it is possible to notice the structuring of a third emotional ecology around worry, anger and empathy. Here the emotional ecology is not produced by family proximity, but as the reaction that occurred in the face of the other emotional ecologies described. Within the framework of the geometry of the person that is above (individual, agent actor, subject and author) energy, in a disposition between the characteristics of the agent, the reflexivity of the subject and the autonomy of the author where people experienced being worried in the sense of at least minimal anticipation regarding tomorrow and in contrast to uncertainty, human beings struggle as a species between the fear of death, state discipline and mercantile interests. That is why we experience both concern for others who are close and also distant, which produced two practices of feeling, usually different or from different families, but on this occasion anger and empathy were related. On the one hand, there was anger with the health system, with the State, with the pharmaceutical industry and with communication monopolies; and on the other hand, there was empathy with those who suffered the same, with those who were the object of profound inequalities and with those expelled from institutional systems. Thus, the technological gap that prevented communication with the most disadvantaged, the inexperience or corruption on the part of the vaccine administrators, and the voracity of the market to ensure its profit, produced practices of feeling located between concern, anger and empathy.

## Content outline

One of the peculiarities of the COVID-19 pandemic was undoubtedly the emergence of a different social narrative. Society as a text was modified: dialogues, communications, and language games were transformed. In narrative terms, societies quickly learned biomedical languages, the use of new communication channels, and the expression of emotions through multiple channels. Chapter One, by Coca and Roche, not only takes note of this quality, but also presents the redefinition of the semiotics of the biological and the social. The chapter explores the narrative structuring of these two dimensions of life in the pandemic context and in its relationship with emotions.

The authors clearly support the connection of narratives and emotions:

“We are, therefore, faced with a paradigmatic biosocial phenomenon which we will explore in depth throughout this work. Alongside biosemiotic and sociosemiotic signs, we will also pay attention to the role of emotions. This is because human emotions and also their own body are at the root of all human crises (...). It is no coincidence that emotions are clearly involved in

action, in the social structure (...) and in the more or less complex relationships that are established between the two.”

Undoubtedly, the “pandemic situation” is a field of encounters and disagreements that can be clearly seen in the following chapters of the book. Power, illness, knowledge and emotions have always been tied together.

Professor Bergua's chapter is aimed at presenting another of the characteristics of the structuring of sensibilities in the pandemic, such as vulnerability. Through a rereading of an empirical study carried out in 2020, our attention is drawn in the direction of the processes of trust/distrust and optimism/pessimism as key factors for understanding the proximity and distance of the experiences of the manipulation of the State and the market, a possibility or limit of the reflective and the unreflective as an individual and collective attitude towards the pandemic.

In the context of the investigation of the “blind spots” that prevent us from approaching the complexity of the pandemic, the chapter maintains:

“Even once it had come amongst us, a proper knowledge of COVID-19 and how to treat it continued to elude us, as is shown by the difficulties encountered by the authorities with something theoretically so easy as counting the dead and the infected, not to mention the problems involved in diagnosing and treating patients. However, the COVID crisis has revealed several additional types of blindness, with their corresponding emotions, which affect both social and political sciences. Rather than avoiding these blind spots or pushing them away out of view, we should accept them. To do this, we must first clear our minds and cast off a number of bad cognitive habits. This is the approach we applied in our analysis of the data obtained in a survey conducted in two separate sessions (6-7 April and 7-8 May 2020) by the *Creativity, Society and Uncertainty* Research Group from Zaragoza University (Spain) during the first phase of lockdown in Spain. Although our main objective was to analyse vulnerability, we also looked at various other important issues.”

It is easy to understand how any politics of sensibility involves a contradictory set of emotional ecologies.

In Chapter Four, from a global perspective and in the context of the structure of fear and vulnerability exposed up to now, uncertainty is now presented.

Another characteristic of the pandemic situation was the overcrowding at the planetary level of very similar emotional ecologies, and experienced within the framework of the geopolitical histories and geocultural sensibilities of each place. Chapter Three proposes, through an empirical investigation, some approximate indicators of the structure of the policies of sensibilities

that emerged in the periods of confinement that spread throughout the planet. Beyond the preliminary nature of the study, the figures of uncertainty and “feeling lost” emerge as outstanding components that allow a painting of the world in these difficult times.

The authors of this chapter explain:

“According to what has been said so far, two features of the politics of sensibilities seem to begin to be drawn from this first look at the data collected. On the one hand, “uncertainty” arises as a widespread and accepted way of feeling that articulates opposite rhythms (Anxiety and Serenity) with a series of emotional states of negative valence: fear and sadness. This first feature provides a predatory component of the action, which can be seen from a complex web of practices that involve a specific (and intimate) way of naturalizing the context of the pandemic, which has become a structural property as a slowing feature of the action. Thus, life comes between the heavy serenity of sadly dragging a supposed inexorable destiny and the vertiginous fear of an uncertain world. On the other hand, the second trait detected from the experiences of the subjects contributes to a new element in the observed direction. If, up to this point, we have alluded to a politics of sensibilities where the action seems to slow down, the feeling of “being lost” comes to consecrate impotence as a feature of the predatory geometry of social relations associated with the context of the pandemic. Uncertainty and the feeling of “being lost” thus constitute cross-cutting components of the operational conditions of the bodies in the global rewriting of the territories of COVID-19.”

The previous chapters allow us to approach a “short” list of prevalent emotions.

Chapter Four is the beginning of inquiries that bring us closer to the variable intensities and volumes that integrated the pandemic experiences. Chapter Four is oriented to show the results of an inquiry about the socio-emotional perception carried out among university students regarding work, education and family. The study investigates the appearance of four emotions that can be verified in almost all studies at a global level, such as sadness, fear, anger and happiness, being in this way an excellent example of the emotional tensions/distensions that occurred, and that at first glance would seem contradictory. One facet of this chapter that is connected to what is presented in the other chapters, and what can be understood as a characteristic of emotional psychology in the pandemic, is how this emotional ecology of four emotions implies diverse and multiple emotional dispositions wherein variations in intensity of the experiences of each one implies the opening of a new Moebius band which would seem to shift the gaze towards other emotional ecologies that coexist with the first.

In this context, Pelaez maintains that:

“What may be argued is that we were facing an emotional climate where few “positive” emotions emerged in the narratives. However, emotions presented a variation of intensity when students narrated circumstances that had to do with their relationship in the corporate organizations in which they interacted: family organization and interactions, new practices and relationships in the educational environment and difficulties in staying employed, and the transformation of the work space to the home office modality. This aspect is connected to alienation as a second-order emotion, composed of an emotional spectrum of disappointment, anger, sadness or fear that is mainly directed towards the meso and macro level, such as feelings of anger and fear towards certain populations like working class groups or migrants; but also, towards institutional domains or forms of social stratification such as the labour or educational market.”

The chapter shows how experiencing different emotional ecologies at the same time is not a discontinuity, but rather the “usual”.

If the previous chapter investigated work, family and education, the next investigated one of the central practices of all politics of sensibilities: the “management of the everyday.”

Chapter Five configures the investigation into the situation of confinement in Shanghai, thus addressing another of the aspects of difficult times, namely how the transformations of daily life unfolded. Everyday life was transformed throughout the world, and the activities began to adapt to life inside houses, thus modifying the rate of intensity and the experientiality of the practices that are performed individually and collectively. This chapter shows some of the central features of the students' experience in relation to food, bodily care, relationships with others, rest, work and enjoyment. In this context, the authors argue that:

“In the process of Shanghai’s fight against the epidemic, our daily time patterns were disrupted, time was cut and reconstructed, and the citizens of Shanghai had collective memories and emotions about the event during the quarantine. What kind of temporal practices did they experience, what difficulties did they encounter, and how did they express their emotions during this period? What were their diets, bodies and lifestyles like during the flexible time? In the following discussion, we will expand on these questions.”

The investigation is revealed as a systematization of the central components of the daily life of Shanghai under confinement: a sequence of time, daily routine and memory; of subjective time and collective emotions; of negative emotions, time/space compression; of online meeting fatigue

and mechanization; of collective life, 'being looked after' and understanding; of diet, body and emotions in flexible time; of food, group buying and anxiety, and home fitness and daily exercise.

These experiences are connected with the practices of eating that the next chapter addresses.

From the beginning of the confinements, eating practices were one of the challenges of the collective and personal organization. Boragnio's chapter shows the structure of sensibilities in eating practices in the context of the pandemic in Argentina and Spain. In this way, the chapter opens a window onto one of the experiences notoriously transformed during the confinements of the pandemic, such as preparing and sharing food. In this sense, it appears from emotional ecologies that are connected with sadness, uncertainty, and fear, but that are also related to calm and stillness. The study also explores another of the characteristics regarding what was eaten, what was bought and how it was bought, these results being very pragmatic transformations that had to be carried out overnight in a context of uncertainty:

"Eating in isolation was organized based on parameters for the management of time/another space, where, in households that ate and could choose what, cooking once again became the main axis of daily life since eating organized the day from the explicit rules of commensality that ordered when and what was eaten. In this sense, the change in routines caused by the pandemic affected food practices positively or negatively, since "some have more time to cook and prepare delicious dishes; others eat more because leisure and boredom force them to take refuge in food..."; others dare to cook for the first time, self-managing their favourite preparations and the approach to the knowledge linked to cooking. Thus, in many cases, having time, cooking took a new place in household activities, becoming a creative, pleasurable activity, caring for oneself and others. The period of confinement and isolation led to a rethinking of food practices and commensality practices, configuring eating practices as a central node of pandemic daily life"

Without a doubt, eating is a challenge for an animal as fragile as a human being, an issue that is deepening in the pandemic due to several factors, but among the main ones because it implies affection.

If we observed something on cell phones, PCs, Tablets and TVs, it was the poverty that threatened outside the home as much as COVID. This chapter is very clear in showing how that happened.

Chapter Seven refers to one of the outstanding problems of the confinements of the pandemic, as it concerns a study on emotions in connection with poverty in one of the most unequal districts in Argentina. If something exists, the pandemic made it clear, it is its role of having made

visible some aspects of society that possibly were not clearly seen before. Angélica de Sena's study allows us to observe the relationship between emotions, social policies and poverty by analysing what poor people feel when they are recipients of a social policy in the context of the fear and uncertainty that the pandemic implied. The empirical work allows us to identify the perception, uncertainty, fear and sadness produced by the possibility of interrupting state aid over time.

The chapter concludes:

“The tour carried out sought to show the relationship between material conditions and emotions in populations living in poverty. This population has been receiving social programs for decades, essentially through monetary income that does not allow them to get out of poverty. Meanwhile, this population is not only in a situation of income poverty but also has limited access to education, housing, health and the environment. (...) Social policies become for their recipients an order of life, and the data analysed pre-pandemic showed an intervened-upon and non-autonomous population. In this context, the advent of Covid-19 meant to fear for those with fewer resources (economic, social, etc.), among those who already have few resources; and anxiety for those with a few more resources.”

One of the riskiest edges of the pandemic is that it deepens the state of dependency of millions of people and drags the loss of autonomy of many others.

Within the framework of the emotional ecologies that the book has presented thus far, Chapter Eight shows us again the connections between sensibilities and geopolitics. Chapter Eight takes us to Italy, and more specifically to Sicily, and refers to the experience of the confinement of young Sicilians. As is well known, Sicily is one of the poorest regions of Italy, and young people must often emigrate to study and work. It is in this context that their return home to abide by the rules of confinement involved a series of experiences that can also be taken as indicators of what had happened to many young people across the planet. The loss of a job, the interruption of education, the estrangement from the people they loved, and the reconnection with the family of origin were situations that were experienced all over the world and that this chapter narrates as part of the civility that is experienced by young Sicilians.

The authors are clear in connecting present conditions, pandemic and sensibilities, they say:

“The Coronavirus emergency can be considered rain in the wet. In fact, even if Italy in general has paid the price, in Sicily the crisis hits an already negative economic situation compared to the rest of Italy. Sicily is the region