

Prolegomena to an Everyday Peace Approach*

[English Version]

Prolegómenos para un enfoque de paces cotidianas

Prolegômenos para uma abordagem da paz cotidiana

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Abstract

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Objective: this article is a reflection seeking to contribute to the *foundation* of a peace-building approach that focuses on the scale of the local-everyday (of the *world of life*), without neglecting the interaction and mutual influence that may exist with other scales of the regional, national and transnational or global. **Methodology:** this article is structured based on a set of premises that open paths and scenarios for reflection; it is a perspective to work in the theoretical-practical field of conflicts and peace. **Results:** the need to think critically about the theoretical-practical field of conflicts and peace from a transdisciplinary and

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multiscale perspective of phenomena, actions and power relations was identified. A perspective that evidences the colonization processes of this theoretical-practical field by the models of a (neo) liberal peace is also unavoidable and that, in turn, manages to transcend the critical polarizing scheme of the North and the South. It is important to *vindicate* the scale of everyday life, as it offers experiences, practices, resources, perspectives and relevant interpretations for the understanding and transformation of conflicts and peace. **Conclusions:** it is required to *problematize* peace in everyday life to address its tensions, contradictions, dilemmas and problems. This is intended to stimulate understanding and conversation around the *conditions of possibility* of an approach to understanding and strengthening everyday peace.

Keywords: Everyday peace; Peace building; Research on peace; Social conflicts; Conflict analysis; Transdisciplinarity.

Resumen

Objetivo: este trabajo de reflexión busca contribuir a la *fundamentación* de un enfoque de construcción de paz que apueste a la escala de lo local-cotidiano (del *mundo de la vida*), sin dejar de lado la interacción y mutua influencia que pueda existir con otras escalas de lo regional, lo nacional y lo transnacional o global. **Metodología:** el trabajo se estructura a partir de un conjunto de premisas que abren senderos y escenarios de reflexión; se trata de una perspectiva para el trabajo en el *campo* teórico-práctico de los conflictos y las paces. **Resultados:** se identificó la necesidad de pensar críticamente el campo teórico-práctico de los conflictos y las paces desde una perspectiva transdisciplinar y multiescalar de los fenómenos, las actuaciones y las relaciones de poder. También resulta ineludible una perspectiva que evidencie los procesos de colonización de este campo teórico-práctico por parte de los modelos de una paz (neo)liberal y que, a su vez, logre trascender el esquema crítico polarizante del Norte y el Sur. Es importante *reivindicar* la escala de lo cotidiano, pues ofrece experiencias, prácticas, recursos, perspectivas e interpretaciones relevantes para la comprensión y la transformación de los conflictos y las paces. **Conclusiones:** se requiere *problematizar* las paces en las cotidianidades para abordar sus tensiones, contradicciones, dilemas y problemáticas. Con ello, se pretende estimular la comprensión y la conversación en torno a las *condiciones de posibilidad* de un enfoque para la comprensión y el fortalecimiento de las paces cotidianas.

Palabras-clave: Paz cotidiana; Construcción de paces; Investigación sobre la paz; Conflictividades sociales; Análisis de conflictos; Transdisciplinarietàad.

Resumo

Objetivo: este trabalho de reflexão busca contribuir para a fundação de uma abordagem de construção da paz que se concentra na escala do cotidiano local (do *mundo da vida*), sem parar à parte a interação e influência mútua que pode existir com outras escalas do regional, nacional e transnacional ou global. **Metodologia:** o trabalho está estruturado a partir de um conjunto de premissas que abrem caminhos e cenários de reflexão; É uma perspectiva de trabalho no *campo* teórico-prático dos conflitos e da paz. **Resultados:** identificou-se a necessidade de pensar criticamente o campo teórico-prático dos conflitos e da paz a partir de uma perspectiva transdisciplinar e multiescala dos fenômenos, ações e relações de poder. É também incontornável uma perspectiva que evidencie os processos de colonização desse campo teórico-prático pelos modelos de uma paz (neo) liberal e que, por sua vez, consiga transcender o esquema crítico de polarização do Norte e do Sul. É importante *reivindicar* a escala do cotidiano, pois oferece experiências, práticas, recursos, perspectivas e interpretações relevantes para a compreensão e transformação dos conflitos e da paz. **Conclusões:** é necessário *problematizar* a paz na vida cotidiana para enfrentar suas tensões, contradições, dilemas e problemas. Com isso, pretende-se estimular a compreensão e o diálogo sobre as *condições de possibilidade* de uma abordagem para a compreensão e fortalecimento da paz cotidiana.

Palavras-chave: Paz diária; Construção da paz; Pesquisa sobre a paz; Conflitos sociais; Análise de conflito; Transdisciplinaridade.

Introduction

There are initiatives and peace processes that emerge, unfold and struggle to consolidate and influence the conflicts present in their unique context, beyond and within the peace that is administered in the fields of macropolitics, between the elites of the different sides in conflict and under the tutelage of multinational bureaucracies that seek to manage conflicts within the framework of a *paradigm of global governance of transitions* towards societies and states “correctly” immersed in the neoliberal market system (Castillejo, 2017).

In this article I present some general reflections that seek to contribute to the *foundation* of a peace-building approach that focuses on the scale of the local-everyday (of the *world of life*), without neglecting the interaction and mutual influence that may exist with other scales of the regional, national and transnational or global. It is a perspective to work in the theoretical-practical field of conflicts and peace. Now, I am not only proposing the *claim* of the scale of everyday life, but its *problematization*. The way in which this article is written does not intend to present a complete and finished theory, but rather to collect and reflect a thought process in progress, in the manner of the *living metaphor* of Paul Ricoeur (2001), that is to say, an exercise of reflection in gerund that brings tensions, contradictions, displacements, transitions, dilemmas and problems linked to the meaning and implications of the subject discussed. Simply put, this is an *experimental* text.

I am grateful in advance for the kind and creative work of reading, appropriation, reformulation and criticism that each reader can carry out as they go through these pages. I hope that the reflections that I present stimulate reading exercises and analysis of cases. Thus, in the end, this work aims to establish reflective dialogues with some of the conceptual elements that make up discourses on peace building.

On the other hand, I recognize the context, the logic and the prevailing dynamics in the *world* of academic publishing. This is why I consider it important to make a statement about my commitment to writing in the first person. Those of us who produce and consume articles and other types of academic materials know that, in general, these artifacts avoid or deny the use of the first person as an exhibition resource. The use of the impersonal, which makes me think of the *das Man* that Heidegger speaks of, seems to be the preferred device to avoid any risk of contamination by the *informalities* of language, subjective biases, lack of objectivity and of rigor in scientific communication. In this sense, impersonal

writing tends to be associated with the objectivity and clarity of exposition expected from a scientific production.

I observe in these considerations that the presence or absence of the personal voice and the predilection for impersonal writing goes beyond stylistic issues and has epistemological implications. It implicitly involves positions on what scientific knowledge is, how it is built, how it is validated and how it is communicated, as well as what is the place of subjectivity and intersubjectivity in it.

Therefore, I want to make explicit the epistemological position from which I consider that writing in the first person can become a practice and an ethical-political commitment. The central bet from which I start is to recognize that knowledge, as feminist epistemology warns, is a *situated knowledge* (Haraway, 1991). The idea of situated knowledge problematizes the presumption of neutrality and objectivity in research and invites us to recognize the place from which it is investigated, the role of the partial gaze in the production of knowledge, as well as the conditioning, contexts, values, beliefs, relationalities and intersectionalities present in the production of knowledge. According to Donna Haraway (1991), situated knowledge is knowledge whose objectivity does not result from the alleged neutrality but, rather, from self-reflective exercises of the knowing subjects, examined with the same rigor with which known subjects are analyzed. Objectivity becomes partial objectivity. Knowledge is recognized as embedded by the context from which it is known, by the subjectivities involved in research relationships, by how it is stated and by the ontological and axiological assumptions that guide it. Under this epistemology, subjectivity and intersubjectivity that artificially disappeared after the pretense of objectivity and the recourse of the impersonal are brought to the fore.

In short, I consider that betting on the use of the first person in academic writing is consistent with the epistemological and ethical-political positioning that I assume from the idea of situated knowledge. Writing in the first person represents, for me, an invitation to position myself as a subject, to assume my own conditioning, limitations and possibilities, as well as responsibility for what I write. It is also an invitation to generate a closer setting for polyphonic dialogue and for questioning the supposed superiority of scientific knowledge.

Methodology

The reflections that I present in this article are the product of a fertile environment for conversation within the team of the line “Conflictos sociales y armados. Abordajes psicosociales hacia la construcción de culturas de paz” of the Doctorate in Psychology of the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá Headquarters. In this scenario, I have had the opportunity to question my assumptions, to get involved in discussions about multiple experiences and phenomena, to listen, learn, talk, build knowledge and draw lines of thought together with colleagues who have extensive experience in dealing with conflicts and peace. The reflections are also nourished by my own research experience on the reintegration processes of ex-combatants, as well as the critical review of the postulates wielded by the authors with whom I dialogue every day in this knowledge path, in which I stop today to make a brief pause to present to them what I have been understanding along the way.

Results

This section is structured around a set of premises that open paths and scenarios for reflection, hoping to stimulate understanding and conversation around the *conditions of possibility* of an approach to understanding and strengthening everyday peace. In other words, strictly speaking, due to the type of article this is, the following “results” could be understood as transitory understandings or preliminary results of thinking.

Premises for an Everyday Peace Approach

Premise No. 1.

The need to think critically about the theoretical-practical *field* of conflicts and peace from a transdisciplinary and multiscale perspective of phenomena, actions and power relations was identified.

Let us dwell on the examination of the various components of this premise. As a starting point, it is important to recognize that the approaches to conflict and peace have been configured as a *problematic field* of work that involves both

research, reflection and theorizing, as well as action, accompaniment or intervention. The fact of being configured as a *field* indicates an unavoidable *transdisciplinary* condition. That is to say, no monodisciplinary, or even interdisciplinary, work is sufficient to address the most pertinent topics of this *field* of studies (Flórez-Malagón, 2002).

Although historically studies on conflict and peace tend to be located predominantly in disciplines such as political science, economics, sociology and history, among others, none of them can encompass or exhaust this field¹. No form of disciplinary intervention in this *field* can be understood as an isolated and self-sufficient entity, to the extent that its discourses and practices are dynamically configured by interweaving with other disciplines, as well as with the contexts and subjects involved.

In accordance with the above, it is understood that this *field*, emerging in the second half of the 20th century, overflows the "borders" of the different social sciences, which in turn generates questions, transformations, ruptures and innovations to ontological, epistemological, methodological and axiological level. Following Flórez-Malagón (2002), it can be stated that the configuration of this *field* allows a critique of the internal hierarchy of disciplines, the fragmentation of knowledge and the problematic separation between cognitive activity, ethics, aesthetics and ontology. Attempts to solve this separation can be found in works by authors such as Alejandro Castillejo (2000), Arturo Escobar (2015) and John Paul Lederach (2016). Peaces, like conflicts, do not function as "disciplinary objects", but rather imply a blurring and criticism of that logic. Rather, they represent dynamic convergence scenarios, thus demanding border crossings, border thinking, nomadic understandings. The *fields* are configured from new languages, new records of knowledge and writing that generate the permanent reorganization of knowledge and the establishment of new pragmaticities (Flórez-Malagón, 2002). Other characteristics of transdisciplinarity scenarios are complexity, heterogeneity, non-linearity, the dialogue between the local-regional-global and the political vocation. A vocation that generates tensions and slopes within the *fields*. In the *field* that concerns us this is manifested, for example, in the tension between a (*neo*) *liberal peace* and the *daily peace*.

The logic of a *transdisciplinary field* forces us to recognize that, beyond some *mainstream* referents, it is a scenario in progress, emerging, that has not stabilized and its foundations are not completely delimited. The singular or existential dimension of the phenomena on which it works contributes to this. In this case,

1. In fact, the predominance of this type of discipline can be related to the privilege of a *macro* gaze that is aligned with a logic of conflict governance from transnational settings and institutions.

conflicts and peace (situated, contextualized, historical phenomena) permanently energize the *field*.

On the other hand, the transdisciplinary perspective is articulated with a *dynamic and integrative multiscale gaze* that invites permanent exercises to open and close the comprehension lens to move between the micro, meso and macro study of social processes and contexts. This examination does not focus solely on the processes and logics that occur in each scale, but rather seeks to identify the differences between the scales, that is, the way in which they relate and influence each other. Conflicts and peace are dynamically configured in the interaction between different scales (local, regional, national, transnational-global).

The foregoing invites us to consider both the everyday peaces in themselves and in their relations with other scales and phenomena, as well as the external contexts and the way in which they affect the configuration, the becoming, the tensions and the power relations that the peace experiences go through at the local level.

This last consideration allows us to address another aspect that illuminates the premise, namely, power relations. It is a *field* completely crossed and configured from the logic and dynamics of power. Hence, in this article I do not delve into what might seem obvious, namely, that conflicts and peaces emerge, become and take shape from a certain network of power relations. Rather, I focus on a look at the *geopolitics of knowledge* that cuts across the *field* of conflict and peace studies. I explore this from the following premise. Therefore, it is important to point out, in relation to the issue of power relations in the reading of everyday peaces, that it is essential to incorporate understandings about the factors that have generated conflicts and the emergence of violence.

The integrative multiscale perspective should also guide the understanding of conflicts and violence, in such a way as to avoid *depoliticizing* everyday peaces or shifting responsibility for violence to the subjects who coexist and inhabit the territories in which in an interrelated way different conflicts have historically been configured.

Finally, it is essential to highlight the use of the plural to refer to conflict and peace. Peaces, like conflicts and violence, are differential, intersectional, territorialized, embodied, situated, unique. The use of the singular to refer to peace is symptomatic of a global governance logic that seeks to channel the force of the social torrent implied by the conflicts and the possibilities of political transformation that they open and prefigure, through a State-centric, institutionalized model, bureaucratic and functional to the reproduction of neoliberal societies anchored in the global market and in the *promise* of progress. Talking about peaces invites us to break with the idea that there is an ideal and equal

Peace for all societies, a *path* that must be traveled to achieve it and some *prophets* who know the proper way to *lead* anyone towards the *promised land* of peace (*neo*) *liberal*.

The use of the plural to refer to peace can be understood in the framework and *spirit* of a turn towards pluralism and multiculturalism that has led to talk of identities, subjectivities, genders, etc. In the reflections of Francisco Muñoz (2001, nd), one of the precursors of the *pluralization* of the notion and understanding of peace, and in particular in his idea of *imperfect peace*, we can find some fundamental reasons that stand out the importance of the use of the plural in the approach to peace.

With the notion of *imperfect peaces* Muñoz (2001) tries to open up the meanings of peace, to understand it as procedural, unfinished, immersed in uncertainty and complexity; free her from negative orientation; identify it with the human condition and the particular conditions of existence, thus opening up the real possibilities of thought and action based on the realities that we live; Recognize that there are many spaces where peaceful conflict regulations take place, as well as the contributions that each subject and each culture can make to *their* peace, in other words, *decentralize* understanding and peace building. In short, the use of the plural, the commitment to *peaces*, entails the need to debate, rethink and resignify the ontological, axiological, epistemological, methodological and practical presuppositions of the theoretical-practical *field* of conflicts and peaces.

Premise No. 2.

From a perspective of *geopolitics of knowledge*, it is possible to show a process of colonization in the theoretical-practical field of conflict and peace from the North to the South.

Juan Daniel Cruz and Victoria Fontan (2014) postulate and argue that historically, the North has functioned as a *center* from which the thinking and practices about peace that currently predominate in the South have developed. It is, according to these authors, a dynamic of colonization of the Latin American *episteme* on conflict and peace, as occurs in other *fields*. The colonizing process goes through the imposition, by hegemonic powers (national and transnational), of discourses, practices and vertical logics (top-down) in academia, institutions, governments, communities and various practical fields. The peace that is imposed through these vertical logics, from above, is called by Cruz and Fontan (2014) as *liberal* peace.

In the *field* of conflicts and peace, *mainstream* "peace" discourses are "sold" and implemented that maintain the core of power of the States and the elites.

Cruz and Fontan (2014) argue that these discourses and their practices make invisible and deny voices, idiosyncrasies and local and community contexts, as well as the existence of peace that arises from the local. This means that the leading role of people and communities in the construction of “their” peace is relegated to a *subordinate* role in the face of the domination of the State, its institutions and international organizations.

The challenge of these types of critical perspectives on the geopolitics of the *field* of studies in conflict and peace is to deploy exercises of decolonization of the Latin American *episteme*. In the words of Cruz and Fontan (2014). This implies decolonizing the assumptions *from, for and on peace* imposed from the North and, jointly, claiming that there are types of peace that arise from the local and in everyday life. It is committed to recognizing and positioning the idea that “the peace that already exists at the local level does not have to be built in accordance with the values and understanding that are not typical of that environment” (Cruz and Fontan, 2014, p. 142).

For these authors, a critical pedagogy of colonialism and the creation of decolonized knowledge about conflicts and peace should be promoted from a position from the global South. Such pedagogy would make it possible to make visible, celebrate and rethink the types, practices and models of peace that are being created from below, from the local-everyday. At this point, it is necessary to highlight that these scenarios, due to their very situation of marginality, exclusion and subordination, may face greater challenges and complexities in terms of conflict and peacebuilding, for which they require and can by themselves develop complex, and creative alternatives that can account for the uniqueness of each case. This would lead to problematize the insistence on considering the production of models from the Global North and their adoption as the “ideal”, more “advanced” and “adequate” way to “manage” conflicts and build “peace”.

It is important, due to all of the above, to ask what the North and the South represent in the logic of a de-colonial proposal such as that of Cruz and Fontan (2014). Speaking in terms of North and South positions us in an understanding of geopolitics that identifies a historically configured dynamic in which the relations between different societies and countries respond to a *center-periphery* logic. It is a logic that operates according to power relations in which the societies and countries that embody the *center* have a greater capacity and probability of governing the *peripheries*. It governs over multiple fields, settings and scales, from complex articulations of the political, economic, social and cultural realms.

Within *peripheral* societies the same logic of *center-periphery* is reproduced, by which some sectors and territories are established as *centers* that establish a *government* relationship with and over the *peripheries*. Said local, regional and

national *centers* can become aligned with transnational-global *centers* and thus favor the reproduction of a certain *hegemonic order of things*. It is important to note that in the power relations established in this geopolitical logic of the *center-periphery*, there is always room for emergence and the exercise of resistance. There is never total and permanent domination.

It is clear that the notions of North and South represent more than geographic location and geopolitical dynamics on an international scale. What the North and the South represent, that is, dynamic *positions* in a vertical logic of *government* relations, allows us to see that the *position* of the North can be reproduced on national, local and interpersonal scales.

The *political ontology* proposed by Arturo Escobar (2015) offers more elements to broaden the understanding of the North and the South as a model or a perspective to critically interpret power relations in an integrative *multiscale* key. The notion of *ontology* would allow us to understand the North and the South as *worlds* or sets of *worlds* articulated through a particular *grammar*. A grammar, according to Joan-Carles Mèlich (2014, 2012), is a symbolic-normative universe (signs, symbols, beliefs, myths, rituals, habits, values, frames, practices, customs and *epistemes*) that structures experiences and everyday life, which orders, classifies and conceptualizes, which includes and excludes, which prescribes and, in this way, configures a world taken for granted. There is a world in each grammar, that is why when inheriting a grammar, a world is also inherited, one that is being made and that is never completely done; that owns us, determines us, places us, but that we can also transform and configure.

The North and the South represent worlds, ways of life, of being, of relating, of building community, of assuming *development*, of socio-political organization, etc., whose configuration is mutually conditioned or determined. In other words, in this model, it does not make sense to think of the South or the North in themselves, leaving aside the other *position*. The configuration and operation of a North are conditioned by the configuration and operation of a South, and vice versa. We are facing a relational model that, as Arturo Escobar (2015) would say, postulates that nothing and no one pre-exists the relationships that constitute it. This critical perspective, which shows the way of structuring relationships from the *North-South logic*, draws attention to how the relationships that constitute us can be traversed by government dynamics that give them a vertical shape. Verticality that unbalances, that establishes forms of colonization, control, submission, inequality (ontological, political and economic) and exploitation by the North of the South.

Now, it is not about looking for the South to become the new North. What it would be about, following Escobar (2015) and Cruz and Fontan (2014), is to decolonize North-South relations, to *deconstruct and subvert* that relational logic.

Ultimately, it is hoped that the situation from which one should speak of a North and a South does not exist. In Escobar's (2015) *political ontology* this translates into the affirmation and preservation of the *pluriverse*. The North-South model reveals the existence of multiple worlds that are grouped together in an agonistic dynamic in which one of those *worlds*, or a *set* of them, tries to position itself as "the" World towards which, or in which, all *worlds* should converge. The *political ontology* re-locates the North, the modern world (globalized, neoliberal-capitalist, rationalist, "civilized", individualistic, dualistic, marked by the myth of progress), as *a world among many other worlds*. This represents the *subversion* of the North-South model, through the defense of the *pluriverse*.

In this way, it is possible to avoid the aporia and the contradiction that affirming the Global South (as a new North) would entail without *exploding* the *North-South relational logic*. Thinking about peace from below, from the local and the everyday, without *subverting* that *logic*, perhaps leads authors like Cruz and Fontan (2014) to postulate a *subaltern peace*, a term that I have deliberately sought to avoid for the *foundation* of an approach to everyday peace. The notion of subalternity, although it may fulfill a function, for example, from the perspective of the construction of a *class consciousness*, it may also contribute to the configuration of identities anchored, ontologically and epistemologically, in the polarity and reproduction of the North-South model. Installing in polarity is contrary to an approach to everyday peaces that is more committed to the dialogue of knowledge, to encounters and joint construction with the different agents and institutions that are present (and even absent) in a world of life crossed by violent conflict.

The everyday peace approach that I outline here finds fertile ground in Arturo Escobar's (2015) *political ontology*. Building peace on a daily scale, in the *world of life*, entails, without being exhausted in it, caring for the pluriverse. That is, the active defense of the many *worlds* that, interconnected, inhabit the planet. It is about the claim of *autonomy* to change the *norms* (the grammar) of a world from within and on its own terms. The affirmation of the *pluriverse* implies *deconstructing* the relational dynamics that favors the colonization of one world by another and exploding the myth of the "ideal and happy world" from which all worlds should be constituted in its image and likeness.

From what has been said so far, it is understood that a condition of possibility of everyday peaces is found in the lucid and desacralizing criticism of the *gospels*, the *prophets* and the *dogmas* on which the myth of a modernity that operates as an *anthropotheistic religion*. This *democratic religion*, as Nicolás Gómez (2001; 2010) called it and as several insightful thinkers such as Walter Benjamin (1996) and Max Weber (2010) have warned, is dedicated to a perverse and im-

perative duty: capital must circulate, reproduce, expand, multiply. And for this goal everything can be sacrificed. The defense of the *pluriverse* puts the care of life before this imperative imposed by "the only completely false god". In this *care* for life and *worlds*, everyday peace can find resources, paths, territorialities and interactions conducive to germinate.

Premise No. 3.

The study and practice of peacebuilding have experienced a technocratic turn, an overvaluation of the expert and the imposition of a vertical (top-down) logic centered on institutions.

Following Roger Mac-Ginty (2014) and Cruz and Fontan (2014), a strategy that is part of the way colonizing *logic* operates in the *field* that is the subject of this work involves the import and implantation of models, in a vertical (top-down), technocratic and institutionalized way. They are models thought out and tested for other societies and contexts. This strategy entails the standardization and professionalization of a large part of the discourse, understandings, measures, activities and practices related to peacebuilding.

Faced with this panorama, an approach to everyday peaces must assume a critical and purposeful stance. One of the focuses of criticism is the position of experts that the colonizing *logic* encourages in peacebuilding professionals and the idea that "expertise" is exogenous, thus relegating local actors to the position of passive victims and recipients who lack the agency to traverse their path without external help (Cruz and Fontan, 2014; Tovar, 2013). The colonizing *logic* derives, in this scenario, in the configuration, on the one hand, of the role of "experts-saviors" (the professionals who diagnose, prescribe, guide and impose practices) and, on the other, the role of inexperienced people who must be "Saved." For Cruz and Fontan (2014), the relational dynamics that promote assuming these roles could be understood as a form of *therapeutic governance*, in which

The external models are the recipe, the governments and peace policies are the doctors, the peace agencies are the good nurses, the communities the patients who "do not know" why they have gotten sick and do not know (nor should they dare to know) a different prescription than the one recommended by the doctor (p. 137). [Own translation]

Therapeutic governance generates bonds of dependency, subordination and assistance, as well as interventions that are *invasive* insofar as they alter routines and the local environment, ignore the resources installed, do not consult the will, availability and felt needs of people and their communities (Tovar, 2013). This contributes to silencing and marginalizing local voices and initiatives, in favor of an imposed peace, which can generate disastrous consequences in relation to the conflict that is being managed (Cruz and Fontan, 2014; Tovar, 2013).

From an everyday peace approach, it tends to denature (historicize) and *deconstruct* the role or subject position of the *expert-savior*. This entails raising the *ontological equality* between the knowing subjects and the known subjects (Vasilachis, 2006). By virtue of the recognition of this equality, the “other” towards whom the knowledge and intervention strategies are directed appears as someone who has the same capacity to produce valuable knowledge, whether or not it involves the scientific method, as well as to influence the knowing subject (Vasilachis, 2006). Along these lines, Claudia Tovar (2013) affirms the importance of genuine gestures of humility and curiosity as a reaction to the omnipotence that is often frequent among professionals who work with vulnerable populations. This requires, of course, a reflective and permanent self-criticism attitude on the part of professionals, in the face of the ontological, axiological, epistemological and methodological assumptions that guide the proposals for understanding and action that they raise. To this is added the importance of recognizing oneself as a knowing subject situated, intersectional and framed by power relations.

In accordance with the above, the perspective that assumes an approach of everyday peaces claims the agency capacity of individuals and communities, as well as the idiosyncratic knowledge and resources installed and emerging in work contexts (Mac-Ginty, 2014; Tovar, 2013). Thus, the transgression of conventional ways of producing knowledge and work practices in the field of conflicts and peace is necessary (Cruz and Fontan, 2014). The construction of knowledge and work plans in the field lead to a logic that favors cooperation, horizontal dialogue, and permanent feedback mechanisms. The importance of collecting, analyzing, making visible and celebrating the learning about peace building in everyday experiences is also highlighted (Hernández, 2013).

Celebrating everyday experiences in the *field* of peace-building offers the opportunity for new questions, demands, alternatives, methods, metaphors, and perspectives to emerge for conflict transformation, regulation, and overcoming violence. In this way, the very meanings of daily experiences in peacebuilding stand as a guiding beacon of theorizing-action (Tovar, 2013). In this regard,

Mac-Ginty (2014) draws attention to how the apparent banality of everyday life challenges us to think creatively about the perspectives and methodologies that can allow us to capture it; I would say that they allow us to *grasp* the everyday, without colonizing or subduing it.

Premise No. 4.

The scale of everyday life offers experiences, practices, resources, perspectives, and interpretations of conflicts and peace that can confront the hegemonic *logic* of a North-South geopolitical model.

The approach of which I have exposed some of its *foundations* vindicates the daily, local-community scale, without neglecting the other scales and the multiple possibilities of interrelation, as is typical of what I have called dynamic and integrative *multiscalar perspective*. This demand implies showing and celebrating the capacity for agency and the heterogeneous peacebuilding initiatives that are configured and woven from below, from the local, as well as the expertise and innovations that are not the product of academies, institutions and gurus of conflict resolution (Mac-Ginty, 2014). The idea is therefore to position the idea that external experts and their resources are not a necessary and sufficient condition, they are not indispensable, to “bring Peace” to communities and shape the *world of people's lives*.

This does not mean that the possibility of dialogue with external agents is rejected, but it does mean that, in any case, the conversations would take place in a horizontal setting, of mutual recognition, in which people and their communities can become active agents building their peace. Of course, this position entails a deep questioning of the primacy of the State and formal institutions (national and international) as the main referents for research-intervention in the *field* of conflicts and peace. It also implies wondering about the type of power relations that are built from the external cooperation that reaches the territories with resources that are often long desired by the communities. Hence the importance of investigating the way in which different communities have managed to resolve these tensions without rejecting dialogue and interaction with external agents and without allowing the co-option of the construction of their daily peace.

Roger Mac-Ginty (2014) warns that, due to positions such as those just presented, the agenda of an approach to everyday peace is potentially *subversive* because it takes the *field* of peace beyond and beyond programs, projects, initiatives, the resources, the NGOs and the international organizations that colonize and manage many of the peacebuilding scenarios. With this author it can be affirmed then that the daily-local is not an *epiphenomenon* of deep structural for-

ces, rather, it is a generative force in itself and is constitutive of the national and the transnational. This perspective, Mac-Ginty (2014) would say, contributes to counteracting a fatalism associated with the growing power of technocratic, state-centric and institutionalized approaches to peace. Fatalism that is associated with the perception of an absence of control and agency in the face of one's own conflicts and the world of life itself.

Decentralizing the *field* of work in conflicts and peace from the vertical-institutional *logic* goes hand in hand with a critique of the approach to these phenomena centered on violence, even more on direct violence. Focusing on violence can generate skepticism and despair in the face of possibilities and alternatives for building peace. Similarly, dismissing forms of cultural and structural violence may itself be a form of violence that perpetuates them, thus maintaining conditions that make the possibility of escalations of direct violence remain latent.

Consequently, an approach to everyday peace will always require a complex and comprehensive understanding of the different aspects of conflicts, key to peace building. Within that, is the construction of precise and complex representations of the "other" that go beyond one-dimensional cartoons (Mac-Ginty, 2014). It is therefore essential to aim at the deconstruction of the *dominant and saturated histories of the problem*, allowing us to see that conflicts are not total, that there are always alternative histories, resources, resistance and experiences of peace even in the most critical and virulent moments of confrontations.

From Lederach's (2016) proposal, the above is connected with the idea of betting on the strengthening of a *moral imagination* that challenges what seems to be a deadlock and structurally determined, which bursts into new territories, overflows existing opinions about perceived reality it opens up what is determined as possible, contributes to materialize possibilities, to create what does not exist or to enhance what exists without the necessary force to generate greater transformations. Along the path of Lederach (2016), the everyday peaces approach focusses on that capacity to imagine and generate responses and constructive initiatives that, even being rooted in the daily challenges of violence, transcend and, ultimately, *break* the ties of those destructive patterns and cycles.

The everyday peaces approach entails the challenge of being able to grasp the everyday in and from its own poetics, its ethos, its pathos, its aesthetic-politics (ways of life). It is essential that the subjects themselves, situated and intersectional, who build their daily lives with others are the protagonists of the interpretation and transformation of that *world of life*. However, this cannot lead to an idealization of the local-community. Subjects often incarnate, reproduce and can be seen "favored" by the violence that runs through their daily

lives. Hence, external agents, as long as they assume a position that recognizes ontological equality and guarantees horizontal scenarios, play a significant role in supporting subjects in their exercises of understanding and transforming themselves and their circumstances.

The work of understanding that I have outlined so far as the insignia of the everyday peaces approach can also be understood as a task of *historicizing* the everyday, along the path of the *ontology of the present* that articulates all the work of Michel Foucault (2014, 2004).

Premise No. 5.

The semantic field on which an approach of everyday peaces is established claims an everyday peace in the face of a *(neo)liberal* peace.

In this last premise, I address the central concept of the approach that I have been profiling from the above premises. The concept of everyday peace or structured everyday peaces this approach and contrasts (ontologically, epistemologically, methodologically and ethically-politically) with a *(neo)liberal* form of peace.

According to Juan Daniel Cruz y Victoria Fontan (2014), a liberal or *(neo)liberal* peace is one that is imposed from *above*, in a vertical, colonizing logic, through hegemonic practices in which the external (national or transnational) submit the local-everyday life. This model of peace-building is part of what Alejandro Castillejo (2017) called as *global governance of political transitions* (in situations of armed conflict or dictatorship). For Cruz y Fontan (2014), as I stated in the development of the third premise, this is *therapeutic governance*.

A *(neo)liberal* peace is constituted from the universalist and administrator gaze that assumes Peace as a mechanical solution for Conflict. It is also organized around States and their territories, neoliberal socio-economic development, international organizations, bureaucratic elites, and political and business classes. This dynamic, as I mentioned above, derives from the marginalization and/or co-optation of voices and local processes. This situation, that can deepen conflicts and create the illusion that peace-building, is due exclusively to formulas and imitations of external models, as well as to the redemptive agency of peace experts. The approach of everyday peace is at the same time as all these logics, perspectives and implications of *(neo)liberal peace*.

In contrast to a *(neo)liberal peace*, Roger Mac-Ginty (2014) defines everyday peaces as the practices, techniques and norms deployed by individuals and groups, in deeply divided societies to avoid and minimize conflict and difficult

situations, both intergroup and intragroup. I believe that this definition can be reformulated and complemented to understand everyday peace as dynamic, localized (contextualized) and ritualized sets of discourses, norms, methods, practices and techniques that individuals and collectives use in daily life, within the framework of deeply divided societies, willing to direct violence and with expressions of structural violence, in order to manage their conflicts, create and care for non-violent forms of life and interaction with others.

To assume this concept of everyday peaces implies to recognize that everyday life is governed by sets of rules, the social world flows, groups are heterogeneous, environmental factors are of paramount importance (Mac-Ginty, 2014), and the domination is never total, it means, there are always possibilities for agency, resistance and *poietic action* (involves *moral imagination*, innovation, improvisation and creativity). An everyday peace must be based upon and allow agency. Its origin is local-community and works in a horizontal logic of *bottom-up* always within the framework of power relations and they are decisive for its understanding and conformation.

For the above, peace is not always obvious, it can and tend to operate almost clandestinely, in an informal area that is not immediately subject to the same controls that shape formal projects (budget cycles, reporting mechanisms, deadlines, etc.) (Mac-Ginty, 2014). In the informal context, unwritten and constant evolving governance systems emerge and apply to intergroup and intragroup relations (Mac-Ginty, 2014).

In this way, an everyday peace departs from notions, logics, programs, projects, State-centered instances and organizations, institutionalized, technocratic and bureaucratic (peace-building elites). Here is one of the main challenges for an everyday peace: to establish dialogues and cooperative relations with external (national and international bodies) without losing their autonomy and their capacity for agency, without giving in to co-optation and colonization, managing strategically the risks to the lives of those who embody this model based on local daily life. The goal is that dialogues and other interactions with elites and institutions can increase the likelihood that a daily peace will be positioned and lasted over time.

It is important to understand, in accordance with Mac-Ginty (2014), that an everyday peace is fluid and can be thought of as a continuum, with a minimalist version that concerns survival (to avoid or to calm conflict and direct violence – negative peace), and a broad vision (more positive and ambitious actions of transformation or qualitative impact on the nature of the conflict – positive peace). Flow can mean, on the other hand, that a daily peace may be possible in some periods and impossible in others, strong in some respects but weak in

others. It is also an intersectional peace (responds to aspects of class, gender, race, religion, age, etc.), differential, territorialized, embodied and dialogical (it is supported in interaction, social recognition, reciprocity, shared parameters and social responses). In different aspects it is a *parrhesiac* peace.

According to Michel Foucault (2010), the concept of *parrhesia* had extensive use in Greco-Latin antiquity. This concept connoted a vital, earlier than formal, relationship of the subject with his speech. This means that his discourse is not "true" because it obeys a set of technical rules, but it is backed by the way of life of that who enunciates it. The *parrhesist* showed a "courage of truth" by not fearing the vital risk of behaving according to his speech. This is a correspondence between action, speech and ethos. The *parrhesist* reveals, challenges and confronts the politician, the technician of the management of the social, with his "truthfulness", through his way of life.

In this sense, I suggest that an everyday peace is *parrhesiac*, because it is a peace that is not shaped and positioned in everyday life based on formal models and technical discourses, but its power lies in the ways of life, in the microsocialities, narratives, experiences and meanings of subjects and communities that bet on strategies for the management of their conflicts, which depart from the logics of a (*neo*)liberal peace.

Therefore, its *teaching* responds more to sensitive observation, intuition, essay and error, various forms of cultural transmission, and the encounter of subjects immersed in conflict situations than to handbooks or academic literature confined to articles Q1 and Q2. In the contexts of deep socio-political division in which everyday peace initiatives are at stake, as Foucault mentions about the *parrhesist* and Lederach (2016) warns about *moral imagination*, it requires courage, willingness to risk and to advance into the unknown without further guarantee of success or security. A paradox of conflict scenarios, Lederach (2016) states that the violence is what is known, the *mystery* is peace.

This *parrhesiac* aspect, in which peace efforts become life forms with others in everyday life, as well as their local-community origin, can give everyday peace greater authenticity and legitimacy in the face of imported and hegemonic initiatives. According to Mac-Ginty (2014), it is a form of peace that can help to prevent escalation, the *hybris* of conflict, maintain some "civility" and introduce informal rules in critical situations.

The *parrhesists*, then, did not seek to walk away in order to preserve their way of life, rather they were looking for something that authors like Mac-Ginty (2014) and Lederach (2016) consider indispensable for the construction of an everyday peace, called the conquest of an *existence* in the public sphere as agents of their own peace. This involves, for example, demonopolizing the peace agen-

das of models, timelines and resource management imposed by national and international institutions (Cruz y Fontan, 2014).

The *parrhesists*, with their truthfulness, with their politics and peace embodied in their bodies, in their territory, in their way of life and in relation to others, seek to horizontalize the social field of power relations. An everyday peace, *parrhesiac*, thus becomes a category, figure and exercise of resistances. Resistance to all logic and model of (neo)liberal peace, but also with regard to any form of polarization, fatalism, dominant narrative, hegemonic and totalizing conflict. Resistance to the narratives of the "other" that reproduce ontological inequality and represent it as someone homogeneous and invariable, irrational, dangerous, illegitimate, unworthy, with whom you cannot dialogue and who can not be trusted. Resistance as a critique to the legitimacy and instrumentalizations of conflicts and violence.

Conclusions

As a colophon and invitation to continue to think of an everyday peace approach, I draw on these conclusions some reflections, challenges, questions and openings arising from the development of the above premises.

As a starting point, I consider it is necessary to make it clear that everyday peace is not limited exclusively to the world of the lives of populations in conditions of exclusion, discrimination, marginality, socio-economic precariousness or violated by direct violence. An everyday peace can, and often must, involve different sectors of society. To this contributes the commitment to the everyday peace, that here, I outline to depolarize the *world of life* and to *subvert* the *relational logic* of the North-South type. Taking on this polarizing model can lead us to settle in a place of subaltern identity and in a militancy that seeks to break entirely with the above; with the North, elites, institutions and the State (locally, regionally, nationally and transnationally). In this regard, I remark on the importance of reconstructing relationships from and in everyday life, understood as a generative force in itself, but without "idealizing" it.

At this point, I consider it is necessary to problematize and add nuance to the way in which some of the considerations on everyday peace were presented, and that they could create the impression that a dichotomic perspective is being proposed that aims to encapsulate forms of peace-building into two ideal categories or types: everyday peaces and neoliberal peace. I believe that; it is not

feasible to assume that all peace-building experiences can be placed or aligned in one of these two forms of understanding and interpretation.

Each experience of peace, although in principle may give rise to the impression that it can be recognized from one way or another of building peace, can involve or develop complex forms of hybridization, contradictions, continuity and discontinuities, displacement, transits and transformations. Interconnections may occur between different forms of peace-building. Presences and incidents of logics of a neoliberal peace in the experiences of daily peace, as well as the logics of everyday peaces influence the way in which to proceed in peace-building scenarios signed by presence and technocratic management.

It is also important to note that at non-local scales and state areas non-neoliberal logics can operate, it means, those are not necessarily prerogative of the local-daily scale. I believe that, phenomenological and ethnographic approaches to peace-building experiences, without excluding other methodological approaches, can determine one's own movements of understanding and interpretation, as well as their relevance in contributing to the strengthening of those experiences.

On the other hand, it is risky to be unaware that conflicts, violence, exclusion logics, neoliberalism and capitalism are also built from the South, from *below*, from the local. We cannot fall into the trap of "idealizing" the everyday and community strategies as if they were perfect and free from contradictions, conflicts, risks, ideologies, particular interests, reproductions of colonizing logics and perverse effects, just by emerging from *below*. An everyday peaces approach cannot deny or ignore the historical configuration and presence of conflicts, and violence that may exist in communities and territories where challenges arise for building peace. In fact, it is possible that one factor that stokes these conflicts is the different understandings and bets on how they are understood and how peace is built.

To pretend *breaking* with the State, institutions, organizations and elites may involve entering into the *game* of neoliberalism, which shifts responsibility (and guilt) for change and "development" to individuals and their communities. An example of the above is pointed out by Mac-Ginty (2014) in relation to the superficial agendas that elevate "resilience" to the status of the idea of the cure for everything (an ideological view that connects neoliberalism and communitarianism). Without facilitating the "hand washing" of governments, an everyday peaces approach aims to build bridges of horizontal dialogue and joint, collaborative and co-crafting construction between local peace experiences, and agents and institutions working in other scenarios and scales. To this end, it is essential to advocate for the recognition of *ontological equality* for all.

A peace built from the local can find it difficult to connect with the level of the elites. However, some kind of interaction is necessary to prevent the elites from attacking the processes of building everyday peace. In this sense, those who interact with the elites should seek to take into account the fears and risks that they may be perceiving, in order to contribute to managing them strategically.

This everyday peace approach advocates a dynamic view of power relations that allows peace initiatives to have more and better tools to persist, resist, adapt, strengthen, to take a place in and influence the public sphere. It is also a matter of claiming the legitimacy and power of knowledge that is built from the local, from whom it is usually placed in the position of known and enunciated subject. A knowledge not only about themselves, their experiences and their worlds of life, but about elites, government and, in general, those who have historically studied, categorized, theorized, enunciated, modelled, calculated and governed.

In everyday life, on the local scale, there are epistemologies, ways of thinking and relating, that an approach of everyday peace must vindicate and express the knowledge from academia and other institutions, that affect the field of conflicts and peace. It is important that everyday peace experiences and initiatives implement a dynamic and strategic view of power relations, the functioning of government, rulers and other elites, in order to enhance their actions, their chances of resisting attempts to co-opt or instrumentalize them, and their scope in terms of transforming conflicts and violence.

This dynamic and multi-step view of power relations recalls Niccolò Machiavelli's warning to Lorenzo de Medici in his dedication to the Prince. There, Machiavelli speaks to everyone who aspires to govern and move properly in the webs of power:

And I don't want it to be taken as a presumption if a man of low and humble condition dares to discuss and settle the concerns of princes; because, just as those who draw landscapes place themselves below in the plain to contemplate the nature of the mountains and of lofty places, and in order to contemplate the plains place themselves upon high mountains, even so to understand the nature of the people it needs to be a prince, and to understand that if princes it needs to be of the people. (Machiavelli, 2010, pp. 76-77). [Own translation]

This set of perspectives and positions is key to a daily peace approach that raises the need for complex ways of understanding the world and themselves, which renounces linear views of causality and simplifies phenomena. This approach embraces the uncertainty that the commitment to a permanent pro-

blematization of its own premises and actions can generate. You feel comfortable understanding and interacting with the paradoxes of the *world of life*, navigating through the flow of ever-provisional experiences, meanings and metaphors, as well as betting on a *poietic* action that is not disconnected from the material conditions of existence.

A complex and strategic understanding of contexts and power relations may be essential for circumvention, as Mac-Ginty (2014) points out, the possibility, generally present, that everyday peace initiatives become the target of the exercise of violence when they threaten the narratives of division and incompatibility to be perpetuated or intergroup boundaries, as well as when they open up real possibilities for structural transformations. Even members of the community in which everyday peace initiatives are born can also deposit violence and escalation of conflict when they find contact and dialogues with external agents threatening and/or threaten their privileges. This is why strategic management of fear, risk, hopelessness, prejudice and interests is a main aspect of building everyday peaces and must be done both within the community, and in interaction with external actors.

I would like to conclude with some reflections on the role of the academy in the face of everyday peace initiatives, bearing in mind that from there, a contribution is made to produce knowledge and practices that can influence peace-building at different scales. A clear call from the approach of everyday peaces is to question the (neo)liberal model of peace; this is a model whose budgets and concepts are often included in research-intervention projects, even more so when framed by funding and/or cooperation with official institutions². In addition, such an approach creates significant tension for professionals working in the field of conflict and peace by asking them to resign from the position of expert-colonizer-saviors, and still require them to commit to "making a difference" by interacting with subjects and their communities.

The question then arises about the principles and strategies that can contribute to adequately dealing with this tension. This also leads us to ask about the role that the academy can play in building dialogues and interactions between everyday peace experiences and formal institutions or scenarios, so that they do not become more or less obvious forms of co-optation, colonization and instrumentalization.

It is also a challenge for the academy to avoid colonizing and instrumentalizing everyday peace initiatives by prioritizing the struggles of training, re-

2. For a critical approach to this scenario and its tensions, I suggest to consult the reflections set out in the text "(Re)politicizing Development Cooperation: Public discourses, practices and policies for transformative international solidarity" (Belda-Miguel, Boni y Sañudo, 2018, pp. 37-60).

search and knowledge production that favors products that are "high impact" according to the neoliberal trend that increasingly dominates academia.

A thorough fieldwork, respectful of *ontological equality* of cognizant subjects and known subjects (Vasilachis, 2006) and, consequently, open to the collective construction of knowledge, it is essential to understand how everyday peace initiatives operate, and how we can humbly contribute to their success and sustainability. Here is another challenge related to the fact that everyday peace activities can be highly localized and context-dependent.

It is about the importance of managing limits on how and where a particular commitment to everyday peace can operate, as well as the possibilities of inspiring and mobilizing initiatives in other contexts. Beyond the aspirations for replicability that science reveals, it is about how to connect with initiatives elsewhere, and how to expand the incidence range. In other words, how to move from small island scenarios and oasis of peace to a growing and dynamic context of archipelagoes that share knowledge, strategies, learnings and empower each other.

The academy cannot simply be the translator, theorizer and viewer of what emerges from the local-everyday-community. It must help to prevent violent *rupture* between the everyday, the *bottom*, and the different instances, institutions and agents that form an *up* in power relations. It is a commitment to the horizontalization of interactions around peace-building, as well as to the deconstruction of false dichotomies, and multiple forms of polarization. It is the commitment to help local subjects and experiences of daily peace to achieve strong public existence as peace-building agents. The existence that can be compromised by violent rupture with what is set on the top.

But it is not just about helping to position everyday life in the public sphere, besides that, it implies criticism of false dichotomy that seeks to differentiate and distance daily life and the public sphere. The *world of everyday life* is a generative constituent and dynamizing force of the public sphere.

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