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CREATING PEACE: TRAINING CONTENTS WITH PEDAGOGICAL IMAGINATION

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Abstract

This article stems from a research project about mediation experiences and transformational conflict management in areas affected by the armed conflict in Colombia. The first finding states that in the midst of repeated violence cycles, people have achieved a “pacifist empowerment”. They have overcome and called upon their capacities to transform conflicts and restore social structure. The second one, concerning self-work, is the symbolic approach when dealing with conflict and educating in peaceful coexisting ways. The identified cultural resources served as the basis for creating digital training content that will contribute to the country’s Cátedra de Paz in the country. Therefore, specific experiences were transformed into training contents aimed at building peace instead of using contents based on provisions or theories.

PEACE • DEMOCRACY • EDUCATION • CITIZENSHIP

CREANDO PAZ: CONTENIDOS FORMATIVOS CON IMAGINACIÓN PEDAGÓGICA

Resumen

Este artículo se deriva de una investigación sobre experiencias de mediación y gestión transformativa de conflictos en zonas afectadas por el conflicto armado en Colombia, presentando dos hallazgos: uno, que en medio de ciclos repetidos de violencia, las personas han logrado un “empoderamiento pacifista”, sobreponerse y apelar a sus capacidades para transformar los conflictos y para restituir el tejido social; y dos, el trabajo sobre el ser, el abordaje simbólico para tramitar los conflictos y para educar en formas de convivencia pacífica. Los recursos culturales identificados sirvieron de base para la construcción de contenidos formativos digitales que aportaran a la Cátedra de la Paz en el país. Por tanto, los contenidos no parten de prescripciones ni de teorías, sino que convirtieron las experiencias concretas en contenidos formativos para la construcción de la paz.

PAZ • DEMOCRACIA • EDUCACIÓN • CIUDADANÍA

CRIANDO PAZ: CONTEÚDOS FORMATIVOS COM IMAGINAÇÃO PEDAGÓGICA

Resumo

Este artigo se deriva de uma pesquisa sobre experiências de mediação e gestão transformadora de conflitos em áreas afetadas pelo conflito armado colombiano, apresentando dois achados: em primeiro lugar, que, no meio de ciclos repetidos de violências, as pessoas conseguem obter um “empoderamento pacifista”, se superar e apelar para as suas capacidades, a fim de transformar os conflitos e restituir o tecido social; e em segundo, o trabalho sobre o ser, a abordagem simbólica para administrar os conflitos e educar sobre formas de convivência pacífica. Os recursos culturais identificados serviram como base para a construção de conteúdos formativos digitais que contribuíram para a Cátedra da Paz, na Colômbia. Portanto os conteúdos não partem de prescrições nem de teorias, mas transformaram as experiências concretas em conteúdos formativos para a construção da paz.

PAZ • DEMOCRACIA • EDUCAÇÃO • CIDADANIA

CRÉER LA PAIX : CONTENUS DE FORMATION ET IMAGINATION PÉDAGOGIQUE

Résumé

Cet article découle d'une recherche sur les expériences de médiation et de gestion et transformation des conflits dans des zones de Colombie touchées par le conflit armé. Il rend compte de deux découvertes : la première est que, malgré les cycles de violence récurrents, la population est parvenue non seulement à s'autonomiser de manière pacifique, mais aussi à se surmonter en mobilisant ses capacités à transformer les conflits et à restaurer le tissu social ; la deuxième étant que grâce au travail sur l'être humain lui-même et à une approche symbolique il est possible de gérer les conflits et de mettre en place une éducation bâtie sur des formes de coexistence pacifique. Les ressources culturelles identifiées ont servi de base à la construction des contenus de formation numériques ayant contribué à la Chaire de la Paix en Colombie. Les contenus ne sont donc pas partis de prescriptions ou de théories, mais des expériences concrètes qui ont été converties en contenus de formation pour la construction de la paix.

PAIX • DEMOCRATIE • ÉDUCATION • CITOYENNETE

P OST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES, LIKE THE COLOMBIAN SOCIETY, ARE EXPECTED TO TURN TO EDUCATION

as the mechanism that merges political pacts into the collective imagination. Hence, peace is not limited to a protocol signed between opponents; it is mainly the slow process of building a culture in line with negotiated premises (GOMEZ-SUAREZ, 2017; HERBOLZHEIMER, 2016). Thus, projects with educational innovations are requested so that peace, which has been negotiated at the highest levels, ends up being endorsed from the lowest levels. For Colombia, the following two examples are shown: a call for research that seeks to contribute to the objective of educating Colombian citizens living in peace¹ and a regulatory decree related to the implementation of the *Cátedra de Paz*² in all educational institutions of the country.

Both the call and the executive order constitute a framework for the research project from which this article emerges.³ A six-year effort at *Escuela Itinerante para la construcción de Cultura de Paz* (Itinerant School toward Peace Culture)⁴ allowed us to use some evidence for its design. We wanted first to avoid falling into the same invocations and ideals of what education and society should be. We also aimed to recognize the real meaning of democracy as a distant abstraction. Finally, we know that turning democracy into a culture entailed pooling resources from the same society that has worked for life in war and violence-related scenarios.

Therefore, this research aims to analyze cultural resources in mediation experiences and transformational conflict management, as well as peaceful coexistence in conflict-affected areas to build, using these resources as reference, digital training content that would support *Cátedra de Paz*. The four selected cases have one common factor: They have experienced repeated violence cycles, and while experiencing them, they have achieved “pacifist empowerment” (MUÑOZ-MUÑOZ, 2006; MUÑOZ-MUÑOZ; JIMÉNEZ ARENAS, 2015), which means to overcome and call upon their capacities to transform conflicts to restore the social fabric.

Consequently, the text is based on experiences to develop theories instead of being based on theory to place findings. Initially, the abstract culture nature of democracy is recognized, as well as the educational possibility of, over time, materialize in a type of education that considers people’s own social experiences. Then, it is argued that to accomplish the above, it is necessary to encourage pedagogical imagination in educational programs. At last, four experiences are briefly presented, specifically those that enabled theoretical constructions as well as the curriculum and educational program, which integrate training contents contributing to the *Cátedra de Paz*.

- 1 Call 740 for research in Social and Human Sciences of Colciencias (November 30, 2015) that sought the human development and quality of life of Colombians to build peace. Refer to: <https://bit.ly/2UoKkrK>
- 2 Executive Order No. 1038 of May 25, 2015, regulating *Cátedra de Paz*. Refer to: <https://bit.ly/2oLn7kH>
- 3 Project “Creando Paz: recursos culturales en experiencias de mediación y gestión constructiva de conflictos y su aporte a la formación de competencias ciudadanas y construcción de cultura de paz” (Creating Peace: cultural resources in mediation experiences and transformational conflict management, and their contribution to the citizenship skills training and building peace culture). Conducted by the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana and the Region Corporation and co-financed by Colciencias (code 121074054774)
- 4 Creando Paz is an interagency alliance of peace education formed by social, academic, and governmental organizations, created to systematically contribute to build a peace culture.

ABSTRACT CULTURE, CONCRETE CULTURE

Democracy is the possibility proof for better citizenship, and active citizenship is having democracy as a general form of culture (O'DONNELL, 2004; WEINBERG; FLINDERS, 2018). This inherence between citizenship and democracy, designed from a peacebuilding perspective in Colombia, requires asking questions such as, what is culture? What does it mean to frame democracy as a general form of culture? What is the role of citizenship in a democratic culture? What role does education play in building culture, and therefore citizenship and democracy? In what sense is a citizen competent within a democratic culture? By analyzing community experiences of transforming conflict and building a peace culture, the article addresses these questions with the following finding: *a citizen is competent when democracy is experienced as a culture and, to achieve this cultural experience of democracy, education and training contents must be, in part, sensitive experiences of society itself.*

For Paul Ricoeur (1961), the “ethical-mythical nucleus” of a culture is the set of values that lie in concrete attitudes toward life, as they form a system and are not radically criticized by influential and responsible men. According to this statement, democracy is clearly not the ethical-mythical nucleus of today’s liberal society. For this reason, education, which according to Kant (2003), improves humanity from generation to generation, has the function of transforming democracy into the essential form of culture. Education, in the long run, helps people behave naturally in society, according to the requirements that encourage the discourse of democracy, for example, when making suggestions related to promoting common good and equality as well as respect for the law and justice (DEWEY, 1998). Moreover, liberal democracy has a clear ecumenical vocation that tends toward constant expansion and generalization (FOUCAULT, 2007). However, this expansive vocation could only be conflicting in and of itself (HUNTINGTON, 1997) while becoming concrete culture through education.

That, indeed, is the objective of governmental guidelines such as citizenship skills promotion, *Cátedra de Historia* (Lectures on History), or *Cátedra de Paz* (already mentioned): to establish, from people’s daily experience, the basis of a democratic culture. Nevertheless, these efforts can be in vain if there are no inquiries about the inextricably synergic nature of democracy, citizenship, and education in the first place. Understanding this triad is fundamental to make educational, pedagogical, and curricular innovative proposals. These proposals offer cultural resources and community life experiences as potential training contents so that peace sensitivity can be inherited by future generation and thus to achieve with time *better conflicts* (DÍAZ-PERDOMO; ROJAS-SUÁREZ, 2019; GIRALDO RAMÍREZ, 2016; ZULETA, 2001) that sustain lasting peace.

There is another educational factor that shapes a democratic peace culture in Colombia: promoting teacher’s *pedagogical imagination*. The aim is to recognize, among multiple experiences in the communities of such a diverse country as Colombia, those cultural resources susceptible to becoming educational objects to encourage more and better practices in line with communitarian sensitivity as a peaceful experience. This innovative idea of strengthening pedagogical imagination is built, however, with old institutionalized evidence: teachers neither carry nor provide science; rather, they turn objects of that science into teaching objects. In doing so, they enable students’ minds to be efficient at different levels of that science or within the society that has that science as a paradigm. Similarly, teaching can turn social experiences into teaching objects so that people become efficiently peaceful within the society that carries peace as an ethical-mythical core to live together (BELTRAN-VÉLIZ; OSSES-BUSTINGORRY, 2018; RAMREZ BRAVO, 2017; TOURAINÉ, 1997).

CULTURE AND DEMOCRACY

The claim of liberal democracy is to become the general form of culture in the west (FOUCAULT, 2007; GARCIA PICAZO, 2010). This evidence is made even more complex when it lacks (SHKLOVSKI, 2004) the evidence itself and when it is questioned in a different way to overcome the exaggerated meaning that the words “democracy” and “culture” have accumulated to trivialize arguments that put them together. The word “culture” includes, among other things, ethnic expressions (indigenous culture), social manifestations (soccer culture), and even certain criminalities (drug trafficking culture). The word “democracy,” for its part, includes any collective or individual action within the constitutional state, whether to camouflage violence and authoritarianism or not. Even the strong left and right political parties are both considered democratic (RINCÓN, 2009). This intrinsic complexity urges us to establish a definition of culture, and concordantly, what strategy democracy would adopt to become the general form of that culture. To define what culture is, the definition of Edward Tylor (1975), which has become traditional, is used as a starting point:

Culture or civilization, in a broad ethnographic sense, is all that complex that includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morality, law, customs, and any other habits and abilities acquired by men as members of society.⁵ (TYLOR, 1975, p. 29)

From this wordy phrase, attention can be set on the apparent superficiality of arguing that culture is everything. Adding that this “everything” is “complex” adds no greater depth to the definition. However, there is nothing superficial about Tylor’s definition. On the contrary, it is a quite deep phrase. First of all, “everything is culture”, as Ramírez (1996) recalls, does not mean that anything individually is culture; it rather means that culture is everything that is within a social group as a non-rational substratum that allows things and people to relate meaningfully. In other words, *everything is culture* means that “*totality is culture*” and that *culture is totality*.

The first expression, “totality is culture,” states that all objects of people’s practice in interaction are the consequences of human capacity to create objects and give them meaning and a function in society (ELIADE, 1974; JUNG, 1977; RAMÍREZ, 1996). All objects created by men are part of the culture, no matter how important they are in the purposes and ideals of the group. On the contrary, “*culture is totality*” means that the elements that constitute life in society are related in such a way that meanings cannot be grasped, regardless of their factual expressions. In other words, the meanings with which things that are manufactured are endowed (by hand or symbolically) do not exist beyond how they are interpreted and applied in socio-historical subjective and inter-subjective experiences, namely, in social interaction at any time and place (GIMÉNEZ-MONTIEL, 2005; RAMÍREZ, 1996).

“*Everything is culture*” lists a synthesis according to which meaningful objects are created within a social group, and those meanings are captured in everyday processes of socialization that give identity and cohesion to the group. “Totality is culture” and “culture is totality” force the recognition of concrete cultures, i.e., the living, practical, and active reality in which hand-built or symbolically constructed objects are the formula of unthinkable and unspeakable meanings. Those meanings are transformed into the deep substratum that makes it possible to live together in community. However, it is also important to accept that there are abstract cultures conceived as a series of meanings, codes, or general structures of functions different from the everyday community lifestyles. According to these, people are capable of including the theory that seeks to substantiate a particular ideal of culture, until they turn it into a concrete existence in daily customs (RAMÍREZ, 1996).

5 In the original: “La cultura o civilización, en sentido etnográfico amplio, es aquel todo complejo que incluye el conocimiento, las creencias, el arte, la moral, el derecho, las costumbres y cualesquiera otros hábitos y capacidades adquiridos por el hombre en cuanto miembro de la sociedad.”

The difference between concrete culture and abstract culture is that the former derives from the ethical-mythical nucleus of living in society and, therefore, is the constant execution of social values in interaction: an order of meanings that refer to issues essential to human survival on an individual and collective scale (DUSSEL, 1976; RICCEUR, 1990). Concrete culture is irrational and includes the unspeakable factors of community members, but it has common meanings that have an impact on culture. A group's particular culture with intrinsic validity, since it constitutes the way each person acts, which later builds vital behaviors, i.e., the experience of living together in a defined time and space. Concrete culture is an order of meanings transformed into behaviors that facilitate different ways of being, acting, feeling, and living. Meanings are lived within the group as an experience, but at the same time, externally, they are recognized with a sense of multiplicity, turning the group that operates them into a coherent and understandable group (RAMÍREZ, 1996).

Abstract culture, on the contrary, is the result and not the process: a discourse consciously developed to generate behaviors that are increasingly similar to the interests that shape such culture, which are considered necessary for cohabitation. Some sort of engineering or discipline to transform society into the ideal that foresees possible futures (ROSE, 2010). Culture is perceived as a series of meanings, a general structure of functions that can be separated from their concrete forms of execution in society, as they have a previous definition slightly unique and steady, imposed to individual subjects inside a social group through different requirements (RAMÍREZ, 1996).

Two outcomes stem from this abstract concept of culture: a) that such culture legitimates itself to dominate and deny other cultures by globally imposing its own vision of society, politics, and culture; and b) that the value and truth of the meanings that characterize such culture are unrelated to the concrete process of its execution; therefore, training is always required to not lose the sense of belonging and identity.

Concrete and abstract cultures are part of an irretrievable human historical sequence. On the one hand, a culture that seeks to be transformed/preserved may never remain in concrete socializing form, as its progress takes it to increasingly abstract forms of relationship. On the other hand, abstract forms of society, such as democracy, through constant education, tend to produce concrete expressions of action, sharing, and feeling, i.e., they can fulfill an important part of the ideal abstraction of the social group in a culture. This indicates that education can build a democratic culture over time (SLOTERDIJK, 2012). It is then deduced that culture is not the univocal word to describe ethnicities in marginalized territories, nor is it a valid conflict for the preservation/mummification of unchangeable traditions. It becomes culture when...

[...] a common past and origin are recognized, the same language is spoken, a system of deep values and worldview are shared, own territory awareness is present, participation in the same system of signs and symbols, (thus) only with this is possible to strive to a common future.⁶ (BATALLA, 1991, p. 11)

In short, culture is a common past and collective present of meanings within which abstractions of democracy have to become practices through the uninterrupted intermediation of educational objectives and programs. Democracy is not, in principle, a concrete culture but an abstraction. Its basic discourse, its legal framework, and its leading goals are not objects created with a social sense filled with unspeakable meanings that are carried out through interaction daily; instead, those goals are created by experts with a constant logic of knowledge and power for the population's governance (FOUCAULT, 2007; ROSE, 2010). In other words, democratic premises are not the mythical-ethical

6 In the original: "[...] se reconoce un pasado y un origen común, se habla una misma lengua, se comparte una cosmovisión y un sistema de valores profundos, se tiene conciencia de un territorio propio, se participa de un mismo sistema de signos y símbolos, (pues) solo con ello es posible aspirar también a un futuro común".

core that allows for group cohesion anywhere in the world. Instead, they are a hegemonic ideal that does not get affected by the specific cultures with which it interacts, but it tries to outline them until they lose their form and become a democracy in progress. Culture itself becomes a general concrete culture, as its ideals are better observed in individual and collective practices.

This design is not a complaint of defects that constitute democracy to justify cultural resistance from the South or reinforced decolonial practices (DUSSEL, 1996; RAMÍREZ, 1996). It is something else: the evidence that democracy is different from concrete forms of culture, but that is not why it has less ethical, political, and aesthetic possibilities for groups and for people. Moreover, from a certain perspective, democracy is simultaneously abstract culture and concrete culture, because, like cultural forms in smaller spaces and short times, it is formed in another experiment as a result of human development when trying to remain a constant viable species (GEHLEN, 1987; LEROI-GOURHAN, 1971). Democracies are not eternal, nor are indigenous or isolated cultures, but because democracy is much more complex in its dimensions and developments, it requires systematic forms of management to be sophisticated and constantly valid, namely, to become a continuous game of tradition and innovation (DEWEY, 1998).

EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship has a long history. Greek, medieval, modern, and contemporary conceptions provide sense to a notion that develops incessantly to create new spaces of social and political action (DELGADO-PARRA, 2012; ORTIZ-CHARRY, 2003). Within this history, a piece of evidence is highlighted. Democracy and citizenship are mutually dependent: There is no democracy without citizenship, and there is no citizenship without democracy. However, the notion of citizenship, which is made operational here, is not applicable to any of these historical positions; it is rather a construct working as an educational strategy related to needs that encourage a concrete culture of peace in a democratic nation like Colombia.

In a democracy, education is a device to form citizens, that is, people who exercise the rights provided by law will become, by educational means, the agents creating, implementing, and expanding those rights constantly. For democratic abstraction to shift toward experience and culture, new members are required to achieve, through education, everything they lack by birth:

Newborns not only do not know but are completely indifferent to the purposes and habits of the social group; the group must acknowledge and inspire an active interest in them. Education and only education will fill this void.⁷ (DEWEY, 1998, p. 15)

Nonetheless, citizenship is not a basic skill that is acquired in childhood once and for all. Being part of an abstraction moving toward a concrete culture, citizenship enters as a rudiment always pursuing perfection. Citizenship is not only the abstraction that sets limits on the partner's actions but rather the daily activities of the partners that widens the limits of their own actions. Paraphrasing Foucault (2007), little existing citizenship is given by even greater citizenship that is demanded. Finally, citizenship is a skill that is sharpened by a dialectic that states that the highest levels grant benefits, rights, and recognitions so that, with them, the lowest levels can demand better rights and freedom, as a general action for the constant currency of democratic forms of power.

If democracy functions as an ideal, citizenship is also an abstraction that is part of the democratic ideal. Citizenship is based on the construction of criteria, principles, and guidelines

7 In the original: "Los seres recién nacidos no sólo desconocen, sino que son completamente indiferentes respecto a los fines y hábitos del grupo social, que ha de hacérselos conocer e inspirarles interés activo hacia ellos. La educación, y sólo la educación, llena este vacío."

that individuals, as free and equal beings, defend, knowing for sure that all the other members of a community are willing to accept and respect. Rawls's work, for example, recognizes how a social cluster, made up of free and equal persons, can lay the foundations for a democratic society in which every member can develop his full vital cycle owing to ideas, pluralism, respect for differences, and morality (CORAL LUCERO; CASTILLO CASTILLO, 2011).

This understanding of citizenship, specifically because of its abstract status, has to fit into concrete life so that, by symbolic effectiveness, the discourse ends up making society look similar to the requirements, because as Lechner (2000) points out, "being a citizen refers not only to institutional policy, but progressively to social life"⁸ (p. 25). Certainly, in the abstract beginnings of democracy, Jean Jacques Rousseau (1998) argued that civilized man, i.e., the citizen, was "a fractional unit that determines the denominator and whose value expresses its relationship with the whole, which is the social body"⁹ (p. 42). According to him, it was the good social institutions that took away each person's absolute existence to replace it with a relative one so that each individual does not assume itself as a whole but as part of unity, therefore being only sensitive in the social whole.

Besides, acknowledging that the way of training citizens was through education, he uttered a phrase that still takes effect today: "true education consists less in precepts than in exercises"¹⁰ (ROUSSEAU, 1998, p. 45). That is to say, a full, active, and pro-positive citizenship is not built upon its own theories; on the contrary, it is built by the execution of them. In other words, although going from abstract to concrete, citizenship was built in part with theories that sought practices, now, instead, practices that produce theories must be studied, i.e., cultural experiences and resources that exercise forms of citizenship for social welfare (FREIJEIRO VARELA, 2008).

To turn concrete experiences into training contents to build peace as a culture, it is important to have an education like the one described by Rousseau: with exercises. The first exercise is pedagogical imagination, which allows building a different curriculum, in line with the society that demands it, and is established in an improvement framework that goes from generation to generation. Innovation as a disruption is alien to systematic education. Following, pedagogical imagination will be dealt with.

PEDAGOGICAL IMAGINATION

Imagination is more important than knowledge.

Albert Einstein

Both are important, but knowledge without imagination is sterile.

Frank Wilczek

In the book *Spheres I* by Peter Sloterdijk, the prologue says "Philosophy is not only original when it coins new concepts, but also when it discovers something surprisingly significant in well-known expressions"¹¹ (2003, p. 14). This phrase is assumed completely with the sole purpose of replacing the word "philosophy" with "pedagogy". This exchange recognizes that pedagogy, as a reflection to build training content that encourages a culture of peace, allows the discovery of "something surprisingly significant" in the not so common expression "pedagogical imagination".

⁸ In the original: "ser ciudadano no se refiere tan sólo a la política institucional, sino progresivamente a la vida social".

⁹ In the original: "una unidad fraccionaria que determina el denominador y cuyo valor expresa su relación con el entero, que es el cuerpo social".

¹⁰ In the original: "una unidad fraccionaria que determina el denominador y cuyo valor expresa su relación con el entero, que es el cuerpo social".

¹¹ In the original: "la Filosofía no es solo original cuando acuña nuevos conceptos, sino también cuando descubre algo sorprendentemente significativo en expresiones bien conocidas".

Based on the power of Lederach's concept of moral imagination (2008),¹² the least apparent notion of "pedagogical imagination" is recognized and redefined as an educational strategy that guarantees the transition, whether slowly, from abstract culture to concrete culture both in terms of democracy and peace. Furthermore, the concept is surprisingly significant, as it can be inferred that peace becomes an irrational element of that culture, specifically in the natural way of living in a community without conspicuous efforts of prescriptive or invoking discourses. As a result, the war becomes the rhetorical referent incapable of constituting the collective imaginaries (BENAVIDES-VANEGAS; OSPINA-PEDRAZA, 2011; DIOS DIZ, 2011).

According to Lederach (2008), it can be said that *the possibility that education contributes to building a culture of peace is related to the development of the teacher's pedagogical imagination*. School is still the default device for democratic socialization, but for that democracy to become a concrete culture, it requires teachers who infuse the school with pedagogical imagination. Through pedagogical imagination, mummified contents can be unlocked to help promote renewed forms of social imagination. Imagination is important at all levels of social life, because instead of representing "reflections" or "copies" of what is "real," it produces creations that rewire to be potential transformations. For example, "social imagination" assumes that each society is a collective creation of a particular unrepeatable way of being that is constantly created and transformed due to the fact that this is a local logic, which has links with what is known as "general" but experiences everyday life as its own. Social imagination, according to Castoriadis (1975), is a set of imaginary social meanings embodied in institutions. Social imagination, as a way of ordering things, guides the actions of the members of that society by determining ways of feeling, desiring, and thinking (FOUCAULT, 1968).

Every society contains in itself a power of otherness in a double static and dynamic perspective: "the established" that appears to have certain stability in a set of institutions and "the one that establishes" as a dynamic that drives its transformation. For Castoriadis (1975), an "imaginary institution of society" is not established because it has not been created "naturally" but by the result of human action. Such action is an intention fixed in a symbolic system; this is also imaginary because it is a human spirit phenomenon that builds meanings and values to guide society without being completely rational. Furthermore, it is a social imagination, since it constitutes an order of phenomena, *sui generis*, irreducible to the psychic and the individual aspects - an anonymous collective work that transcends and imposes itself on individuals (FRESSARD, 2006).

Imagination is not a spontaneous quality for the management and immunization of people and societies; rather, "it is largely shaped by socio-historical mechanisms and by representations that are materialized in relationships, evaluations, and in real imagination conditions"¹³ (COLECTIVO FILOSOFAR CON CHICOS, 2017). It is necessary to have a pedagogical imagination to foster a social imagination that reflects within its strengths the creation of ways of living within a democratic framework. The creative power of societies is not only based on exceptional individuals with futuristic imaginations but also in cultural and historical experiences that allow the recognition of past ways of being to become something else. Imagination is not a prescriptive concept that can be evoked or that appears as an unquestionable strategy for individuals and groups to build new societies, neither is it a faculty that could be implemented by a curricular proposal to transform society at the will of emerging educational ideals.

However, imagination is not an abstraction without reality either. Imaginary creation spontaneously emerges from a social-historical perspective. Then, it is explicitly empowered

¹² Lederach's work is based on C. Wright Mills, "La imaginación sociológica" (1961).

¹³ In the original: "es configurada en gran medida por dispositivos socio-históricos, y por representaciones que se materializan en relaciones, valoraciones y en condiciones reales de la imaginación".

through different strategies, such as educational ones, to obtain results that have been previously planned. In other words, imagination is not a passive request affecting society in a risky manner. For education, it is about unlocking the power of imagination and thus taking advantage, in a practical way, of its creative potential. It would be necessary to prevent imagination overflows using delimited proposals to avoid the imagined scenarios from coming in contact with realistic possibilities, as this may lead to more frustration and stagnation.

There is better social imagination when there is pedagogical imagination. The key to using imagination in education is creating communicative events where students can participate in different ways: speaking, listening, reading, and writing together. Thus, although the goal is to have an order on educational tasks, simultaneously, a type of imagination is proposed – one that is willing to capture the contributions and particular events through flexible organization that enables variations on activities, content, sequences, and materials. In educational terms, this implies that the activities carried out in a classroom are as important as selecting the content and materials. Not only do the addressed contents matter but also what is done with them; activities are the core of learning. Therefore, teachers are expected to take care of their students, and students are expected to be well trained to become the architects of a better future as Colombia frees itself from violence (MURPHY; GALLAGHER, 2009).

Imagination needs incentives, power, and limits. For pedagogical imagination to flourish, it is not enough to just evoke it; conditions of social, political, and economic possibilities have to be offered. Social reality is not changed by individual efforts of imagination forced by desire and powerlessness, but improved conditions make richer, more innovative, and accurate imaginations possible. The pedagogical imagination proposal is not another responsibility of teachers to fight concrete exclusions in an abstract way; rather, it is a programmatic concept to work on every aspect that helps improve this quality in favor of society and education.

Pedagogical imagination, in this sense, is very similar to the sociological imagination documented by C. Wright Mills (1961), “a mental quality of mind that will help them to use information and develop reason to achieve lucid summations of what is going on in the world and of what may be happening within themselves”¹⁴ (p. 25).

Based on this assumption, it is argued that pedagogical imagination is made up of at least five flexible elements presented as teacher attitudes:

- when imagination in pedagogy is constantly used, i.e., when the teacher’s imagination is empowered to develop the social imagination;
- when the teacher recognizes and uses cultural resources of their close environment to build emotions and actions, i.e., the teacher does not limit teaching to more or less mummified contents but rather finds in the history and in the environment itself the training contents to build identity and culture;
- when the teacher perceives society as transformation processes and students as its agents, i.e., the teacher’s ability to recognize that culture is the constant otherness built with the internal subjectivity of students, adults, and the community;
- when there is a will not only to passively resist the habits of content transmission but also to move toward cultural resources and toward contact as educational inputs, i.e., imagination cannot only criticize a system that is considered stagnant, but it can criticize the often-delusional proposal of new ways of building the own system;
- when trying to be more sensitive in different parts of society to build more comprehensive world views;

¹⁴ In the original: “una cualidad mental que les ayude a usar la información y a desarrollar la razón para conseguir recapitulaciones lúcidas de lo que ocurre en el mundo y de lo que quizás está ocurriendo dentro de ellos”.

C. Wright Mills' (1961) statement can be applied when he says that

[...] The first outcome of this type of imagination is the idea that the individual can only understand his own experience and evaluate his own destiny by placing himself in his time; he can know his own possibilities in life if he knows those of all the individuals who are in his circumstances.¹⁵ (p. 25)

The phrase becomes operative for pedagogy, because this is thorough knowledge that has to appeal to cultural resources and the experiences of society to build a culture according to the premises of a good imagination. To unravel “cultural resources” of society and convert them into training contents for promoting peace, subtle sensitivity and situated thought is required. It could even be said that the essential components of pedagogical imagination are (1) pedagogical tact that forces one to think more on others in a more generous and wider way and (2) situated thought that requires keeping reflection and action open to places and situations related to performance (ECHEVERRI-ÁLVAREZ, 2018).

It is important to point out that the transition from an abstract culture to a concrete culture, or even better, from a society that has lived through war to another society capable of culturally assuming peace, cannot neglect its cultural resources as training elements for a global identity. In the end, it requires adding imagination to educational projects that are committed to promoting peace. Social imagination is possible if there is a pedagogical imagination capable of creating pedagogy that uses imagination.

To turn cultural resources and experiences into training contents, “pedagogical imagination” is necessary not only for its planning but also for its sustainability over time as a transformation of pedagogy and didactics. A pedagogical imagination that allows imagining society as part of ourselves and each individual as part of a society that has good and bad experiences but that imagines life and builds it on a daily basis.

THE LIVED CURRICULUM FOR DEMOCRACY AS A CONCRETE CULTURE

According to the research findings, a citizen is competent as such when democracy is experienced as a culture, and to do so, the training contents of the curricula at the national, regional, local, or institutional level must be sensitive expressions of that culture. With certain circularity, democracy is experienced as a culture when citizens are competent in it, and they become such when democracy offers education with content that is an expressions of that specific culture, thereby creating a non-solving path of continuity between education, citizenship, culture, and peace (EVANS RISCO; WEISSERT; ZAVALA SARRIO, 2018).

A curriculum has four basic elements (objectives, contents, methodology and evaluation). However, the missing question is, what stagnation overcomes the proposal? A curriculum must recognize what it leaves behind and foresee the future to avoid falling into the same situation too soon. Asking what can be exceeded and recognizing in what type of need the school and curricular mechanism emerges (FOUCAULT, 1991) is not the overused formula of disqualifying traditional models to validate the current ones but rather to promote a systematic reflection about the meaning of previous experiences and the ones that are expected to be achieved through education. A curriculum is not only used to overcome models and pedagogy methods but also to recognize what is no longer valid in terms of society and culture to turn it against an ideal of future that also chooses the educational path to achieve it, i.e., teaching with better training contents (HERBART, 1806).

¹⁵ In the original: “puede comprender su propia experiencia y evaluar su propio destino localizándose a sí mismo en su época; de que puede conocer sus propias posibilidades en la vida si conoce las de todos los individuos que se hallan en sus circunstancias”.

Education must consider how to make democratic abstraction, no matter how sophisticated, a concrete realization. That is why experience is important; rights need to be exercised by real people; adversities need to have resilience; history needs to have a present and living voice; and emotion should be present in contact. Education has to have pedagogical imagination to achieve an education with tact – tact to relate with people and to see through landscapes, faces, and living stories (VAN MANEN, 1998). The idea cannot be to oppose a discourse to a forceful reality but to accustom the population with real practices, well-being, and honesty so that politicians can be seen as individuals accepted for their honest and ethical will to serve. Schools can guard and guarantee management, administration, and transparency.

EXPERIENCES TURNED INTO DIGITAL TRAINING CONTENTS

The project of creating digital training content for building a culture of peace in Colombia chose to recognize experiences in which the community's own cultural resources had made it possible to overcome the pain of the conflict, restore sensitive imagination, and go on with lives with an aware memory, although less painful and more creative. There were four cases selected for this research: 1. Parcelas Alternativas Solidarias, Valle del Guamuez (Putumayo); 2. Estudiar, qué negociazo! Granada Siempre Nuestra (Antioquia); 3. Corporación Casa Mía, Medellín (Antioquia), and 4. Escuela Itinerante para la construcción de Cultura de Paz (Creando Paz), Medellín (Antioquia).

A common finding in the four experiences is that the work is centered on being – the symbolic and metaphorical approach when dealing with conflicts and to educate in peaceful coexisting ways. Cultural resources, in Lederach's perspective (2008), are imagination and creativity, and this is what we found in each of the experiences. Both imagination and creativity are platforms for forms of violence to be overcome or transformed into sociocultural tools that move from suffering to the search for individual and community well-being alternatives. In the four analyzed cases, it was found that social actors directly affected by violence engaged in self-healing actions based on affective bonds caused by the suffering experienced, which was shared afterward in accounts of events.

In the Valle del Guamuez in Putumayo, the cultural resource that the community resorts to is the one about ancestral practices; these are part of the narrative they build about themselves and their origins as a community. What is legal and what is unlawful can be traced into their notions (ÁLVAREZ CORREA; ARBELÁEZ ROJAS; LONDOÑO HERNÁNDEZ, in press). In the program *Estudiar, qué negociazo!*, based in Granada, the practice of weaving is both metaphor and practice, a concrete culture that is allowed to be questioned by every movement of the needle and thread, warp and weft as imaginary rebuilding of young people and their parents who were victims of the armed conflict (GIRALDO-RAMÍREZ; ECHEVERRI-ÁLVAREZ; ZULUAGA JARAMILLO, in press). Corporación Casa Mía, in the Santander district of Medellín, turned restoring symbolic heritage into a horizon of new values to reaffirm the value of life and collective actions to restore the community ties broken by violence. The representation of Homeric youth to ennoble the warrior of life is only one of the symbols that Casa Mía appeals to in a city where the war was the only option for many young people. They demonstrated that emotion, affection, and solidarity can produce creative synergies (SAENZ-MONTOYA; ÁNGEL-URIBE; GIRALDO-RAMÍREZ, in press). Finally, the Escuela Itinerante Creando Paz untangled the set of conflicts through training as a process of experience that leads to participants' reflection of their own conflicts — the transformations they would like to make, what needs to be done to reach them, and what contributions are being made to the way the conflict develops. Mediation, transformational training, and communication are the main resources of the school that assumes conflicts as a possibility for transformation (SÁNCHEZ MEDINA; CARDONA BERRÍO, in press).

Appealing to a co-creation methodology that directly involved the parties in each case, the digital training contents that contribute to *Cátedra de Paz* were built. In the context of the meetings, all based on techniques that allowed real and horizontal participation in the production of meanings, the cultural resources described above emerged continuously. Considering the methodological consequences of the approach proposed, this co-creation experience never intended to suggest a general or standard model of production but to identify the metaphors and symbols that guide the reconstruction work of the social fabric between the actors and the experiences involved. Thus, in this way, interpreting the expressive elements of the digital communicative ecosystem and the didactical transposition to fulfill the digital training contents could begin.

CONCLUSIONS

The article clarifies that liberal democracy is an abstract form of culture. Although this condition is not a disadvantage in terms of meaning, value, and significance in relation to more apparent and authentic forms of culture, it is a different stage in the open possibilities of human life adventure – a stage in which it is anticipated, in a spiritual sense, what society wants to become, and mechanisms are established so that more and more people feel fulfilled while building a coexisting life without community. Democracy has to educate those people so they can understand, adapt, and embody its foundations. They become the possibility proof for democracy itself when they are turned into citizens. Democracy, citizenship, and education are part of an inextricable relationship (BICKMORE; KADERI; GUERRA-SUA, 2017).

While the imagining of theorists, academics, and scientists can make better and better demands and manage to leave extensive bibliographies in texts and repositories, the truth is that this will simply expand the abstract forms of democracy. Curriculum proposals have to be implemented in experiences, such as living cultural resources, with transformational power formed by people who, however, at some point were only simple people. Those people went from living a quiet life to feeling terror and the pain of seeing friends, husbands, children, neighbors, and parents die, without justification other than creating fear, and yet they were able to continue living by helping others to live better lives, i.e., rebuilding their sensitive imagination (ECHEVERRI-ÁLVAREZ; ZULUAGA-JARAMILLO, 2019).

The cultural resources of the community must be heard, seen, and felt by more people, not only to worship them but also to recognize in them the warrior capacity demanded by peace. Peace is not a gift attained externally but a discipline that is built daily by the same community. Therefore, it is concluded that for education to build a culture of peace, it must first envision its own culture and, with pedagogical imagination, make it available for specific ends, such as peace.

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NOTE ON AUTHORSHIP

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