ÁNFORA

Social, Economic and Cultural Dynamics

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La revista **Ánfora** es una publicación semestral con alcance regional, nacional e internacional. Difunde resultados de investigaciones en las áreas de las ciencias sociales y humanas, con el fin de fomentar el intercambio de conocimientos, opiniones y perspectivas culturales diversas. Se dirige a investigadores, docentes y, en general, a estudiantes y profesionales de las disciplinas afines. La revista invita a presentar investigaciones interdisciplinarias que busquen interpretar y abordar soluciones a temas actuales desde distintas perspectivas de las áreas establecidas. El interés de Ánfora es aportar al enriquecimiento del acervo científico y a sus comunidades, a partir del debate y la colaboración.

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Editorial

Dinámicas sociales, económicas y culturales: cambios y transformaciones

Social, Economic and Cultural Dynamics:
Changes and Transformations

Dinâmica social, econômica e cultural: mudanças e transformações

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Resumen

Resulta innegable que los cambios de la última década —en especial, los que se han presentado desde la pandemia en el año 2019— han posibilitado nuevos espacios de reflexión en las diferentes dimensiones del mundo social en busca de nuevas formas de vida que respondan a los desafíos y retos de una sociedad cambiante en un mundo cada vez más complejo (Bonil *et al.*, 2004). Se presentan nuevas formas de entender la realidad en las que, desde la ciudadanía, la política, la economía y la cultura se realizan discursos y acciones que intencionalmente generan cambios y transformaciones sociales (Searle, 2010). Ante estas exigencias diversos investigadores han iniciado, desde sus estudios en los diferentes campos del saber, una serie de apuestas para el cambio. Para responder a estos desafíos, los autores de los trece artículos que componen este número de Ánfora plantean nuevas dinámicas que permitan avanzar hacia una sociedad del bienestar en la que se generen acciones para alcanzar la paz, se proteja el ambiente, se aporte a la economía sostenible y se

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transite hacia una cultura en la que prime la formación de las capacidades del ser y sus interacciones con el mundo, a partir de los saberes construidos en la ciencia moderna, el arte y los saberes ancestrales.

Palabras clave: Dinámicas sociales; cambios; desarrollo humano; bienestar; sostenibilidad.

Abstract

It is undeniable that the changes of the last decade - especially those that have occurred since the pandemic in 2019 - have enabled new spaces for reflection in the different dimensions of the social world, in search of new ways of life that respond to the challenges of a changing society, in an increasingly complex world (Bonil et al., 2004). New ways of understanding reality are presented, in which, from the citizen, political, economic and cultural perspectives, discourses and actions that intentionally generate social changes and transformations (Searle, 2010) are made. Faced with these challenges, various researchers have initiated, from their studies in different fields of knowledge, a series of bets for change. As a response, the authors of the thirteen articles that are included in this issue of Ánfora propose new dynamics that allow progress towards a well-being society in which actions are generated to achieve peace, protect the environment, contribute to the sustainable economy and move towards a culture in which the development of the capacities of beings and their interactions with the world prevails, based on the knowledge built in modern science, art and ancestral wisdom.

Keywords: Social dynamics; changes; human development; well-being; sustainability.

Resumo

É inegável que as mudanças da última década, especialmente as que ocorreram a partir da pandemia de 2019, possibilitaram novos espaços de reflexão nas diferentes dimensões do mundo social, em busca de novos modos de vida que respondam aos desafios de uma sociedade em transformação em um mundo cada vez mais complexo (Bonil et al., 20XX). Há novas formas de compreender a realidade em que, a partir da cidadania, da política, da economia e da cultura, são realizados discursos e ações que intencionalmente geram mudanças e transformações sociais (Searle, 2010). Diante dessas demandas, diversos pesquisadores, a partir de seus estudos em diferentes áreas do conhecimento, têm proposto uma série de mudanças. Para responder a esses

desafios, os autores dos treze artigos que compõem esta edição da Ánfora propõem novas dinâmicas que nos permitem avançar em direção a uma sociedade de bem-estar, na qual são geradas ações com vistas à promoção da paz, proteção do meio ambiente, contribuição para uma economia sustentável e progresso em direção a uma cultura na qual a formação das capacidades do ser e suas interações com o mundo, com base no conhecimento construído na ciência moderna, na arte e no conhecimento ancestral, tenham primazia.

Palavras-chave: Dinâmica social; mudança; desenvolvimento humano; bem-estar; sustentabilidade.

Los avances en la ciencia, la tecnología, la innovación y la educación trazan rutas para el cambio en pro del desarrollo social y sostenible de los territorios. Es así como se generan apuestas para responder a los retos que ha trazado la ONU (2015) en su agenda 2030, en los que sin duda aportar a los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) posibilitará el trabajo sinérgico para el avance de los pueblos; en especial, para aquellos que están en vía de desarrollo.

Así, la injusticia social, la corrupción política, la legitimidad otorgada a los actos de violencia, los atentados a la democracia y a la dignidad humana, la pérdida de la memoria histórica, los bajos niveles de sostenibilidad económica, las injusticias epistémicas y la incertidumbre frente a un futuro incierto son, entre otros, algunos de los problemas que exigen volver sobre la reflexión y a la toma de conciencia colectiva para emprender acciones de cambio en las que la educación para la ciudadanía crítica se convierta en una pieza fundamental para proponer «[…] nuevas formas de sentir, valorar, pensar y actuar en los individuos y colectividades que posibilite a toda la ciudadanía del planeta alcanzar una vida digna en un entorno sostenible» (Bonil *et al.*, 2004, p. 53).

Ante este panorama, el conocimiento científico en diálogo con los saberes ancestrales —como productos de creación cultural— se convierte en una herramienta esencial para la comprensión del mundo actual y las transformaciones requeridas para alcanzar el bienestar social (Sen, 2000). Sin embargo, resulta evidente que, en su mayoría, los Estados no brindan las oportunidades sociales, económicas, políticas y culturales requeridas para lograr los cambios deseables. Es allí cuando el enfoque de capacidades propuesto por Nussbaum (2012) permite a las colectividades generar estrategias para poner al alcance de todos los miembros de las diferentes instituciones sociales los recursos y condiciones necesarias para el buen funcionamiento de la sociedad.

Para Nussbaum (2001), alcanzar una *buena vida* demanda una educación cuyo objetivo se centre en formar a los ciudadanos para cuestionar el funcionamiento de las instituciones sociales y políticas, lo que a su vez conlleva al reconocimiento del ser humano como ser histórico. «Este principio no sólo conduce a la necesidad de contextualizar las aseveraciones del sujeto en la historia para comprenderlas, sino de entender al sujeto en su historia para contextualizarlo» (Arias, 2011, p. 64). En este sentido, esta formación debe realizarse desde el fortalecimiento de las capacidades humanas fundamentales. Así, los ciudadanos en el hacer colectivo asumen en sus acciones de cambio la responsabilidad para garantizar el ejercicio de las libertades básicas y defender la dignidad humana. De igual forma, estarán en capacidad de exigir al Estado y a las instituciones que se garantice a las comunidades el acceso a las oportunidades requeridas para que los seres humanos que constituyen el tejido social realicen transformaciones en las dimensiones sociales, políticas, económicas y culturales, y con ello aporten al crecimiento social y productivo del entorno que habitan.

De acuerdo con lo anterior, como agentes sociales asumimos la responsabilidad de trazar nuevas rutas para el cambio de las instituciones que históricamente han constituido y reglamentado los dispositivos para el funcionamiento de la organización social. Ello implica pensar la realidad en nuevos términos y con nuevas lupas teóricas que posibiliten una configuración de nuevos sentidos simbólicos para interpretar y comprender desde otras perspectivas la tensión individuo-sociedad.

Son justamente estas nuevas miradas las que convocan las investigaciones que se presentan en este número, en los cuales aparecen propuestas para el cambio. Es así como Isabel Rivera, Andrés Gómez y Jorge Rivadeneira presentan en su estudio un análisis de los determinantes de recurrencia de ataques terroristas, planteando que existen factores que permiten iniciar procesos para la disminución de los índices de dichos ataques, entre los cuales se hayan la alta participación laboral femenina, inversión en educación y bajos índices de corrupción. Dichas variables permiten pensar este fenómeno bajo nuevas perspectivas para proponer alternativas de cambio.

En una línea de trabajo similar se encuentran las investigaciones de Andrés Orozco y Pedro Madrid, quienes presentan en su artículo «Violencia y legitimidad» un análisis en torno a las percepciones que poseen los jóvenes de la comuna 13 en Medellín, Colombia, sobre legitimidad que se ha otorgado a la violencia y a las organizaciones criminales. Para los autores, como lo muestran en las conclusiones de su estudio, en Medellín como en muchos otros municipios de Colombia se presentan problemas de legitimidad para el ejercicio de control y seguridad. Por lo tanto, se han legitimado prácticas corruptas y violentas y

se requieren acciones del Estado para ejercer control y soberanía en aras de garantizar la seguridad social.

Por su parte, Leonardo Cárdenas, en su texto «Colombia en tiempos de posverdad» presenta un estudio en el que reflexiona en torno a la importancia de reconstruir de manera objetiva los hechos que han marcado la historia social y política del país, y desenmascarar aquellos discursos en los que se maquillan los hechos, desconociendo la historia del conflicto armado en Colombia. Para este investigador el conocimiento de la historia no solo es fundamental para comprender la realidad que han vivido los colombianos durante las últimas décadas, sino que se torna en un elemento esencial para el ejercicio de la ciudadanía, ya que otorga la objetividad requerida para comprender los hechos que marcan nuestro devenir histórico como colombianos. El negacionismo que sostiene el director del Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica en Colombia sobre los hechos del conflicto armado en este país, expone el Cárdenas, tiene implicaciones prácticas desastrosas, no solo porque se crea una realidad paralela a la que vivió el país, sino porque se niega la posibilidad de reparación a las víctimas, dado que en esos discursos de la posverdad se niega la existencia de estas. Los estudios de Cárdenas nos invitan a pensar sobre el cambio social que, como lo exponen Bonil et al., (2004), parte del conocimiento de la historia.

Ahora bien, otra problemática de gran interés que moviliza reflexiones son los movimientos migracionales. Juan David Mambuscay y Tirso Duarte-Molina invitan con su investigación a reflexionar sobre cómo es posible realizar análisis de las dinámicas migratorias desde nuevas perspectivas. «Nuda vida» es una propuesta para trabajar en defensa de los derechos fundamentales de aquellas poblaciones migrantes que han padecido la exclusión por parte de las naciones receptoras. El análisis presentado por estos autores incita la reflexión en torno al tratamiento jurídico, político y económico que han recibido los migrantes cuando llegan a un país foráneo. La propuesta de un modelo rizomático para examinar los procesos migratorios abre nuevas rutas para entender y regular estas dinámicas desde diversas variables; en especial, aquellas que protegen la dignidad humana.

El cuarto artículo de este número es presentado por Zulema Rodríguez. Su estudio da cuenta del rol que cumplen las mujeres en el cuidado de sí y de otros como mediación para la paz. El análisis de las narrativas de estas mujeres y sus vivencias en tiempos de conflicto y de transición posibilitan nuevos caminos para el reconocimiento del otro en medio de diálogos y prácticas basadas en el amor, el respeto y la solidaridad. Son, precisamente, estas dinámicas las que marcan nuevas formas para habitar y transformar el territorio en busca de paz.

Es justo el reconocimiento del otro que está en relación con el cuidado de sí y del entorno el que incita a repensar la educación. Por ello, Édgar Fernández y Adrián de Jesús Tabares nos invitan, con su artículo de revisión, a pensar cómo se

ha sustentado teóricamente en América Latina la educación basada en derechos. Si se requieren cambios sociales que atiendan a las particularidades del territorio y que también dé respuesta a estas problemáticas que convoca el ejercicio de una ciudadanía global, entonces hay que empezar a tomar conciencia sobre los lineamientos que orientan los diseños de una educación basada en derechos. Es así como estos investigadores realizan un análisis de las tensiones legales, políticas y morales que se han presentado a lo largo de los últimos seis años a la hora de diseñar procesos educativos que aporten en el fortalecimiento de capacidades para pensar de manera crítica la realidad con el fin de incidir de mejor manera en una educación para la ciudadanía que propenda por el respeto de la dignidad humana, por el cuidado de la naturaleza y que movilice en niños y jóvenes acciones colectivas para el cambio social.

En una línea similar, Diana García, Paula Aristizábal y Consuelo Vélez centran su investigación en el ámbito educativo. Su estudio se enfocó en indagar sobre la satisfacción con la vida que posee una comunidad universitaria tras vivir épocas de incertidumbre como las vividas durante la pandemia. Para las investigadoras los tiempos de crisis vividos durante la pandemia deja en evidencia que docentes y estudiantes asumieron esta realidad de forma diferente. En sus conclusiones, las autoras evidencian el reto que tienen las instituciones de educación superior en la formación de profesionales críticos; seres humanos más resilientes y que sean capaces de afrontar desde sus conocimientos y acciones los desafíos que se imponen ante las diferentes crisis que se puedan avecinar en los diversos ámbitos del mundo social. Por ello, un desafío que aparece latente para la academia en estos tiempos de incertidumbre es el de formar en capacidades para fortalecer el trabajo multidisciplinario y dar respuesta a las demandas de esas nuevas dinámicas que se han generado en el mundo social.

En diálogo con los resultados alcanzados por García, Aristizábal y Vélez en su estudio que da cuenta de la satisfacción con la vida, Juan Carlos de la Ossa y Sandra Tatiana Delgado realizan una reflexión en torno al enfoque de capacidades y cómo desde este se pueden reorientar los procesos formativos en los diferentes niveles educativos; máxime cuando se espera que los procesos educativos aporten a las nuevas dinámicas sociales, económicas y culturales que se imponen en los últimos años. La apuesta por una formación que aporte al desarrollo humano, al fortalecimiento de la agencia y las individualidades éticas resulta esencial si en verdad se espera impactar la sostenibilidad y sustentabilidad de las regiones. En este sentido, desde la educación se debe asumir el reto de pensar la agencia desde la colectividad para lograr un verdadero cambio social.

En un ejercicio que aporta en la comprensión de las dinámicas económicas, la investigación de Ricardo Andrade y Joan Sebastián Arbeláez, así como la presentada por Camilo Gómez y Óscar Hernán Cerquera, nos acercan a nuevas

alternativas para mejorar la productividad de las regiones. En sus estudios muestran cómo los elementos constituyentes del desarrollo humano resultan esenciales a la hora de aportar no solo al capital humano de un territorio, sino también al capital relacional y estructural que incide en el crecimiento social y productivo de las regiones. Elementos como el arraigo, el reconocimiento de la cultura —y, en especial, las formas de vivir y habitar los territorios— son particularidades que dan cuenta del compromiso de las colectividades que dinamizan los cambios en los ámbitos económicos y sociales. La vinculación de nuevas prácticas que dan cuenta tanto de saberes científicos como ancestrales para cuidar el territorio y aprovechar con conciencia los recursos que se tienen en una región han sido elementos poco valorados en la cultura del mercado. Es por ello que en estas investigaciones se bifurcan nuevos caminos para alcanzar una economía sostenible en la que se humanicen las prácticas de quienes aportan a ese crecimiento económico. Se vinculan, así, prácticas culturales y sociales que no responden al funcionamiento de un mercado tradicional, sino que evidencian otras formas de vida en las que el cuidado de sí y de los recursos son esenciales para lograr transformaciones de vida. Podría decirse que esta apuesta por un modelo socio-relacional posibilita nuevos espacios para pensar variables no convencionales que inciden de manera directa en la economía.

En este sentido, el crecimiento económico va de la mano de la reflexión sobre la cultura, el cambio climático, los cuidados del ambiente y el compromiso social. Es precisamente esta la ruta que trazan los estudios de Gómez y Cerquera, quienes en su análisis generan alternativas para pensar una economía sostenible. Al igual que la investigación presentada por estos autores, el estudio realizado por Lucio Noriero, Artemio Cruz y Jesús Daniel Castillo presenta una apuesta por la etnoagranomía y los saberes para sustentar un nuevo modelo de desarrollo agrícola que responda a los desafíos que enfrenta México ante la cuarta transformación. Para Noriero *et al.* la crisis social y alimentaria que se presenta en México y en Latinoamérica demanda espacios de reflexión en los que las visiones progresistas posibiliten cambios en los gobiernos y en las políticas públicas educativas en aras de generar espacios de diálogo para escuchar a quienes aportan desde sus saberes al crecimiento social y económico; esas voces poco reconocidas que pueden aportar para propiciar nuevos escenarios en los que se generen los cambios sociales y económicos requeridos.

Los saberes ancestrales cobran relevancia en las prácticas sociales y, dentro de estos, el arte como manifestación de la cultura tiene mucho que decir a la hora de pensar en procesos de cambio social. Es así como Aglaía Sphati escudriña en su análisis la función social del arte para develar la fuerza de este para transformar la conducta ética del individuo. El arte genera no solo un espacio de expresión, sino una reflexión para iniciar procesos de cambio en la lucha del individuo ante

el abuso de poder político y social que se impone. El arte es la herramienta del poeta para pensar nuevas formas de habitar en el mundo y transformarlo. Se inicia, entonces, una apuesta por el cultivo de lo estético y la recuperación de la cultura para entender las crisis y construir una sociedad sana que progrese en el esfuerzo colectivo que convoque nuevas comprensiones y acciones de cambio. El arte es esa primera aproximación hacia la búsqueda de la sanación del espíritu.

La puerta de salida que deja abierta Sphati con su estudio sobre la función social del arte es justo la entrada a la investigación de Bairon Jaramillo y Javier Lombo, para quienes las prácticas ancestrales en la cosmovisión de los pueblos amerindios vislumbran nuevos caminos, si lo que se espera es transitar hacia la sanación del espíritu. En este sentido, la concepción de vida encarnada en la sabiduría ancestral de un pueblo moviliza nuevas narraciones colectivas en la creación de una sociedad sana que responde de maneras no convencionales a los cambios sociales y culturales que se anhelan cuando se postula una sociedad del bienestar.

En este sentido, cada uno de los autores que presenta sus manuscritos en este número de Ánfora invita a tener nuevas miradas desde diversas perspectivas de los problemas que en sus investigaciones exponen. Apuestas por nuevas dinámicas que posibiliten el avance hacia una sociedad sostenible tanto en el ámbito social como en el económico. Por esta razón, invitamos a todos nuestros lectores a entablar un diálogo con las apuestas que se sugieren en cada uno de los trece artículos que componen este número 56.

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SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND
CULTURAL DYNAMICS

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Investigaciones y reflexiones
Pesquisa e reflexão

Determinants of Recurrence of Terrorist Attacks. Global Analysis with Panel Data[*]

[English Version]

Determinantes de recurrencia de ataques terroristas. Análisis global con datos panel

Determinantes da recorrência de ataques terroristas. Análise global com dados de painel

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Abstract

Objective: The objective of this study is to establish the determinants of the number of terrorist attacks in a territory over time. **Methodology**: Elements of both the theory of the attack claims and the recurrence of attacks are incorporated, to obtain a deeper analytical spectrum. Secondly, a negative binomial stochastic model with panel data is implemented, characterized by being dynamic to avoid endogeneity problems. The information used comes from the Global Terrorism Database, Big Allied and Dangerous, Political Terror Scale, and World Bank databases. **Results**: The initial results obtained indicate that the probability of terrorist attacks increases when there is a history of armed assault, a high educational level, suicide attacks, and attacks on civilians, while it decreases with high female labor participation and low corruption rates. Alternatively, the research found sufficient empirical evidence to affirm that the attack claims help to explain the phenomenon of the number of attacks by including civilian targets, the number of fatalities, armed assaults, and suicides. **Conclusions**: If variables from the number of attack theories are incorporated, such as female labor participation, variation in GDP *per capita*, education expenditures, and the corruption index, the results are significantly more robust. This broadens the argumentative spectrum and enhances the explanatory capacity of the variables amongst themselves.

Keywords: terrorism; terrorist attacks; claim; econometric models; panel data analysis.

Resumen

Objetivo: en este estudio, se tiene por objetivo establecer los determinantes del número de ataques terroristas en un territorio a través del tiempo. **Metodología:** como novedad, en primer lugar, se incorporan elementos tanto de la teoría del reclamo de los ataques como de la recurrencia de ellos, para tener un espectro analítico más profundo. Y, en segundo lugar, se implementa un modelo estocástico binomial negativo con datos panel, caracterizado por ser dinámico para evitar problemas de endogeneidad. La información utilizada proviene de las bases de datos Global Terrorism Database, Big Allied and Dangerous, Political Terror Scale y World Bank. **Resultados:** los resultados iniciales obtenidos indican que la probabilidad de ataques terroristas aumenta cuando hay antecedentes de asalto armado, alto nivel educativo, ataques suicidas y ataques a civiles; en tanto que disminuye con la existencia de una alta participación laboral femenina y bajos índices de corrupción. De otro lado, la investigación encontró evidencia empírica suficiente para afirmar que la teoría del reclamo de los ataques ayuda a explicar el fenómeno del número de ataques mediante la inclusión de los objetivos civiles, número

de víctimas fatales, asaltos armados y suicidios. **Conclusiones:** y aún más importante, si se incorporan variables propias de las teorías del número de ataques; tales como la participación laboral femenina, variación en el PIB per cápita, gastos en educación y el índice de corrupción, los resultados son significativamente más robustos al ampliar el espectro argumentativo y potenciar la capacidad explicativa de las variables entre sí.

Palabras clave: terrorismo; ataques terroristas; reclamo; modelos econométricos; análisis de datos de panel.

Resumo

Objetivo: o objetivo deste estudo é estabelecer os determinantes do número de ataques terroristas em um território ao longo do tempo. **Metodologia:** como novidade, em primeiro lugar, são incorporados elementos da teoria da reivindicação de atentados e da recorrência de atentados, a fim de obter um espectro analítico mais profundo. Em segundo lugar, é implementado um modelo estocástico binomial negativo com dados de painel, caracterizado por ser dinâmico para evitar problemas de endogeneidade. As informações utilizadas são provenientes dos bancos de dados Global Terrorism Database, Big Allied and Dangerous, Political Terror Scale e World Bank. **Resultados:** os resultados iniciais indicam que a probabilidade de ataques terroristas aumenta com o histórico de ataques armados, alto nível de escolaridade, ataques suicidas e ataques a civis, e diminui com a alta participação da força de trabalho feminina e baixos índices de corrupção. Por outro lado, a pesquisa encontrou evidências empíricas suficientes para afirmar que a teoria da reivindicação de ataques ajuda a explicar o fenômeno do número de ataques ao incluir alvos civis, número de fatalidades, ataques armados e suicídios. **Conclusões:** mais importante ainda, ao incorporar variáveis específicas das teorias do número de ataques, como a participação da força de trabalho feminina, a mudança no PIB *per capita*, os gastos com educação e o índice de corrupção, os resultados são significativamente mais robustos, ampliando o espectro argumentativo e aumentando o poder explicativo das variáveis em relação umas às outras.

Palavras-chave: terrorismo; ataques terroristas; reivindicações; modelos econométricos; análise de dados de painel.

Introduction

Research on terrorism involves a diversity of topics. Prominent among them are the claim of terrorist attacks (Abrahms & Conrad, 2017; Brown, 2020; Kearns, 2019) and the determinants of terrorist attacks in a territory (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1983; Halkos et al., 2017; Li, 2005; Piazza, 2017), as well as studies on specific modes of terrorism, such as suicide attacks (Demir & Guler, 2021; Farnham & Liem, 2017; Mroszczyk, 2019; O'Rourke, 2009; Pape, 2003), or the organizational dynamics of terrorist groups (Abrahms & Potter, 2015; Abrahms, 2018; Byman & Kreps, 2010; Salehyan et al., 2014; Shapiro, 2013), among others. However, as Stohl (2012) argued, more quantitative work is needed in this field to obtain results based on robust research methods.

Two theoretical justifications can be identified for the motivations behind a terrorist attack. Skoll and Korstanje (2013) propose that terrorism is just a tool used by elite countries to advance their political and economic interests. Authors such as Moskalenko and McCauley (2009) argue that terrorism is a phenomenon that is distinct from activism and is experienced when an individual is willing to use violence within the framework of the illegal to promote a political cause.

Given the scope of the present work, the theoretical perspective of Moskalenko and McCauley (2009) will be justified to support the practical implications derived from the research. In this sense, the present document is useful because it allows one to delve deeper into the causes and implications of terrorism by quantifying the effects that the set of proposed variables has on the probability of a terrorist attack occurring in a country. From a practical perspective, this allows estimating the risk of new terrorist attacks per country, and the consequent implementation of preventive measures to reduce this probability. Similarly, the study of causal relationships in the phenomenon of terrorist attacks allows intuition of new explanatory relationships among the proposed variables. These relationships, accompanied by new theoretical advances, facilitate the understanding of the motivations and dynamics under which a terrorist group acts.

When dealing in a particular manner with studies related to the determinants of the number of terrorist attacks in a territory, factors such as the level of democracy, education, or economic growth have explanatory value for the studied phenomenon (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1983; Li, 2005; Piazza, 2017). Likewise, by transferring variables belonging to other phenomena related to terrorism, such as those from Abrahms and Conrad (2017), this research seeks to find new correlations between the variables and their set to expand the explanatory

framework of the probability of the occurrence of terrorist attacks in a given territory.

Specifically, it aims to find the relationship between the variables proposed by Abrahms and Conrad (2017), Halkos et al. (2017), and Piazza (2017) regarding the prediction of a future terrorist attack. From the theoretical foundation, it is possible to argue that the variables used by the aforementioned authors are complementary since the reasons for claiming an attack by a terrorist group are linked to the number of attacks experienced in a territory.

The first section introduces the topic and presents the theoretical references that support the variables and factors incorporated in the model proposed in this research. The second brings together a set of empirical and theoretical studies that provide an account of research on the determinants and incidence of terrorism by country. The third section describes the methodology implemented and presents the results obtained from the proposed modeling. The fourth section analyzes the results obtained in light of the theories considered. Finally, the conclusions affirm that the probability of terrorist attacks increases in a country when there is a history of armed assault, a high level of education, suicide attacks, and attacks on civilians, while the probability decreases when there is a high level of female labor participation and low corruption. Similarly, this section addresses a set of preventive measures that can have an impact on reducing the probability of a terrorist attack in an established territory.

Empirical and Theoretical Studies

Some terrorism research focuses attention on specific terrorist groups and locations (Brown, 2020; D'Souza, 2016; Elden, 2014; Ette & Joe, 2019; Rudner, 2017; Williams, 2011; Yadav, 2010), while others encompass multiple terrorist groups operating in diverse territories (Abrahms & Lula, 2012; Abrahms, 2013; Kluch & Vaux, 2016; Kearns, 2019; Young & Dugan, 2014). The former allows for the isolated analysis of conditions particular to a group and a territory, which allows for a more specific assessment in time and space, while the latter facilitates the drawing of general conclusions by observing global trends in the composition, dynamics, and organization of terrorist groups.

In the study by Hamilton and Hamilton (1983), with a sample of 16 countries during the 1968-1978 period, it was found that the more authoritarian governments have a greater facility to prevent the "contagion" of terrorism, while democratic societies have greater difficulties in curbing and dealing with this phenomenon. Similarly, Li (2005) studied the influence of the level of

democracy on transnational terrorism in 119 countries for the 1975-1997 period and concluded that higher levels of democracy reduce incidents of transnational terror.

Piazza's (2017) study analyzed far-right terrorism in the United States and found that the number of such terrorist attacks is influenced by variables such as female labor participation, abortion rate, and the political composition of the government during the subperiods studied. This shows that the phenomenon of terrorism is in direct conflict with the inclusion of women in the labor market and the liberalization of rights. However, in an earlier study, Piazza (2008) finds that market liberalization and democracy are not negatively correlated with international terrorism events. In turn, Halkos et al. (2017) found that the Islamic religion is a major determinant of terrorism in a country with high market affectation, evidencing that ideological radicalities directly impact terrorism.

Regarding the motivations for terrorism, Skoll and Korstanje (2013) propose that terrorism is just a tool used by elite countries to advance their political and economic interests. Such a tool has a historical origin dating back to past threats from communist regimes. In this sense, the phenomenon of terrorism is not as important as the control and monitoring measures that are implemented due to the feeling of uncertainty that spreads in the community (Skoll & Korstanje, 2013, p. 2). The authors assert that terrorism is a narrative that allows the mobilization of material and symbolic resources to administer the idea of sovereignty; under this perspective, terrorism is a phenomenon of mass control that serves the ruling classes.

Altheide (2007) agrees with what has been proposed, stating that the fear of terrorism —as a consequence of the September 11, 2001 attacks and the beginning of the war on terrorism— was a strategy that made possible the expansion of U.S. domestic control. From this perspective, the author states that Western countries initiated a propaganda campaign in which they portrayed themselves as a nation of superior morals and values:

> A key factor in propaganda is geared to not hearing the 'other's' voice, but rather, using language and discourse to negate the legitimacy – if not the relevance – of the other. This is easier to accomplish if the other is feared. (Altheide, 2007, p. 292).

These arguments agree with Altheide (2006), who states that terrorism is a discourse that reflects symbolic relations between order, harm, and threat, which are exploited by public policymakers. Under the narrative of terrorism, fear becomes part of everyday life by representing social life as dangerous and full of

potential victims. This symbology, in turn, invites greater protection, regulation, and intervention to thwart further terrorist events. Under this perspective, the phenomenon of terrorism is little more than a narrative expanded by the mainstream media, used as a tool for political control.

From a second perspective, Moskalenko and McCauley (2017; 2009) argue for the need to distinguish between activism and terrorism. Given previous work, such as that of Horgan (2006), has characterized the phenomenon of terrorism as a linear process that individuals go through, during which they have differentiated and progressive levels of commitment to the terrorist group. The authors propose to test the hypothesis that activism, understood as nonviolent and legal political action, is a prior state of radicalism, interpreted as violent and illegal political action. Using three surveys and the formulation of two indicators of political intention (ARIS and AIS), the authors find that activism and radicalism are two correlated but independent dimensions. In this sense, it is seen that those who intend to engage in lawful political activities without violence do not necessarily have a higher propensity to engage in extremist activities. Additionally, the authors choose a theory of transition to terrorism, according to which people can move directly from one state of commitment to another without passing through intermediate states. As a result, even someone who is not committed to a particular political cause may transition to radicalism after suffering a personal loss, coming into conflict with someone, or accepting an invitation from a radicalized friend (Horgan, 2006, p. 241).

The variety of studies published accounts for variables that influence terrorist attacks, including political involvement, workplace inclusion, educational levels, economic growth, religion, and personal motivations, among others. These factors, along with the terrorist groups' organizational structure about size, leadership, and territory, provide elements that help to explain why this study connects the possibility that a country will experience a new terrorist attack every year with the possibility that these attacks will be blamed on the terrorist groups.

As a result, based on the syncretism achieved in theories about international armed conflict that appear to be unrelated, this study establishes the factors that determine the number of terrorist attacks in a country over time. One such theory is the claim of the attack's theory proposed by Abrahms and Conrad (2017), which is supported by the ideas put forth by Moskalenko and McCauley (2009), Halkos et al., Piazza (2017), and other researchers with regards to the repetition of attacks.

Re
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Methodology

Analysis of Description

Four data sources were used to obtain the information for this investigation: the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), Big Allied and Dangerous (BAAD), the Political Terror Scale (PTS), and the World Bank (WB). After cleaning, joining, and collapsing them, a final database with unbalanced panel data information that relates to 116 countries across seven years (2012-2018) was obtained. In other words, there is a large panel since there are more countries than periods studied. Only the observations of the study-relevant variables that didn't have any missing data were included in the information cleanup process. Additionally, to exclude anomalous data (outliers), only the information falling within percentiles 1 and 99 was included.

The definition of the variables used in the empirical model is shown in Table 1, and measures of the central tendency of the variables are shown in Table 2. It is important to keep in mind that the vast majority of the variables are quantitative, and only a small number are of a dichotomous or qualitative nature. In this sense, the median of the dichotomous variable corresponds to the presence of the examined attribute in each variable.

Table 1. *Definition of Variables.*

Variables	Definition	Type
attack	Number of attacks by terrorist organizations.	Quantitative
claimed	The attack claimed by terrorist organizations.	Qualitative 1 Attack claimed 0 Other case
civobj	Attacks on civilian targets.	qualitative 1 Yes, there were attacks on civilians 0 Other case

Variables	Definition	Type
nfat	Number of fatalities in the attacks.	Quantitative
vio	Violation of the right to physical integrity of citizens.	qualitative 1 There was a violation of rights 0 Other case
assas	Attack in the form of murder (assassination).	qualitative 1 Yes, there were murders 0 Other case
host	Existence of hostages taken in the attack.	qualitative 1 Hostage-taking 0 Other case
armass	Attack including armed assault.	qualitative 1 Armed assault. 0 Other case
size	The size of the terrorist organization is measured in persons.	Quantitative
nterr	A number of terrorist organizations.	Quantitative
stasp	State sponsorship of the terrorist organization.	qualitative 1 Islamism 0 Other case
islam	Terrorist organizations inspired by some form of Islam	qualitative 1 Islamism 0 Other case
sui	The attack was suicide.	qualitative 1 Suicide attack 0 Other case
damp	Damage to private property in the attack.	qualitative 1 There were damages 0 Other case

Re
search

Variables	Definition	Type
pfem	Percentage of female workers in a country's labor market each year.	Quantitative
Δgdppc	Variation percentage in GDP *per cápita*.	Quantitative
edu	Percentage of GDP spent by the government on education.	Quantitative
corr	Corruption index.	Quantitative

Table 2. *Measures of Central Tendency for Important Variables.*

Variable	Obs.	Media	Desv. Est.	Min.	Max.
attack	520	86.21	199.95	1.00	1364.00
claimed	520	31.22	87.95	0.00	669.00
civobj	520	29.51	71.70	0.00	627.00
nfat	520	312.42	1064.09	0.00	9604.00
vio	520	62.40	184.51	0.00	1317.00
assas	520	3.96	11.58	0.00	96.00
host	520	10.02	24.76	0.00	173.00
armass	520	22.81	54.63	0.00	474.00
size	520	4.24	31.59	0.00	358.00
nterr	520	5.26	7.19	1.00	61.00
stasp	520	19.95	123.46	0.00	1249.00
islam	520	14.93	118.54	0.00	1251.00
sui	520	6.90	28.33	0.00	367.00
damp	520	31.52	69.88	0.00	520.00
femp	516	47.76	18.84	6.00	85.68
Δgdppc	376	2.37E+10	1.59E+11	-6.85E+11	1.08E+12
edu	285	4.27	1.35	1.02	7.91
corr	504	0.45	0.21	0.04	0.97

Based on GTD, BAAD, PTS, and WB.

Following are descriptions of some of the variables used in the statistical model. The study's variable goal is the number of terrorist group-perpetrated attacks (attacks). According to the information, only 10 of the 116 countries that were studied account for 70% of them; Afghanistan stands out with a particularly high participation rate (16.7%), along with Iraq (13.6%) and India (8.2%). For this reason, the standard deviation significantly exceeds the median (see Table 2), and most of the violence is concentrated in a few countries in Africa and Asia.

Figure 1. *Higher Percentages of Terrorist Attacks on a Global Scale. 2012-2018.*
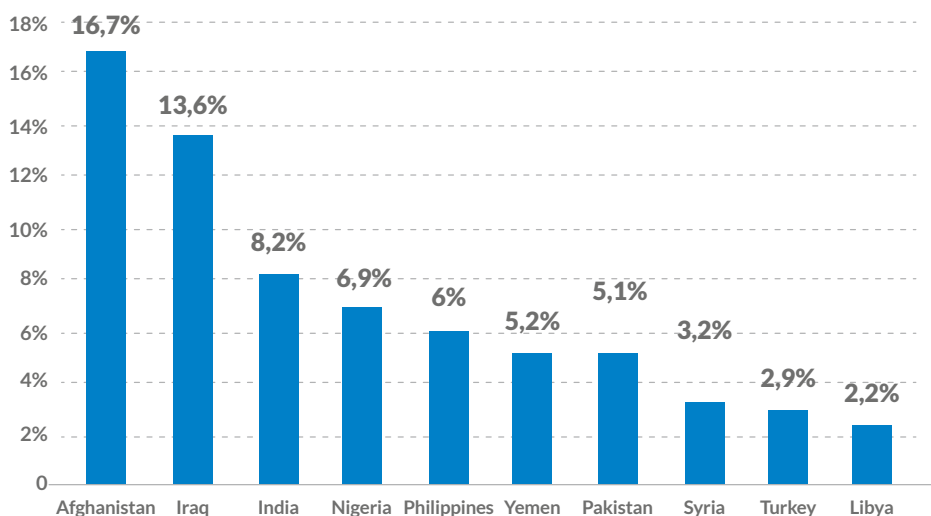
Source: Based on GTD, BAAD, PTS, and WB.

Regarding the variables covered by Abrahms and Conrad's (2017) theory, such as the reported attacks (claimed), the pattern is similar to the previous one because 75% of reported attacks have been condensed into nine countries, and once again, Afghanistan and Iraq are the countries where this phenomenon is more prevalent (more than 40% between the two).

Figure 2. *Higher Percentages of Terrorist Attacks on a Global Scale 2012-2018.*
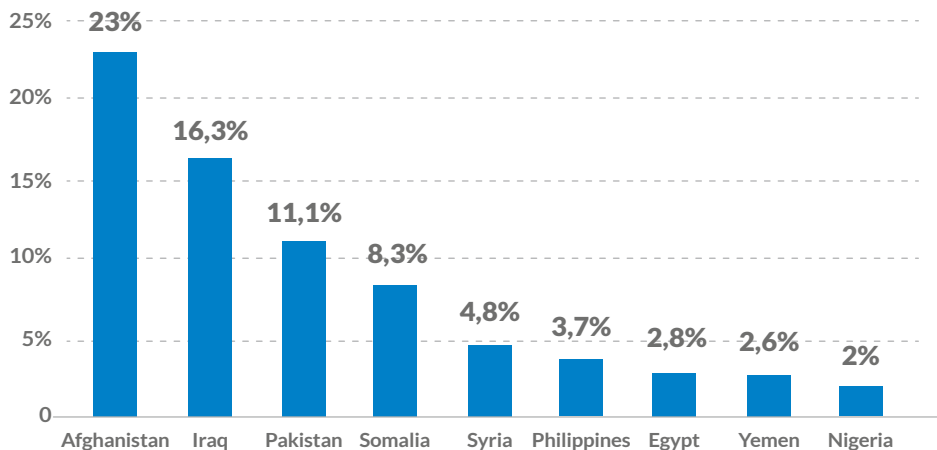
Source: Based on GTD, BAAD, PTS, and WB.

The previous data draws attention to the fact that there is a very comparable ratio between the percentage of attacks and the claims in graphs 1 and 2. This affirms that there is an empirical link between these two phenomena. With this in mind, the line-by-line correlation between attacks and claims results in a higher value (0.84) for the countries shown in the previous graphs and a higher value (0.9) for the entire sample. Although it is true that correlation does not imply causation, these numbers show that there is a substantial relationship between the number of attacks and the claims related to those attacks. This encourages incorporating Abrahms and Conrad's (2017) theory into the empirical analysis of the number of attacks proposed by Halkos et al. (2017) and Piazza (2017), among others. In a preliminary analysis, a panel data regression model with random effects between attacks and claims with and without controls by year and country was estimated. The results showed a high statistical significance that was independent of the functional approach taken; this showed that there were typically two attacks for every claim made. Results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. *Preliminary Model Estimates.*

Dep var: Claimed				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
claimed	2.03***	2.00***	1.91***	1.82***
year	No	Yes	No	Yes
country	No	No	Yes	Yes
constant	18.2***	2.17	49.1	80.8
rho	0.37	0.4	0.00	0.00
obs.	520	520	520	520

Concerning the number of fatalities (*nfat*), the average over the sampling period rises to more than 312 victims per country (see Tables 1 and 2). However, due to the extreme standard deviation, there is now a concentration of these numbers in specific countries (Afghanistan 21.9; Nigeria 13.4%, and Iraq 21.1%). Another critical issue is the use of hostage-taking (*host*); on average, ten people per nation are deprived of their freedom each year due to attacks, and as has become customary, the countries that use restraints the most globally is Afghanistan (14.70%), India (13.60%), and Iraq (10.70%). But when it comes to attacks against civilians (*civobj*), things are a little bit different because, even if the average number of victims is around 30, Iraq, Nigeria, and Afghanistan are the countries with the highest prevalence rates, at 17.4%, 13.3%, and 10.6%, respectively.

The numbers show that variables associated with the theory of the number of attacks, such as female labor participation (*pfem*), are below 50%. This aims to document right-wing attacks that are brought on by social changes that challenge white male privilege. In this case, the countries with the lowest shares are Yemen (0.11%), Iraq (0.22%), and Syria (0.25%), which are also among the most violent countries in the world. Those with the highest female participation are Madagascar (85.68%), Rwanda (83.91%), and Nepal (80.45%), which do not initiate attacks. This implies that women's participation in the labor market may be a source of violence in the United States due to strong advancements in gender equality (Pérez-González, 2021), but that is not the case in the Middle East due to tradition and cultural factors that call for a strong woman's submission to patriarchal authority (Duderija, 2021).

Alternatively, the educational levels specified here, as well as the percentage of government spending in the GDP of each nation in this section, are also in the same situation as the case before. Although the average for the entire sample is 4.3%, it is elevated by the presence of Scandinavian countries like Norway

(7.9%), Sweden (7.6%), and Finland (6.8%), which record few terrorist attacks. Contrarily, the most violent countries show low levels of investment in education (Afghanistan 3.5% and Pakistan 2.6%), demonstrating a clear inverse relationship between education and terrorism.

Finally, the average value of the 'corruption index' (*corr*), which is defined here as the measurement of private power abuse on behalf of the executive branch and public administration, is 0.44, placing it slightly below its median value, indicating that corruption does exist in all countries but is not particularly pervasive. Analyzing the most violent countries, the index drops to 0.27, possibly indicating that the least developed countries have high levels of corruption and frequent terrorist attacks[1].

Empirical Modeling

To achieve the proposed goal, a model was built that captures the factors that determine the number of terrorist attacks in a country each year using a binomial negative model with dynamic panel data. This final component contributes to the empirical modeling of current armed conflicts because, as far as is known, no one has addressed the issue of potential endogeneity via simultaneity.

The choice of this model is because terrorist attacks in each country, per year, is a count variable that assumes finite values in the positive integers, and shows overdispersion i.e., the variance and mean of the distribution are not equal; therefore, it follows a negative binomial distribution. In addition, a lag is introduced in each of the dichotomous variables, and in the first differences in the quantitative variables to capture dynamic effects and avoid endogeneity problems.

In this way, this model observes the determinants that increase or decrease the risk of new terrorist attacks in the countries analyzed. It can be used by local governments or international bodies as a preliminary instrument to try to prevent or avoid attacks. Therefore, the model is a contribution to the empirical literature on terrorism internationally. It has the following form:

$$y_{it} = exp\left[\tau_0 + \sum_{j=1}^{3} \delta_j AC_{it}^j + \sum_{m=1}^{10} \delta_m X_{it}^m + v_i + \eta_{it}\right] \quad (4)$$

---

1. These findings also suggest that controlling the stochastic model by country and year is advised because each has unique temporal dynamics.

Where *y* is the endogenous count variable, and *exp* is the exponential function. Once linearized, the model is estimated by maximum credibility. Explanatory variables are divided into those Abrahms and Conrad's analyses (2017); denoted as AC_{it}^{j}. The other group of variables (X_{it}^{m}) are derived from the theoretical contributions of Halkos et al. (2017); Piazza (2017); Li (2005); Hamilton and Hamilton (1983), among others. The v_i parameter of the sample, individual effects, and η_{it} are random errors that are assumed as a gamma distribution.

Specifically, in the *AC*, vector, dichotomous variables take a value of one if the event or characteristic takes place; if not, they take a value of zero. The variables that this vector includes are attacks on civilians (*civobj*), the number of fatalities (*nfat*), the high degree of violation of the right of the physical integrity of citizens (*vio*), assassination (*assas*), hostage-taking in the attack (*host*), armed assaults (*armass*), terrorist group size (*size*), number of terrorist groups (*nterr*) government support of the group (*stasp*), inspiration in the Islamic religion of the attacking group (*islam*), suicide attacks (*sui*) and, as mentioned, now includes the presence of damages to private property in the attacks (*damp*).

According to Abrahms and Conrad (2017), the objective variable is expected to show a positive sign. The authors suggest the presence of terrorist groups "descendent" with more experience, these groups will tend to ignore the negative consequences of attacking civilians (Downes, 2007; Toft & Zhukov, 2012), and, by the imitation effect proposed by Nacos (2009), these groups are expected to repeat the tactics of attacks on civilian populations, by observing cultural and ideologically similar groups.

Alternatively, a negative effect of the *nfat* variable is expected, as the States attacked will tend to counteract with greater force if the terrorist attack causes a greater number of victims. (Crelinsten & Schmid, 1992). In this way, after a terrorist attack with a large number of victims, the State counterattack is expected that temporarily reduces the capabilities of these groups and therefore the decrease of attacks in the future.

For the violation of civil rights (*vio*), a negative effect is expected on the probability of future terrorist attacks, because States with higher capacity for repression may exert higher costs on terrorist groups; this decreases the probability of future attacks (Downes, 2007).

Regarding assassination (*assas*), a positive effect is expected; because this type of attack promotes political instability in the attacked territory (Bell, 2017). Terrorist groups are expected to seek this instability through further attacks in the future. As for armed assaults (*armass*), a positive effect is expected (Phillips, 2012; Lee, 2013); considering that imitation plays a relevant role in tactics used by terrorists. Thus, groups imitate this type of attacks in the future if they observe

other terrorist groups implementing these tactics often including a reward for kidnapped individuals.

For the *sui* variable that involves suicide terrorist attacks, a positive effect is expected for the high strategic value (O'Rourke, 2009; Pape, 2003). It also motivates the imitation of this type of attacks. Regarding the variable of the organizational size of the group (*size*), a positive effect is expected; while the attacking terrorist group has a greater number of active members, it is more capable of carrying out a higher number of terrorist attacks, it has significant scope and is less likely to disintegrate against its competitors (Young & Dugan, 2014).

In the number of terrorist groups (*nterr*) a positive relationship with the endogenous variable is expected; since they must be differentiated by claiming their attacks for survival purposes (Nemeth, 2014). In addition, a territory with a greater number of terrorist groups may also have a higher level of competition; this can increase the level of future violence used by terrorist organizations (Hoffman, 2010).

In the face of State support (*stasp*), it is believed that government sponsorship of the terrorist organization will have a positive effect on the probability of future attacks. As Byman (2020) states, when groups are funded by a foreign government, they have a better supply of weapons, training, and shelter; this allows for greater attack capabilities and increases the probability of future attacks.

Regarding the influence of Islam, a direct relationship is expected because the dualistic vision of terrorist groups leads to not making concessions to the opponent, as the goal is to eliminate it (Wright, 2014). In this sense, these types of groups tend to be less sensitive to the costs arising from acts of violence, and therefore they may be more likely to carry out terrorist attacks in the future.

Finally, with respect to the *damp* variable (damage to private property in the attack), a positive effect is expected because attacks against private property may be more costly for the attacked State. This encourages terrorist groups to carry out future attacks to eliminate their opponent or force the attacked State within a negotiating context (Lake, 2002; Pape, 2003).

In vector X the participation of women in the labor market (*pfem*) is included, the variation of GDP *per capita* (*Δgdppc*) as a proxy of economic growth, education expenses in the total GDP (*edu*) as a proxy to the educational level of the country, and the level of corruption (*corr*) as a proxy to levels of democratic participation in the territory.

Women's participation in the labor market is expected to have a positive effect on the number of terrorist attacks, this can be an indicator of social change that increases the resentment of certain population groups that hold and wish to maintain status and privilege (Piazza, 2017). Variations in *per capita* GDP

are expected to have a negative effect on terrorist attacks count by country (Li, 2005). More expenses on education will have a negative impact. (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1983)[2].

Results

In general, modeling included several functional ways to deal with possible specification bias. To separately evaluate the explanatory capacity of the theories considered, the first column contains only the AC vector (excluding claims (*reclams*) that depend on the variables included in the vector), and in the second column, the X vector is included.

The third includes all the variables of the AC and X vectors. The fourth does the same and, to avoid possible multicollinearity problems, it includes some variables of the AC vector and all of X. As for the fifth column, this only includes the claim (reclamation) and the X vector because AC boosts the endogeneity problem. The sixth is similar and includes the expected value of the claim (*dado AC*) as an instrumental variable. For this purpose, a logit model with panel data under random effects between the claim and the remaining *AC* vector variables is estimated and its forecast is obtained[3]. Finally, column seven captures claims, such as the residuals of the *logit* model implemented in column six model; that is, it shows the part of the observed claims that are not explained by Abrahms and Conrad's theory (2017). This was done to investigate whether the depurated claims of the influence of the *AC* vector have some explanatory capacity in the model.

It should be noted that, regardless of the functional form, all are controlled by year and by country to account for exogenous macroeconomic and/or political shocks, as well as the socio-economical dynamics of each territory. Table 4 shows the results.

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6. Poverty is not included because of lack of information in many countries and also the possible collinearity with economic growth. Other collinearity variables, and therefore not included variables, are income inequality and the percentage of the population below the poverty line, and the unemployment rate with economic growth, among others.

7. This template is not shown in this paper, but it is available to the reader on request.

Table 4. *Stochastic Model Results.*

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Attacks							
claim					1.040***		
					(0.001)		
claim_hat$_{t-1}$						1.150***	
						(0.003)	
claim_rest$_{t-1}$							1.030***
							(0.001)
pfem$_{t-1}$		0.336***	0.406**	0.411**	0.330***	0.311***	0.353**
		(0.127)	(0.166)	(0.155)	(0.132)	(0.123)	(0.145)
Δpibpc$_{t-1}$		0.737	0.921	0.852	0.620**	0.684*	0.663**
		(0.444)	(0.226)	(0.183)	(0.115)	(0.135)	(0.128)
edu$_{t-1}$		1.280**	1.170*	1.231**	1.429***	1.323***	1.360***
		(0.126)	(0.110)	(0.106)	(0.146)	(0.123)	(0.138)
corr$_{t-1}$		0.204***	0.475**	0.324***	0.134***	0.216***	0.155***
		(0.071)	(0.159)	(0.101)	(0.046)	(0.069)	(0.057)
objciv$_{t-1}$	1.004***		1.007***	1.006***			
	(0.001)		(0.002)	(0.001)			
nfat$_{t-1}$	0.742**		0,763	0.710*			
	(0.106)		(0.146)	(0.125)			
polterr$_{t-1}$	0.829*		1.096				
	(0.093)		(0.216)				
ases$_{t-1}$	1.301***		1.034				
	(0.114)		(0.129)				
reh$_{t-1}$	1.206**		1.136				
	(0.118)		(0.168)				
asarm$_{t-1}$	1.562***		1.570**	1.604**			
	(0.229)		(0.331)	(0.334)			
tamorg$_{t-1}$	1.205		1.024				
	(0.171)		(0.230)				
nterr$_{t-1}$	1.021***		1.013				
	(0.007)		(0.016)				

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
$patest_{t-n1}$	1.253*		1.105				
	(0.173)		(0.242)				
$islam_{t-1}$	1.014		0.717	0.996			
	(0.164)		(0.222)	(0.188)			
sui_{t-1}	1.000		1.013**	1.015***			
	(0.001)		(0.005)	(0.005)			
$dapp_{t-1}$	1.003***		1.002				
	(0.000)		(0.002)				
year/country	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
ln r cons.	-0.215	-0.166	0.081	0.042	-0.080	-0.063	-0.119
	(0.153)	(0.188)	(0.201)	(0.199)	(0.193)	(0.192)	(0.191)
ln s cons.	1.089***	0.440*	0.807**	0.773***	0.434*	0.469*	0.465*
	(0.244)	(0.242)	(0.296)	(0.289)	(0.254)	(0.250)	(0.253)
no. of obs.	376	149	149	149	149	149	149
wald p-value	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
chi2_c	470.69	321.503	155.8	178.334	289.289	290.304	290.318
p-value chi2	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
log-l	-1689.425	-627.95	-610.510	-614.495	-620.551	-617.895	-624.64

The general results show that the choice of the negative binomial model is correct since the *p-values* associated with the test probation for similarity are correct (*p-value chi2* at the bottom of Table 4) for each functional form is equal to zero. This means that the panel estimator is better than the negative binomial grouped estimator with constant dispersion. In other words, the model is suitable, as there is overdispersion. Alternatively, the *p-value* of the Wald test shows that the variables together for each functional form are statistically significant.

Coefficients in this type of model are incidence rates, which must be interpreted in this context as the possibility of a country having new terrorist attack per year, due to the increase of a unit in the explanatory variable if quantitative, or a change of category if qualitative. If the coefficient exceeds the unit and it is statistically significant, it indicates a percentage increase in the risk of being attacked, while one lower than one implies a reduction.

Analysis of Results

In the first column, outcomes show that each variable in the Model for determining claims (Abrahams & Conrad, 2017) accounts for the number of terrorist attacks occurring in a country per year. However, the size of the terrorist organization (*size*), Islamic religion (*islam*), and suicide attacks (*sui*) do not exhibit a significant explanatory relationship with the occurrence of such attacks. The variables accounting for the highest occurrence are armed assaults (*armass)*, assassinations (*assas*), state sponsorship (*stasp*) and hostage-taking (*host*) because they exceed unity. In this regard, if a country has experienced armed assaults carried out by terrorist groups in the past, the risk of subsequent attacks is 1.6 times higher compared to countries without such history.

With respect to assassinations, if they have occurred in a particular country in the past, the likelihood of subsequent attacks rises 1.3 times a year in comparison to those territories without a record of such attacks. Additionally, if the terrorist group has received sponsorship from one or more governments, the probability of a subsequent attack is 1.3 times greater than in cases where no such support has been provided. Finally, within this group, a history of hostage-taking suggests a present risk of an attack increased by 1.2 when compared to situations without a record of this type of terrorist attack.

As previously mentioned, the positive effect of armed assaults on the dependent variable could be elucidated by the theory of imitation among terrorist groups (Phillips, 2012). In this regard, the increased likelihood of experiencing a terrorist attack in the future can be attributed to the copycat behavior observed among connected terrorist groups.

On the contrary, the positive effect of assassinations indicates that terrorist groups aim to increase the instability within the territory through subsequent attacks, following the occurrence of a terrorist assassination (Bell, 2017). According to Moskalenko and McCauley (2017), it can be asserted that individuals who engage in armed assaults occupy the bottom level of the pyramid of radicalization. If one considers assassinations, armed assaults, and hostage-taking as expressions of radicalization, it may be plausible to assert that the presence of radicalized individuals increases the likelihood of encountering new terrorist events, owing to their inclination toward expressing themselves through violence and unlawful means.

Regarding the impact of state sponsorship (*stasp*), findings suggest that when sponsored groups have better training and weapons, as well as safe havens, there are conditions for further terrorist attacks in the future (Byman, 2020). Hostage-taking increases the probability of a terrorist attack's success, creating a positive

impact on the likelihood of experiencing subsequent attacks. Furthermore, it fosters the imitation effect among other terrorist groups, when the initial attack was carried out successfully (Sandler & Scott, 1987). This dynamic is most likely to be evident in democratic countries, as they may be more susceptible to making concessions in response to the demands of terrorist groups (Lee, 2013). However, Piazza's (2008) assertion that higher levels of democracy and economic openness do not necessarily result in lower levels of terrorism is a consideration.

Variables such as civilian targets (*civobj*), the number of terrorist groups (*nterr*) and damage to private property (*damp*) may have less significant impacts because their values are very close to unity. This suggests that the occurrence of attack events is not significantly different from those countries where these phenomena do not occur.

The findings related to the civilian targets (*civobj*) can be explained from the perspective of Abrahms et al. (2018), in terms of the creation of "children" groups by other terrorist groups. These terrorist groups are characterized by their inclination to attack civilians, which can be attributed to their limited background and experience. In this regard, they mimic each other under the contagion effect (Nacos, 2009), which increases the probability of subsequent terrorist attacks on civilians.

The positive effect on the number of terrorist groups (*nterr*) variable indicates higher levels of competition in territories characterized by the greater presence of terrorist groups (Hoffman, 2010). Hence, territories exhibiting elevated levels of competition may experience increased levels of future violence, given the need for terrorist groups to capture sympathizers and ensure their presence and success.

As anticipated, the effect of damage to private property was positive, albeit modest, on the probability of experiencing subsequent terrorist attacks. This situation may arise from the belief held by terrorist groups that such attacks increase their coercive negotiation prowess (Lake, 2002; Pape, 2003).

Conversely, the number of fatalities (*nfat*) and political terror (*terrpol*) variables decrease the possibility of subsequent attacks per year by 0.74 and 0.83 times, respectively, in comparison to countries with a lower occurrence of these phenomena. This finding can be demonstrated by the non-negotiation policies adopted by certain States concerning terrorist groups, whose aim is to minimize the gain and maximize the costs for these groups (Wilkinson, 1981).

In this regard, following a terrorist attack resulting in a substantial number of victims, the targeted State will impose substantial costs upon the perpetrating group, thus discouraging other terrorist groups from engaging in subsequent attacks in the short term. The implementation of coercive tools by the State can lead to a short-term reduction of the capabilities of terrorist groups,

consequently decreasing the probability of experiencing subsequent terrorist attacks (Crelinsten & Schmid, 1992).

On the contrary, the negative effect of the political terror (*terrpol*) variable indicates that under specific circumstances, indiscriminate violence perpetrated by the State has a greater capacity to curtail the use of violence by insurgent groups (Downes, 2007). Accordingly, States endowed with a wider scope of authority on civil rights and civil liberties also hold the capacity to exert a significant detrimental impact on terrorist groups. This, in turn, tends to decrease the likelihood of subsequent attacks within their territories.

The second set of functional information in (Column 2) also encompasses statistically significant variables related to the theory of the number of attacks. However, economic growth *per capita* (*Δgdppc*) is not statistically significant, female participation (*pfem*), education expenditure (*edu*), and corruption (*corr*) are found to be statistically significant, and the signs are consistent with the expected direction.

In territories with a high proportion of female labor market, the likelihood of attacks is reduced by 0.34 times per year compared to territories with a high proportion of male labor participation. Furthermore, countries with lower levels of corruption encounter a decreased likelihood of attacks by 0.20 times in comparison to countries with high corruption levels. Finally, higher education expenditure raises the probability of attacks by 1.3 times in contrast to countries that allocate fewer resources to this particular expenditure.

The female participation (*pfem*) variable reveals that the negative effect on the explained variable contradicts Piazza's (2017) findings. Hence, this effect can be attributed to the reduced attractiveness of terrorist groups when alternative occupational opportunities are readily available (Bénézech & Estano, 2016). Under this condition, women, who may be susceptible to recruitment for certain forms of terrorism (O'Rourke, 2009), are likely to exhibit a reduced willingness to join terrorist groups when they have alternative occupational opportunities that offer them increased income possibilities.

The findings related to expenditures in education provide a higher level of identification of individuals who may be potential targets for terrorist groups (Krueger & Malečková, 2003). The Israeli-Palestinian conflict showed that educational level is positively related to the likelihood of becoming a member of a terrorist group (Berrebi, 2007). Therefore, communities with a higher level of political education, in terms of advocating for rights, may be more likely to engage in terrorist groups. This, in turn, could increase the likelihood of attacks given the higher educational level in the territory.

Corruption (*corr*) exhibits a negative effect on the likelihood of experiencing a terrorist attack in the future. This can be attributed to the fact that in regions

where corruption is prevalent and a familiar practice, organizations follow this path as a means of exerting influence. Conversely, in the absence of corruption, organizations may resort to terrorism as an alternative strategy to obtain their objectives (Simpson, 2014).

The third and fourth sets of functional information (Columns 3 and 4) show that when the variables of the two vectors (AC and X) are combined, only certain variables exhibit statistical significance. This could be attributed to the non-orthogonality between these variables. However, the findings in Columns 6, 7, and 8 exhibit different outcomes. Incorporating the claim, its forecast, and the residuals of the claim along with the other variables comprising the X vector reveals a high statistical significance because these models prove to be less susceptible to statistical deficiencies as they avoid the presence of endogeneity and multicollinearity. The coefficients are very similar in these sets of functional information and statistical significance is consistently maintained.

Hence, the prior existence of claims of terrorist attacks in countries leads to an increase in the likelihood of subsequent attacks by slightly more than once per year in comparison to territories where such claims do not exist. The GDP *per capita* growth is now statistically significant, indicating that a 1% increase in GDP per capita reduces the likelihood of a subsequent attack by roughly 0.6 times. As previously mentioned, female participation and low corruption rates reduce the likelihood of attacks, while high educational levels increase the likelihood of attacks.

Conclusions

These findings provide compelling empirical evidence to assert that Abrahms and Conrad's (2017) theory of attacks plays a significant role in comprehending the phenomenon of the number of attacks by including variables such as civilian targets, number of fatalities, armed assaults, and suicides.

Indeed, the inclusion of stochastic modeling variables such as female labor participation, variation in GDP *per capita*, education expenditures, and the corruption index, as commonly seen in explanatory theories of the number of attacks (Halkos et al., 2017; Hamilton & Hamilton, 1983; Li, 2005; Piazza, 2017) lead to significantly more robust findings. The incorporation of these variables broadens the argumentative spectrum and enhances the explanatory capacity of the variables among themselves.

Moreover, there are other variables that explain claims and influence the number of attacks which are not explicitly considered in Abrahms and Conrad's

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(2017) modeling. In this regard, the stochastic modeling revealed the presence of unknown variables that possess explanatory capacity and, were not part of the theories incorporated in the initial modeling, indicating that this field of knowledge is not yet fully explored which opens the path to new theories and variables that can enhance the analysis and provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the occurrence of terrorist attacks.

Regarding the consequences of future terrorist attacks, it is possible to assert that countries should choose to constantly combat terrorist groups within their borders, with a focus on preventing them from developing. Moskalenko and McCauley's (2009) consideration is useful, which asserts that State pressure should be directed toward radical groups rather than activist groups. The rationale behind this distinction lies in the fact that these two units operate with distinct modalities of action.

Finally, further research in this field may be devoted toward particularizing the recurrence of attacks, taking into account the geographical regions, as well as the economic, social, and political conditions of the territories that characterize varied patterns in terrorist groups' behavior.

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Violence and Legitimacy: State and Criminal Organizations from the Perspective of Young People in Medellín, Colombia*

[English version]

Violencia y legitimidad: el Estado y las organizaciones criminales desde la perspectiva de jóvenes de Medellín, Colombia

Violência e legitimidade: o Estado e as organizações criminosas sob a perspetiva dos jovens de Medellín, Colômbia

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Abstract

Objective: The purpose of this research was to gather the perspective of 256 young people from Comuna 13 in the city of Medellín regarding their perception of the legitimacy that criminal organizations have achieved in exercising violence and establishing territorial order in the city. **Methodology**: The process was divided into two phases. The first involved analyzing the State's main theories to understand its unity without competing with other armed organizations for territorial hegemony. The second phase focused on analyzing the perspective of the youth in Comuna 13 regarding the legitimacy of violence that many of these organizations have acquired, especially in the first 10 years of the 21st century. **Results**: In the case of the city of Medellin, a brief review was made of the background of violence and territorial domination. This review spanned from the beginnings of the Medellin Cartel in the 1980s, through the expansion of paramilitarism, to the consolidation of the different criminal organizations that operate in the city. These organizations dominate "security" in the neighborhoods and, in turn, are the cause of extortion, homicides, micro-trafficking of weapons, drugs, people, and forced displacement of the civilian population. **Conclusions**: Currently, the city of Medellin, as well as many municipalities in Colombia, have a serious problem of legitimacy in exercising control and security processes over neighborhoods, communities, or districts (depending on the city). This should lead to the rethinking of public security policies and the consideration of the idea of quadrants in the case of police action.

Keywords: legitimacy; State; criminal organizations; Medellin; violence.

Resumen

Objetivo: esta investigación tuvo como propósito recoger la perspectiva de 256 jóvenes de la Comuna 13 de la ciudad de Medellín, acerca de su percepción sobre la legitimidad que han conseguido las organizaciones criminales para ejercer la violencia y establecer órdenes territoriales en la ciudad. **Metodología**: el proceso estuvo dividido en dos momentos, el primero, el análisis por las principales teorías del Estado para comprender la unidad del mismo sin competir con otras organizaciones armadas por su hegemonía territorial, y lo segundo, el análisis de la perspectiva de los jóvenes de la Comuna 13 sobre la legitimidad de violencia que han adquirido muchas de estas organizaciones sobre todo en los primeros diez años del siglo XXI. **Resultados**: para el caso de la ciudad de Medellín, se realizó un breve recorrido sobre los antecedentes de violencia y dominación territorial que se abordan desde los inicios del Cartel de Medellín en los años de 1980, pasando por la expansión del paramilitarismo, hasta la

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consolidación de las diferentes organizaciones criminales que operan en la ciudad y que dominan la «seguridad» en los barrios, y a su vez, son las causantes de extorsiones, homicidios, micro-tráfico de armas, drogas, personas y desplazamientos forzados a la población civil. **Conclusiones**: es posible considerar que, en estos momentos, la ciudad de Medellín al igual que muchos municipios de Colombia tienen un serio problema de legitimidad para ejercer los procesos de control y seguridad sobre barrios, comunas o distritos (dependiendo la ciudad), lo que debe llevar al replanteamiento de políticas públicas de seguridad y la consideración de la idea de cuadrantes para el caso de la acción policial.

Palabras clave: legitimidad; Estado; organizaciones criminales; Medellín; violencia.

Resumo

Objetivo: o objetivo desta pesquisa foi reunir a perspetiva de 256 jovens da Comuna 13 da cidade de Medellín sobre sua percepção da legitimidade que as organizações criminosas alcançaram para exercer a violência e estabelecer ordens territoriais na cidade. **Metodologia**: o processo foi dividido em duas partes: primeiro, uma análise das principais teorias do Estado para entender a unidade do Estado sem competir com outras organizações armadas pela hegemonia territorial e, segundo, uma análise da perspetiva dos jovens da Comuna 13 sobre a legitimidade da violência que muitas dessas organizações adquiriram, especialmente nos primeiros dez anos do século XXI. **Resultados**: no caso da cidade de Medellín, foi realizado um breve panorama da história da violência e da dominação territorial, começando com os primórdios do Cartel de Medellín na década de 1980, passando pela expansão do paramilitarismo, até a consolidação das diferentes organizações criminosas que operam na cidade e dominam a "segurança" nos bairros, que, por sua vez, são responsáveis por extorsão, homicídios, microtráfico de armas, drogas e pessoas e deslocamentos forçados da população civil. **Conclusões**: é possível considerar que, no momento, a cidade de Medellín, assim como muitos municípios da Colômbia, tem um sério problema de legitimidade para exercer os processos de controle e segurança sobre bairros, comunas ou distritos (dependendo da cidade), o que deve levar a repensar as políticas de segurança pública e a considerar a ideia de quadrantes para o caso de ação policial.

Palavras-chave: legitimidade; Estado; organizações criminosas; Medellín; violência.

Introduction

The arrival of a drug trafficker of the stature of Pablo Escobar to the Congress of the Republic of Colombia in 1982 marked a milestone in the margins of legality in Colombia. One could not differentiate between the institutional and legislative orders of power and the influence of criminals in some of Colombia's strata. Those who questioned and denounced the permeability of drug trafficking in the Colombian State were assassinated. An example is the case of the Minister of Justice, Rodrigo Lara Bonilla, who was assassinated in 1984 by Pablo Escobar's hitmen.

Later, in the 1990s, Pablo Escobar decided to build his own prison, known as "La Catedral," to avoid extradition to the United States. He set up his own internal surveillance, and the Colombian Army was just meters from the entrance to his own prison compound. Once again, the legitimacy and control of the Colombian state were questionable.

The case of Pablo Escobar would not be the only one. In 1998, former President Andres Pastrana, in Resolution 85 of October 14, 1998, granted the FARC a no-conflict zone as a requirement for negotiating peace. This allowed for a much greater consolidation of this organization and territorial control of 42,000 km^2; that is, a territorial space that belonged to the Colombian State came to be dominated by an outlaw group within the country.

Paramilitarism, the armed and illegal extreme right, also contributed to further fragment the legality and legitimacy of the institutions, especially the Colombian Army, after the case known as "parapolitics." In 2006, it was revealed how paramilitary groups promoted and financed political campaigns for the Congress of the Republic to favor their anti-insurgency activities in different areas of Colombia.

Allowing orders not legitimized by the State to hold sway contradicts the foundations of the social rule of law that Colombia is supposed to uphold; it provokes processes of fragmentation and undermines the legitimacy of the institutions. In this sense, the trust of the citizenry is based on other forces that do not correspond to the State, naturalizing non-state violence as a form of citizen defense in response to the slowness or indifference of many officials.

This research focused its efforts in the theoretical framework on observing basic principles for the constitution of a State. It addressed those that were considered most fundamental but also questioned theoretical reflections on the duality of States and how these fragmentations generate dualities that corrupt the legitimate trust of citizens toward their institutions. Therefore, in this space,

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the authors sought to understand the structures of strong states and to analyze the points of rupture and fragmentation within these states.

The research process, in its evolution of results, focused on analyzing primary sources that provided statistical data. These sources included the Criminal Investigation Directorate of the National Police of Colombia and the Ombudsman's Office, a collective defender of human rights. The entire focus is on the city of Medellín. This is where large criminal organizations are located.

In a second stage, interviews were conducted with young people from Comuna 13 in Medellín. These young individuals constantly experience the actions of these illegal organizations. These organizations, in turn, manage to legitimize their actions in their communities through fear or the simple conviction of their inhabitants to exercise violence indiscriminately. From there, finally, how the State, even without consciously doing so, inadvertently competes for legitimacy in many neighborhoods and communities of Medellín is analyzed.

Theoretical Framework

The Integrating Unity of the State

For Hobbes, consent among those who are governed by the sovereign is essential for the establishment of peace and security for all. This prevents fear from leading them to use their own despotic force to attack others. Consequently, "it belongs to him who possesses the sovereign power to be a judge, and he will appoint all judges based on opinions and doctrines which seem necessary for peace, thus preventing discord and civil war" (Hobbes, 2018, p. 135).

The sovereign and the legislators who accompany him prescribe the laws by whose mediation any man may know what goods he may enjoy and what actions he may perform without being overwhelmed by the other subjects. Hobbes establishes, in the consistency of consent and common agreement, the *legitimate and illegitimate* in the actions of subjects.

In this sense, the English author integrates into the figure of the sovereign the capacity to maintain peace, defend common goods, and uphold integrity in establishing mutual agreements among the subjects and their governance. In other words, if any of the governed violates the agreed legitimacy of that order, the legitimate authority imposes punishment on the subject who has transgressed:

A *sin* is not only a transgression of some law, but also any disregard for the legislator. Because such disregard is a simultaneous violation of all laws. And, therefore, it may not only consist of the commission of a deed or in speaking words prohibited by law or in the omission of what is ordered by law, but also in the intention or purpose to transgress. For the purpose of breaking the law implies a certain degree of contempt for the one to whom it belongs to see it executed. (Hobbes, 2018, p. 214).

Although Hobbes does not provide a theological treatise on sin, he recognizes a certain similarity between sin and fault, stating that where the law ceases, so does sin. Simultaneously, he implies that where there is no sovereign power, the illegitimacy of crime also ceases, since there is no protection of the law or its *citizens*.

To ensure the maintenance and preservation of modern states, as developed by Hobbes through the sovereign, states must be unified structures in all their administrative spheres. This is necessary to maintain coherence and avoid implosions that could jeopardize their existence in the territorial order they dominate. This is where the importance of the administrative activity of the States in guaranteeing legitimacy processes becomes evident.

In this sense, Weber (2012) examines the state as a unit through different types of domination, including violence and physical force against those who threaten its integrity (a reflection already initiated by Hobbes). From there, he turns to the need for an administrative apparatus that sustains the functional unity of the State. This unit adds some fundamental characteristics to those who wield administrative power:

1. They are personally free and subject only to obedience in their impersonal official duties.
2. They are organized in a clearly defined hierarchy of positions.
3. There is a clear delineation of official competencies.
4. The staff member is subject to strict and systematic discipline and control of their behavior in office. (Weber, 2012, p. 83).

The responsibilities carried out by the officials within the administrative unit must be separated from their political involvement to safeguard the State's function as a guarantor of the various political freedoms it encompasses, provided those freedoms do not pose a threat to the State' existence.

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The elucidation of the definition and professional qualifications pertaining to roles responsible for the governance of the State is instrumental in fostering impartiality throughout regulatory procedures, thus averting their potential politicization or ideologization. This in turn, ensures the protection of citizens' rights ungraded in the same law and enforced in the same authority, sometimes requiring the use of force, not solely for the preservation of the State's institutional components, but also for the protection of the inviolable rights of its citizens. This undoubtedly nurtures the prevailing notion of legitimacy through trust. However, when either the State or its citizens fail to uphold integrity, this unity starts to fracture the structural foundation of legitimacy.

> This trust constitutes the fundamental cornerstone of any constitution that lays the foundation for the rule of law as a state legislature. State legislature, devoid of trust, would be an intricate form of absolutism. Unfettered obedience would become overt oppression, and an unequivocal relinquishment of the right to resist would be an untenable imperative. (Schmitt, 1970, p. 31).

According to Schmitt, the interplay between reason and justice enables the establishment of a state legislature that upholds its legitimacy within the administrative unit, thereby averting absolutism and preserving political struggle. Consequently, legality and legitimacy develop into tactical tools that each party deploys strategically, identifying particular actions of their political opponents as illegitimate or unjust (Schmitt, 1970).

These mechanisms basically serve for transforming legality into an instrument of political struggle. According to Weber (2012), both civil servants and politicians are obliged to prevent any division in the State's unity, consistently functioning within the constraints of the constitution and the law.

Both Weber and Schmitt concur that political divergences should not influence the administrative legitimacy of the state in practice, using the established mechanisms for its defense. They also acknowledge that administrative resources should never be employed for personal purposes, regardless of the strength the political opposition. The distinctions between the state legislature and state jurisdiction, as well as between the state government and administrative state, and even the utilization of the constitution and the legal frameworks to challenge political adversaries and combat perceived *public adversaries* are sometimes reaffirmed. However, legitimacy and violence to maintain order cannot be mandated or contested by any entity besides the State (Martinez-Ferro, 2010; Beca, 2006).

In this context, what happens when other entities reside unlawfully and, still garner approval from a group of settlers, be it out of fear or conviction? Does

the State fragment within its administrative unit responsible for the protection and security of all?

State Fragmentation and Duality

In *The Dual State*, Ernst Fraenkel (2010) analyses the deviation of the National-Socialist party in Germany from the concept of a unified administrative and bureaucratic state posited by Weber (2012). This deviation is represented by a shift toward a state marked by *personal decision-making* driven by an ideological capture, resulting in the separation of various sectors of the German civilian population.

Fraenkel (2010) identified two distinct states to characterize the preceding process: the prerogative state and the normative state. The *normative state* utilizes all legal powers and tools of the State to safeguard the legitimacy of the constitution and laws, while also ensuring diversity and political participation across various sectors. The *prerogative state* rejects the legitimacy of established laws replacing them with the personalized mandates of a ruler who, in turn, has the support of armed forces, whether legal or illegal. This transformation is exemplified with the *Schutzstaffel*, a paramilitary force eventually incorporated into the German Army as part of the Nazi party's shock troops. Consequently, the boundaries between administrative and legal actions are breached.

> [*The Prerogative State*] No delimitation of jurisdiction is provided for Political officials may be instruments of the state or the party. The jurisdiction of party and state officials is not subjected to general regulations and in practice is flexible. (Fraenkel, 2010, p. 7).

In such instances, civil servants and administrative offices of the State are beholden not to the legislative body's administrative acts, but to the party's programs and ideological activities.

In his work, Fraenkel (2010) cites Hitler's Emergency Decree of February 28, 1933 (Reichstagsbrandverordnung, 1993), which was enacted without legal or administrative order. This decree removed all constitutional rights and established a state of emergency, allowing Hitler to formulate decrees without institutional regulation or congressional approval. Similar situations may be observed in Colombia with parapolitics, where paramilitary organizations, for a period, exerted influence over congressmen and senators, leading to illegitimization of the political constitution and decisions made under the sway of these organizations:

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At the time of writing this paper, the national press had reported that 34 out of 102 Senators elected in 2006, 33%, and 25 out of 168 House Representatives, 15%, were under investigation for ties to narco-paramilitarism. These figures demonstrate how narco-paramilitarism has considerably surpassed drug trafficking previous infiltration capacity. In 1982, when Pablo Escobar was elected to the House of Representatives, both his votes and that of his running mate accounted for less than 1% of the Senate votes. In 1994, when it was revealed that the Cali Cartel had significantly infiltrated the political campaigns, those who were convicted accounted for 8% of the Senate votes. If one were to include others implicated in the 8,000 process, this percentage would raise to 12% of the Senate votes. In 2006, those under investigation for narco-paramilitarism represented 35% of the Senate seats and 25% of the Senate votes. This steady growth suggests that drug trafficking has been refining its methods of infiltrating political power and achieving a higher level of "success". (López & Sevillano, 2008, p. 1).

The paramilitary advance allowed different illegal groups to assume territorial control over abandoned areas of Colombia, thereby exerting both military and political influence. This situation led to the emergence of candidacies for the House of Representatives and the Senate establishing a form of co-government between the paramilitaries who controlled the abandoned territories by the State power and the newly elected representatives who joined the Colombian legislative branch (Cruz, 2021; Duque, 2021).

Regarding the above, Avila (2015) highlights the following:

The complicity between certain military structures and paramilitary groups was not a coincidence [...] the legitimacy of the military forces led to a decrease of their actions against the civilian population, while their vulnerability in dealing with the guerrilla allowed paramilitary groups to progressively assume the roles previously carried out by the public forces. (p. 101).

The armed groups not sanctioned by the State fiercely assert their power through armed means and take control of public order in certain territories. This leads to a fragmentation of the state's administrative capacity within these regions, and in some cases, replaced by illegal forces. As a result, the civilian population is compelled to a kind of legitimacy to illegality, as a unit that defends "citizen security."

In this regard, Fraenkel (2010) similarly illustrates how the prerogative state breaks its relationship with administrative, military, and legal actions, degrading the rule of law. In the absence of power, alternative power structures within the State can acquire a certain level of legitimacy for their violent actions, thereby creating a dual and fragmented State at different levels.

The theoretical principles of the State explicitly assert that States do not exercise relative governance over specific territories, instead, they assert their authority over the entire delimited territories.

> The State is a unified territory due to the fact that, whether it is a single geographic space or multiple separated spaces, it is "governed" in a unified manner. In the case of a State with a territory composed of discontinuous spaces, the spatial arrangement serves as a form of closure or enclosure, as the majority of the State's provisions have territorial and not personal legitimacy. (Heller, 2007, p. 173).

Consequently, the State experiences dualities when civil rights and administrative institutions are absent or when external entities employ various forms of violence and territorial control for legitimization (Fraenkel, 2010).

Similarly, Bobbio (2016) recognized that the origins of the delegitimization of the rule of law are concealed beneath the facade of governmental bodies employing the constitution, laws and, more recently, the media. The above serves as a principle of opportunity to conceal social problems that can give rise to criminal organizations seeking to seize state power or, simply, to foster competition with processes of social legitimization of violence and other interests.

The illegitimate perceived as legitimate stands out in the exercise of powers concealed beneath the facade of the State. It ends up concealing those actions that would resemble a dictatorship. However, the constitutional framework of democracy requires that such actions remain hidden from public view.

In this regard, Bobbio (2015) distinguishes three modalities in which the State can be fragmented to the extent that may lead to its destruction. The first modality refers to invisible forces, often clandestine, including illegal organizations, mafias, and terrorist groups. The second modality involves political sects forming alliances with private sectors, leading to instances of corruption. The third method involves analyzing the data from the same employees who function as an invisible power within the same state structures. Regarding the first case, Bobbio mentions:

> There is an unseen force directed against the state that functions as the most effective weapon against it. It contains criminal associations, large criminal organizations like the mafia – for which our country holds the top spot – as well as covert political sects, which today function as terrorist organizations and whose proliferation over the past ten years is also a uniquely Italian phenomenon. The secret society differs from criminal organizations in terms of its goals, yet

it frequently uses the same methods for hurting, assassinating, seducing, and murdering people. (Bobbio, 2015, p. 30).

In the Colombian case, Pablo Escobar's entry into the Congress of the Republic in 1982, as well as various parapolitical cases from 2005 to 2006, demonstrate how organizations with leaders have formed legitimizing the power of their violent actions. Examples of this are the creation of violent discourses like that of the paramilitaries in Colombia, their "battle against the insurgency" (Castaño & Ruiz, 2017), the widespread acceptance of narco-populism, and the creation of social images of Pablo Escobar as the social hero of tv dramas (Wilches, 2020; Korstanje, 2017).

In the case of Medellín, Escobar's image has transcended the boundaries of the city's notoriously violent, drug-trafficking past and has been recast as a kind of "Robin Hood" in some of its outlying areas. Additionally, with the use of narco-novels, the media have been strengthening this perception (Orozco, 2021).

The same idea of Robin Hood is examined by Hobsbawm (2011) in relation to social banditry, i.e. men outside the law who the government regards as criminals while a portion of the populace (at least) views them as victorious heroes and fighters.

> 1) The noble thief begins his career outside the law not because of a crime but rather as a victim of injustice or as a result of authorities persecuting him for some action that he believes to be unlawful but is not generally accepted to be so; 2) "fix the abuses," 3) "rob the rich to give to the poor," 4) "never kill unless it's your own defense or just retaliation," and 5) "if you survive, reintegrate yourself into your community as a respected citizen." In practice, he never abandons his community; 6) he is supported, admired, and helped by his people; 7) his death is solely the result of betrayal because no honorable member of the community would aid the authorities against him; and 8) he is, at least in theory, invincible and untouchable. (Orozco, 2021, p. 59).

The beginning of his career outside the bounds of the law already poses a challenge to the territorial order where he dominates. Hobsbawm (2011) lists a number of characteristics that a social outlaw must possess in order to obtain a degree of legitimacy approved by a group of people in a given territorially defined area and to provide "benefits" to their community in retaliation for the approval given to their actions by the same group of people. Therefore, the sector's vulnerability is the seed of their violent attack, which consists of "guardians of abuse," and their violence often reflects righteous retribution. Therefore, according to Hobsbawm's interpretation (2011), the community

prefers the legitimacy of the social bandit over the slow actions of justice by state authorities.

Methodology

This investigation was developed from a qualitative approach because, even though the social reality of many municipalities in Colombia is similar to the one presented here, there is a lack of official studies and research to provide a characterization of Colombia as a fragmented state where co-governance occurs due to ignorance, lack of interest, or economic interests of some officials with criminal organizations.

In the case of Medellín, there is a long history of governance and legitimacy of criminal forces in the city that began with the Medellín Cartel in the 1980s. This history includes the constant struggle of Pablo Escobar to enter national politics and the significant paramilitary coverage that subjected Colombia to legitimizing violence to eliminate insurgency. This role was exemplified in the case of Medellín by the Metro Block and the Office of Envigado, led by former paramilitary Diego Murillo Bejarano, alias "Don Berna," who controlled Medellín and its organizations until his extradition.

This historical foundation made it possible to analyze the Medellín case and the legitimacy of criminal organizations in two distinct periods. First, gathering official information from the Medellín Integral Security and Coexistence Plans (ISCP), early warnings from the Public Defender, data from the Fund for Peace and Reconciliation, and databases from the Criminal Investigations Division of Colombia's National Police was proposed.

In the second phase, young people who experienced the daily functioning of these organizations in their neighborhoods during the years 2019 and early 2020 were approached. This approach recognized the legitimacy that many of these organizations enjoy through a process of social normalization of their violent actions. Accordingly, a field study was conducted in the community of young students ranging in age from 13 to 19 years old in Medellín's Comuna 13 (one of the areas most affected by violence since the turn of the century).

A total of 256 young people were involved in the research process. Two processes were conducted: 1) a discussion of Medellín's social reality in which the topic of violence was discussed; and 2) the formation of 128 couples for focus groups. The decision to focus on only two participants per group was made to make the narrative of their experiences more concrete, and to prevent a third

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participant or more from being influenced by the experience of the person reading the question and the one initiating the narrative.

The sociodemographic characterization of the surveyed youth corresponds to ages between 14 and 18 years old, belonging to strata 1 and 2 in Comuna 13 of the city of Medellín. To make the survey balanced in terms of gender, 130 women and 126 men were chosen.

Two surveys were conducted to obtain the desired information. In the first survey, a SWOT matrix and a speaking map were developed, identifying the most conflict-prone areas of the city and the neighborhood. In the second survey, questions were asked about the functioning of the state and criminal organizations, as well as the legitimacy of orders in the neighborhoods where they operate. At the end, each of the responses and general ideas about the topic was shared by the focus groups.

Results

State and Criminal Organizations in Dispute for Legitimacy

In the 1980s, the proliferation of neighborhoods and settlements in the city of Medellín went beyond the urban planning regulated by P. L. Weiner and J. L. Sert in 1956 (see Figure 1). The fabric of the new neighborhoods and areas in Medellín became increasingly complex for the planning of straight streets, as originally intended.

Figure 1. *Center for Planning Documentation (Medellín). Plan Room E, Tray 9, Page 2 contains urban development 1770, 1800, 1847, 1889, 1908, 1932 and the present day. General location map. Base map, 1956, analysis map 1958.*
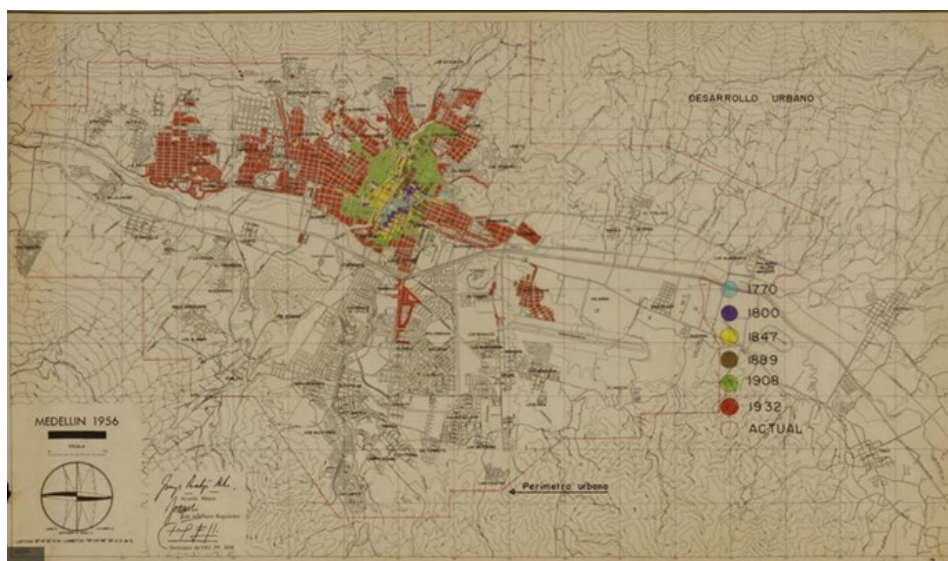
Source: Historical Archive of Medellín (1958, p. 9).

As a result, poor farmers' migration to Medellín in search of better opportunities and progress gave rise to a complex urbanist landscape of neighborhoods and encampments that were difficult to access, which revealed the local governments' ignorance of the social conditions that were emerging in these new areas of the city. To these problems, the following was added:

> The problems of overcrowding, unsanitary conditions, insufficient urban facilities, lack of public space, transportation difficulties, housing precarity, uncertainty regarding property titles, and exploitation in the rental market were challenging to overcome in the context of intense popular urban growth, low incomes of many families, and the absence of a city policy. In addition to this, starting from the late seventies [of the 20th century], there was the emergence of drugs zone – previously concentrated in a few locations in the city – alongside the spread of the consumption of the highly addictive and destructive bazooka. New forms of crime and youth gangs also began to emerge in connection with drug dealing, drug areas, and the establishment of drug trafficking and organized crime in the city. (Martin, 2014, p. 143).

In other words, the emergence of these disconnected neighborhoods and settlements, separate from municipal political administration, provided fertile ground for many young people to turn to crime as a means of sustaining themselves within their communities. They were also joined by the economic backing of the Medellin Cartel through the provision of weapons. As a result, local authority became disconnected from the new dynamics of violence and legitimacy that were taking shape in the emerging 16 districts of Medellin.

It is crucial to recognize that:

> In Medellin during the 80s [of the 20th century], three main types of gangs can essentially be distinguished: the "duras", the "chichipatas", and the guerrilla militias, along with all possible intermediate, mixed, and atypical forms. The "duras" gangs (integrated by Los duros) consolidated themselves with direct influence from drug trafficking kingpins. The smallest gangs, emerged in the poorest and most marginalized neighborhoods, and constituted the workforce for the "duras" or tough gangs. The militias were urban guerrilla groups that operated with varying levels of autonomy. (Martin, 2014, p. 149).

These organizations were in constant dispute for territorial control under several processes. At first, they were sponsored by the cartel of Medellín during the 1980s. After Escobar's death and the consolidation of *"Los Pepes"* group (persecuted by Pablo Escobar) the criminal organization of Escobar was decentralized and conflicts started among dissidents of the Medellín cartel, guerrilla militias and *Los Pepes*, who later gave birth to the political and military life of the paramilitaries, fostered at the beginning by Cooperatives of Surveillance (Convivir), stated in the article 42 of the Law Decree 356 of 1994.

Between 1994 and 1997 there was a constant struggle in the process of creation of the United Self-Defenses of Colombia (AUC in Spanish) in Medellín.

> The first armed group formally created by AUC, although within the structure of ACC, it was called *Bloque Metro* under the guidance of [alias] *Doblecero*. This group was comprised of combatants trained in Urabá and assigned to Valle de Aburrá and its surroundings. The aim in Medellín was to organize groups of urban Self-Defense (Grau in Spanish) to displace active guerrilla militia mainly in the *comunas* 8, 9 and 13. (Martin, 2014, p. 369).

The total consolidation of AUC in Medellín took the total control of the groups and criminal gangs of the city. *Operación Orión*, executed by the Colombian State, was an opportunity for the AUC to displace and killed their enemies of guerrilla militias in *Comuna* 13. It consolidated a territorial order in all the city

of Medellín by paramilitaries. This means that neighborhood organizations that at the time were under Pablo Escobar orders, were now the new youngers, under Diego Fernando Murillo, alias *"Don Berna."*

After the demobilization of AUC in the compliance of the agreement of Santa Fe de Ralito, July 15, 2003 and the capture of several paramilitary leaders – Diego Fernando Murillo, *"Don Berna"* – among others, and his extradition to the United States on May 2008 was another scenario for the criminal organizations in Medellín. The gang dealt with micro-trafficking, theft, and blackmail and additionally "take care of the neighborhoods." This caused another scenario for the conflict to obtain the power and control of the office in the municipality of Envigado and the order of neighborhoods of Medellín.

Table 1. *Rate of Violent Deaths in Medellín 2007-2012 PISC.*

Crimes	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Source
Rate of homicides for each hundred thousand inhabitants (HPHI)	34,04	45,61	94,38	86,34	69,63	50,91	INML, SIJIN, CTI, -Secretary of Security of Medellín
Rate of violent deaths for each thousand of inhabitants	61,19	74,32	119,23	110,97	95,05	ND	SISDEC, SIAVAC-SI-VELSE. INML, SIJIN, CTI, Secretary of Security of Medellín
Homicides	771	1045	2187	2023	1649	962	INML, SIJIN, CTI, SISC- Secretary of Security of Medellín

Source: *Plan Integral de Convivencia y Seguridad* (2015, p. 61).

In Medellín, the *Plan Integral de Convivencia y Seguridad* (2015) shows an increase of more than 50% in homicides the year after the extradition of alias "Don Berna." During this time Erickson Vargas Cárdenas, alias "Sebastián," and Maximiliano Bonilla Orozco, alias "Valenciano," vied for the control of the city. Beyond the succession of gangs by the leaders of these groups, how the social permanence of the neighborhood records a degree of stability according to the agreements between the gangs of the city is revealed. They obtained control

beyond blackmail and micro-trafficking, the orders of legitimacy of coexistence between neighbors of these sectors.

These organizations have increased since 2012. In 2014, *Fundación Paz y Reconciliación* (2018) registered 146 criminal organizations in Medellín and another 13 unidentified. As this entity states:

> The culture of drug trafficking and illegality acceptance is a consequence – or a natural response – of the years of armed violence focused in Medellín. It has led to a parallel order being imposed and accepted. The illegalness is recognized more as an authority than the State itself. And the youth respond to the groups – specifically those from marginal neighborhoods. Currently, this conflict in Medellín is manifested in organized structures of power with criminal acts. Those come up from old schools and criminal practices implemented by the old actors of the armed conflict and drug trafficking at the national level. They have always taken Medellin as a kind of laboratory of all kinds of violent acts. (p. 8).

The *Fundación Paz y Reconciliación* (2018) remarks that these criminal organizations have forcefully taken over the legitimate order of the neighborhoods Medellín. Their presence is valid throughout the territory of the city. Figure 2 shows the early warning reports of the Ombudsman's Office.

Figure 2. *Illegal Armed Structures in Medellín by 2020.*
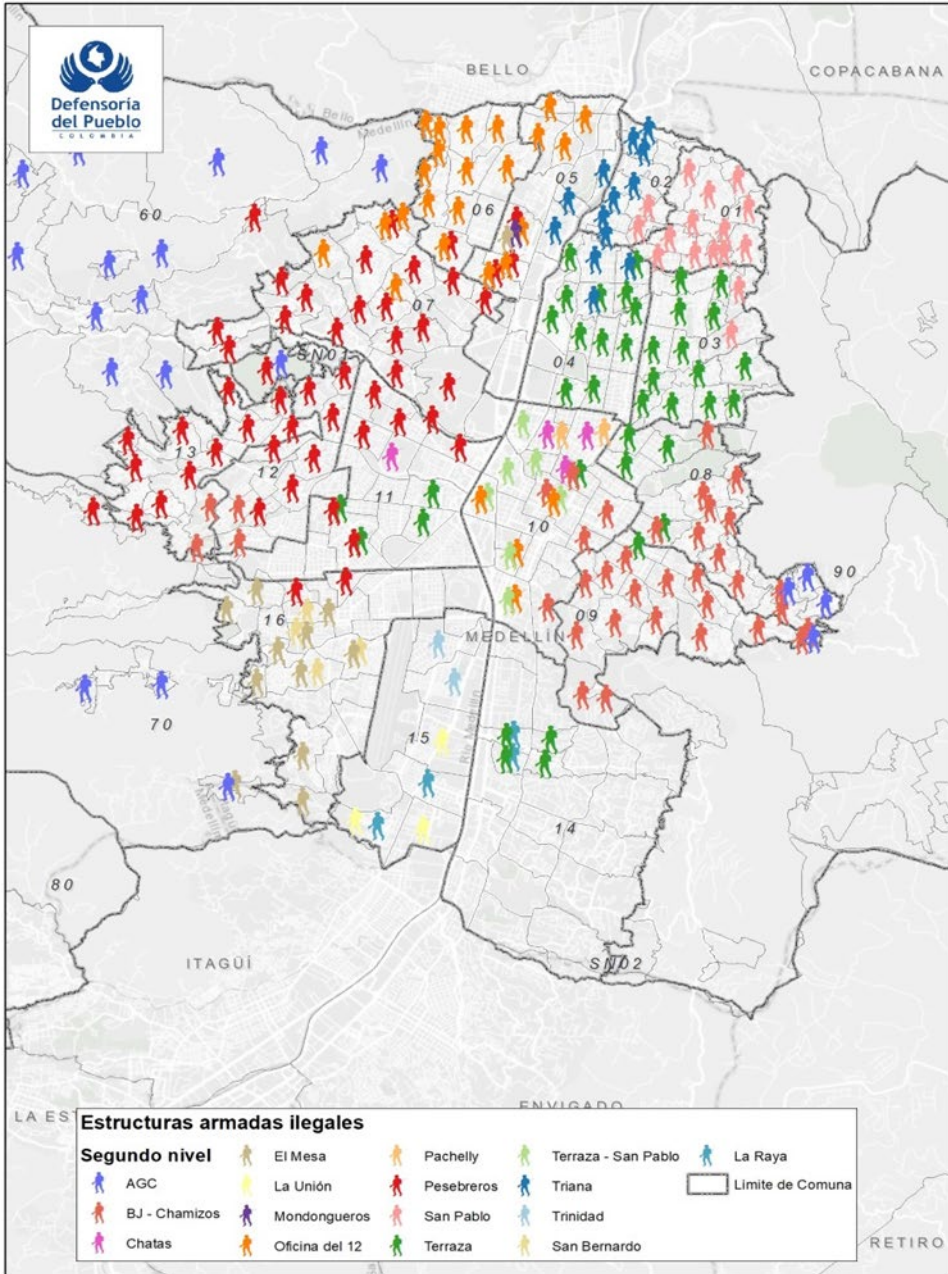
Fuente: Defensoría del pueblo (2020).

Different organizations distributed according to the information of the Ombudsman's Office show full coverage of the city. They control problems between neighbors and, even, the recruitment of new young people. These groups are also responsible for stimulating or stopping the conflict of emerging organizations. Usually, there is no confrontation and if there is, it is severely repressed by this already-aligned organization. The Ombudsman's Office (2010) highlights the presence of these criminal organizations in several risky scenarios.

> [One of the scenarios of] risk is found [in] most of Medellín's neighborhoods and streets, specifically in territories where there has been no open confrontation between illegal armed structures during the last two years, but there is a presence and a territorial and population control that has been hegemonically exercised for years by the same illegal actor. There, the civilian population tolerates another type of behavior. It is silent, the events are not headlines, but they are a permanent source of DDHH violation of the civil population. These are the most common behaviors in these vulnerable sectors: Threats, forced displacement, connection and use of NNA, blackmailing, constraint of participation and social fabric, violent punishment (mainly individual), among other behaviors that the population seems to be naturalized to in the absence of institutional action. (p. 36).

These criminal organizations end up taking over the actions of a pre-modern state like an inquisition. Without social agreements and respect for human or constitutional rights, criminal punishments, and orders arise from the decision of the leaders of these organizations against some neighbors of the neighborhoods or opponents from other organizations. What makes the situation even more complex is the naturalization of these behaviors; even to replace the judge or the police by leaders of these organizations. This does not happen because people want to choose these organizations as promoters of law and neighborhood justice, but mainly for two reasons:

> 1) The lack of a stable, legal and sustainable economy for young people and their economic independence, and permanent presence of criminal structures willing to address the needs of young people 2) The connivance of some members of the public force and the legitimacy of a large part of the community. This makes it easier for the young person to connect to illegality. (Fundación Paz y Reconciliación, 2018, p. 11).

The corruption of members of the armed forces with these groups has become a kind of de-legitimation by a large majority of people who perceive the State as inefficient and corrupt in resolving conflicts and social problems. In the case of Medellín, also the police structure planned by quadrants in each of the neighborhoods does not fully cover citizen security.

Legitimacy and Violence: The Social View of Young People on Criminal Organizations in Medellín

The naturalization of organized crime in many neighborhoods of Medellín corresponds to the lack of the State order. It ranges from the judicial institutions and their slow effectiveness of high volume of cases, to the legislative branch. It is marked by its high rates of corruption, to police intervention in the effective control of criminal organizations in the city.

To get closer to the concept of legitimacy of violence and justice in Medellín, the fieldwork was conducted with 256 young people from the Comuna 13 (one of the most affected by city organizations). A total of 128 focal pair groups answered four structural questions to communicate the naturalization of the legitimacy of the violence of criminal organizations in the area and, mainly, to convey how they assume the security and protection the State should provide.

Table 2. *Analysis of the Perception of Justice.*

Do you think Colombia is a country where justice is exercised?		
Yes	6	5%
No	100	78%
Sometimes	22	17%

The first question aimed at ascertaining the conception of justice. The question was: Do you believe that Colombia is a country where justice is exercised? Seventy-eight percent replied "no." These 200 young people were skeptical that the model of justice in Colombia would solve many of the problems that arise daily; mainly, a neighborhood that at the beginning of the 21st century suffered state intervention and where many paramilitary organizations took the opportunity

to annihilate their enemies from groups that included people outside the conflict. One of the considerations expresses:

Figure 3. *Perception of Justice.*
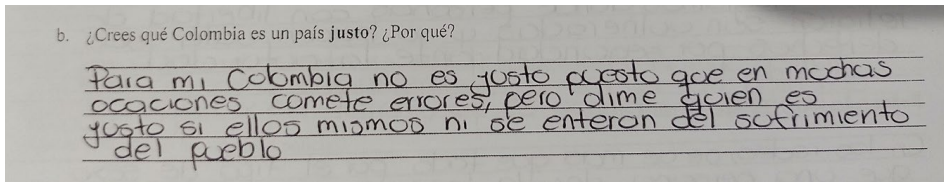
They describe the State's forgetfulness regarding the suffering of violence and other social factors experienced in the poorest neighborhoods of Medellín, to the distancing of some entities from the civilian population, as a seed of injustice and self-defense or, as Hobbes (2018) maintains, "If there were no constituted power or it was not great enough for security, every man could legitimately rely on his own strength and aptitude to protect himself against all other men" (p. 127).

In accordance with the background of the lack of justice from the perspective of these young people, the intention was to find a justice generator in Colombia from the social perspective in which they live, where the only close relationship they have with the political and social reality of the rest of Colombia, is what is transmitted by the media or what they manage to acquire in the educational institutions they attend. Consequently, the question was raised: who are the most unjust people in Colombia?

As shown in Table 3, the same 78% maintain that politicians are the people holding the highest rate of injustice; followed by the upper classes, at 10%, as well as the police.

Table 3. *Analysis of the Perception of Justice.*

Who are the most unjust people in Colombia?		
	Groups	**Percentage**
The politicians	100	78%
The upper classes	13	10%
The Police	13	10%
Criminal organizations	2	2%

Something to highlight in this question is that criminal organizations – which are the same ones that operate in these areas and are mainly responsible for thefts in the city, homicides, micro-trafficking and forced displacement – appear in last place with only two focal couples that consider them actors that generate injustice. Some considerations were the following:

Figure 4. *Considerations on the Perception of Injustice.*
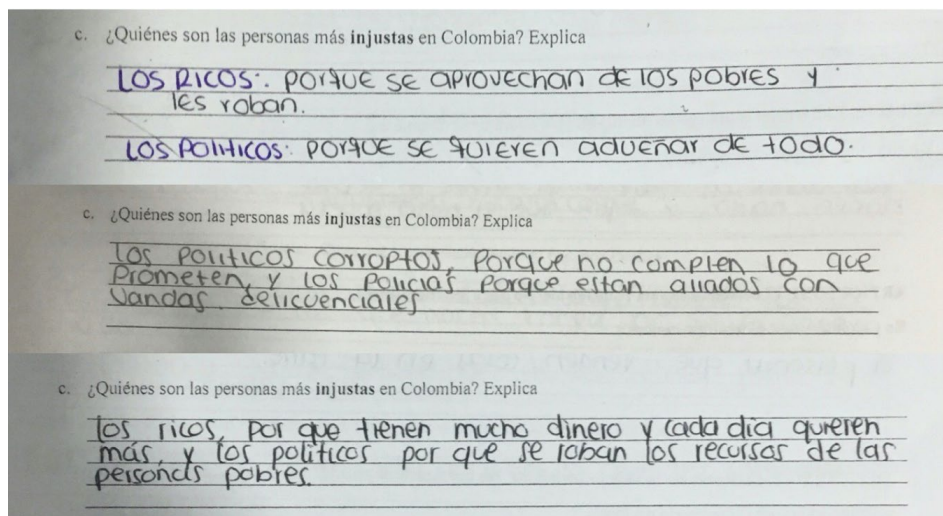
The development of these discourses almost always includes corruption as a way of capturing public resources that are not properly delivered, as well

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Re search

as the similar singling out of the upper classes as accumulators of money and hoarders of workers' resources. In the same development, one of the focal couples points out the corruption of some members of the police with members of these criminal organizations.

Police figures, published by the press *El Tiempo*, show that in 2016 650 police officers were captured for various crimes (Rueda, 2019). In 2017, 583 were captured and by October of 2018, 450 members of the public force were detained. For the year 2019, the Antioquia Police Command relieved all uniformed personnel belonging to the Caucasia command, municipality of Antioquia, due to complaints about alleged links of the police force with micro-trafficking and extortion networks.

In conclusion, many of the characteristics mentioned by Weber (2012), such as the "elimination of the personal point of view and submission to obedience in their impersonal official obligations and a clear delimitation of official powers" are violated by some State officials, disintegrating citizen trust in institutions, which are – or should be – protectors of civilian lives and property.

The excesses on the part of many of these officials facilitate criminal organizations, providing them with greater coverage in the development of their operations, and greater penetration and legitimacy in the social sphere. In that order of ideas, the question was posed: do you believe that there are other powers that govern more than the police authority?

Table 4. *Analysis of the Idea of Authority.*

Do you think there are other powers that govern more than the police authority?		
Yes	104	81%
No	24	19%

To this question, 104 focal couples responded that in Medellín powers greater than the security forces govern. The Police were included because they

are the largest representative entity among the State order in the protection of citizens and civil rights.

This governability that is put in the question, is formulated in various ways, ranging from maintaining territorial order in the neighborhoods to the recruitment of young people into these criminal organizations. Some responded to this, as can be seen in Figure 4:

Figure 4. *Perception of the Youth Idea of Authority.*
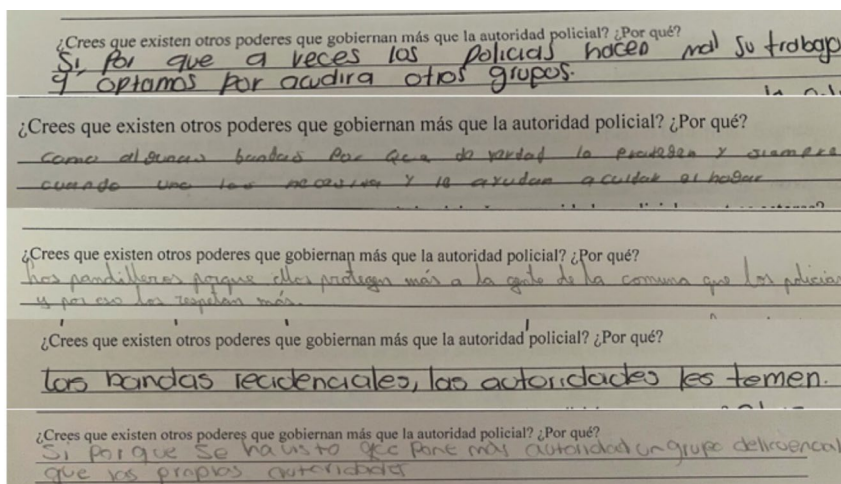
Some of the participants of the research acknowledged going to these groups in case of any problem they had in their sector. They consider the Police ineffective when it comes to solving problems among neighbors. These groups resort to a type of street court to intimidate others who do not conform to their rules or are simply perceived as a threat to the development of their interests in micro-trafficking and extortion. Of the latter, according to statistics issued by the Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Interpol of Colombia (2020), 630 complaints of extortion were reported for the year 2019 alone. By 2020, it dropped to 506.

Some members of the focal couples considered that criminal organizations provided "security" to the neighborhood where they live, that their actions through weapons have allowed them to consolidate a level of respect on the part of the community in which they live. However, this respect for the members of these organizations is based on the fear they generate. Those who do not do so, are often murdered or forced to relocate. According to *Early Alert 032-2020* of

the Ombudsman's Office (2020), between 2018 and 2019 approximately 6,741
people were displaced from their neighborhoods and communities.

Finally, to close a generalized understanding of control and territorial order
in a more specific way, it was decided to ask the young people according to their
knowledge about the territory and the different armed bodies that operate or have
operated there: which organization has greater control and territorial power?

Table 5. *Analysis of Territorial Control.*

Which organizations have greater control and territorial power?		
The Police	8	6%
The paramilitaries	34	27%
Criminal organizations	63	49%
The guerrillas	18	14%
Others	5	4%

Forty-nine percent highlighted the criminal gangs or "Bacrim," which
are composed, for the most part, of demobilized former paramilitaries who
continued a criminal life. However, the emergence of new paramilitary factions,
such as Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia (AGC), have taken much of the
territorial power in Medellín. Therefore, it is consolidated at 27%, according to
the consideration of young people. Fourteen percent consider that the guerrillas
have extensive territorial control. It is noteworthy that, although some members
of the ELN operate in Medellín, they do not have a major impact on the city's
criminal orders. Finally, eight of the participating couples considered that the
Police manage to have territorial control.

It is important to highlight that 94% of the focal couples recognized that
the territorial order, at the level of weapons and administration of violence in
their neighborhood, is controlled by forces that do not belong to the State. State
forces are perceived as ineffective in the territorial order. The sale of narcotics,
extortion and other criminal modalities practiced by these organizations are,
in turn, their gateway to administer violence in the different areas of Medellín
and carry out State tasks – such as security, protection of life and integrity of
citizens – leaving the State in a difficult situation, which leaves the effectiveness
of the law and the Constitution in a paradox. These criminal organizations act
under their own law and interests, and compete with the State for legitimacy that
they have already consolidated for decades.

Conclusions

The administrative unity and coherence in the actions of a State are essential for its existence. Their presence in the lives of citizens is consolidated with the force that the military forces exert on the civilian population, as well as through the legitimate trust that citizens place in their institutions.

In theoretical terms, every social State of law must be a guarantor of the security and life of citizens, protect the differences that make it up, supporting its actions in the Constitution and the laws as the maximum pillars of justice. However, there are three possibilities for States to disintegrate their own legitimacy: the first, when their organizations do not act effectively on their powers; the second, when many of its officials end up connected to the activities of criminal organizations; and the third, when a State does not accompany the construction of social and cultural groups, leaving room for unregulated violence.

The safeguarding of the security, integrity, and well-being of citizens is the first sign of integrity of the States. It can consolidate violence against the civilian population as a hegemonic principle of domination, as well as improve the dignity of the most forgotten sectors, where theft, extortion, micro-trafficking and other forms of violence occur as a form of survival and self-defense against what the State itself causes due to abandonment.

The data provided by government entities for the city of Medellín show that, although there is a police presence as a guarantee of security, they are not able to definitively contain the control of other criminal groups in the neighborhoods and communities that make up the city. The poverty of some neighborhoods, along with the unemployment of hundreds of young people or those with poorly paid salaries, become a source of opportunity for the swelling of the criminal ranks of these organizations.

The absence of the State on various occasions or the incomplete presence in certain situations – or even the corruption of some State officials – have caused the legitimate distrust that many citizens have – and, especially, young people – to gradually disintegrate and instead, other non-legal organizations are the new recipients of powers that were created to liquidate the very same powers. As evidenced in some of the interviewees' considerations, many people place greater trust in the actors of these organizations to exercise street justice, to the point that the same people have managed to naturalize these behaviors that give them a mobile legitimacy in accordance with the sides that come to power.

These fissures in the unity of the State are becoming more and more evident in cities like Medellín, where the State allows the strengthening of networks of selective violence by the Armed Forces to favor very specific factors, but not for

the civil protection of the citizens. Added to this is the lack of a forceful policy in the process of control, legalization, and industrialization of some narcotics to gain effective control over micro-trafficking, accompanied, in turn, by social welfare policies for young people at risk of falling into the formation of these criminal organizations.

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Colombia in Times of Post-Truth: The Case of The National Center of Historical Memory. A Philosophical Reflection*

[English Version]

Colombia en tiempos de posverdad: el caso del Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica. Una reflexión filosófica

A Colômbia em tempos de pós-verdade: o caso do Centro Nacional de Memória Histórica. Uma reflexão filosófica

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Abstract

Objective: The present article aims to examine the issue of post-truth in the Colombian context, focusing specifically on the National Center for Historical Memory (NCHM). Emphasis will be placed on the practical consequences that arise from adopting theses such as relativism and negativism. **Methodology**: This article follows an analytical orientation, wherein the elements that justify the significance of objective facts (defined as independent of any opinion, belief, or ideology) are presented. These objective facts serve as benchmarks to counterbalance judgments, such as the assertion made by the

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former director of the NCHM, suggesting that a privileged point of view to determine what can be considered a fact is lacking and that, ultimately, facts are established by consensus. **Results**: In the analysis of the post-truth phenomenon in Colombia, one significant aspect of concern emerges: the peril of rejecting facts and pitting subjective perspectives against objective truth in the process of reconstructing Colombia's history. **Conclusions**: The key point to be drawn from this study is that negationist relativism, which plays a crucial role in the post-truth phenomenon explored by Acevedo, can be traced back to the postmodern school of thought.

Keywords: Colombia; National Center for Historical Memory; objective truth; denialism; postmodernity.

Resumen

Objetivo: el presente artículo tiene como propósito examinar el problema de la posverdad en el contexto colombiano, específicamente en el Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (CNMH), haciendo énfasis en las consecuencias prácticas que traen la adopción de tesis como el relativismo y el negacionismo. **Metodología**: así pues, a partir de una orientación analítica se presentarán los elementos que justifican la importancia de los hechos objetivos (entiéndase esto como independientes de cualquier opinión, creencia, ideología), que sirvan de jueces para neutralizar juicios, como, por ejemplo, la del anterior director del CNMH, según la cual no tenemos un punto de vista privilegiado para determinar si algo puede contar como un hecho y que, en cualquier caso, estos se fijan por medio de un consenso. **Resultados**: al analizar el tema de la posverdad en Colombia, tomando el siguiente aspecto principal de discusión, se halla el peligro que conlleva rechazar los hechos y oponerse a la verdad objetiva para reconstruir la historia de Colombia. **Conclusiones**: el punto central que se concluye es que dicho relativismo negacionista, como pieza clave de la posverdad con el que Acevedo se compromete, tiene sus raíces en la escuela posmoderna.

Palabras clave: Colombia; Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica; verdad objetiva; negacionismo; posmodernidad.

Resumo

Objetivo: o objetivo deste artigo é examinar o problema da pós-verdade no contexto colombiano, especificamente no Centro Nacional de Memória Histórica (CNMH), com ênfase nas consequências práticas da adoção de teses como o relativismo e o negacionismo. **Metodologia**: assim, com base em uma orientação analítica, apresentaremos os elementos que justificam a importância dos fatos objetivos (entendidos como independentes de qualquer opinião, crença, ideologia), que servem como juízes para neutralizar julgamentos, como, por exemplo, o do ex-diretor do CNMH, segundo o qual não temos um ponto de vista privilegiado para determinar se algo pode contar como um fato e que, de qualquer forma, estes são fixados por meio de um consenso. **Resultados**: ao analisar a questão da pós-verdade na Colômbia, considerando o seguinte aspecto principal da discussão, encontramos o perigo de rejeitar os fatos e de se opor à verdade objetiva para reconstruir a história da Colômbia. **Conclusões**: o ponto central que se conclui é que esse relativismo negacionista, como peça-chave da pós-verdade com a qual Acevedo se envolve, tem suas raízes na escola pós-moderna.

Palavras-chave: Colômbia; Centro Nacional de Memória Histórica; verdade objetiva; negacionismo; pós-modernidade.

Reflec tion

Introduction

The leap to stardom of the term "post-truth" dates back to 2016, coinciding with two globally recognized events: Donald Trump's victory in the US elections and the campaign in Great Britain to withdraw the United Kingdom from the European Union (Brexit). The common recipe for both events has been: appealing to the passions of citizens, and seeking relevant facts that feed or justify those passions. As a result, the facts ultimately depend on emotional opinions, rather than the other way around. In the case of the Trump victory, as English journalist Matthew D'Ancona (2019) recalls, the popular slogan was "Make America Great Again" (p. 20), and in the case of Brexit the slogan was "Recover Control" (p. 20). Of course, for Trump to feed the popular sentiment of America's greatness, he resorted to undermining confidence in his Democratic Party opponents by repeatedly promoting the unfounded claim that his rival Hillary Clinton ran a child sex trafficking ring with Obama out of a pizza parlor. This conspiracy theory is known as *Pizzagate* (Kuznia et al., 2020), just to mention one of many hoaxes that helped Trump win the 2016 election.

Now, "Regaining control" for Brexit promoters consisted, for example, of unearthing "the Kalergi plan"; the old conspiracy theory suggesting a worldwide plot to "flood" Europe and especially Britain with African and Asian workers to wipe out the white race. Of course, there are many more lies and conspiracy theories in all this, but the point is that the repetition *ad nauseam* of that pile of garbage is intended to fuel popular indignation, and thus political decisions can ultimately be reduced to a merely frenzied or passionate affair.

The Colombian case has not been excluded from this post-truth phenomenon. In fact, Juan Carlos Vélez, the pro-Uribe manager of the NO Campaign for the peace plebiscite, advocated the emotional slogan that "we have to go out and vote," supported by conspiratorial ideas that the peace process was the triumph of Castro-Chavismo —a term attributed to the Chilean historian Fernando Mires or to the leader of the Democratic Center and former president of Colombia, Álvaro Uribe (Universidad de los Andes, 2018). In other words, Castro-Chavismo promoted the peace accords in Colombia, and the base document of the Havana agreement was inspired by gender ideology. However, although the peace agreement has been a clear example of post-truth in Colombia, especially due to the lies hammered by its opponents, this essay will not address this particular event. Several recent research papers, such as those by María Fernanda González (2017) and María Daniela Jiménez (2017), have already examined the relationship between the peace process and the post-truth phenomenon. What is interesting as

a theme for investigation are distinctive features that fuel post-truth. This refers to the denialism —as alluded to in this paper, concerning a particular historical fact, although it can also have a broader connotation, especially when denying certain natural events. Additionally, the essay will explore the relativism that postmodern thought has cultivated.

These traits are represented by the National Center for Historical Memory by its former director Darío Acevedo, who does not miss an opportunity to deny the armed conflict —recall that he was the head of the NCHM from February 2019 until July 7, 2022. Acevedo's reasons for denying the conflict center on relativism. In his view, there is not a privileged point of view to determine whether something can count as a fact, and in any case, these are fixed by consensus—as will be shown and substantiate in Section 3 of this article. Therefore, the fundamental interest of this work is to analyze the issue of post-truth in Colombia, focusing primarily on one aspect: the danger of rejecting facts and opposing objective truth in the process of reconstructing the history of the country. The point is that this negationist relativism with which Acevedo engages has its roots in the postmodern school.

Before embarking on this work, first delving into the definition of "post-truth," is crucial to clarifying the true meaning of this concept. "Post-truth" is not synonymous with "lie," although the two terms are closely related. Language, especially political language, is rife with falsehoods, yet these two terms can be distinguished independently. The person who lies possesses the intention to deceive their interlocutor, offering a version that deliberately does not correspond to the facts. However, the novelty of post-truth is that "facts become subordinate to our political point of view" (McIntyre, 2018, p. 41). Facts serve only insofar as they feed feelings or favor emotions; otherwise, they are worthless.

Thus, as the Italian philosopher Maurizio Ferraris (2019) puts it, "post-truth is a radically new phenomenon with respect to classical lies" (p. 49). The novelty of post-truth is not so much that what is said does not conform to the facts, but that what is said depends on a private convictions and emotions. The alignment of personal preferences with actual events is irrelevant. In short, according to the Oxford dictionary definition, "post-truth" is "the idea that feelings sometimes matter more than facts" (McIntyre, 2018, p. 41).

Given this presupposition, the author will demonstrate that this characteristic of post-truth is deeply ingrained in Colombian institutions. Therefore, it is essential to not only unravel the way in which it has spread but also analyze its epistemological roots and potential implications for culture in general. Clearly, the phenomenon of post-truth in Colombia can be studied from other governmental entities —such as the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Research, which is a very particular case, since it is paradoxical that the director of this portfolio until

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the year 2021 had positions against the proceeding of science— and from other events in Colombian national life. To analyze the issue of post-truth in Colombia, examining the role of the media and "fake news" that sneak into social networks and virtual platforms would also be interesting. However, as already stated, this paper has the fundamental purpose of examining the issue of post-truth via the National Center for Historical Memory, namely its previous director.

The National Center for Historical Memory's Denialism Stance

In 2011, the National Center for Historical Memory was established to preserve the memory of the armed conflict. Since then, it has published a number of reports detailing numerous tragedies that have occurred in Colombia from the middle of the previous century to the present. However, it is strange that the former director of this entity has negationist inclinations toward the armed conflict. I.e., precisely the agency in charge of describing the historical development of the armed conflict, the different actors that have participated in it, the different victims that it has left throughout the national territory has been headed by a person who does not believe that there has been an armed conflict in Colombia, but rather that what has occurred has been a systematic attack by illegal groups against the State. One of Acevedo's arguments for supporting this negotiator's point of view is as follows: "The truth is not unique and there shouldn't be official truths [...] If a section of the population is going to be stigmatized for any reason, then those who are already stigmatized may also become stigmatized" (Bolaños, 2019, paragraph 5).

No one can claim to be in possession of the truth, according to Acevedo, because there are multiple versions of the truth regarding the conflict in Colombia: what is true for the government is false for the armed groups and for the victims; what is true for the victims is false for the government and the armed groups; and what is true for the armed groups is false for both the government and the victims. Therefore, according to Acevedo, there exist a variety of truths, but none of them stand out over the others because there is no official or single truth; therefore, all facts have the same historical significance and truth is relative to the position one decides to take.

Precisely, Acevedo's denialism, which is justified in the idea that there is no objective truth, but that it is relative, is one of the foundations of the phenomenon of post-truth, because if the truth cannot be privileged from any point of view, then the value for objective Truth disappears and whatever is preached as true is nothing more than euphemistically calling opinions and passions. Philosopher Victoria Camps (2017) says the following about this aspect:

Given that truth is no one's monopoly, that it is virtually unattainable, that the views are diverse and plural, since we are in the postmodernity, in the age of weak thought and liquid society, why worry about seeking the truth? (p. 95).

Camps' approach is based on a premise that is interesting to analyze: the legacy that postmodern thought has left to post-truth. Philosophers like Vattimo and Rovatti (1988, pp. 9-13) and Vatttimo (2009, pp. 21-33) have considered that reason and truth have been part of the absolutist or universalistic attributes of modernity and have weakened the different perspectives that human beings have on the world, so if one leaves aside these universal values, one can accept all the points of view, all the values, all approaches. In summary, the best remedy according to Vattimo (2009) for universal ideas is relativism. Of course, this relativist thesis, which Vattimo himself refers to as "weak thinking," seems to have the following appeal: it seems to be tolerant of all points of view because it privileges none and holds that there are no absolute truths; consequently, neither the authority of reason nor the authority of truth can be the arbiters of one's own beliefs and opinions. In other words, everything is valid after relativism has been accepted. There is no such thing as objective truth after that.

The point is that the practical effects of relativism are devastating because if the standard of objective truth is rejected, one won't be able to determine whether the bubonic plague under the Bizanian Empire was real or whether the Holocaust committed by the Nazis actually occurred. If everything is a matter of "perspectives," Hitler's truth on the purported "purification of the race" is just as real as the Holocaust committed against the Jews. This emphasis on relativism has two flaws. The first is that since every position must be balanced according to relativism, such opinions are incongruous. If this equilibrium is achieved, stating a fact is as simple as denying it; if some people accept certain facts, others will disagree, as has happened with the Holocaust. Alejandro Ordóñez, Colombia's attorney general from 2009 to 2016, held conflicting views on acknowledging the Jewish Holocaust, aligning himself with the Lefebvrist church to which he belongs (BLU Radio, 2013). A second principle of relativism is that since all points of view are equally valid, each one will have its own supporting facts. This tenet is no less dangerous than the first.

In other words, the facts that don't fit with one's beliefs, opinions, or ideologies should be rejected and replaced with other "alternative facts." When Gerardo Macas said, "these are my principles, and if you don't like them, I have others," (p.1) in 2020, he was quoting Groucho Marx. In the age of "post-truth," the issue is more or less as, these are the facts, and if they don't satisfy the person's point of view, other facts are available. This can be recreated if one recalls two episodes from the recent past. In 2008 Alvaro Uribe's presidential advisor, José

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Obdulio Gaviria stated that in "Colombia there are no displaced people, but rather they are migrants" (Delgado, 2011). This was to support Acevedo's negationist theory that there was never an armed conflict between the government and guerrilla groups in Colombia. Instead, Acevedo claims that migration was the result of terrorist attacks against the country's government, making it impossible to discuss displacement.

The second episode takes place in the year 2020. This time it was Colombia's President Iván Duque who, in response to bloodshed across much of the country, claimed without qualification that "massacres" "are not a problem there; rather, 'collective homicides' are the norm" (Vanguardia, 2020; Deutsche Welle, 2020). He then replaced this claim with another that appeared less arrogant. Both cases, the one that "in Colombia there are no displaced people but rather they are migrants" and that in Colombia "there are no massacres, but rather collective homicides" are nothing more than choosing for their liking the facts that best suit the official position. Lee McIntyre (2018) summarizes this kind of event: "the particular use of facts supporting the position itself and the complete rejection of those that do not, seems to be an integral part in the creation of the new reality of post-truth" (p. 60), or as Valdés Villanueva (2018) states in the presentation for the Spanish edition of McIntyre's book, in the era of post-truth "the distinction between facts and opinions becomes diffuse" (p. 20).

One possible objection to this statement is that the examples exposed belong to Colombia's political right, as if post-truth were a phenomenon that only concerns this political spectrum. The obvious reason this article is focused on the right and especially on Uribism approach is because it is the political ideology that has ruled the country over the last twenty years, although it is necessary to point out that post-truth is also something that leftist ideologies have also embraced. For example, the trend that in 2020 the defunct FARC denied the forced recruitment of children to integrate their lines (45 Segundos Noticias, 2020), despite the fact that the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) found that between 1971 and 2016 this guerrilla group recruited at least 6,230 boys and girls (El Espectador, 2020).

In a famous essay, "Politics and English Language," George Orwell (2009) accepted that this euphemistic phenomenon is owned by political language, since it was created only to deceive, manipulate, and project an appearance of solidity to what was pure smoke. Orwell (2009) stated:

> Political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question- begging and sheer cloudy vagueness. Defenseless villages are bombarded from the air, the inhabitants driven out into the countryside, the cattle machine- gunned, the huts set on fire with incendiary bullets: this is called *pacification*. Millions of peasants are robbed of their farms and sent trudging along the roads with no

more than they can carry: this is called *transfer of population* or *rectification of frontiers*. People are imprisoned for years without trial, or shot in the back of the neck or sent to die of scurvy in Arctic lumber camps: this is called *elimination of unreliable elements*. Such phraseology is needed if one wants to name things without calling up mental pictures of them. (p. 370-371).

This quote seems to be the script that our Colombian politicians have repeated, since there is a clear parallel between the "there are no massacres, but rather collective homicides" by Duque and Orwell's "rectification of frontiers." What should be made clear is that the post-truth, whether the one by the left or the right, has its formulas for denying the facts, and if the facts do not match its ideology, then they create others that do. Chomsky is right agreeing with Martínez (2018) when he states that in the contemporary world "people no longer believe in facts" (para. 1), at least not from an objective point of view.

Armed Conflict: Does a Fact Depend on Consensus?

Returning to Acevedo's denialism attitude toward the armed conflict, it can be seen that this approach is not far from postmodern philosophers, because the rejection of the idea of an objective truth is supported by the benign appearance of relativism; the point of view of one who denies the armed conflict is as true as that of the one who stated it. Based on the facts, these points of view can be constructed whenever one's opinion allows; the facts meant the same way that opinions, beliefs, ideologies, or feelings are expressed. Matthew D'Ancona (2019) states: "There is no stable and verifiable reality, there is only an endless battle to define it, the fighting of your 'facts' against my 'alternative facts'" (p. 25). This denial of the facts is what the Spanish philosopher Arias Maldonado (2017) calls "post-factualism," "the loss of the persuasive value of facts in the public debate, so that these would no longer be determinants for the configuration of private beliefs" (p. 66).

This aspect calls for attention because Acevedo has stated that the armed conflict in Colombia does not exist, because there is no high consensus on this fact, there is not a unanimous agreement that determines whether in this country there was conflict or not. Acevedo states: "There is no consensus between us. Law 1448 recognizes the presence of an 'armed conflict', but it warns against official truths that are more owned by dictatorial regimes" (Hernández, 2019,

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para. 28). As this article has tried to show, Acevedo is a committed relativist, and that generates two quite questionable assumptions; one of them is that the facts are determined by a consensus, it depends on an agreement, either between ideologies, parties, cultures, civil society, etc. This means that since the facts are relative to what each person determines, then objectivity is impossible. There is nothing that impartial facts are independent of, neither a scheme of perception nor an ideological affiliation, which is why they have to be a subproduct of an agreement between parties.

Clearly, the idea of consensus to resolve the objectivity of facts is a rather weak argument. In the Middle Ages, it was established by consensus that the sun revolved around the earth and, it had been also determined by the clerical authority. Even though this consensus could have been stated as a belief or religious doctrine, its own misconception was discovered. With the new astronomy it was revealed that it was not the earth but the sun that is static. This is a simple example to show that objectivity is neither a matter of consensus nor agreement, much less of authority. Likewise, Acevedo cannot defend responsibly that armed conflict does not exist simply because there is no great agreement on this fact. The armed conflict is an openly objective fact that does not correspond to any consensus; it has nothing to do with what right parties, left parties, church, congress, the president, or Acevedo state. The phenomenon of the armed conflict is an event that Colombians have endured for more than sixty years, despite the fact that the director of the National Center for Historical Memory claims to be unaware of it. It is necessary to remind him of the words of Aldous Huxley (2000): "Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored" (p. 288).

This relativism approach, the thesis of consensus, is contrary to that of one of the most important canons of Western rationalist tradition that has been defended by philosophers such as Searle (2003); it is the conception of ontological realism that holds that "Although we have mental and linguistic representations of the world, in beliefs, experiences, judgments and theories, there is a world 'out there' that is entirely independent of those representations" (p. 22). Thus, when one abandons the fundamental principle of realism and instead embraces the relativistic doctrine of consensus on facts and truth as a matter of faith, "post-truth" becomes imminent. As previously mentioned, professor Arias' notion of "post-factualism" exemplifies that when one loses the value of facts in public debate, a fertile ground for facts is vulnerable to the opinions and desires of individuals, sects or political parties.

Acevedo justifies his denialism by making a second assumption, he contends that discarding the thesis of the objectivity of facts in favor of consensus helps to distance oneself from certain authoritarian positions that insist on the existence of official truths and facts. In Acevedo's view, accepting a proposition based on

the consensus of what qualifies as fact and what does not emphasize an attribute of relativism to which he adheres. Despite the perception that relativism may ensure tolerance and respect for all perspectives, Acevedo's assertion of this unfounded. Stating that anyone who upholds the objectivity —of facts, truth or even moral judgment— automatically adopts an authoritarian and intolerant stance is a misconception. There is no inherent contradiction in affirming that a specific action is just or unjust, regardless of individual or cultural perspectives, while simultaneously expressing regret for an authoritarian invasion of a country of forcefully imposing "what people consider to be right. The acceptance of the objectivity of moral values does not inherently imply intercultural or interpersonal" imposition and control (Arango, 2005, p. 19). Similarly, one can assert the existence of facts independent of personal schemes of representation or linguistic frameworks while acknowledging the undesirability of a certain political ideology or religious sect imposing their preferred facts upon people, as was witnessed with clerical authority during the Middle Ages. The thesis of the objectivity of facts is not linked to coercion or the mandate of any authority.

If the acceptance of the relativist idea allows for tolerance and progress, then the argument is self-defeating. Indeed, if relativism must advocate for respect and understanding of each cultural context, it would invalidate any form of criticism or censorship even in cases involving governments responsible for genocidal acts or purges. One must then be tolerant because of the lack of objective criteria to condemn such acts. According to Acevedo, people cannot arrive at a consensus regarding the existence of such acts, as the determination of what is right and what is wrong or what should be considered facts remains undefined. Does this mean unquestionably accepting that individuals should immerse themselves in each cultural context and condone the way these acts are committed? The inclusion of tolerance in the relativist idea is paradoxical, as nothing better facilitates a totalitarian government more than the absence of censorship and the possibility of criticism. In other words, relativists, possibly without realizing it, find themselves closer to intolerance and authoritarianism than they believe.

Relativism fails to provide a foundation for social dialogue due to the vast differences in individual viewpoints on facts, criteria of truth and moral judgments. Any attempt to establish objective parameters would be regarded as an authoritarian imposition of an official truth. Therefore, individuals cannot engage in discussions as no one can exert their points of view upon each other. The relativistic approach would entail staying silent and embracing a world governed by mere subjectivity. However, in a multiethnic and diverse world, individuals must engage in dialogue to establish rational common parameters that extend beyond their personal viewpoints. Relativism, understood as that dialogue of the deaf where no one has the authority to discuss or deliberate

about anything, fosters the advent of "post-truth" wherein truth itself assumes a subordinate role, beholden to the dictates of diverse cultures, ideologies, or sects. I fully agree with Matthew D'Ancona's (2019) statement that:

The challenge lies in identifying a shared common ground for social, intellectual, and practical dialogue that garners unanimous consensus. Post-truth thrives on feelings of alienation, dislocation, and stultified silence. The most significant civic task individuals face is to eradicate that vein (p. 132-133).

Conclusions

Acevedo's denialism, rooted in postmodern relativism, has detrimental and practical consequences, especially regarding the preservation of the country's history, the very core responsibility of the entity he governs. The breeding ground lies in the relationship between relativism and denialism within a society that has become contaminated by post-truth. According to Luis Valdés Villanueva (2018, p. 23), "post-truth" creates a parallel reality when opinions and ideologies emotionally implicate themselves in shaping the recognition of facts.

Acevedo's denialism with respect to the armed conflict painfully implies a failure to acknowledge the victims, as without the recognition of conflict itself, the identification of victims becomes negated. Denying the existence of the armed conflict equates to denying the presence of victims within that conflict. One of the consequences of Acevedo's denialism has been the censorship of the exhibition "Voices to transform Colombia" —a showcase of cultural pieces representing the victims' experiences and their resilient resistance against violence— and the later withdrawal of the archives of victims' collectives by the NCHM. As highlighted by journalist Sebastián Forero (2022), Acevedo has regarded both these actions as biased initiatives.

The opinion expressed by the author of this paper is that Acevedo denialism of the Colombian armed conflict renders the various ways in which the victims attempt to recount for their war experiences meaningless. Nietzsche's (2006) apparently innocuous assertion that "there are no facts but interpretations" (p. 7), which noticeably inspired postmodern thought, bears practical implications that may lead to the cultural and historical degradation. The prevalence of "post-truth" times is the rational outcome of the lighthearted dissemination of

the notion that facts and truth are non-existent. Postmodernists should be mindful of their responsibility towards culture. While the notion may sound appealing and forthright within classrooms, advocating that individuals should be skeptical about facts and regard truth as subjective can lead to adverse consequences. In this regard, the philosopher Daniel Dennett (2017), during an interview with Carole Cadwalladr, asserted that:

> Sometimes, opinions can lead to dire consequences that may become reality. For the author, what postmodernism caused was truly evil. Postmodernists are responsible for the intellectual fad that made practicing cynicism of truth and facts respectable (para. 9).

Unforeseeably, the postmodernists may not have envisioned that their philosophy could serve as a source of inspiration to particular right-wing Policies, because their initial audience was the left-wing militants in France, followed by the United States and subsequently Latin America. This observation may highlight that post-truth is not inherently linked to a particular political standpoint, to this respect, postmodernity may be a distinct philosophical movement from the phenomenon of "post-truth." Nevertheless, as examined in this paper through the relativist and denialist assertions of the former director of the National Center for Historical Memory, adopting the theoretical tenets of postmodernity seems to have exposed individuals to the contagion of post-truth which has permeated society. It could indeed be argued, in line with McIntyre (2018) that "postmodernism serves as the godfather of post-truth" (p. 159).

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Bare Life as a Theoretical Proposal for the Analysis of Migration Dynamics*

[English Version]

Nuda vida como propuesta teórica para el análisis de las dinámicas migratorias

Vida nua como uma proposta teórica para a análise da dinâmica migratoria

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Abstract

Objective: Present-day migratory dynamics, owing to their characteristics and scale, have increasingly become subjects of discussion and debate, forming an integral part of the political agendas of various countries and their governments. At the mercy of this, the life of the migrant becomes a State matter, contingent upon their qualification, determined by legal-political decisions. With this in mind, the life and body of the immigrant are positioned as consistent targets of sovereign decisions, bolstered by progressively stringent measures, including but not limited to control systems, anti-immigration laws, and administrative procedures. **Methodology**: In alignment with this, the current study embraces Giorgio Agamben's concept of bare life as a theoretical framework, and adopts the rhizomatic model proposed by Deleuze and Guattari as a methodological approach. **Results**: Following its application, the study identifies how variables within the Colombian social, legal, and administrative landscape impact the lives of migrants, with interconnections being amplified, especially under irregular circumstances. **Conclusions**: This scenario offers a novel avenue for interpretation, grounded in fundamental categories that underpin the formulation of policies and strategies about the subject.

Keywords: migratory dynamics; bare life; immigrant; sovereignty; rhizome.

Resumen

Objetivo: las dinámicas migratorias actuales, motivo de sus características y dimensiones, han sido convertidas con mayor solidez en motivos de discusión y debate, integrándose así mismo en las agendas políticas de distintos países y sus gobiernos. A merced de ello, la vida del migrante se torna un asunto de Estado, expuesto a su cualificación o no, producto de decisiones jurídico-políticas. Con esto en mente, la vida y cuerpo del inmigrante se sitúa como un objetivo constante de decisiones soberanas, sustentadas en ajustes cada vez más rigurosos, entre los que, por ejemplificar, se enlistan los sistemas de control, las leyes antiinmigración, los procesos administrativos, entre otros. **Metodología**: en línea de ello, el presente estudio toma como marco teórico la nuda vida de Giorgio Agamben, acogiendo el modelo rizomático propuesto por Deleuze y Guattari como apuesta metodológica. **Resultados:** tras su aplicación, se identifica cómo diferentes variables de la realidad social, jurídica y administrativa colombiana inciden en la vida del migrante; interconexión maximizada en condiciones de

irregularidad. **Conclusiones**: este escenario brinda un nuevo espacio de interpretación, desde categorías que resultan fundamentales en la creación de políticas y estrategias relacionadas con la materia.

Palabras clave: dinámicas migratorias; nuda vida; inmigrante; soberanía; rizoma.

Resumo

Objetivo: a dinâmica migratória atual, por suas características e dimensões, tem se tornado cada vez mais objeto de discussão e debate, passando a fazer parte das agendas políticas de diferentes países e seus governos. Como resultado, a vida do migrante se torna uma questão de Estado, sujeita à sua qualificação ou não, como resultado de decisões jurídico-políticas. Com isso em mente, a vida e o corpo do imigrante passam a ser alvo constante de decisões soberanas, baseadas em ajustes cada vez mais rigorosos, incluindo, por exemplo, sistemas de controle, leis anti-imigração, processos administrativos, entre outros. **Metodologia:** para tanto, este estudo toma como marco teórico a vida nua de Giorgio Agamben, utilizando como abordagem metodológica o modelo rizomático proposto por Deleuze e Guattari. **Resultados**: após sua aplicação, identifica-se como diferentes variáveis da realidade social, legal e administrativa colombiana afetam a vida do migrante; uma interconexão maximizada em condições de irregularidade. **Conclusões**: esse cenário oferece um novo espaço de interpretação, a partir de categorias que são fundamentais para a criação de políticas e estratégias relacionadas ao tema.

Palavras-chave: dinâmica migratória; vida nua; imigrante; soberania; rizoma.

Introduction

This research article demonstrates how migrants, within the framework of the nation-state, can form a collective entity in which Agamben's concept of bare life resides. In other words, it entails a collection of living beings who are encompassed through exclusion within the host society, and this process signifies the embodiment of sovereign power over life and the physical forms of these individuals. This stage of analysis is established through the premises inherent to the diverse theoretical foundation laid out by the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben. This aligns with the migration issue as a paramount concern on the global policy agenda, wherein territories serve as the primary wellspring of strategies, thereby reshaping the paradigms through which it has conventionally been approached.

Considering this perspective, the character of migratory waves —stemming from an increasingly assertive and technologically advanced market system (as well as the crisis and ensuing erosion of the legitimacy traditionally vested in nation-states)— has heightened the discourse surrounding immigrants and the requisite legal, political, and economic approaches that ought to be extended to them. One of the primary limitations identified arises from the persistent notion that migrants, as external agents, pose a threat to the accomplishments of more developed societies. It is not widely recognized that this very level of satisfaction stems from the accumulation and concentration of capital, which arises from the exploitation endured by the migrant's countries of origin. With this issue being problematized, the living conditions of immigrants are progressively becoming integral to the sovereign matters incorporated into the political agendas of various governments.

Positioned within political coordinates and governmental strategies, the migrant's body becomes a focal point of sovereign determinations and progressively rigorous adaptations. These are rooted in control systems, anti-immigration statutes, administrative procedures, and segregation processes —a legitimizing approach to support electoral undertakings and legitimize the State amid crisis. Consequently, the contemporary significance of migratory control rests within bio-political inclinations, where life transforms into a subject of State concern, particularly in instances where its qualification (or lack thereof) is determined by juridical-political verdicts.

Similarly, the influence of policies solely dictated by the State shapes the perception of individuals among themselves. This amplifies the discourse surrounding the significant "other," from which factors that either complicate or facilitate the presence of migratory groups within host communities, whether

through tolerance or acceptance, emanate. Consequently, the migrant's situation is subject to arbitrariness, stemming not only from the State and legal-normative mechanisms that predicate their residence upon a series of constraining factors but also from society at large as a daily catalyst for progress. It's a realm where the sense of belonging must wane to endure within an environment inherently unfamiliar, upheld by overarching values and principles.

This viewpoint is further heightened by the abundance of assertions presented by Bauman (2016). By invoking the insights of Michel Agier, a dynamic arising from contemporary migration policies is illuminated (p. 82). This dynamic seeks to partition the world into sanitized spaces, distanced from the predicament, while others are marked by the residual, constituting an everyday backdrop and a point of contention among governing bodies. While this approach is commonly employed to depict refugee camps, these attributes align with irregular migratory flows driven by fear. In such contexts, both economically and politically, the migrant's physical body assumes a distinct status amid the cohesive fabric of the host society.

Therefore, this article is divided into two sections for a theoretical review, thereby aligning its attributes with the analysis of the prevailing migratory landscape. This exercise, though not firmly situated within an abstract context, functions as an interpretive framework for understanding the circumstances prevalent in the migrant's reality. Through this framework, an analysis of the States' migration policies is facilitated, gauging the degree of rights accorded to migrants.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach rooted in the hermeneutic paradigm. It employs Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome as both a method and technique to attain interpretation and comprehension of the categories embedded within the research process. From the aforementioned perspective, qualitative research assumes an approach oriented toward the exploration of phenomena, inherently interpretive in nature as it pursues the interpretation of experiences through continuous reflection (Verd & Lozares, 2016; Niño, 2019).

Hermeneutic research has been regarded as a form of investigatory inquiry, aiming to bestow significance and substance upon particular concepts and categories (Agudelo, 2018). Within the realm of social sciences, hermeneutics stands as a cornerstone tool employed for dissecting the subject-object relationship. It

bestows significance upon the image crafted of the object using interpretation (Angulo & Solís, 2021).

When proposing research with a hermeneutic approach, there are some necessary assumptions: (I) the signifier, (II) the concept or its corresponding meaning, (III) the contextual backdrop of this concept, and if relevant, (IV) the novel context in which the concept is to be apprehended. These are essential, as the interpretation necessitates grounding in pre-existing knowledge of the data, encompassing— the historical, philosophical, and cultural —dimensions of the reality under scrutiny (Ortiz, 2015). It has been said in this regard that:

> The interpretive phenomenon stands as a pivotal cornerstone within all natural cognitive occurrences, encompassing social life as well. Significance emerges in connection with a clearly defined identity, and it does not stem from the mere absorption of information from an external source. (Maturana & Varela, 2004, p. 46).

The aforementioned enables embracing Deleuze and Guattari's (2014) rhizome approach as both a hermeneutic method and technique. The rhizome is employed as a metaphor by the authors to facilitate both entry and exit in the depiction and interpretation of data. Concisely, it is illustrated that a rhizome lacks a distinct beginning or end; it invariably resides within the middle. It functions as a coalition of signifiers, woven together by the interplay of the signifieds and signifiers that form its structure (Deleuze & Guattari, 2014). The alliance between signifiers is directed by a series of principles:

I.   **Connection.** "Any point of the rhizome can be with any other and must be. [...] A rhizome would not fail to connect semiotic links, organizations of power, junctures referring to the arts, to the sciences, to social struggles" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, pp. 15-16). The *rhizome* must be connected to all the elements that compose it.

II. **Heterogeneity.** "A rhizome-type method can only analyze language by decentering it on other dimensions and other registers. A language is never enclosed within itself [...]" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, p. 17). Despite the connection between the elements, none is hierarchically superior to the other.

III. **Multiplicity.** "In a rhizome, there are no points or positions, as one finds them in a structure, a tree, a root. There are only lines. [...] Multiplicities are delineated by external factors: by the abstract line, line of flight, or deterritorialization that directs their transformation as they engage with others" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, pp. 18-20). The concept or signifier

undergoing rhizomatic construction must be examined comprehensively, with a focus on comprehending all its constituent elements.

IV. **Allocating Rupture.** "A rhizome can be broken anywhere, it resprouts again following this or that of its lines and even other lines" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, p. 22). The *rhizome* cannot be disrupted. The interruption would entail the formation of a new construction stemming from that very signifier, with the possibility of resuming the interrupted one.

V. **Cartography and Decalcomania.** "A rhizome does not adhere to any structural or generative model. [...] The map doesn't replicate a self-contained unconscious; instead, it constructs it. It contributes to the connection of the fields. [...] The act of tracing has already translated the map into an image and has already metamorphosed the rhizome" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2014, pp. 28-29). There is no prior idea of the *rhizome*. A map that serves as a conditioning factor for its conformation. It has no structure, and no depth, hence rhizome 1 can be the starting point of a new rhizomatic conformation: rhizome 2.

Adhering to these principles as a hermeneutic criterion, this article has advocated for the rhizomatic construction of the concept of "bare life" within a specific context, namely that of human migration. Hence, the center of the map is "bare life" and precisely the cartography of this concept leads to the construction of a rhizomatic map where the connections of this notion with the necessary ones are established (as evidenced in Figure 1) to facilitate the understanding of the migratory phenomenon.

Consequently, through the proposed methodology, a signifier has been established: bare life and meaning will be attributed to it in the Agamben context. Additionally, the new context in which this concept will be interpreted is presented, which in turn transforms the context into a new signifier: migrations. It is under this map that the enunciated principles will be applied, and by which the rhizome 1 will be generated. For this exercise, the following rhizomatic map is considered as a starting point.

R review

Figure 1. *Rhizomatic Map of Bare Life in Migratory Contexts.*
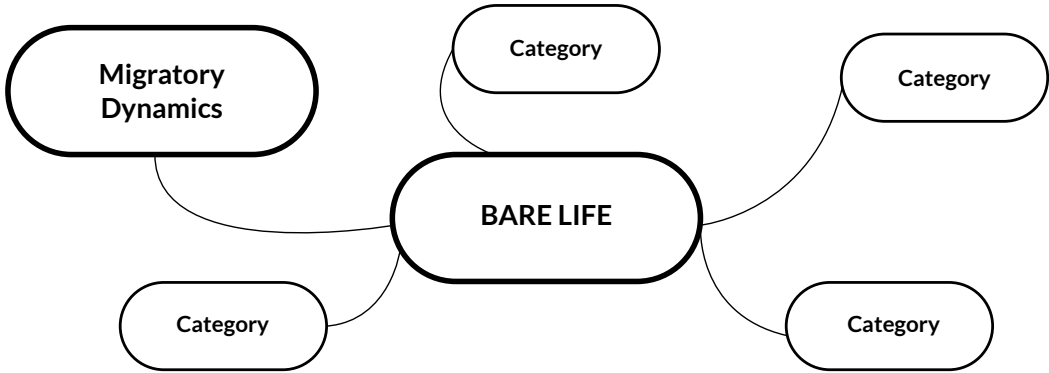
Deconstruction of the Category of Bare Life: Its parts

Addressing the proposal of Giorgio Agamben regarding the bare life characteristic implies a chronological review of how life and how it has been contemplated has taken place. Far from providing metaphysical details, the Italian philosopher persists in showing the existence of the human being in a social environment, adjacent to legal, political, and economic mechanisms, under a division between public and private life.

The above space occurs primarily in the concepts ζωή (*zōḗ*) and βιός (*biós*), adapted from fundamental texts in Greek philosophy and from which, according to Agamben, politics finds an angular substrate (Acosta, 2013). To exemplify a brief difference between both terms, according to the Agambenian vision on the matter, already in Acosta (2013) how the *zōḗ* implies life in the most biological sense possible, while the *biós*, in the Greek *polis*, alluded to forms or styles of life is exposed.

Feeding the divergence between both forms, seeing them as parallel situations in ancient Greece and with space in current Western politics, Hernández (2018) affirms that "Here we have the politically qualified life (biós), on one hand, and the natural life common to all animals (zoé), on the other" (p. 4). In turn, the *zōḗ* is relegated to the field of the οἶκος (*oikos*) (the private), while the *biós* is that scenario that, having politics as an element of exercise, turns it from the very scenario of just living, to living well (Quintana, 2006).

According to the aforementioned approaches, the subject is frequently exposed to two moments, according to their conditions, in which their life practices and/or integration into a community as an active participant, with

rights and duties, are circumscribed. In this order of ideas, the subjection of existence to a natural life (*zōế*) and a qualified and willing life on the political stage (*biós[/i]*) *has as its main condition the very act of separating*. The latter, without a doubt, finds development in the legal-political devices and tools that the State's —categorical form of life in society contains and deploys, or fails to deploy, on those who inhabit a territory, which attaches to it very close notions such as citizenship, nationality, etc. From them, the act of differentiating as a method of coexistence and identification has a starting point, which gives meaning to how the *other* is interpreted.

Accordingly, the conceptualization of bare life has a background based on the division of the parts that make up social life. Therefore:

> The idea is that the "bare life" is that life is separated from its form. What this means is that the production of bare life occurs through separation or, in other words, that the production of separation is equivalent to the production of bare life. (Hernández, 2018, p. 5).

In this historical transition, a second figure addressed in the work of the Italian philosopher takes place in archaic Roman law under the concept of "*homo sacer*." Such an analysis, developed chronologically, although it implies a different behavioral situation in each of the phases addressed, does not imply an abandonment of the rescued and treated concepts. In the words of Lemke (2011), the "*homo sacer*" is defined as "a person who could be killed with impunity, since they were prohibited from a political-legal community and reduced to the status of their physical existence" (p. 55). In addition, Laurencich (2012) states that "since *homo sacer* is exposed to a violent death and whose murder is not punishable, it is also the one who lies in a sort of absolute political abandonment" (p. 30). Such an indication of separation, considered from those who can be part of the community along with the rights and duties that this entails and those who cannot, accentuates the idea of a bare life as a result of sovereign decisions about existence itself.

In this sense, the set of ideas proposed by Lemke (2011) situates the analysis of bare life as a situation. In addition to placing the bodies in a marginal situation, living or dying depends on the sovereign decisions, which produce bodies through devices.

As a way of expanding the previous proposal, the position of D'alonzo (2013) is appropriate when concluding that "Bare life, although included in political values, is marked not only by isolation, that is, the solitude, but also due to mutism" (p. 105). In this dialogue of sovereignty, there is, on the one hand, the division previously indicated between *biós* and *zōế* and, on the other, bare life

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view

is embodied as a condition in which one becomes a part precisely in a segregated way. In this sense, the terminology around biopolitics and bio-power acquires an essential character in Agamben's work, thinking about it through a kind of devices and/or applied forms of power existing on bodies, which fragment society and determine the quality of life of its components.

Under a Foucaultian explanation, Tejeda (2011) refers to "biopolitics" as the capacity of power to influence life, not only from the legal point of view, but also from its administrative, organizational, regulatory, and inhibition capacity. In this order of ideas, biopolitics converts earthly and human power into one with the capacity to intervene in the lives of others, which even determines issues such as population growth, migratory phenomena, and the quality of life of the population.

Looking for an extension on how these last two terms are expressed in the political sphere, the analysis of the institutional legal model and the biopolitical model of power acquire an inseparable condition among themselves, without which it is impossible to detail the implications of bare life and the core of sovereign power (Agamben, 1998). On this dynamic, returning to the notion of "biopolitics" worked on in Foucault's mature work, Benente (2012) details: "Foucault affirms that, for a long time, one of the privileges of sovereign power had been the right of life and death over his subjects" (p. 12). Their deployment, however, demanded a tangible danger to the sovereign's existence.

Postulated both affirmations, bare life as sovereign production or the result of its decisions, sovereignty itself and biopolitical mechanisms function as an inseparable triad in the modern vision of Western politics for the studied philosopher. In this sense, as stated by Hernández (2018) "Agamben finds […] that life has been incessantly divided or separated through the law: the law or legal rule, he will tell us, it lives only putting life in an exceptional situation, separating it from the legal order" (p. 4). In greater detail, Schindel (2017), in a study on bare life and the condition of migrants or refugees in European countries, defines that "One of the essential characteristics of modern biopolitics is its need to return to define at each moment the threshold that articulates and separates what is inside and what is outside of qualified life" (p. 22).

With this in mind and, according to the purposes of the study in question, the condition of the migrant in a receiving country or, even, whether transit is their main motivation, it cannot be ruled out that their status in the society they become a part of is implied by certain bio-political tools and decisions in the State as a sovereign entity —decisions that can configure bare life; which, ultimately, finds correspondence to a specific territory and the population that lives there. One of the reasons for making such a statement has as its starting point the idea presented in Barrera (2017) according to which, the configuration

of biopolitics does not escape being a current fact inseparable from the concept of *"population," [/i] being, in the same way, its primary objective.* This last term, in the words of Yuing (2011) "emerges as a political-administrative category at the moment when sovereignty is withdrawn in favor of political representation, and when, precisely, the Legal theory establishes a political pact between the citizen and the State" (p. 9).

Until now, the constitution of bare life, a fundamental concept in the Agambenian theoretical construction, has been subject to an explanation based on a binary behavior, that is, as has already been seen, through the naturalization or qualification of life —*zoé* and *bíos* Greeks, respectively— or *homo sacer*, legal figure of archaic Rome where the sovereign act of separating was gestated, as a form of totalizing individualization. However, as bare life has been broken down into its parts, elements of greater analytical importance have been mentioned, such as bio-politics.

In this commitment to affirm that sovereignty is materialized when it manages to exclude and, at the same time, continue to have control of the bodies that are no longer included, the notion of a *"State of exception"* takes shape and validity. Adhering to the sovereign nature of the decisions that make up bare life, Bolton (2012) mentions the state of exception that "constitutes a moment of radical suspension of the law based on its conservation [...] If the state of exception constitutes a moment of suspension, it is because this is nothing more than the pragmatics of the sovereign decision" (p. 163). In the same way, Ruiz (2019) delimits the state of exception as a device of power that operates on the bare life of people. The latter is exempt from the clothing of civility and, contrary to this, sheltered by the condition of the citizen. Regarding an explanation of the concept mostly linked to the legal institution of the States, it is necessary to assert that:

> The topology of sovereignty configured here shows that the exception is the "outside" that the legal order itself opens in its "inside," since sovereignty will be nothing more than the pragmatics of the decision capable of articulating the "outside" with the "inside" of law in a single movement. (Bolton, 2012, p. 163).

A more detailed approach to the concept is developed by Silva (2016), who delimits it by determining that "it is nothing other than the rupture of legal security to rescue or preserve control against any threatening event of the system, altering the rules of the game for the benefit of the holder of power" (p. 47). A more general advancement is provided by Laurencich (2012), who focuses on the act of excluding itself and defines it as "sending someone or anything outside or referring to someone who is outside of us while we inhabit the inside" (p. 24).

According to this line of reasoning, the bare life develops from considerations that marginalize the condition of a particular group of people, but unlike other instances, it is not the right that places them outside of it; rather, it is the right that excludes and includes them. Once again, the juridical and political disappearance of life, rooted in this condition in the Greek *zōḗ*, is the product of a movement that the State and its institutions carry out, reasserting their power.

Such a state of affairs subjects the beings, placed in bare life, in a situation called a side, on which the law takes shape through its non-application (Berrío, 2010). According to the same author, Agamben's theoretical composition on the subject states that life, by arranging itself into a band, gives rise to bare life or *zōḗ* before the sovereign, who then leads it to a limbo-like zone of political indifference to life (Berrío, 2010).

The Agambenian perspective is further developed in Bolton (2012), whose words come to signify the entirety of the ontological-political structure of the state of exception. This structure is characterized by serving as a device by which the sovereign power captures life, disproves law, and leaves only the first, which only refers to a single object apart. The legal-political issue with the exception is demonstrated as a biopolitical dilemma. The bare life is an exceptional reversal of how citizens live their lives, just like the exception state is a reversal of the legal system (Bolton, 2012).

In summarizing what has been said, the political debates over the very existence of humans and the factors that influence their decisions extend our understanding of bare life as a biopolitical experiment in which power is tied to factors that go beyond the scope of invisible and abstract networks. Which transforms into something highly productive and materialized in dictates or control devices that are, for the most part, visible to the general public. Regarding this last point, Zamora (2005b) asserts that "The power is before all other power over life and finds expression in relationships of dominance, specifically relationships of inclusion and exclusion" (p. 57); the suspension of rights is, therefore, a manifestation of the power of inclusion-exclusion.

To apply the elements intrinsic to the bare life as an analytical horizon, on the condition of the migrant and migration itself viewed as a challenge in crescendo of the current nation-state— the results contained in Zamora (2005a), Zamora (2005b), Moreno (2014), Ocampo (2014), De la Lastra (2016), and Aguilar (2018) serve as a practical example of the issue, since, in them, the question of the configuration of bare life on migrants plays a fundamental role.

The problematization of human movement over the same territory or, as will be studied in the following section, toward a different country, compels reflection on issues like the sense of attachment that a being holds to a place, which is loaded with symbolism and meaning. In violent crime cases, Ocampo (2014) examines

the phenomenon of deterritorialization, which is defined as "the deconstruction of the relationship with the place of origin, from the loss of the fixed residence and domicile to the meaning and significance ascribed to the places habited and frequented" (p. 12). Although this relationship is permeated by internal conflict conditions, the bare life begins to take shape whenever a migrant's access to new opportunities is restricted after entering a new country or territory, whether as a result of ideological or philosophical viewpoints that are directed outside of that country or territory or administrative procedures that "normalize" that state of affairs.

Regarding this prevailing norm, Ocampo (2014) defines a full citizen as someone who enjoys equality in all spheres of social life, as opposed to someone who is in a position of displacement because they are adrift from their intended destination.

In this act of separating, a condition for the establishment of bare life and, as already mentioned, the result of the sovereign decision, the contrast of the subject as a migrant takes place with those categorized as citizens. Through a dynamic in which two spheres are considered, territorial (concerning the citizen) and exogenous (concerning the immigrant) as an outside agent in the setting, the binarization of existence as a whole takes shape.

Regularization, Binarization and (Dis) Citizenship

The development of bare life, on a global scale, is based on this duality. The access and subsequent "regularization" of the migrant subject in the new environment involves a legal-political scaffolding which, depending on the decisions of the sovereign entity in its coordinates of legitimacy, may vary, placing the existence of those admitted into uncertainty.

Keeping a dual reference, the concept and status of citizen is one in which, at least in the face of the migrant, the materialization of sovereign power does not harbor a relationship of inclusion-exclusion. With this, the citizen behaves as an endogenous agent, belonging to a political community with distinct characteristics and whose legal and institutional framework protects contractual freedom and equality in treatment (Zamora, 2005b). As such, Aguilar (2018) sees in the citizen a medium through which the State chooses who receives rights, services, and freedom of movement on a national level. However, it would be incomprehensible to censure cases in which even the migrant, regular or irregular, has access to certain social rights; the problem in such a concession lies in the ambivalence of the category "citizenship" and what is contemplated as such.

In similar terms, Kymlicka (1996) points out that the category "citizenship" brings with it "fears" consisting of rights differentiated according to each of the groups. Differentiation can lead to disunity. However, the idea of a "distinct citizen" refers to the adoption of rights that differ from the norm in terms of autonomy participation, and ethnic politics. Zamora (2005b) establishes that:

> The problem is that, without a rethinking of citizenship itself, rights, permanently threatened by the logic of power and the market, remain at the mercy of the vagaries of immigration policies [...] If the link between citizenship and nationality is maintained, immigrants will always depend on external protection offered from sovereignty to which they do not belong and which can cancel the offer at any time (p. 147).

The nature of this offer, which is random and subject to conditions with political overtones, leaves the phenomenon of migration on the verge of bare life; based on the fact that the enjoyment of existence and the facilities to do so rest on sovereign decisions to make or not to make concessions through political, legal, economic, or even biopolitical devices. In addition, "By being denied inclusion in society and confined to the mere fact of living —by being animalized— these bare lives are left at the expense of the determinations or needs of the State" (Aguilar, 2018, p. 23).

Corresponding to this, the possibility of conjuring states of exception through legislative or executive bodies increases the creation and adaptation of legal loopholes in which bare life takes place. Of course, these gaps are shaped as vehicles with which, par excellence, a specific population is configured as the ultimate recipient of the provisions. An example of this in practice may be seen in Moreno (2014) and his notion of "de-citizenization" concerning the September 11 attacks of 2001.

Although the events forced the government to declare a state of emergency, the treatment of irregular migrants, who are frequently associated with terrorists and dangerous subjects, involves biopolitical tactics. Without such mechanisms, the human being is transformed into a homo sacer, with a bare life and a willingness to be sacrificed to protect the true citizens (Moreno, 2014, p.129). The process undertaken by the Congress and the executive branches of the United States was charged with creating and making operational such mechanisms that extract citizenship, rights, and qualities. In the same way, the topic of immigration is reframed as "migration problems," which gives it a contentious tone and causes the public to develop preconceived notions about how immigrants are perceived (Yuing, 2011, p. 17).

Now, assuming that the expelling countries are characterized by their weakness in meeting the demands of their citizens and that these, then, cross borders in search of better living conditions (Moreno, 2014), it is useful to delve into the paradox that persists in a capitalist world system; fundamental encouragement in the liberalization and deregulation of capital and merchandise flows while, simultaneously, border controls and selection criteria become increasingly demanding as a form of sovereign representation of the State (Zamora, 2005a).

As a result, the contemporary state's sovereignty is primarily defined by its ability to exert authority over a territory and the subsequent order it imposes through its judicial apparatus. Regarding these issues, the immigrant releases the boundaries of such connection, which are supported solely and more through strict and violent controls over spatial movements (Zamora, 2005a, p. 58). About this,

> In relation to immigrants and refugees, it is clear how the state transforms citizens' unique way of life from something everyone once possessed to something that no longer belongs to anyone. Hence, the lack of a valid rationale for this constraining transformation becomes apparent. The demarcation delineating "humanity" from citizenship can be flexible, and the dynamics of constellations of power can alternately influence specific individuals depending on the conditions of inclusion and exclusion. (Zamora, 2005a, p. 58).

The status of immigrants would undergo a de-subjectification process from the inherent human identity. This implies that only the freedoms and rights attainable through an abstract classification referred to as citizenship become feasible. Upon entering a de-subjective dynamic, characterized by a lack of attributes necessary for a full life, or at the very least, living conditions meeting acceptable standards, the migrant's susceptibility to sovereign authority and occurrences and unforeseen situations is increased. This, in turn, raises great uncertainty. In this regard, De la Lastra (2016) states that "the migrant body materializes in modern borders as an outcome of the process of ontic reification of the body. During the process of migration, migrants experience a detachment from their subjective attributes, consequently being reduced to a mere physical entity" (p. 670).

The parameters that define the concept of bare life, as observed within the framework of migratory movements, are prior established by the host nations. In the course of cross-border migration, irregular migrants become detached from the rights acquired at the national level (De la Lastra, 2016). Furthermore, migrants operating within these legal constraints, where their rights are withheld, find themselves susceptible to sovereign violence because of their vulnerability. In

unfamiliar and uncharted territories, violence is provoked by factors that surpass economic or social orders (De la Lastra, 2016).

Considering this viewpoint, the concept of bare life as it advances according to executive and legislative procedures, and manages to configure itself in the lives of migrants, prompts inquiry into the circumstances that warrant its establishment, if deemed necessary. To this respect, concerning the comprehensive status of the citizen —defined as an individual embodying the highest capacity for agency within a designated territory— three distinct categories emerge for measuring the adequacy of bare life. These categories comprise legal and political concessions, along with economic accessibility, each susceptible to the potential influence of administrative decision-making.

Within these categories, as elucidated in the subsequent section, lie the conditions of existence wherein the potential manifestation of bare life endures, regardless of whether access to these conditions is intentionally withheld as deemed suitable. Similarly, across all three of these categories, there is an adjacent influence of the State and its decision-making power, which, as previously mentioned, facilitates the establishment of exceptions within the system, wherein a select few or broader multitude become the recipients.

Theoretical Deconstruction for Contextual Interpretation

After explaining the aforementioned aspects, assimilating the migratory dynamics —particularly those framed within legal irregularity, using theoretical heritage inherent in the Agamben's concept of bare life— an interpretative coincidence emerges wherein its constituents converge as asymptotic lines. However, after the examination of bare life into its constituent components and foundational factors, the rhizomatic analysis used in this paper allows for an exercise of relational order. Within this framework, each concept related to a category maintains proximity to its root.

To engage with the categories comprising the existence of migrants within the Colombian legal, political, and administrative framework, the methodological and contextual background established by Rúa and Londoño (2020) as well as Castillo and Oliveros (2020) are used as a point of reference. According to their appraisal, the different variables exerting influence upon the condition of Venezuelan migrants in the country are identified. These variables show a heightened interdependence particularly, within the context of irregularity.

Following this line of reasoning and to delve into the theory and its constituent factors within real scenarios for building the rhizomatic model, the initial step involves the presentation of a segment of the compilation of the interviews

conducted with Venezuelan migrants in an irregular status. These migrants currently live in the city of Santiago de Cali, Colombia, in accordance with the framework and objectives delineated by the research project. In this regard, a total of 24 semi-structured interviews were conducted at visible locations designated by Migration Colombia, where resources and guidance were made available for obtaining the Temporary Protected Status (TPS). During these interviews, the necessary categories were explored to carry out an interpretation based on Agamben's theory.

Table 1. *Standardized Interview with Migrant.*

P245	LAV	As I previously mentioned, I have already obtained the documentation and have been registered within the system
246	LAV	Colombia, no? So, what about that register [...] What is it called?
247	EGIPCODEP	From the statute?
248	LAV	From that statute, yes, it allows us, as I did mention, to have access to education
249	LAV	Access to health and so are we, accessing a registry, we are legally here in
250	LAV	Colombia, we are in a place where anything is used to find out about us/ and the information appears,
251	LAV	We already exist/

2 5 2	E G I P C O D E P	Okay, legally speaking
2 5 3	L A V	Legally speaking

*LAV: initials of the Migrant Interviewed.

EGIPCODEP: interviewer

Primarily, the migrants refer to a document, namely, the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) as a mechanism through which they discern certain advantages that, transcend mere provisions and services. Instead, this document provides them a sense of existence once its tangible manifestations come to fruition. The concept of existence is then composed through a record according to which migrants in irregular situations are empowered to assert "we already exist" (Line 251). The process of regularizing their residency status, far beyond a specific circumstance, serves as a conduit through which they establish a sense of belonging and are no longer the object of indifference by the State. In the interviews, this State identity was exhibited under the heading "Colombia."

The application of the principles for the construction of rhizomatic mapping (Deleuze & Guattari, 2014) is illustrated in Figure 2. In this representation, the core category is the bare life concept, around which revolves the categories of State and migrants. Through their components, these categories intersect and broaden the perspective of interpretation and interpellation.

Figure 2. *De-constructed Relation Among the Categories Explored.*
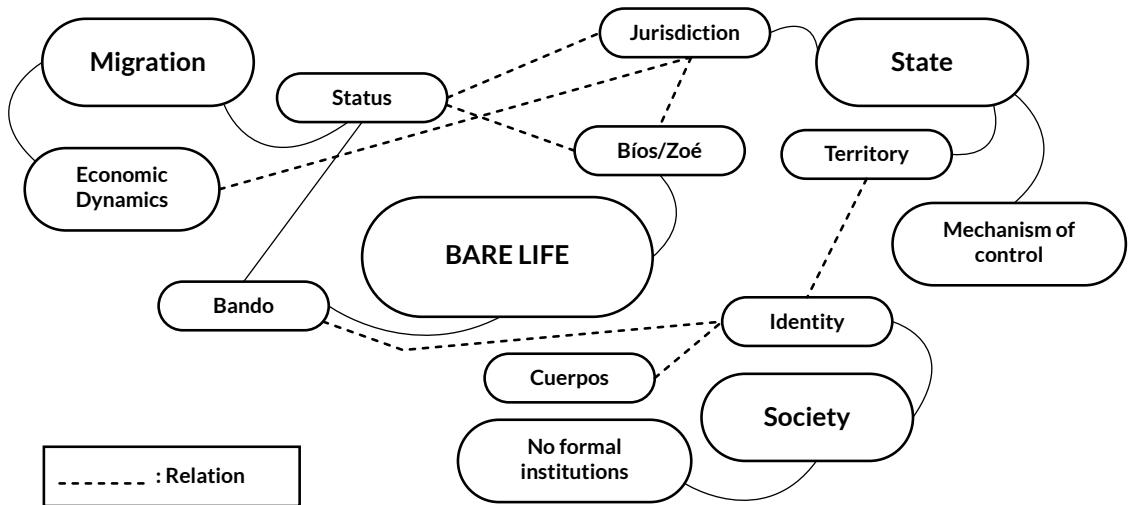
In terms of *relation*, the signifier of the bare life concept is not only the beginning of the rhizome, but can also be the end and, therefore, it is a node serving to relate all signifiers. This assertion ensures *heterogeneity*, as the analysis of the bare life concept is proposed within the context of migration. In this context, the rhizome does not present a hierarchical order, since the initial node may be the final node. In turn, this represents *multiplicity*, as the construction is subjected to a comprehensive analysis through deconstruction to understand its elements.

In the event of a rhizome breakage, a new one could be started. However, this rhizome does not exhibit interruption, and its construction leads to addressing the signifiers —currently— proposed; finding here the *asignifying rupture* principle. Finally, the sum of all these principles leads to *mapping and cartography*, since the rhizome of the bare life concept did not follow any structural model and contributed to the relation of different fields and signifiers such as *State, jurisdiction, territory, identity, bodies, side,* and *biós/zōé*.

Conclusions

Today, the migration phenomenon has emerged as a suitable scenario for bio-political analysis. Within this context, the figure of the sovereign entity is

manifested through institutional and legal procedures persisting regardless of its abandonment in modernity. Considering the meanings encompassed within the bare life concept that were proposed by the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben constitutes a profoundly critical endeavor. Such an undertaking enables a more insightful comprehension of the mechanisms of control inherent within the States. Here, the existence itself is revealed as a political matter, susceptible to sovereign volition which is noticeable in the actions and governance policies.

Consequently, existence becomes a recurrent uncertainty, thereby, involving a strict division or qualification process which serves as a contemporary political anchorage. The conception of individuals as citizens, or otherwise, creates a binary dynamic in which one becomes subject to legal regulations whether from a passive or active capacity. The former is evidenced by an inclusion and protective perspective; while the latter is from one of inclusion and exception.

These spaces of exception within the normative framework serve as the initial point for reducing a population —adhering to specific characteristics with which they are identified in a community— to the bare life concept. As previously mentioned, they are elucidated to a form of power in which the right assumes an amorphous nature, delineated through its denial. Within the Venezuelan diaspora context, the attainability of circumstances that ensure a complete existence or, even within sufficient developmental standards, is subject to administrative pronouncements and decisions. This exacerbates the vulnerability to the sovereign authority to which migrants, regardless of their regular or irregular status are subjected. Existence itself depends on consulting and deciding who can have it or not.

In light of this, the migration phenomenon worldwide persists in being a tool that serves to legitimize electoral speeches, governmental agendas, and so on. This also aids in amplifying the perceptibility of the susceptibility of existence to evaluative frameworks predicated upon an undesirable other, which are characterized by constructs of affiliation to abstract notions. Otherwise, digressing within an inclusive legal-political order, under the sense of exception and what is not as it should be.

The elements presented here, not far from an abstract connotation serve as inputs for a theoretical analysis of the worldwide migration circumstances and guide the identification of certain transversal factors in the daily environment of individuals. These factors make the situation complex and sharpen the response capacity from the local authorities, in the end, subject to the migratory waves. This establishes the need for methods for the construction of strategies and proposals to guide the actions of the State, as evidenced in the nuance's manifestations concerning this phenomenon.

Furthermore, the rhizomatic model rather than complexifying how migration processes are scrutinized —particularly those framed in irregular dynamics— broadens the spectrum of observation encompassing different variables at play. Hence, the administrations, as representatives of the State, are empowered to formulate mechanisms that address each of these variables at their foundational origin. While acknowledging the influence of migration policies subject to the existence of the migrant body, the incorporation of factors from diverse perspectives such as societal identity processes serve as an instructive approach for facilitating an inclusive reception within the framework of human rights.

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Women's Narratives: Care as Mediation for Peace[*]

[English version]

Narrativas de mujeres: el cuidado como mediación para la paz

Narrativas das mulheres: o cuidado como mediação para a paz

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Abstract

Objective: To reveal the role of women from the municipality of Ovejas, Sucre, as peace weavers during times of armed violence and transition in Colombia, based on the recognition of care as a comprehensive category. **Methodology**: The research was qualitative, employing a narrative approach. Ten women from eight local initiatives participated. The selection of the information unit was done through non-probabilistic sampling. The technique used was the semi-structured in-depth interview. **Results**: Through practices of self-care and care for others, the women of Ovejas demonstrate novel aesthetics that contribute to peace in a territory long affected by armed violence. Caring for others, through the protection

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of life where fear, protection, responsibility, and love intersect, and caring for oneself, driven by trust, security, the desire to overcome, and forgiveness as a means of reconciliation, emerge as self-affective expressions of recognition and resistance in support of peace. **Conclusions:** The care promoted by women during times of armed conflict and transition serves as a mediation of recognition, safeguarding, and binding through love and solidarity. Through caring for themselves and others, women demonstrate their creative capacities that contribute to peacebuilding. In this sense, the experiences of mediation through care demonstrate that when women participate, reconciliation processes become more visible and likely.

Keywords: women; peace; care.

Resumen

Objetivo: develar el papel de las mujeres del municipio de Ovejas, Sucre como hiladoras de paz en tiempos de violencia armada y de transición en Colombia a partir del reconocimiento del cuidado como categoría comprensiva. **Metodología**: la investigación fue cualitativa y el método la narrativa. Participaron diez mujeres vinculadas a ocho iniciativas locales. La selección de la unidad de información se realizó por muestreo no probabilístico. La técnica utilizada fue la entrevista semiestructurada en profundidad. **Resultados**: mediante prácticas de cuidado de sí y para otros las mujeres de Ovejas demuestran nuevas estéticas para aportar a la paz en un territorio afectado por la violencia armada durante un largo tiempo. El cuidado de los otros en virtud de la protección de la vida —en el que se cruza el miedo, la protección, la responsabilidad y el amor— y el cuidado de sí —a través de la confianza y la seguridad, el deseo de superación y el perdón como reconciliación— emergen como expresiones autoafectivas de reconocimiento y de resistencia a favor de la paz. **Conclusiones**: el cuidado promovido por las mujeres en tiempos del conflicto armado y de transición es una mediación de reconocimiento que a través del amor y la solidaridad protege y vincula. Las mujeres a través del cuidado de sí mismas y de los otros dan cuenta de sus capacidades creadoras que aportan a la construcción de paz. En este sentido, las experiencias de mediación desde el cuidado muestran que cuando la mujer es partícipe, los procesos de reconciliación son más visibles y probables.

Palabras clave: mujeres; paz; cuidado.

Resumo

Objetivo: revelar o papel das mulheres no município de Ovejas, Sucre, como fiandeiras da paz em tempos de violência armada e transição na Colômbia, com base no reconhecimento do cuidado como uma categoria abrangente. **Metodologia**: a pesquisa foi qualitativa e o método foi narrativo. Participaram dez mulheres ligadas a oito iniciativas locais. A seleção da unidade de informação foi realizada por amostragem não probabilística. A técnica utilizada foi a entrevista semiestruturada em profundidade. **Resultados**: por meio de práticas de cuidado consigo mesmas e com os outros, as mulheres de Ovejas demonstram uma nova estética para contribuir com a paz em um território que tem sido afetado pela violência armada há muito tempo. O cuidado com os outros em virtude da proteção da vida - na qual o medo, a proteção, a responsabilidade e o amor se cruzam - e o cuidado consigo mesmo - por meio da confiança e da segurança, do desejo de superar e do perdão como reconciliação - emergem como expressões autoafetivas de reconhecimento e resistência em favor da paz. **Conclusões**: o cuidado promovido pelas mulheres em tempos de conflito armado e transição é uma mediação de reconhecimento que, por meio do amor e da solidariedade, protege e cria vínculos. Por meio do cuidado consigo mesmas e com os outros, as mulheres demonstram suas capacidades criativas que contribuem para a construção da paz. Nesse sentido, as experiências de mediação por meio do cuidado mostram que, quando as mulheres participam, os processos de reconciliação são mais visíveis e prováveis.

Palavras-chave: mulheres; paz; cuidados.

Introduction

The experience within the context of the armed conflict in Colombia and the transition to peace demonstrate that women have played a significant role in both private and public spheres. Despite not being acknowledged, women have contributed through care practices that, as stated by Comins-Mingol (2003), enable the maintenance and promotion of life, along with the development of capacities in their family members. This is achieved through the enhancement of skills such as commitment, responsibility, tenderness, autonomy, and resilience.

While women have played a fundamental role in peace-building processes (Comins-Mingol, 2003), the incorporation of the sex/gender framework has led to a concentration on women's perspectives regarding peace-building processes. This is particularly evident in the effects they experience, such as violence, displacement, persecution, sexual aggression, murder, or exclusion from political decision-making contexts. These experiences, while valid, often highlight positions of victimization rather than agency.

This text portrays the experiences of a group of women from the municipality of Ovejas, Sucre, situated in the Montes de María sub-region within the Colombian Caribbean. This region has been profoundly affected by the armed conflict, characterized by victimizing incidents and economic as well as social repercussions that have left the population in conditions of poverty and vulnerability, straining the social fabric. Within the municipality, the spotlight falls on the experiences of local initiatives spearheaded by women. These initiatives have given rise to the establishment of social organizations with the goal of enhancing living conditions. This improvement hinges on both asserting rights and fostering capacity development. As a result, the women of the municipality have succeeded in integrating the gender perspective into local policy actions by shedding light on the discrimination and vulnerabilities they encounter in Montes de María (Grupo de Memoria Histórica, 2010, p. 336).

Regarding the overarching goal of the project «Hilando capacidades políticas para la transición en los territorios»[1] the research's objective guiding the content of this document is to *uncover the peace initiatives advanced by the women of the municipality of Ovejas, Sucre. This investigation encompasses both the period of armed conflict in the region and the transition era, as the residents confront the challenges posed by the pursuit of peace.* The concept of "care," in any of its various forms, emerged explicitly in women's narratives as a means of mediating peace-building.

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1 The project's objective is to foster political capacities for transitions in the territories through democratic mediations of social conflicts, aimed at establishing stable and enduring peace.

Peace, to rephrase the words of Muñoz and Martínez (2011), stands as a fundamental and inherent reality of the human condition, intricately linked to conflict as an inherent facet of life. It encapsulates the intricate web of relationships formed by individuals. In this context, peace does not signify the mere absence of war, but rather the establishment of relationships grounded in recognition amidst differences. This aims to identify, coexist with, and manage conflicts. From this viewpoint, the notion of "imperfect peace" is embraced (Muñoz & Martínez, 2011; París-Albert, 2009; De Vera, 2016). It's understood as a collection of inventive human and social capabilities that emerge within the realm of conflict and violence. As López (2011) proposes, the task at hand is to move toward perceiving peace as the sought-after conditions or situations that pave the way for its attainment. This approach bridges the gap between peace and justice (p. 88).

The epistemological shift doesn't center around the absence or eradication of conflicts[2]. Instead, it fosters an appreciation for the empathic capacities and inherent competencies of individuals, aimed at proposing constructive regulations and transformations for societal, political, cultural, and environmental contradictions. Peace (embracing a polysemic and diverse spectrum of meanings) takes shape within the realm of relationships and can manifest as either tangible or symbolic. It is, much like its imperfect nature, entwined with conflicts and violence. Imperfect peace encompasses a wide array of experiences and interventions that enable "the transformation of conflicts to discover alternatives that nurture life and cultivate novel ways of engaging with others. This, in turn, promotes psychological, social, cultural, and political coexistence" (Sánchez-Jiménez et al., 2021, p. 93).

In this context, it's worth noting that in Colombia, due to the pervasive presence of violence and armed conflicts that have deeply impacted the regions (marked by instances of death, displacement, poverty, persecution, political exclusion, sexual aggression, and more) the perceptions and depictions of peace (Muñoz & Martínez, 2011) often revolve around the resolution of conflict. This perspective often overlooks the fact that violence is deeply ingrained within social structures, extending beyond warfare, and that all manifestations of violence invariably impact development across its various domains. This is evidenced by the fact that even after the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016 (during the transition period), the endeavor of peacebuilding continues to pose a challenge within the regions. The aim is to secure a steadfast and enduring peace that safeguards the rights and dignity of life. Concerning the populations victimized

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2 "Conflicts are neither positive nor negative in themselves, but their character depends on the means used for their regulation" (Paris-Albert, 2009, p. 13).

by the armed conflict, the shift toward peace can materialize through structural reforms within conflict-affected regions. This transition hinges on fostering social transformation under the umbrella of political, economic, cultural, and environmental conditions that foster equity.

It is evident, therefore, that constructing peace rooted in acknowledging the interconnections among individuals – while also acknowledging tensions and conflicts – necessitates the involvement of both men and women equipped to foster fresh modes of interaction, even amidst differences. Experience, particularly within the context of the armed conflict in Colombia, underscores that women, far from solely being victims (Correa, 2019; Parra & Gutiérrez, 2019; Sauterel & Sepúlveda, 2016), also play active roles in reshaping the landscape of peace scenarios.

> Women's contributions expand the scope of how peace is conceptualized and constructed. Such contributions should encompass various domains, including both the private and, notably, the public spheres. These peace-building ideas have predominantly been manifested within formal structures (public), yet acknowledging those informal practices that have historically been undervalued and disregarded within the private sphere (often seen as a space of lesser influence) is imperative. (Rojas, 2018, p. 263).

As Ariza (2020) notes, during periods of armed violence in Colombia, women were the highest proportion of individuals compelled to relocate, often accompanied by their sons, daughters, and other family members. A significant number of them were confronted with experiences of death, forced displacement, family separation, and other circumstances that etched indelible imprints in their memories and bodies. These encounters profoundly influenced their day-to-day existence and their perceptions of the future. As highlighted by Garrido (2020), during periods of transition, women have assumed the responsibility of fortifying family bonds, advancing life endeavors for their family members, and initiating local organizational efforts aimed at safeguarding their rights and enhancing their living conditions.

As a result of this, it becomes evident that women dedicated themselves to resisting, safeguarding familial connections in support of their loved ones, and transcending their own suffering. Additionally, they took charge of steering community initiatives centered around reconciliation, as well as social and economic progress. In doing so, they established themselves as catalysts of change, playing a pivotal role in peacebuilding within their regions. Therefore, as stated by Urrutia (2017), women transform their adverse experiences into

opportunities to confront novel circumstances and provide enduring and viable solutions.

In this regard, the acknowledgment of women's presence in the peace-building landscape is illuminated by Resolution 1325 of 2000 (UN Security Council). This resolution underscores women's pivotal role in conflict prevention and resolution, thereby emphasizing the imperative for their equal participation in endeavors and procedures aimed at ensuring peace and security. The document also emphasizes the necessity of embracing a gender perspective across all dimensions of peacekeeping and the importance of providing training to personnel on matters related to women's rights. In the year 2020, in direct alignment with ongoing studies on gender, women, peace, and conflict, the United Nations entity UN Women (2020) indicated that, despite discernible signs of advancement between 2019 and 2020 regarding women's recognition, there remained a need for heightened endeavors. These endeavors encompass the promotion of women's empowerment to solidify the legitimization of their rights and their direct involvement in driving social and economic development.

Similarly, the 2021 UN Women report states that the international community highlights the participation of women as an essential aspect to achieve lasting peace. Women have proven to be agents of change and should have the opportunity to work even harder for this goal. In this order of ideas, researchers such as Trujillo-Gómez (2013), Gizelis (2011), DeMeritt et al. (2014), Erzurum and Eren (2014), and Veneranda et al. (2020) coincide in affirming that women, regardless of their ethnicity and religion, organize themselves and adopt discourses of respect for life and human rights, contributing an ethical position to political discussions on violence. Likewise, they expose that thinking and acting in favor of sustainable peace must include women and their narratives.

The role of women in the field of conflict and violence – and their consequent capacity to act in favor of peace – reveals how they achieve transformative actions through care practices. The woman-peace-care triad is, therefore, a matter of special interest because of what it represents. For example, violence and conflict are not topics that have been studied in depth. The work of Comins-Mingol (2003) and Londoño and Hincapié (2016) help to understand the relationship of care and justice in coexistence with pluralism and equity, since care is a human right, both for those who receive it and those who deliver it, and is part of a beneficial daily life for the construction or strengthening of ties among the subjects. In short, *caring is a social relationship*:

> An activity that is characteristic of the human species that includes everything we do with a view to maintaining, continuing or repairing our world, in such a way that we can live in it as well as possible. This world includes our bodies, our

individualities (*ourselves*), and our environment, which we seek to weave together into a complex, life-sustaining web. (Tronto, 1993, p. 103).

Under this conception of care, a responsibility for the other is identified that is present in various ways and includes solidarity and compassion, while healing wounds and helping to resolve different situations that affect the human condition. In line with a series of authors such as Comins-Mingol and París-Albert (2019), Domínguez-Alcon (2020), Molinier and Legarreta (2016) and Tobio et al. (2010), it can be understood that through care practices, actions are materialized from which the central element is the relationship with others in the face of the dominant notion of rights and obligations, just as these actions are essential for sustaining life and the well-being of people.

An understanding of care as an action proper to human beings is perceptible from the social and cultural roles in which care representations are anchored and go beyond a gender bias. However, as expressed by Comins-Mingol and París-Albert (2019), it is pertinent in signifying the role that women have historically played in matters of care, not to legitimize their status as women but to highlight their place in the private and public spheres, assuming representative tasks for the human dimension, such as the production and reproduction of culture, socialization processes, domestic economy, and involvement in community organization processes. Thus, women have acted in the construction of new citizenship scenarios with "a political activism, contemplating the existence of being subjects of rights with a political identity and subjectivity that justifies their social actions" (Urrutia, 2017). Under these approaches, along with those of Londoño and Hincapié (2016), the relationship between care, women and peace emerges:

> Women and girls, before taking care of themselves, take care of others, even if they are the injured ones and, through this work of care, they maintain the cohesion of the family and the social fabric. They reproduce the culture of peace in their daily lives and educate men and women for reconciliation. (p. 264).

Having said this, addressing the issue of care from a woman's perspective, as expressed by Barreto (2007), "presumes to deconstruct the myths that have sustained the expanded reproduction of violence in its different forms and expressions" (p. 240), both structural and structuring, legitimized in daily life or among people, as is the case of the armed conflict in Colombia, which interferes with both spheres. In the particular case of violence and conflict, it is then a matter of situating the place that women have occupied as agents in the construction of peace (Andrade et al., 2017), either from their family life experiences, in the

community context and, although not with such visibility, in spaces of political order, facing the processes of violence in which they have been involved.

In the same way, based on the results of their research, Correa (2019), Bautista-Bautista and Bedoya-Calvo (2017), Campo and Giraldo (2015), and Vargas (2014) agree that even in times of conflict – with difficulties, denials, insults and exclusions – women in Colombia have been resilient and have built peace initiatives through different means, whether in the family or in the community: attention to life, emotional support, maintenance of material conditions, defense of the permanence of the territory, organizational work, and political and productive formation. These actions have been significant for peace and reveal the role of women in "living for others" (Jelín, 2002, p. 108).

As found in the ethnographic data and the narratives present in the research by Arias-López (2015), daily life is where care actions are undertaken, which become increasingly creative according to the uniqueness of the experiences that, in the case of the armed conflict in Colombia, allow:

> Recognizing the endogenous knowledge and resources with which communities have faced their suffering and articulating a dose of uncertainty to the practices themselves, not only for more creative care, but for care that deals with the dignity of people. (Arias-López, 2015, p. 13).

In short, peacebuilding in times of armed conflict and transition must help resolve structural issues of inequality and promote or strengthen the role of women as protagonists of peace, taking into account the restoration of their rights as victims, as well as their role as builders of peace.

Methodology

This research was carried out through the narrative method that, following Ricoeur (2000), allowed: a) to preserve the breadth, diversity, and irreducibility of words, thoughts, feelings and interactions of women about their contributions to building peace; b) bring together the dispersed ways and modalities of narrating, each based on their own experiences and life circumstances that, although in common times, are different from each other and together create a shared discourse without spirit or claim for truth; and c) relate the times (during the conflict and after the signing of the peace agreements) and the narratives to select and organize the testimonies in discourse units that revealed how care is a peace mediation used by women.

The information unit was made up of 10 women linked to eight women's organizations in the municipality of Ovejas, Sucre. The inclusion criteria were defined based on their experience in the territory in times of the armed conflict, as well as the fact that they currently live in the municipality. Non-probability sampling was used (Hernández-Sampieri et al., 2014). Likewise, the approach to women (individually) and attention to their narratives was carried out through semi-structured in-depth interviews that favored conversation and contextualized analysis.

The construction of information, as Rorty calls it (quoted by Botero, 2006), was carried out thanks to the conversation with each woman. In addition, for the analysis, the proposal of Quintero (2018) was implemented, namely:

— *Coding record:* transcription of the constructed information and definition of typification codes.
— *Textual level:* identification of the narrative plot recognizing the experiences from the facts and temporalities.
— *Contextual level:* assessment of the narrative forces where women ponder with their language.
— *Metatextual level:* reconfiguration of the narrated experiences also taking into account the interpretations made in the previous moments and their relationship with the theoretical referents studied to create a story of social life.

Results

As part of the research findings, identifying that the women of the municipality of Ovejas, Sucre, contribute to the construction of peace through care of the other and self-care practices is possible, both during the armed conflict and after the signing of the peace agreements. The expression of these forms of care is related to the times in which the discourse is related: caring for the other is situated in the before and now, and caring for oneself becomes visible and conscious after the experience of the armed conflict. In accordance with the above, care – associated with women as agents of peace – is assumed as a practice of recognition: a binding connector of responsibility, solidarity, identity, and love for others and for themselves.

Caring for Others as an Expression of Recognition

The care of others corresponds to the connection that women establish with their families, other women, and their territory to preserve, guard or assist in their human, cultural, and patrimonial condition. This process of participation "with, by and for the other, requires us to be involved in solidarity in that relationship of alterity, free of domination, exploitation, mistrust and paternalism" (Vásquez, 2006, p. 138).

According to the women, caring for others is a task they have learned throughout their lives as a result of the family responsibilities assigned to them from childhood. A similar occurrence also develops with feelings. These feelings have been the product of recognition and the links the women have forged with others who, in the case of this investigation, were identified as their families, other women and their territory. However, these women also express the challenges they have had in terms of care, visible in the experiences of the armed conflict and those they had to assume in times of tense calm (referring to the time after the signing of the Peace Agreement).

The Protection Their Family Lives as a Care Mediation and Resistance Strategy

The fear of death – especially, of dying from stray bullets in the midst of the armed conflict – caused women to assume a role of care oriented toward the protection of life in their figure as mothers and daughters. In addition, for being the ones who stayed in the house the longest. They invented different ways to avoid or elude the armed actors' persecution of their children, among which are: bringing the family into the houses early, not sending the children to school or leaving the territory – either the whole family or sending the children to other places where they would not face the armed conflict. All this, to avoid death or avoid recruitment, especially of male children. Below are testimonials from women[3] who exemplify this resistance:

> I was very frightened. I was frightened of losing a loved one, I was very afraid of that. At any time, a gunfight started and people thought they heard a bomb. Thus, I was afraid of not being alive the next day and concerned about who would protect my children. (María, Personal Communication, May 22, 2020).

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3. For ethical and identity protection reasons, women's names have been changed.

> I knew I had to get the children home early, at six o'clock everything must be silent ... not going out. One option was not to go out because you could meet somebody who would take you. They could take you away home or, I mean, you know that they have no compassion and they can kill anyone easily; the only way to take care of ourselves was not to leave home, to be locked up. [pause] It was the only way and I kept my children locked inside and I was very attentive. (Isabel, Personal Communication, June 24, 2020.)

According to Londoño and Hincapié (2016) to protect and to maintain life in the midst of armed conflict is a caring for peace practice. The particularity of women's narratives from the municipality of Ovejas reveals that the protection of life links privacy (mainly, the house that provides security and peacefulness) with the public (that, most of the time, is adverse and unpredictable). The protection of life as a way of care is engendered by the recognition of the family and its members as legitimate others for whom it is necessary to take care of who they are and what they represent in the lives of women. Life-care practices in times of conflict evoke fear, protection, responsibility, and love to lead women to make decisions to face reality. For instance:

> I was kidnapped with my three eldest children and my husband in 1999. We were kidnapped for twelve hours, my husband was caught up and told that if he took another step he would die, they checked the hammocks where my children were asleep and handled their weapons; and if the child whispered, they mocked them and "Shut them up or we will shut them up." I volunteered to cook so that they would be calmer and more kept busy. (Isabel, Personal Communication, June 24, 2020.)

> There were a lot of fears ... we did not sleep much. It panicked us and it made me feel a little traumatized. I was more attentive, maybe I was leading by fear. I was sending the kids somewhere else or we left. People said that we were cowards; but we were not, we did not let ourselves be killed. (Carmen, Personal Communication, May 10, 2020.)

According to the narratives and Comins-Mingol (2003), this does not deal with caring for children by maternal instinct that erroneously had been assigned to women, but the recognition of the other in a binding commitment. In this context, love is a way of recognition committed through care to the physical integrity of others who need it; it is the possibility of being oneself in the other (Honneth, 1997, p. 25) and the need is permanent and develops under any circumstances. Thus, the care of life promoted by women, as Niño (2017) and Fernández and

González-Martínez (2019) state has an important role in the analyses of the theory of imperfect peace, since "it is not the confinement, the displacement or the refuge that they promote in the midst of conflict, but what is relevant is what these actions meant for resistance".

The protection of life as a mediation of care for children and the family is maintained in times of transition; not in terms of avoiding death. Keeping life from the practical identity that, as Palazzani (2008) states, demands the recognition of the other and their need for training to be maintained in time. It is important for women to foster and help their children, families, and the community to move forward and to have a better future; it promotes moral and ethical behavior based on improvement as a way to surpass their past that forces them to rebuild their lives.

> I want to move my family forward and I'm doing it. I wanted my three children to be professionals, and I'm doing it. There are ways of living differently ... of living in peace. I hope to see my community rising economically, morally, and free without coffins or stigma. (Margoth, Personal Communication, June 29, 2020).

> Before we did not get a high school diploma, now I have a high school diploma. Although I have been a passive person, I like to advise; I like that, if there is a fight, I look for ways to make peace, although I have nothing to do with it. But if they say to me, "Things are like this," it makes my life different and I teach my children that, because that is the only thing you should give your children: knowledge, guidance, and good examples. (Julia, Personal Communication, June 3, 2020).

> Violence generates more violence. I tell my children that we have to improve ourselves, that we need to be more tolerant and that none of us are perfect and we must accept ourselves as we are. We can contribute a little bit to improve that. Less weapons less conflict, but one's words, love, and trust give the power to build peace, the kind we want. To build trust, weave this fabric and make it solid lead us to peace. I must work in a good way, every time we do it, we are contributing to peace, the transformation of our country. (Angela, Personal Communication, June 11, 2020).

Finally, it can be said that the protection of life as a mediation of care offered by women expresses solidarity and social appreciation (Honneth & Rancière, 2016) toward those who are their legitimate others. This includes emotional references to the cognitive component of recognition of rights. Women thus legitimize that these forms of care – such as life protection – constitute self-esteem as a way of self-recognition.

**Self-care as an Expression of Self-recognition
and as a Mediator of Peace.**

In women's narratives, *pre-care* for oneself (dedicating time to physical, emotional, and occupational activities) is a way of self-caring or self-recognition Honneth (2009). This allows women flexibility and the ability to feel comfortable, to overcome situations and to rebuild their lives after traumatic experiences that, although have left a profound impact, did not lead them to victimization. Additionally, the experiences forced them to rethink their position as women. According to Foucault (1987), women taking care of themselves redirects their attention and shifts their perspective outside of themselves, and, in this way, makes them subject to their own actions. In this *pre-care*, care makes sense.

Self-care as a way of dealing with life after the complex times of armed violence is understood as an attitude of self-respect. It includes confidence and security, the desire to overcome and forgive as reconciliation.

In this way, confidence and security appear as self-affectionate expressions of women, recognized in talents, virtues, and skills. According to women, these qualities have developed after living in conflict and allow them to feel calm afterward. It means that, during the armed violence, the main concern was to stay alive and survive; there was no time for self-care and to value one another.

> Now I am a joyful and enthusiastic woman with a desire to live, a struggler, a warrior, of a strong character, in love with life and family; in love with social processes of helping others. I describe myself as a lover of music, of parties (ha, ha, ha), in love with my job. (Ana, Personal Communication, June 22, 2020).

At the beginning, confidence and security made it easier for them to communicate among themselves, to focus on their emotions and to become aware of themselves, which was impossible to do in times of conflict. Then, the confidence and security allow them to communicate with others more calmly, because they believe in the reliability of what they provide and what they can discern. To feel safe goes hand-in-hand with understanding that peace is inside them, within their calm and the recognition of what they are and what they can do for their environment.

Another way of expressing confidence and self-confidence is by caring for the body. This favors the transition from personal existence to coexistence with the other. In peaceful times and with psychosocial support, women even manage to recover dominance over their bodies that, in some way, may have been lost for the traditionally considered weaker gender that marked their socialization processes.

Now I feel that I have my space, I care for my skin, I care for myself; I give myself time to look at myself, to go to bed, to say to myself, "I am more beautiful today" or "I'm skinnier today," or "Today I have this, I will try to improve this." I didn't pay attention to that before; I would go to the bathroom, take a shower, and I was ready; I was not a woman who was going to check "what do I have here, what do I have there." I have learned about my body from personal self-care; I take care of my body and then I suggest to other people to also take of their body; or that there are ways of taking care of oneself, that one must first be there for oneself to then be there for the other person. You have to be healthy to help others; you have to know first what you are doing to transmit that to others. I have learned that difference now. (Lina, Personal Communication, June 16, 2020).

According to the narrative, the concern for the aesthetics of the body helps women recognize themselves in beauty, as well as to realize they are present. Self-care is a way to approach themselves, but also to recognize that their body is link to others though beauty. As Lina states, "You have to be there for yourself and then you can be there for the other." This demonstrates that "to exist is to coexist. My body and the body of others coexist subjectively. It makes a self, living in community as united people, but each one embodied in an existential concrete" (Cervantes, 2015, p. 2).

Alternatively, "the desire to overcome" is understood as a way of self-care that enables women to self-distance and to understand the possibility of being different from what they were, in addition to being aware of the opportunities and possibilities of improving themselves and projecting that in their being. This is to see the future hopefully. Under this understanding, aspirations to learn, train, and obtain knowledge are identified. It promotes personal improvement and contribution to their families and communities.

I received training after signing the agreement because when people are trained or learn new knowledge, they adopt a different mentality. They are no longer aggressive as a result of the conflict. At this moment, help begins by listening, and providing psychosocial assistance. One starts changing the way of thinking while the aggressiveness decreases. This shift aids the peacebuilding process. The high visibility of matters and the increased emotionality are addressed differently with established principles. There was a time, when some women came in, and one couldn't even talk to them, because they were inclined toward physical aggression. As the process of transformation was occurring, they received training and psychosocial assistance, resulting in a positive behavioral change. They are now different people. (Ana, personal communication, 22 June 2020).

> I am also a different person due to the acquisition of knowledge. Part of the transformation is the training process for our rights in the context of the preceding era and the modern moment in which we now live. We have gained knowledge, and we no longer perceive ourselves as individuals beholden to an external entity dictating how to do things. Consider that the *law is this:* we have a different way of thinking and defending ourselves, and if we say no, we have the right to do so. (Olga, personal communication, 27 May 2020).

As per De la Ossa and Rendón's findings (2021), participating in training initiatives, organized by various institutions subsequent to the signing of the Peace Agreement empowers women to acknowledge their inherent capabilities to grasp new ways of life, comprehend and assert their rights, as well as foster local initiatives aimed at self-governance and human, social, and economic development within the designated territory. Hence, the desire for personal improvement manifested as self-preservation, facilitated through involvement in training processes, empowers individuals to deploy their competencies whenever and wherever infringements may arise, be it in their own actions or in support of others.

This desire arising from participation in training processes stands as a manifestation of self-care, particularly when viewed as a means through which women acknowledge and highlight their capabilities to surmount their residual fears inherited from times of harassment and tension intrinsic to the armed conflict. In summary, these women exhibit heightened composure, decreased hostility, and an augmented capacity for expressing their emotions. These emotions contribute to the peacebuilding process.

"Forgiveness, as a precursor to reconciliation", assumes the role of a mediator between the recollection of past events that have disrupted peace and the act of reconciliation, which serves as a mechanism to face the future with peace and without resentment. After experiencing the horrors and rawness of the conflict, feelings of pain, hatred and guilt arise, which hinder the building of trusting relationships with themselves and their counterparts. These emotions, however, are reevaluated by the women themselves, who assert that harboring such emotions would curtail their potential for renewal. Thus, they must view forgiveness as the possibility to transcend and relinquish the past, thereby affording themselves the freedom to live in peace.

As forms of self-preservation, the narratives suggest two distinct categories of forgiveness: self-forgiveness and forgiveness directed toward others.

Primarily, the narratives exhibit self-forgiveness as the possibility of acknowledging and comprehending their actions, undertaken in a bid to shield

their families, particularly their children, from the violent acts experienced during the armed conflict.

> I was a fierce woman; I was submissive but at the same time I was fierce because I protected what was mine and I showed my claws. From the same fear, I found a fury to protect what was mine, or what I believed to be mine, which are my children. During a certain period, my children and I had to lock ourselves in a room at four o'clock in the afternoon as a measure of safeguarding. Subsequently, upon recognizing the violent nature of my actions, I sought their forgiveness. Sometimes, I had to tie them to a seat or a stationary object like a pitchfork to prevent their departure toward the hillside or shoreline as a measure to keep them from handling an abandoned object, thereby averting potential harm or death. This was the reason I sought their forgiveness. (Maria, personal communication, May 22, 2020).

"Seeking forgiveness from one's children" primarily constitutes an act of self-forgiveness, as it comprises a form of caregiving intended toward internal reconciliation. This process enables them to recognize themselves within the actions undertaken in the midst of the tensions of the conflict and the raison d'être of the same (Arendt, 2005). In other words, this entails a journey toward their inner selves to comprehend the motives behind their actions, consequently facilitating the process of "reparation and empowerment of their innate human agency" (Madrid, 2008, p. 5). This leads to a sense of hopefulness for their own lives as well as the well-being of their families.

Additionally, testimonies concerning women's own freedom depict "forgiveness directed toward others". At some point, Women's own freedom led them to exercise violence against their families and communities, leaving them with human and material losses, and taking away their hopes and possibilities for a promising future. This act of forgiveness does not imply forgetting or rationalizing the violent actions, nor does it entail disregarding the prevailing circumstances that occurred. This would likely lead to a form of shielding indifference.

> I have personally engaged in a self-reflection process. I keep confronting each moment I have experienced, firmly confronting it and establishing a resolute emotional barrier within my heart, thereby working for that: to successfully release anger and hatred, to get rid of the pain through tears, an introspection process toward forgiveness. I had no idea where I was going or what I was going to do with my three children when the guerrillas killed my husband. I resorted to selling magazines and bottled water, being resourceful to provide sustenance for my children. At that moment, I was able to overcome the grief that before I had

been unable to. Confronting reality became paramount to overcoming this grief. I did many tasks to raise my three children and help my father, children, and nephews. Because of my brother's departure, I had to become their inspiration. (Lina, personal communication, 23 June 2020).

Embracing forgiveness leads to contributing to the peacebuilding process. Forgiveness aids in the peacebuilding process, as the attainment of peace is inherently intertwined with the concepts of forgiveness and reconciliation. So, if Carmen, within her social settings, openly exhibits forgiveness, she enhances her work endeavors. I establish a social environment by refraining from discussing their father or seeking vengeance. When I teach the lesson to my son that "one has to forgive, because certain individuals must be released according to their volition and entrusting their well-being to our Lord Jesus Christ, "I start a transformative process and significantly contribute to peacebuilding. (Carmen, personal communication, May 10, 2020).

In the midst of painful memories, forgiving others becomes a personal decision and a symbolic endeavor involving care for others, their families and themselves. This choice prevents fostering hatred and resentment which leads to revenge and new types of violence. Forgiving others cultivates a feeling that nurtures trust within personal relationships, while comprehending the complexities inherent in the human condition lays a foundation for a potential path toward renewal. From this perspective, it is interpreted as a caring practice. According to Arendt (2005), forgiveness is characterized by being "the only necessary corrective for the inevitable damage resulting from the action" (p. 259) and is attained not through solipsism, but rather through the interplay of relationships and acknowledgment of the bond. This entails separating connections with the past while maintaining its memory, thereby envisioning collective actions toward reconciliation. In this context, through the act of forgiveness, women take care of themselves and the well-being of their counterparts. Furthermore, they relinquish their roles as victims and position themselves as transformative agents, fostering inclusive relationships that validate difference.

In consideration of the preceding information, drawing from the insights of Muñoz and Martínez (2011) and as an extension of this paper's thesis, the cultivation of self-care and the nurturing of care for others encompassing physical or emotional dimensions by women from the municipality of Ovejas weave pacifist relationships within the midst of prevailing violence. Taking care of themselves is a political issue of transforming their own privileges into proactive political actions that serve the betterment of themselves, their families, their communities, and their territory.

Conclusions

Within the narratives of the women from the municipality of Ovejas, Sucre, the concept of self-care emerges as a symbolic protective intermediary, enabling resistance amidst adversity inherent in their endeavors toward peacebuilding throughout periods of armed conflict and transition. Hence, self-care becomes a means of nurturing relationships characterized by mutual recognition, both for themselves and their counterparts.

Acknowledging women's pursuit of self-care – as exemplified in the context of the municipality of Ovejas – as a mediating force in Colombia's peacebuilding efforts becomes a contemporary and creative reading. This interpretation demonstrates how their care-oriented practices offer different aesthetics for the reconciliation process. The action of care directed toward others, encompassing the preservation of life, coupled with self-care motivated by the concepts of trust and security, alongside an enthusiastic aspiration for improvement and the pursuit of forgiveness as a pathway for reconciliation, whether amidst periods of armed conflict or transition, serves as a testament to the creative capacities exhibited by women in the peacebuilding process.

Furthermore, women demonstrated symbolic discourses and practices of self-care that facilitated, on one hand, their confrontation of the armed conflict through varied means; and on the other hand, their contribution to fostering relationships characterized by the concepts of trust, optimism, and fairness during periods of transition. The self-care fostered by women as symbolic mediation emerges as a metaphorical act of resistance that imprints itself on the memory. This imprint evidences its significance in terms of survival and a valuable lesson in the process of understanding non-repetition. Similarly, during periods of tranquility, this phenomenon engenders the re-creation of experiences, encouraging changes in the ways in which women perceive their own identity in relation to others and successfully engaging in peacebuilding based on the application of values such as commitment and solidarity.

Finally, the peacebuilding process becomes important in the lives of women when the narratives woven from past and current experiences facilitate the discernment of their inherent capacities. As these capacities become assimilated, their individual resources and opportunities are recognized. Additionally, the environment provides supportive provisions that encourage changes in interpersonal interaction. These changes serve as examples to educate others about the need and possibility of adopting new paradigms of renewal. Self-care practices woven by women from everyday life are associated with the inherent essence of humanity, serving as tangible manifestations of changes and constructive and immediate prospects in the realm of peace.

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Human Rights Education in Schools. A Systematic Review within the Latin American Context*

[English version]

La educación en derechos humanos en la escuela. Una revisión sistemática al contexto latinoamericano

Educação em direitos humanos nas escolas. Uma revisão sistemática do contexto latino-americano

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Abstract

Objective: This systematic review aims to characterize studies on human rights education in schools in Latin America between 2016 and 2022. Its purpose is to

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Review

contribute to the discussion regarding the formation of this field of knowledge. The backdrop of the debate centers on how tensions between the political-legal and moral aspects, inherent in human rights theory, have influenced the development of the field of rights education. These tensions become apparent when the international political reality intersects with the local political context during the process of integrating human rights covenants, recommendations, and protocols into educational systems. **Methodology**: The documentary body consists of 51 manuscripts identified in the databases: Redalyc, Jstor, Scielo and Scopus, based on the Protocol for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis PRISMA. The literature analysis is organized by author, year, country, method, and contribution to the understanding of human rights in schools, through indicators related to the political establishment of rights in the educational system, and the set of moral conceptions and resources used for their appropriation. **Results**: Efforts to organize the school system and ensure education as a right prevail, while promoting knowledge of school systems' regulatory system. In addition, there are discursive practices of a moral nature oriented toward human rights education, but with effects on the formation of new citizenships. **Conclusions**: Two social forces have converged in the discursive establishment of Human Rights Education (HRE), one with a preeminence of political-legal aspects and a strong moral content; another covering actions coming from popular education. In schools, HRE has favored the development of critical thinking and the public use of reason, with effects on the shaping of political subjectivity.

Keywords: Human rights; comparative education; Latin America; school; teaching; learning.

Resumen

Objetivo: la revisión sistemática se orienta a caracterizar los estudios sobre la educación en derechos humanos en la escuela, entre los años 2016-2022 en Latinoamérica, con el propósito de aportar a la discusión en torno a la conformación de dicho objeto de conocimiento. El trasfondo del debate se centra en cómo las tensiones entre lo político- legal y lo moral, propio de la teoría de los derechos humanos, han influenciado la construcción del campo de la educación en derechos. Estas tensiones se manifiestan cuando la realidad política internacional entra en confrontación con la realidad política local al momento de incorporar los pactos, recomendaciones y protocolos en materia de derechos humanos al interior de los sistemas educativos. **Metodología**: el corpus documental está conformado por 51 manuscritos identificados en las bases de datos: Redalyc, Jstor, Scielo y Scopus; a partir del Protocolo de Revisiones Sistemáticas y Meta- análisis PRISMA. El análisis de la literatura se encuentra organizado por autor,

año, país, método y aporte a la comprensión de los derechos humanos en la escuela, mediante indicadores relacionados con la instauración política de los derechos en el sistema educativo y el conjunto de concepciones morales y recursos utilizados para su apropiación. **Resultados**: como resultado prevalecen los esfuerzos tendientes a organizar el sistema escolar y asegurar la educación como derecho, a la vez que se promueve el conocimiento del sistema normativo de los mismos. Además, existen prácticas discursivas de tipo moral, orientadas a la educación en derechos humanos, pero con efectos en la formación de nuevas ciudadanías. **Conclusiones**: dos fuerzas sociales han confluido en la instauración discursiva de la EDH, una con preminencia de los aspectos político-legales y un fuerte contenido moral; y, por otra, acciones provenientes de la educación popular. En la escuela la EDH ha favorecido el desarrollo del pensamiento crítico, el uso público de la razón con efectos en la conformación de la subjetividad política.

Palabras clave: Derechos humanos; educación comparada; América Latina; escuela; enseñanza; aprendizaje.

Resumo

Objetivo: a revisão sistemática tem como objetivo caracterizar os estudos sobre educação em direitos humanos nas escolas entre 2016 e 2022 na América Latina, visando contribuir para a discussão sobre a formação desse campo de conhecimento. O debate em questão se concentra em como as tensões entre o âmbito político-jurídico e o moral, intrínsecas à teoria dos direitos humanos, influenciaram a construção do campo da educação em direitos humanos. Essas tensões se manifestam quando a realidade política internacional entra em confronto com a realidade política local, no momento da incorporação de pactos, recomendações e protocolos de direitos humanos nos sistemas educacionais. **Metodologia**: o corpus documental é composto por 51 manuscritos identificados em bancos de dados como Redalyc, Jstor, Scielo e Scopus, utilizando o Protocolo para Revisões Sistemáticas e Meta-análises PRISMA. A análise da literatura está organizada por autor, ano, país, método e contribuição para a compreensão dos direitos humanos nas escolas, através de indicadores relacionados ao estabelecimento político dos direitos no sistema educacional e ao conjunto de concepções morais e recursos utilizados para sua apropriação. **Resultados**: como resultado, predominam os esforços para organizar o sistema escolar e garantir a educação como direito, enquanto promovem o conhecimento do sistema normativo. Além disso, há práticas discursivas de natureza moral, voltadas para a educação em direitos humanos, com efeitos na formação de novas cidadanias. **Conclusões**: duas forças sociais convergiram no estabelecimento discursivo da Educação em Direitos

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Humanos (EDH): uma com ênfase em aspectos político-jurídicos e conteúdo moral robusto; e, por outro lado, ações advindas da educação popular. Nas escolas, a EDH favoreceu o desenvolvimento do pensamento crítico e a utilização pública da razão, com impacto na formação da subjetividade política.

Palavras-chave: Direitos humanos; educação comparada; América Latina; escola; ensino; aprendizagem.

Introduction

Human rights education in the school context has been widely recognized in recent decades, especially due to the prominence of countries adjusting their educational policies in this area to the international context, and the increase of spaces for civil societal participation in the educational system. However, there are limited studies that provide an overview of the research carried out over the last six years. The purpose of this text is to characterize the work perspectives in their theoretical and methodological aspects to facilitate an approach to the state of the question. This approach can be used to formulate strategies in other contexts that contribute to improving the teaching-learning processes in schools.

The debates between politics and morality in human rights theory have contributed to shaping the field of study of human rights education (HRE). There are two predominant positions: those that promote knowledge of the organization of the normative system and the mechanisms for activating judicial processes to ensure rights; and, the democratic values and moral conceptions that foster the construction of a culture of rights. However, the implementation of the international normative system within the local educational system highlights the tensions between the political–legal establishment of rights and their moral appropriation in the school environment. Therefore, there are difficulties related to providing the resources and human capital to ensure quality education as a right. This includes teacher training, the curricular organization of the teaching-learning processes, ongoing reflection on the moral conceptions used in their promotion, and the connection between the school and the legal mechanisms that activate the system of rights.

Consequently, two frameworks of interpretation prevail in the field of HRE. There are those focused on political views that emphasize their legal nature. Their approaches justify their positivization, the challenges and possibilities

of their normative deployment, as well as the legal repertoire within the State that disseminates, ensures, and defends them. Second, there is a moral horizon that promotes these frameworks as imperatives guiding collective action and influencing the processes of subjectivation of individuals. For authors like Menke and Pollmann (2010), this tension has created a divide between political and moral rights. Political conceptions differ from moral conceptions by emphasizing that respect for human rights derives from the political community. Its members establish the political order that recognizes themselves as equals and creates the obligation to freely correspond to the demands of that order. In contrast, in the moral conception, the demands before the public order are justified because it is believed that, before that order, there are moral rights —whose source may be nature or divinity— that must be respected by all human beings.

The political perspective is based on the legal repertoire of guaranteeing human rights, which constitute a distinct category of rights with universal application. This is framed in the Kantian contractualist tradition. According to Rawls (1993, 2012), human rights derive from the law of nations, as it advocates a legal and rational international system that recognizes the necessity of respecting human rights. This is because human rights establish boundaries for domestic institutions. In this sense, each society establishes rational and politically justified ways of coexistence that must be adhered to.

Habermas (2010) posits that human rights are synthesized in fundamental rights when they are integrated into constitutional systems. This incorporation is founded on the significance of historically recognizing human dignity within legal systems. Its effectiveness lies in the aspect that dignity facilitates a shift from moral duties to political rights.

Moral rights also acknowledge a principle of universality, whose origin is rooted in human nature or divinity. Thus, moral rights attain the status of subjective rights, which manifest as claims directed toward the State in response to society's obligation to exist. As a result, these rights are regarded as primary goods that society must consider when acknowledging human dignity. Two positions prevail in this perspective: (Dávila, 2014) a moderate one that advocates placing rights beyond the communities, linked to the universalizable feature that configures them as true moral rights (Feinberg, 1970). This is explained by the fact that moral rights possess a pre-juridical nature that aligns, through the application of reason, with human rights (Harries, 2020). Another rigorous perspective emphasizes the role of morality in the evolution and validation of human rights. In this view, human rights take on the shape of fundamental rights rooted in the necessity to safeguard dignity and freedom (Pogge, 2012, 2017; Tugendhat, 2016). In this sense, human rights are a creation of human beings,

bestowed upon one another as people embrace and internalize the morality of universal respect.

Both positions pertain to the acknowledgment of human dignity and the principle of universality as the foundation of human rights, whether as a political or moral cornerstone. The crux of the matter lies in recognizing their position, whether as a precedent or a consequence. The convergence of the moral and political aspects in rights has given rise to reconciliatory viewpoints, notable among them being discursive ethics (Cortina, 2018; Prono, 2016) and the capabilities approach (Sen, 2019; Nussbaum, 2014; Pinedo, 2020, 2021). In both instances, the authors concur in acknowledging the role of human rights education as the mechanism that facilitates a deeper comprehension of human rights.

Thus, the recognition of respect and human dignity serves as the foundation for asserting or formulating demands within the political community. To achieve this, it is necessary to perceive the human being as a subject endowed with communicative ability to forge binding and universally applicable agreements (Alexy, 2013). Additionally, humans possess the capability to act within a framework of opportunities and freedom, wherein intertwined consensuses (explanatory) and the public utilization of reason (existential) motivate actions within the normative system. Consequently, human rights are characterized as universal, fundamental, abstract, valid, and moral. They are built upon a constructivist metaphysics that amalgamates explanatory and existential attributes (Alexy, 2007).

In contrast to this reconciliatory approach, authors like Rorty (2019), MacIntyre (2019), Sánchez (2018), and De Sousa (2019) adopt a critical position on this matter. They even suggest moving beyond the debate and focusing on specific social practices that render rights viable, without requiring concern about their foundation. Rorty (2019) posits that human rights emerge from social constructs rooted in sentiments, which in turn transition into the realm of morality. His critique centers on questioning the metaphysical essence of rights. Prevailing unconditional interpretations in their discursive use have diminished them to mere slogans.

De Sousa and Martins (2019) challenge the dominant and Eurocentric paradigm of rights. They reject the monolithic perspective that has resulted in a significant portion of individuals not being acknowledged as rights-bearers, but rather as objects within the discourse of rights. This occurs because, throughout its history, two prevailing conceptions have emerged: the hegemonic and the counter-hegemonic. The former strengthens the ideologies of individualism and property by perpetuating the colonial and patriarchal capitalist disorder. The latter supports alternative perspectives on autonomy and emancipation, possessing the potential to foster the establishment of a more dignified and equitable society. The counter-hegemonic conception has been utilized to underscore the practices

of collective human rights and the preservation of nature, thus strengthening the self-determination and autonomy of communities.

Therefore, HRE offers instruments to reshape this conceptual framework, grounded in the comprehension of rights as integral to a social movement (Gallardo, 2009) and stemming from cultural processes and political engagement (Herrera, 2008). In this sense, there is a need to shift from focusing solely on the violative aspect of rights to a preceding stage (pre-violative). In this earlier stage, rights are not only outcomes of activating the normative and legal framework established by the State for their protection, but also stem from the realization that there exist countless opportunities for their formation and efficacy (Sanchez, 2018). In this context, the institutional mechanisms for defense and promotion align with individual or collective social relationships that perceive them as lived experiences.

The latter critical perspective does not take into account the grounding of human rights in politics or moralism, even though it acknowledges the significance of these factors in shaping them. Furthermore, it embodies a critical ethical-political comprehension that consistently queries and contemplates its historical nature, explores the potential for broadening the social framework, and fosters intercultural dialogues.

Methodology

A systematic literature review was conducted using the PRISMA method (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses), a framework endorsed by a considerable group of researchers and scientific journal editors. PRISMA aims to identify, select, assess, and synthesize studies (McKenzie et al., 2021). The search criteria and descriptors used to identify the manuscripts can be seen in Table 1.

Review

Table 1. *Systematic Review Process.*

Phases	Actions	Removed/Excluded
Identification	Search descriptors: «Teaching» AND «human rights » AND «school level» OR «< 2} school". «School» AND «Human Rights» «Education» OR «School level» {2> AND «Human rights». Records identified in the searches (Redalyc, Jstor, Scielo, Scopus) 3,522	Records removed before the screening: Reasons: duplicated (1,843) and do not address the object of study (1,523).
Screening	Total records screened: 156	Total records removed during screening: 10
	Records read and reviewed: 51	Records excluded after reading Reasons: They do not belong to the field of education at school (37). Not from the Latin American context (54). Outside the time range 2016-2021 (14).
Included	Additional records identified in other sources: 0	
	Total records included in the qualitative synthesis: 51 documents.	
Inclusion Criteria	Open access articles in Spanish Published between 2016 and 2021 Indexed journals in Latin America countries Belonging to the discipline or field of education Descriptors used in title and keywords	

The preliminary result allowed working, initially, with 156 manuscripts reviewed one by one. Duplicate documents and those that were outside the field of school education, or were outside the Latin American context, were then excluded. At the end of this second review, 51 publications were located and reviewed, read and systematized in an analysis grid in which the following were identified: summary, main idea of the author, developed research method and approach to the teaching-learning processes of human rights in their political-legal and moral aspects. The collection and reading of the information favored the organization of the documentary corpus around the question: What do they say and how is rights education approached in the school environment?

Results

When organizing the data collected from the publication year and the country where the study was carried out, it was found that, in general terms, there is a tendency toward a decrease in academic productions. Despite this, initiatives in this area have increased in Colombia, possibly due to the political reality surrounding the peace process and the post-conflict. In the same way, there are investigations that carry out comparative views between countries, which contribute significantly to the understanding of how human rights policies have been incorporated into educational systems.

Figure 1. *Number of Publications per Year (2016-2021).*
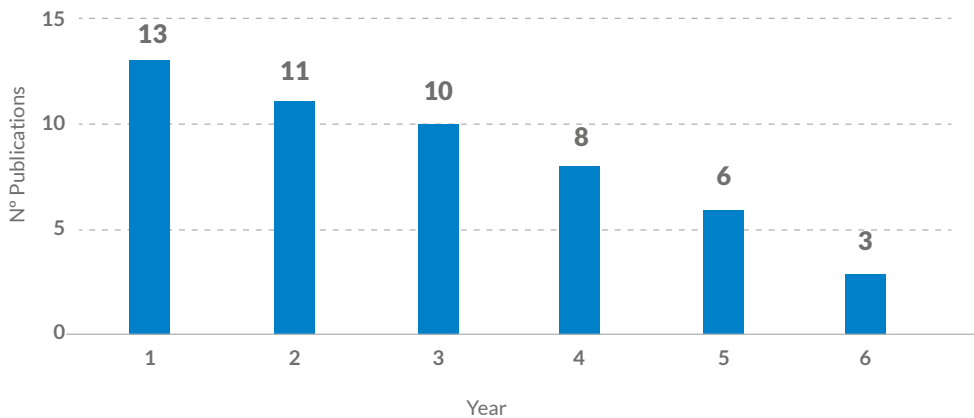
The predominant methodology is qualitative. Publications are grouped into two components, those of factual type that include: historical (3), theoretical-reflexive (20), compared (2), evaluative (1), content analysis (1) and exploratory-descriptive (1); and those derived from intervention with live sources, which include: discussion groups (3), case studies (5), ethnography (5), action-research (6), systematization of experiences (2) and proactive (2). Only one investigation stood out due to its quantitative approach.

The literature tends to show that there is a strong component of discursive productions, in which normative and human rights positivization devices prevail in the educational system, oriented to the regularization and preservation of the social order. The discourse of human rights is used as a set of regulations

from which content is extracted to favor initiatives in school classrooms, but, there is also a horizon of school and reflective practices that develop critical and disruptive discourses in which initiatives transit with a strong content oriented to the establishment of an instituting praxis of rights. This is explained because the construction of the human rights education field is linked to the historical processes of the social and political reality of each country. These include: the rise or restriction of democracy, citizenship processes deployed by the State, and moral values used for this purpose.

Processes of the Institutionalization of Human Rights in the Educational System in Latin America (Establishment-Preservation)

Studies provide an account of efforts made by governments to adjust the international normative system of rights within the school system. These proclamations are managed within a framework of transition processes between periods of authoritarianism or civic-military dictatorship and those of democratic construction. In this sense, the works of Fernández (2016) and Siede (2017) in Argentina, Magendzo and Pávez (2016), Orellana and Muñoz (2019) and Álvarez (2019) in Chile, stand out in the southern cone. For the authors of this article, the socio-political and economic context of the 70's and 80's favored the establishment of initiatives aimed at understanding human rights in formal and non-formal areas, which discursively transitioned between community and legal demands and resistance, until reaching the spaces of curricular formalization.

Said transition began with two modes of activation of rights in the socio-political sphere, which included: tensions between the different social actors that promoted or restricted them, and adjustments to public policies during periods of national reconciliation. Hence, the practices and contents around human rights in school have been subject to political changes that attenuated or promoted the processes of curricular construction of rights in the educational system.

In Brazil, Tavares (2016) highlights that educational policies recognize HRE civic training potential. At the beginning of the 21st century, following international guidelines, Brazilian states formulated policies aimed at building support networks to generate human rights inclusion processes in schools. Human rights education goes beyond training focused on values, as it implies a political character based on the right to have rights since these guarantee dignity and promote the construction of public ethics. Subsequently, the efforts maintained the transverse contents and sought to update the human rights curriculum, based on established public policies and the continuous preparation of teachers (Barros, 2018; Barrios, 2021).

Likewise, Díaz (2017), and Chávez and Bonifacio (2019), in Mexico, observe that the formation of an educational policy on human rights in schools was directed by the articulation of these policies to other scenarios that guaranteed

access to useful supplemental references. In line with what happened in other countries, between 2005 and 2006, the Mexican National Plan for Education in Human Rights was established with broad participation of civil society. In the same way, Nava and Méndez (2019) point out that there are two periods in the establishment of the HRE field. One of wide production (2002-2011), in which prescriptive and normative contributions prevail, that include philosophical reflections but few investigations *in situ* that offered analytical diagnoses on HRE. And a later period, with few initiatives in the context of primary education, except for some systematizations carried out by teachers in which views prevail that subordinate rights to obligations.

In Cuba, Rodríguez (2018) highlights that human rights education requires a change in the conceptions that underlie it, with the purpose of favoring the construction of a culture of peace, whose guiding axis would be an education based on basic skills to function in social life and respect for rights. In accordance with UNESCO guidelines, this change requires considering that education is not only a right, but that knowledge of these, is accessed through education, and in turn, this helps human beings to be autonomous, have a better quality of life, make decisions and show solidarity.

In Colombia, Espinel-Bernal (2013, 2016), Bonilla (2019), Restrepo (2018) and Velásquez (2020), agree that, despite the efforts made in the country to adjust its public policy on education in human rights to international standards, there are still challenges and limitations associated with the political culture that favors the understanding of human rights, with implications for the exercise of citizenship. This is explained because, although the country did not experience a military dictatorship as in the southern cone, the period of the National Front (1958-1974) and the Democratic Security Statute (1978) limited social and political participation, and even some defenders of human rights were assassinated or persecuted. However, there were some collective and popular resistances that had vindications as their axes, such as the right to access the city, education, health, access to better public services and the expansion of the democratic regime.

The 1991 Colombian constitution becomes a breaking point since it included some citizen demands, and the State began to manage policies that would make those demands possible. However, actors of the armed conflict —insurgents, paramilitaries and armed forces— have diminished those efforts through belligerent actions, which include the school context and have resulted in violations of human rights and International Humanitarian Law.

Re view

Table 2. *Studies Addressing the Institutionalization of Human Rights in the Educational System (Installation-preservation).*

Author- Year-Country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights in Schools: Political-Moral Perspective
Fernández (2016) Argentina	Factual historical	The educational policy of human rights during the dictatorship period was a low-intensity citizen training device. Link HRE with ethical-political training.
Siede (2017) Argentina	Factual historical	Political establishment of human rights through educational reforms aimed at strengthening civic and democratic values.
Magendzo, A & Pávez (2016) Colombia- Costa Rica- México	Factual comparative	Citizen training guidelines must show inspiration or identifiable commitment to the set of values and principles that give rise to human rights in official international instruments.
Orellana & Muñoz (2019) Chile	Discussion groups	Changes in the curriculum and introduced public policies, persist in the formation of a citizen connected to rights and duties, with a marked national sense.
Tavares (2016) Brasil	Content analysis	The organization of the curriculum and the production of pedagogical materials on Human Rights must be strengthened since the public policy implementation processes do not follow linear trajectories but present differentiated rhythms and movements.
Barros (2018) Brasil	Exploratory-descriptive	There is a disruption between public policy and the reality in schools in terms of HRE, therefore the school must strengthen multicultural education, in the sense of promoting respect for differences and dignity.
Díaz (2017) México	Factual theoretical-reflexive	Sex education is one of the ways in which human rights are ensured, in this case, the disputes between the secular State and the church affect the ways in which they are promoted and experienced in the educational system.
Chávez & Bonifacio (2019) México	Action-research	Prescriptive guidelines that promote the idea of rights as obligations. Human rights as an ethical reference to assess educational practices.

Author- Year-Country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights in Schools: Political-Moral Perspective
Nava & Méndez (2019) México	Discussion groups	Ignorance of the law is linked to the ineffective exercise of human rights. The greater the misinformation of the agents, the greater the inclination of teachers to violate the rights of students in the classroom, and the less capacity of the latter to demand those rights.
Terrazas (2019) México	Factual theoretical-reflexive	Human rights education contributes to the mitigation of school violence. Education in values, dialogue and moral dilemmas are covered.
Rodríguez (2018) Cuba	Factual theoretical-reflexive	Balance of educational policy in human rights. HRE as a human right that contributes to promoting a culture of peace and competencies for social life, hence respect for rights.
Bonilla (2016) Colombia	Factual historical	Balance of the political configuration of human rights education, from 1991 to 2016. Analysis of the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic perspectives. Takes a moral approach to human rights.
Velásquez (2020) Colombia	Evaluative	The State expands the curricularization of human rights but the reality in schools has generated tensions between the nature of the contents and the measures for its deployment. Assume a humanist formation.
Blanco (2016) Colombia	Quantitative-descriptive	Balance of the regulations on HRE and the teaching-learning strategies that are promoted from State policies.
Chaustre (2017) Colombia	Factual theoretical-reflexive	Human rights as rights and duties. Citizen training is the responsibility of schools; ethical-pedagogical processes must be articulated that promote the construction of peace and recognize the dynamics of globalization.

Efforts to Promote Human Rights as Public Policy in the Educational System

Studies show that there are challenges and restrictions associated with HRE implementation. The challenge for educators is to teach students without putting them at risk of being vulnerable. Therefore, there are recurrent initiatives that conceive of other ways to promote their learning. The debates between curricularize or universalized contents have given this perspective greater

recognition; this implies thinking of its contents as legal instruments, moral principles or both. As a result, the resources used to expand the possibilities of teaching and learning have increased. New pedagogical strategies that go beyond traditional educational practices are sought; hence the existence of processes that are close to innovation in the classroom. Magendzo and Morales (2018), who are aware of this issue, have argued that the Declaration of Human Rights is not just a normative tool but also an ideal tool for a universal ethical dialogue. In this way, a perspective is assumed that enriches the public discourse on issues relating to values like human dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity, social justice, nondiscrimination, and diversity.

As a result, concerns about the creation of the content go beyond knowledge of the normative device and take into account complementary aspects like education for peace because of their development in the educational setting, and even teacher training, enables the creation of environments that foster social harmony and cooperation. To achieve this, it is necessary to focus on promoting values through transformative and mediating practices that serve as fundamental tools for enabling individuals to understand and exercise their rights (Garca & Mora, 2020). In this regard, authors like Osornio-Callejas (2016) acknowledge the role that logic and cooperation games have in creating a peaceful and harmonious learning environment. These encourage positive emotions like empathy and help students develop a sense of their rights.

In contrast, Carranza (2016), Alvarado (2017), Rodriguez (2018), and Bonilla (2019) address the relationship between human rights and education for peace in the educational environment in recognition of the influence this has on those who participate in their own human development. The authors of this article agree that conflicts between peers are a reality in schools, therefore teaching human rights allows for their mitigation and puts pressure on the teachers charged with doing so. This requires measures in the classroom that encourage participation, communication, and adjustments to the curriculum from a critical perspective. The direct consequence of this process is the improvement of peaceful coexistence and the construction of responsible and democratic citizenship in young people. Human rights education develops into a mechanism that enables the development of the peaceful attitudes required in post-conflict settings. To achieve this, it is necessary to strengthen an integrated, holistic, contextualized education whose focus is on developing democratic values and constructing political subjects. Without taking distance from the above, some initiatives recognize conflict as part of educational environments, therefore, the reduction of school violence is a strategy that serves as a middle-ground problem to guide the processes of education in rights, because the violence that occurs there mostly affects rights

related to personal integrity, equality, non-discrimination, and human dignity (Calle et al., 2016).

Thus, cultivating the development of critical thinking becomes a useful mechanism to understand the relationship of power and subordination within the context of school violence, increasing the possibilities to mitigate them, through pedagogical and coexistence actions, favoring an environment of understanding and experience of human rights. In line with this, the introduction of approaches based on restorative justice, such as those put out by De Mézerville (2019) and others transforms the school into a setting that is suitable for the effective exercise of rights. To be effective, it must be acknowledged that rights violations occur in schools, as well as in families, communities, and other settings where they are vulnerable to natural practices. These actors must be included in teaching processes to broaden their capacity to make demands on the social fabric.

The studies conducted allow stating that there is interest in addressing the axiomatic aspect of human rights to promote an empathetic focus (Chávez & Bonifacio, 2019; Garca & Mora, 2020). The topic of human rights and the values associated with them are frequently addressed through initiatives that deviate from conventional education; as such, teachers develop activities like forums, conversations, artistic endeavors, and group projects. The students, on the other hand, demand expanding the spaces and communication channels in which their voices are heard, as well as creating environments that value tolerance, respect, and unity. This viewpoint calls for the development of inclusive educational processes because it guarantees everyone's access to a high-quality educational system without discrimination and encourages the promotion, disclosure, and protection of human rights inside the system (Tovar, 2021).

Other concerns include studies that list the following as problems: child labor, particularly in rural areas (Jorge & Sánchez, 2018); mobile school that stimulate life skills (Chaves & Dorado, 2019); and strategic learning environments that link human dignity to sustainable development goals (Aldana, 2020). The initiatives that have been taken are a part of government technologies that aim to implement human rights education because they stem from an understanding of educational policy and produce concrete actions that make understanding it possible.

Table 3. *Studies Focused on Efforts and Resources to Implement Human Rights as Public Policy in the School System.*

Author- Year- Country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights at School: Political-Moral Perspective
Magendzo & Morales (2018) Chile	Theoretical-reflexive documentary	The Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a didactic resource for its teaching should promote a universal ethical dialogue.
García & Mora (2020) Costa Rica	Case Study	Expanding on the cultivation of values through transformative practices that aid in understanding rights.
Osornio-Callejas (2016)	Ethnography for peace	Playful and cooperative games in the construction of a school environment based on peace and harmony.
Carranza (2016) México	Ethnography for peace	Transversal educational projects that promote human rights respect to create peaceful learning environments at the school.
Alvarado *et al.* (2016) Colombia	Systematization of pedagogical experiences	Consider concrete collaborative work activities that enable visibility, strengthening, and awareness of the HRE through online projects involving literature, the arts, and knowledge of armed conflict.
Bonilla (2019) Colombia	Theoretical-reflexive documentary	HRE contributes to the strengthening of democracy and the social state by serving as a mechanism for creating peaceful subjectivities.
Barrios (2021) Brasil	Constructivist sociocultural perspective	Promote a participatory pedagogy that makes HRE a relevant element for students, as well as teacher training based on the analysis of pedagogical practices and HRE programmatic actions.
Calle *et al.* (2016) Colombia	Case Study	Encourage pedagogical initiatives based on assertive communication for HRE and mitigate school violence.

Author- Year-Country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights at School: Political-Moral Perspective
Calle & Ocampo (2017) Colombia	Group Discussion	Armed and social conflict as a means of promoting human rights awareness and reducing school violence.
De Mézerville et al. (2019) Costa Rica	Theoretical-reflexive documentary	Promotion of critical thinking and restorative justice as HRE resources.
Tovar (2021) Colombia	Ethnography	Human rights as a tool for promoting inclusive education, educating for diversity and enhancing the student's teacher's preparation in these areas.
Jorge & Sánchez (2018) Argentina	Quantitative-qualitative research: interviews, documents, observation without participation in the study	Rural child labor negatively affects children's schooling at the primary level, their right to quality education, development, and equal opportunities.
Martínez (2016) Argentina	Ethnography	There are conflicts between moral categorizations that tend to downplay the needs of immigrant groups and the hierarchization of children's social rights.
Chaves & Dorado (2019) Ecuador	Action-research	Mobile school with a focus on legal rights to strengthen life skills.
Aldana (2020) Guatemala	Theoretical-reflexive documentary	Strategic human rights education taking into account both the goals of sustainable development and an individual's dignity.

R e v i e w

Counter-hegemonic and Displacement Processes (Dislocation-transformation).

The second area that distinguishes the teaching-learning of human rights in the classroom arises in response to established educational policies. The authors claim that the theoretical contributions of Herrera (2008), Gallardo (2009), and De Sousa and Martins (2019) allow for the recognition of human rights as a means of overcoming the conditions of vulnerability, discrimination, exclusion, and social inequality that are imposed by the capitalist system and neoliberal ideology. The educational practices that some teachers and students are developing aim to establish new ways of understanding human rights, close to an institutional practice that upsets the hegemonic pretensions of imposing certain ingrained worldviews. The works that focus on creating a critical, dialogical, liberated subject that is aware of the ontological transformation that underpins their history, interculturality, and memory have received a lot of attention from this perspective. Critical pedagogy constitutes the horizon of action and reflection of classroom initiatives.

The contributions of Magendzo (2016, 2017 & 2018), Espinel-Bernal (2016), Baena and Vela (2019) and Nez (2020) are predominant. The contribution of Magendzo is noteworthy due to its impact on the continent, whether it is because it serves as a theoretical and reflective foundation for the ideas exposed in the classroom or because it takes into account experiences with the educational system. In this regard, the comparative study of the ways in which civic education in some of the region's countries, such as Mexico, Colombia, and Costa Rica, has been guided by HRE stands out.

In addition, Espinel-Bernal (2016) acknowledges the importance of rights in civic education; however, her methodological approach necessitates a critical analysis grounded in a present-day ontology that questions the conditions necessary for civic education to take place in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Based on Freire's contributions, it recognizes that HRE contributes to the formation of political-critical subjects. This requires that the school move away from the verticality that mutes the voices of its protagonists and recognize that the interactions between teachers and students must be open to awareness through an emancipatory education that enhances the construction of subjectivities related to this.

In light of this, a critical paradigm is needed to establish links between human rights, local development, and education, conceiving them as the result of social struggles that push territories to emancipate themselves. Therefore, according to Baena and Vela (2019), education is a crucial component of creating processes for fighting for dignity if it is seen as a cultural and liberating process.

Education, as a practice of freedom, requires the construction of school processes and initiatives that must be based on the heterogeneity of the territories, to generate processes that prevent social exclusion. This viewpoint suggests that HRE is a result of emancipatory cultural processes that lead to the protection of human dignity. Reimagining human rights by challenging the claim that there are no alternatives to the dominant ideology is essential. In this process, school interactions and tensions encourage a de-naturalization in which the excluded might raise their voice.

The efforts to promote a critical understanding of human rights in schools find in the curricular adjustments means that favor it, but in their background, they seek to go beyond it. For this reason, there are many initiatives that, in the context of critical pedagogy, make significant changes at the curricular and content level, with a strong emphasis on transversalization. In this regard, Magendzo and Bermudez (2018) propose an HRE with a contentious perspective to cultivate critical citizens in a pluralist democracy through three action axes that include a universal, minimal, and moral plurality. Moral dilemmas and controversies are a method for boosting HRE and citizen learning because they foster a deliberative climate that aids in developing communication skills by encouraging the deliberate debate of polemic issues. Thus, HRE promotes the development of moral judgment. Closest to this approach, Álvarez (2019) states that the educational system should foster scenarios for dialogue, expressing emotions and critical reflection, since HRE constitutes an enriching synergy because of the humanizing experiences it encourages.

Table 4. *Research Focused on a Counter-hegemonic Perspective (Dislocation-transformation).*

Author- Year-Country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights at School: Political-Moral Perspective
Magendzo (2017) Chile	Theoretical-reflexive documental	HRE must promote critical ethical and political empowerment of the excluded and indignant.
Baena y Vela Jiménez (2019) Uruguay	Theoretical-reflexive documental	Human rights education involves understanding the struggles for territorial dignity.
Núñez (2020) Costa Rica	Theoretical-reflexive documental	Reinvent human rights to distort discourse, thus the excluded can raise their voices.
Álvarez (2019) Chile	Theoretical-reflexive documental	Encourage dialogue and critical reflection based on an understanding of recent history and political reality.

Author- Year- Country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights at School: Political-Moral Perspective
Areiza (2018) Colombia	Theoretical-reflexive documental	HRE contributes to the training of ethical-political subjects through the deployment of practical and experiential processes. They include citizen competences and civic values, but with a critical view.
Espinel-Bernal (2016) Colombia	Theoretical-reflexive documental	Calls attention to citizenship practices under the auspices of a universal discourse of human rights. Human rights are a game of epochal truth from which subjects are recognized, declared, and projected.
Suárez (2017). Colombia	Proposal – prescriptive model	Proposes a curricular alternative structure for teaching human rights. Considers the *ethos*, the free subject, and self-determination.

Critical Human Rights Initiatives in Schools

Literature concerns for the deployment of teaching-learning processes, beyond the normalization of hegemonic discourse within the educational system, through initiatives aimed at transforming the structural aspects of the political system. Within critical pedagogy, these initiatives seek to establish new senses that affect hegemonic discourses. The core of this perspective are the subjects and their contexts as determinants of the content on human rights (Suárez, 2017). Therefore, the strategies used are varied; because the learning axis does not lie in information about rights, but in making them act as excuses for the mobilization of actions that makes it possible to understand them through experiences. Literature, music, theater, care for life, and the environment, the recovery of ancestral knowledge, as well as memory in the context of post-conflict are some of the strategies.

Based on critical pedagogy in dialogue with Development Goals, and concerns about the environmental transformation of life on the planet, authors such as Caride (2017) and Vogelfanger (2020) state that human rights education is a requirement that corresponds to human beings as a specie. The negative consequences of economic models based on development theories are putting life on the planet at risk. To educate, in this way, includes training in a liberating and transformative practice. In this way, socio-environmental changes in spaces directed by social or community education are sometimes articulated with guidelines in the agendas of international organizations such as UNESCO. This

link becomes closer when the school and the territories foster the construction of a democratic communitarism, as its immediate effect is the promotion of democratic values necessary for an effective experience of rights.

Furthermore, there is a constant interest in transforming the schemes in which human rights are traditionally taught, especially in contexts affected by democracy. In this way, the triad is broken: political violence, armed conflict, and memory that emerge as an axis to advance an effective understanding of rights, especially in contexts of the State's precarious assistance.

In territories where political violence leads a barrier of exclusion and discrimination through the establishment of authoritarian political regimes or democratic precariousness, HRE becomes the most efficient strategy for the transformation of political culture through emancipation (Sgró, 2018). Pérez (2018) recognizes the potential of memory as a formative strategy for human rights and the construction of new citizenships. For the authors of this article, HRE moves into a social transformation, through the development of critical thinking and the formation of an ethical-political subject that promotes and demands its rights from social mobilization and the construction of political consensus.

Table 5. *Critical Human Rights Initiatives in the School Area.*

Author-year-country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights at School: Political-Moral Perspective
Suesca et al. (2020) Colombia	Theoretical-reflexive documental	Recognize the role of social movements and moral emotions in understanding human rights.
Castro (2017) Colombia	Theoretical-reflexive documental	Community education contributes to HRE, human rights must be recognized as cultural and historical artifacts produced by social struggles.
Vogelfanger (2020) Argentina	Theoretical-reflexive documental	Resources and contributions of critical pedagogy contribute to HRE, in conjunction with education for sustainable development. Takes on an environmental perspective.
Arguedas (2018) Costa Rica	Research-action	The incorporation of musical strategies favors HRE and intercultural ethics.

Author-year-country	Research Methodology	Approach to Human Rights at School: Political-Moral Perspective
Lara et al. (2017) Colombia	Pedagogical Proposal	Literature favors HRE and fosters the development of critical thinking.
Burmeister (2021) Chile	Case study	Use of theatrical pedagogy as an input to HRE and critical reflection.
Suárez (2017) Colombia	Case study	Implement alternative curriculum models that use critical approaches and theories of society.
Caride (2017) Chile	Theoretical-reflexive documental	HRE is a requirement for human beings as a species, and it involves the care of life on the planet. Takes on an environmental perspective.
De los Santos y Cuevas (2020) México	Research-action	Use the good living category for HRE from the construction of school gardens.
Cortés et al. (2016) Colombia	Theoretical-reflexive documental	Unlink the school from armed conflict. Begins by considering what the school has done to survive in the midst of the conflict.
Osorio (2016) Colombia	Case studies	Recognize the armed conflict from memory in the understanding of human rights to favor the building of a forgiveness culture.
Sgró (2018) Argentina	Theoretical-reflexive documental	Takes HRE from a critical approach that takes political violence into account.
Pérez (2018) Colombia- Chile	Factual comparative	Memory as a pedagogical tool for addressing HRE and fostering critical thinking.
Pino & Sánchez (2017) Colombia	Systematization of experiences	The community organization is a civil societal space for HRE within the context of armed conflict and displacement.

Discussion

The field of human rights education in Latin America formed among tensions of political contexts —moving between authoritarian regimes and struggles for the return of democracy— and the educational reality, involving curricular organization and teacher training. In this context, the debate between the moral and political character of human rights was assumed as discursive strategies and devices used to shape that field. While political issues are predominant as part of the legal establishment of rights within educational systems, moral references have been used for their deployment in the school system to strengthen their appropriation. Thus, the teaching resources used in the classroom involved strengthening their view as moral rights from the recognition of defenses such as human dignity and respect.

The universal and reasonable nature of human rights has promoted their dissemination within Latin American educational systems. However, the political and social reality has obscured institutional efforts, and there have been some initiatives from civil society that have impacted teaching-learning processes in schools. This happens because the needs of the contexts enhance the mobilization of collective processes in the territories to claim rights. These initiatives are not reduced to the scope of their legal and normative knowledge, but are infused with the historical forces of social movements and community organizations which have managed to enter the school space to affect it in their practices (Archila, 2018; Franco, 2022). There are several ways of understanding rights based on popular education through strategies that include: literature, music, theater, and environmental education to dispel cultural practices that contribute to the experience of human rights in school with a high impact on social dynamics.

This is explained by the expansion of civil society into greater spaces of public participation. It includes the promotion, defense, and claim of human rights. As a result, institutional and non-governmental efforts are proliferating in organizing strategies aimed at building a culture of rights. Discourses that include training in citizenship skills, democratic pluralism, and education for peace are becoming stronger. HRE contributes to the construction of new citizenships, as it affects the processes of political subjectivization and, therefore, the patterns of cognitive, emotional and valuative orientation of subjects towards the political system.

The debate between politics and morality is becoming relevant, as it is not focused on how they are articulated in the foundations of rights, but on how the dilemmas inherent in the debate become reflexive nodes that broaden their deliberation. Therefore, to educate in human rights is to foster ethical-political

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thinking, the promotion of the public use of reason, the possibility of establishing crossing consensus and educating on moral and political emotions (Nussbaum, 2014). This makes HRE a field under construction, there the institutional efforts come into dialogue with contextual realities from the tensions between the discursive establishment of rights and the processes that guide their claim even as they displaced hegemonic discourses.

A weak point in HRE is the training of teachers and the prevalence of the hegemonic discourse of rights that emphasizes a moralizing theory, but not the legal contents that in practice activate the normative system for its claim. Pedagogical strategies tend to focus on historical contents, foundations, and axiology of rights; this is necessary, but may lead to a loss of knowledge of legal instruments. This situation entails a possible de-politization of rights that reduces them to a monolithic abstraction. It demands that school promotes experiential scenarios to bring students closer to a practice of rights.

Conclusions

The discursive establishment of HRE shows the predominance of political-legal aspects that were promoted through the use of moral-based educational resources and methods, as well as the deployment of initiatives regarding the critical appropriation of rights that have broadened the mechanisms for their understanding. The school has become a practical setting for the experience of rights, but the evaluative view on the effectiveness of these initiatives needs to be broadened. School context has fostered the building of a culture of appropriation of human rights in dialogue with civil society. It makes the tensions between law-legal and law-moral through critical thinking, the public use of reason, and the recognition of moral emotions in collective life with implications for political subjectivity construction visible.

This debate leads toward the formulation of an ethics rooted in human rights. This approach relies on the potential of establishing an ongoing reflection on politics and morality within the cultural framework. This intricate interplay influences the establishment of cultural norms and practices that individuals engage in respecting social order. The incorporation of foreign language literature into this endeavor broadens the scope and would foster interesting comparative methodologies. By acknowledging the ways in which diverse contexts have shaped HRE within educational institutions.

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Life Satisfaction in the University Community of a Colombian University During the Pandemic*

[English version]

Satisfacción con la vida en la comunidad universitaria de una Universidad colombiana en tiempo de pandemia

Satisfação com a vida na comunidade universitária de uma universidade colombiana em tempos de pandemia

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Abstract

Objective: To determine life satisfaction in the university community of a Colombian university during the pandemic. **Methodology**: A descriptive cross-sectional study with an associative phase was carried out involving 723 students and 257 employees of an institution of higher education during the pandemic. **Results**: The highest percentage of participants in both groups were female. With respect to life satisfaction, 83.7% of employees engaged in virtual activities during the pandemic felt either satisfied (33.9%) or very satisfied (49.8%) with life. In contrast, for students, the percentages of satisfaction were lower (33.3% satisfied and 37.6% very satisfied); a statistically significant association ($p < 0.05$) was found between all sociodemographic variables and life satisfaction. **Conclusions**: Satisfaction with life during the pandemic differed between employees and students. These findings provide valuable insights for institutions of higher education, emphasizing the need to enhance multidisciplinary efforts and implement ongoing actions to improve resilience levels among university community members.

Keywords: coronavirus infections; students; personal satisfaction; higher education; mental health.

Resumen

Objetivo: determinar la satisfacción con la vida en la comunidad universitaria de una universidad colombiana en tiempos de pandemia. **Metodología**: se realizó un estudio descriptivo transversal con una fase asociativa, en el cual se contó con participación de 723 estudiantes y 257 empleados de una institución de educación superior en tiempos de pandemia. **Resultados**: el mayor porcentaje de los participantes en ambos grupos fue de mujeres. Con respecto a la satisfacción con la vida, el 83,7% de empleados que realizaban actividades virtuales durante la pandemia se sentían entre satisfechos (33,9%) y muy satisfechos con la vida (49,8%). En contraste, para el caso de los estudiantes los porcentajes de satisfacción fueron menores (33,3% satisfechos y 37,6% muy satisfechos); se encontró asociación estadísticamente significativa $p < 0,05$ entre todas las variables sociodemográficas y la satisfacción con la vida. **Conclusiones**: la satisfacción con la vida en tiempos de pandemia fue diferente entre empleados y estudiantes, estos resultados se convierten en insumo para que las instituciones de educación superior fortalezcan el trabajo multidisciplinario, y que de manera permanente se realicen acciones encaminadas a mejorar los niveles de resiliencia en los integrantes de la comunidad universitaria.

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Palabras clave: infecciones por coronavirus; estudiantes; satisfacción personal; educación superior; salud mental.

Resumo

Objetivo: determinar a satisfação com a vida na comunidade universitária de uma universidade colombiana em tempos de pandemia. **Metodologia**: foi realizado um estudo transversal descritivo com uma fase associativa, envolvendo 723 alunos e 257 funcionários de uma instituição de ensino superior em tempos de pandemia. **Resultados**: a maior percentagem de participantes em ambos os grupos foi de mulheres. Com relação à satisfação com a vida, 83,7% dos funcionários que participaram de atividades virtuais durante a pandemia se sentiram entre satisfeitos (33,9%) e muito satisfeitos com a vida (49,8%). Em contraste, para os estudantes, as percentagens de satisfação foram menores (33,3% satisfeitos e 37,6% muito satisfeitos); foi encontrada uma associação estatisticamente significativa p<0,05 entre todas as variáveis sociodemográficas e a satisfação com a vida. **Conclusões**: a satisfação com a vida em tempos de pandemia foi diferente entre funcionários e alunos, esses resultados tornam-se um insumo para que as instituições de ensino superior fortaleçam o trabalho multidisciplinar e realizem permanentemente ações destinadas a melhorar os níveis de resiliência dos membros da comunidade universitária.

Palavras-chave: infecções por coronavírus; estudantes; satisfação pessoal; ensino superior; saúde mental.

Introduction

In January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared an outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, which led to the disease known as COVID-19. Due to the high increase in morbidity and mortality cases and the high risk of transmission and contagion, a health emergency was declared. In March 2020, the WHO declared this disease a pandemic (World Health Organization, 2020).

As this pandemic spread throughout the world, it triggered a significant crisis that profoundly affected social activities, interactions, and behaviors across various levels, ultimately altering daily routines and customs. Similarly, the pandemic led to situations of social isolation, fear of illness, economic pressures, and emotional challenges, including depression, anxiety, and uncertainty, affecting a significant portion of the population (Mayoclinic, 2020).

COVID-19 had a profound impact on society as a whole, resulting in significant psychosocial consequences for individuals who experienced stress and anxiety. Similarly, the implemented control measures sparked widespread fear in the population, resulting in the social stigmatization of patients, their families, and the healthcare personnel who cared for them, all of which had psychological consequences (Asociación de Salud Mental y Psiquiatría Comunitaria, 2020). COVID-19 had consequences on individuals in all three dimensions of health—physical, psychological, and social—regardless of race, social stratum, or gender. The disease impacted all population groups, but particularly affected older adults (World Health Organization, 2020). In the context of a global syndemic, where addressing social and group vulnerability should be a primary focus, COVID-19 presented a challenge for various institutions and sectors (Segura et al., 2021).

Being confined generated emotional symptoms such as stress, anxiety, insomnia, and fear (Sandín et al., 2020), all of which had a negative impact on resilience and life satisfaction. In relation to this, the expectation was that individuals who are satisfied with their lives will possess better coping resources and greater resilience, while more resilient individuals will have enhanced personal resources and greater life satisfaction (López de la Llave et al., 2021).

In this regard, the university community was significantly affected, particularly due to the closure of educational centers and the cancellation of on-site, public, and social activities. This limitation impacted interactions with friends and the community's ability to enjoy free time and leisure spaces, resulting in an increased reliance on virtual modalities for most activities (González et al., 2020).

Other reports stated that 107 countries implemented national school closures, which affected over 861.7 million children and young people. Similarly, the confinement restrictions led to emotional uneasiness and anxiety, directly

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affecting the perception of life satisfaction and the quality of life among the educational population (UNFPA, 2020).

University students were impacted by the demands of a new pedagogical format and the unavailability of in-person education. This influenced their training, as well as their ability to relate socially with their peers and educators, and to adapt to the virtual context. These situations, given students' conditions of vulnerability, had a direct effect on their mental health and academic performance (Zapata-Ospina et al., 2021).

Virtual education presented numerous challenges and difficulties for higher education institutions. This was because both students and teachers were unfamiliar with digital resources and tools, and many lacked virtual classroom implementations. This triggered high levels of stress and pressure during the process of adapting to this methodology, for which students and teachers alike were unprepared (Estrada et al., 2022).

Within the university context, students can evaluate their life satisfaction on a global scale, considering their feelings, expectations, and desires. However, extreme situations, such as the pandemic, led to a disruption of subjective well-being and had an impact on students' learning and relationship dynamics (Arias et al., 2022).

For teachers and administrative staff at universities, the pandemic contingency brought about changes in working conditions, resulting in a significant increase in working hours. This situation can be largely attributed to the shift from classroom-based teaching to virtual teaching. This necessitated additional time and dedication to work activities while working from home. It involved resolving administrative matters for the educational institution and providing support to students with special needs. This led to physical and mental overloads that impacted teachers' and administrative staff's life satisfaction (Galvis et al., 2021).

Life satisfaction is framed as life quality. This is a cognitive evaluative process defined as an individual's overall assessment of life based on their personal standards. This evaluation is rooted in the comparison of all an individual's positive and negative experiences. Life satisfaction, as defined by Bernal et al. (2015), "is how much a person enjoys the life they lead or how comfortable they are with the life they have." It should not be confused with a mere approval–disapproval or a measure of satisfaction with objective life conditions. Similarly, life satisfaction results from the comparison between one's current life and the lofty aspirations formed through life experiences (Undurraga & Avendaño, 1998; Ly, 2004).

In this regard, González-Serrano et al. (2013) state that the well-being of individuals includes happiness, which is related to the affective component. There exists a relationship between life satisfaction and the cognitive component, with implications for the individuals' potential to become more productive.

As per Veenhoven, individuals with good physical and mental health, as well as psychological resilience are more satisfied with their lives (Sánchez-Fuentes et al., 2018). Currently, these dimensions constitute a comprehensive assessment of well-being that extends beyond the traditional notion of health as merely the absence of disease (Veenhoven, 1994).

Health is conventionally measured through objective and physical metrics or criteria such as laboratory analysis or imaging tests. Over time, subjective criteria rooted in individuals' self-perceptions have been incorporated, enhancing the evaluation process and yielding a more comprehensive and inclusive assessment of health (Moreta-Herrera et al., 2018). According to Salazar-Botello et al. (2020), individuals also consider other criteria such as income levels and happiness in their overall perception of quality of life. (Botello & Guerrero, 2021).

Studies conducted among university students have shown a robust relationship between quality of life and factors such as physical well-being and the presence of long-term health conditions. Furthermore, it is crucial to ensuring an adequate development of individuals particularly within the context of young university populations (Olivella et al., 2020).

The exploration of life satisfaction within the university community holds significance due to experiences encountered, which lead to the ability to adapt to new challenges. These experiences influence individuals' self-perception and self-assessment. It is plausible to posit that conditions such as stress are intricately linked to individuals' management of responsibilities, life habits, interpersonal relationships, and various other factors that can potentially impact their overall life satisfaction (Ruiz et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the examination of life satisfaction involves fundamental and desirable values, including personal, central, and social orientations, which function as predictive factors for this dimension. Gaining an understanding of these values is crucial for the development of the self as a source of life satisfaction facilitating the management of human needs and the achievement of satisfaction (Cejudo et al., 2016).

Within the university context, life satisfaction shows a strong relationship with social well-being and has the potential to exert positive or negative influences on intergroup dynamics and interactions (Moreta-Herrera et al., 2017). In the context of health-promoting universities, the comprehension of life satisfaction perception maintains significance given the substantial amount of time this population spends within the institutional setting. Furthermore, whether in the workplace or during professional training, students are expected to cultivate skills that lead to the adoption of healthy lifestyles including physical activity and nutritious dietary habits. These practices yield a positive impact on their holistic quality of life and serve as protective factors for their health (Herazo

et al., 2020). The objective of this study was to assess life satisfaction within a university context at a Colombian university during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Methodology

This study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive design with an associative phase. Data were collected between July and October 2021, with a total sample of 723 students and 257 employees (professors and administrative staff) of a private Colombian university. One of the inclusion criteria for students was active enrollment in an undergraduate program at the university at the time of the survey. For employees, inclusion criteria required holding a current contract with the institution. All participants were invited to participate in the study via e-mail and were requested to voluntarily complete the survey after providing informed consent.

The sociodemographic and academic variables were collected through a questionnaire that was designed by the researchers. Life satisfaction was assessed using the Life Satisfaction Scale (LSS) which consists of five items. Participants provided responses on a Likert-type scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). According to recent studies, the Spanish version exhibits a total Cronbach's alpha value of 0.832 on the scale, indicating a high degree of reliability within the range specified in its original version. The authors emphasize its robust psychometric characteristics (Padrós et al., 2015). Psychometric analyses conducted on representative Spanish samples demonstrate a reliable unifactorial structure, and a strong internal consistency of 0.88 (Vázquez et al., 2013a).

This scale was validated for a Colombian university population, and exhibited favorable psychometric properties, including a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.839, a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of 0.847, and significance of Bartlett's test of sphericity ($p<0.001$) for determining construct validity, consistency, and reliability. This finding is consistent with similar outcomes reported in international studies (Vinaccia et al., 2019).

To calculate the total value, the individual scores for each of the five items should be added. This process yields a subjective happiness index categorized in the following ranges.

Table 1. *Diener Scale Total Score.*

Subjective Well-being	Score
Extremely satisfied (very happy)	30-35 points
Satisfied	25-29 points
Slightly satisfied	20-24 points
Slightly Dissatisfied	15-19 puntos
Dissatisfied (unhappy)	10-14 points
Extremely dissatisfied	5-9 points

The information was analyzed using SPSS version 22 software, licensed by the institution where the study was conducted. For qualitative variables, absolute and relative frequencies were used in the descriptive analysis. For quantitative variables, measures of central tendency and dispersion were used. The level of statistical significance was determined to be a value of $p<0.05$. According to the behavior of the variables, nonparametric tests (Mann Whitney H Kruskal-Wallis U test) were used to measure the association.

According to Resolution 8430 of 1993 (Minsalud, 1993), this study was classified as risk-free, because no interventions or manipulations of biological, psychological, or social variables were performed on the participants. The Helsinki Declaration on the respect and freedom of participation of the study population was taken into account (World Medical Association, 2000). The project was approved by the university's Bioethics Committee.

Results

A total of 980 individuals (723 students and 257 employees) participated.

Employees ranged in age from 20 to 67 years old, a mean of 40.6 years, with a standard deviation (SD) of 11.10 years; 60.7% were female; 39.3% reported being married; 51% lived in stratum 1 to 3 and 24.9% were currently studying.

Female students accounted for 59.2%, with ages ranging from 16 to 56 years old, a mean value of 21.82 years and a SD of 4.8 years. Stratum 3 was reported by 39.4% of all participants, and was the most prevalent, followed by stratum 2. At the time of the study, 94.1% of the students reported being single. A total of 97.2% were affiliated with the Colombian health system, 58.9% were affiliated

with the contributory health regime and 33.7% with the subsidized health regime. A total of 18.4% reported that they were working.

Life satisfaction for employees, the minimum score was five points and the maximum 35 points. The average was 28.18 points, 5.35 points for SD. For students, the minimum and maximum were equal with an average of 26.76 points, 5.94 points for SD. Regarding each of the employees items: the highest mean was item 3 (I am satisfied with my life), and the lowest was for item 5 (If I had to live my life again, I would change almost nothing). (See Table 2).

For students the highest mean was item 2 (Living conditions are excellent). The lowest mean for employees was item 5 (If I had to live my life again, I would change almost nothing). (See Table 2).

In a global analysis, in Table 2 the highest mean was for "I am satisfied with my life," and the lowest was for item 5 (If I had to live my life again, I would change almost nothing).

Table 2. *Descriptivos de los ítems de satisfacción con la vida por estamento y total.*

Ítem	Employees			Students			Total		
	N	Mean	DS	N	Mean	DS	N	Mean	DS
1. In most of the ways my life approaches to my goal.	257	5,650	1,166	723	5,300	1,402	980	5,39	1,352
2. My living conditions are excellent.	257	5,720	1,172	723	5,790	1,246	980	5,77	1,227
3. I am satisfied with my life.	257	5,926	1,2680	723	5,733	1,4382	980	5,784	1,3976
4. So far I have achieved the important things I want in life	257	5,615	1,2913	723	5,203	1,4770	980	5,311	1,4414
5. If I had to live my life again, I would change almost nothing.	257	5,265	1,4604	723	4,733	1,7643	980	4,872	1,7053

SD: standard deviation.

With respect to life satisfaction, 83.7% of employees engaged in virtual activities during the pandemic and felt either satisfied (33.9%) or very satisfied (49.8%) with life. The student population reported lower satisfaction (33.3% satisfied and 37.6% very satisfied). The dissatisfaction evaluated in the last two categories was slightly lower in employees with a 3.1% vs 4.7%. (See Table 3).

Table 3. *Levels of Life Satisfaction.*

Subjective level of well-being	Employees		Students	
	#	%	#	%
Extremely satisfied (very happy)	128	49,8	272	37,6
Satisfied	87	33,9	241	33,3
Slightly satisfied	21	8,2	128	17,7
Slightly low of the life satisfaction mean	13	5,1	48	6,6
Dissatisfied (unhappy)	5	1,9	24	3,3
Extremely dissatisfied	3	1,2	10	1,4

The bivariate analysis and administration of normality tests, found that none of the variables were normally distributed. Non-parametric tests were applied when comparing each item and sociodemographic characteristics. The results appear in Table 4. Strata and marital status were found to be the sociodemographic characteristics that showed statistically significant associations ($p<0.05$), with a higher number of items on the scale and with final satisfaction. No statistically significant differences in gender were found.

Table 4. *Life Satisfaction According to Sociodemographic Characteristics for Groups.*

Item Scale	Group Type Employee Students		Gender		Age		Marital Status		Stratum		Labor Affiliation	
	U^1	p	U^1	p	K^2	p	U^1	p	K^2	P	U^1	p
1	79110,500	,000*	85826,500	,609	12,611	,006*	56716,500	,001*	95877,500	,017*	7964,500	,140
2	88088,500	,188	86499,500	,753	3,906	,272	63964,500	,293	83406,500	,000*	9545,500	,900
3	86693,000	,092	85180,000	,480	2,799	,424	59973,000	,021*	95553,000	,013*	6671,500	,010*
4	76885,500	,000*	81127,000	,060	20,464	,000*	52018,000	,000*	89215,000	,000*	8416,000	,285
5	77566,500	,000*	85934,500	,642	15,253	,002*	56132,500	,001*	93927,500	,005*	6701,000	,013*
Total	78677,500	,000*	84551,500	,397	14,169	,003*	53346,000	,000*	87162,000	,000*	6648,000	,014*

1. Mann–Whitney U test

2. H Kruskal-Wallis

*Statistically significant association

In a separate analysis for employees, the socio-economic strata and the marital status had a statistically significant association p<0.05 with life satisfaction. Statistically significant association was found among students by genre and health affiliation p<0.05. (Table 5).

Table 5. *Sociodemographic Variables and Life Satisfaction by Group.*

Variable	Employees		Students	
	Chi ^{2}	p	Chi ^{2}	P
Gender	5,580	0,349	18,637	0,002*
Stratum	38,448	0,042*	25,686	0,424
Health affiliation	15,345	0,119	30,976	0,056*
Marital status	32,483	0,038*	20,115	0,451

*Statistically significant association

Table 6. *Analysis of Variance in the Population.*

| Item | Population | **ANOVA** | | | | |
		Sum of squares	gl	Mean Squared	F	Sig.
1. In most of the ways, my life approaches to my goal.	Between groups:	23,516	1	23,516	13,020	,000*
	Within groups	1766,447	978	1,806		
	Total	1789,963	979			
2. My living conditions are excellent.	Between groups:	,862	1	,862	,572	,450
	Within groups	1472,849	978	1,506		
	Total	1473,710	979			
3. I am satisfied with my life.	Between groups:	7,064	1	7,064	3,626	,057
	Within groups	1905,075	978	1,948		
	Total	1912,139	979			
4. So far I have achieved the important things I want in life.	Between groups:	32,101	1	32,101	15,682	,000*
	Within groups	2001,976	978	2,047		
	Total	2034,077	979			
5. If I had to live my life again, I would change almost nothing.	Between groups:	53,568	1	53,568	18,754	,000*
	Within groups	2793,488	978	2,856		
	Total	2847,056	979			
Total satisfaction	Between groups:	382,734	1	382,734	11,401	,001*
	Within groups	32831,486	978	33,570		
	Total	33214,220	979			

*Statistically significant association

In ANOVA's results, the statistical value of the Fisher (F) test was significantly different from 1 for all other items on the scale except for items 2 and 3. Statistically significant differences were found in the two study groups in the final satisfaction score. Therefore, the null-hypothesis of equality of means is rejected and the means being higher for the group of employees is highlighted.

Discussion

This research aims to highlight the characteristics related to life satisfaction in a university community among employees and students. Regarding socio-demographic characteristics, the age range of employees was between 20 and 67 years and the highest percentage were women. Research in Latin America within the context of the pandemic shows that the highest percentage of participants were women between 31 and 60 years old (Medina et al., 2021). Among the students, the highest percentage were women between 16 and 56 years old, with an average age of 21.8. These results are similar to the predictive capacity of self-esteem on life satisfaction from the cognitive component of subjective well-being in students. There, the female group had a high participation (72%) and a mean age of 21.62 years (Ruiz et al., 2018).

Regarding life satisfaction, descriptive analyses showed a similar average score for both groups. As some authors state, the challenge focuses on studying the university community for well-being, as opposed to the traditional approach which focused on analyzing discomfort through negative experiences (De Pablos et al., 2011).

In employees, the highest mean was for the category "I am satisfied with my life." This finding coincides with that reported by Moniz (2021). In that sense, the results of certain studies reported that the greater satisfaction with life, the greater the satisfaction with work; and although this second variable was not assessed in the present study, it should be a point of analysis for institutions of higher education (Pinto et al., 2017).

In the students, the category "The conditions of my life are excellent" presented the highest average, information that differs from what was reported in Peru, where it is stated that in the context of the pandemic, the students had to grow accustomed to being at home and receiving their training from there; which had a negative impact on their level of satisfaction (Acuña et al., 2021). The lowest mean for both groups was for item 5 (If I had to live my life again, I would change almost nothing), in this regard, other studies on the subject highlight that people adapt differently to adverse circumstances like those experienced during the pandemic, therefore, they manage their anxiety and stress according to their individual life experiences (López de la Llave et al., 2021).

The findings showed that 83.7% of employees felt between satisfied and very satisfied with life. With respect to life satisfaction, 75% of employees engaged in virtual activities during the pandemic felt either satisfied (30.4%) or very satisfied (46.4%) with life. Based on the above, it could be suggested that the employees in this study achieve the goals they set at a personal and work level according to

their priorities (Pavot & Diener, 1993). In contrast, what was reported by Reyes (2017) concludes that the perception of university employees regarding their satisfaction with life was represented at levels of dissatisfied (37.30%) and very dissatisfied (62.70%); while the levels of very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied were 0% (Pinto et al., 2017).

In the student population, regarding satisfaction with life, the report was lower compared to the employee group. In this same sense, a study carried out on intercultural students in Mexico reported that 83.1% of the participants showed positive levels of satisfaction (Núñez et al., 2021). In this regard, the results reported by Marques et al., (2018), in relation to university students, allude to the need to better understand the effect of values on satisfaction with life, to promote adaptability and success in personal career management. This aspect is confirmed by Moreno and Barragán (2018), who highlight how in the university context, generating cognitive and behavioral skills to strengthen satisfaction and improve academic performance is relevant.

In the bivariate analysis, stratum and marital status were statistically associated with a greater number of items on the scale and with final satisfaction. In contrast, in the study carried out by Ruiz et al. (2018) no sociodemographic variable significantly explained life satisfaction. No statistically significant differences were found by sex. This result concurs with the findings of Vásquez et al. (2013b).

The associations found have been explored in other studies, such as that of Reyes (2017), whose results in relation to marital status differ in their average scores in satisfaction with life; married people having statistically slightly greater satisfaction with life ($p<0.049$). Celio (2021) reported a low and positive statistical association ($p<0.05$, $r=0.323$) between satisfaction with life and personal fulfillment in his results. He also reports that 46.4% of employees feel very satisfied, 30.4% satisfied, 8.9% indifferent, 10.7% dissatisfied and 3.6% very dissatisfied with life. In contrast, differences were found according to sex and place of work (Celio, 2021). Likewise, in the work carried out by Sekban and İmamoğlu (2021), who studied life satisfaction and psychological well-being in young people from universities during the COVID-19 pandemic, statistical significance was found between these variables and gender, sleep routine, and immunity status ($p <0.001$).

In employees, socioeconomic status was associated with life satisfaction. This result coincides with what has been reported in other studies that show how the stratum has positive and statistically significant effects on life satisfaction, motivation, anxiety, and an increase in family problems (González, 2020; Salazar-Cantú et al., 2021). In this group, marital status also showed a statistical association with life satisfaction. In this regard, the study carried out by Alvarado-García (2021) highlights that having responsibilities in family life, such as caring for

children, can influence not only the state of mind, but also life dissatisfaction and dissatisfaction with work.

Statistically significant differences by sex were found with life satisfaction in the student population. In this same sense, in the work of Guerrero et al. (2022) significant differences were reported. They drew attention to how women tended to show greater satisfaction with life (Guerrero et al., 2022). In contrast, the work of Ocaña et al., (2022) reports how they found no differences by sex in the university population that participated in their study.

When performing the analysis of variance, differences in life satisfaction were found between the groups of employees and students. In this regard, in the study carried out by Lozano et al., (2020) similar results were reported in university students in the context of confinement. The mean for the life satisfaction items was higher in employees than in students, data that coincides with what was found by Celio (2021), who reports that the highest percentage of teachers were between satisfied and very satisfied with life.

Finally, based on the findings of this work, what was described by Escobar et al. is confirmed (2019). He highlights the importance of permanent work on life skills in the university context, an aspect that favors levels of resilience and contributes to improving health and well-being conditions.

Conclusions

Satisfaction with life in times of pandemic was different between employees and students. The former reported greater satisfaction, which shows the vulnerable conditions of the young population. Sociodemographic variables such as age, marital status, stratum, and social security affiliation regime showed statistically significant differences with different items of the scale and with final satisfaction, which suggests how different factors influence this variable. Therefore, it draws attention to the importance that these are taken into account when developing programs, given that these are related to work productivity and academic performance, as well as living conditions and interaction with other people.

The findings of this work should become input for higher education institutions to structure and strengthen multidisciplinary, intercultural, and inclusive work, aimed at improving mental health conditions in students and other members of the university community.

Acknowledgments

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Reflec tion

Crossing the Boundaries of the Capabilities Approach: Capabilities and Agency from a Collective and Relational Perspective*

⟦*English version*⟧

Cruzando las fronteras del Enfoque de Capacidades: capacidades y agencia desde una perspectiva colectiva y relacional

Ultrapassando os limites da Abordagem de Capacidade: capacidades e agência a partir de uma perspectiva coletiva e relacional

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Abstract

Objective: This study contemplates two fundamental concepts in the Capabilities Approach (CA) as proposed by Amartya Sen: "capabilities" and "agency." It does so by drawing on a documentary review and on the theoretical perspectives of various authors. **Methodology**: This qualitative research employs documentary review and theoretical-conceptual reflection to delve into CA principles and gain insights from other paradigms, thus transcending the confines of its conceptual framework. **Results**: The Capabilities Approach (CA) has revolutionized the understanding of human development and well-being, departing from traditional development theories. While this represents a significant advancement, further efforts are needed to develop a robust theory that addresses individuals and collectives on a human scale. First, the criticisms of the approach from various authors (some of whom accuse it of being individualistic) is considered. Next, conceptual proposals that emphasize the potential of the relational dimension within the concepts of "capabilities" and "agency" are explored, allowing for the expansion of CA boundaries. **Conclusions**: Despite the presenting ethical individualism, the Capabilities Approach cannot be characterized as individualistic from an ontological and methodological perspective. This condition allows the expansion of the conceptual foundation of the approach to encompass more relational and collective dimensions.

Keywords: Capabilities Approach; agency; collective capabilities; Amartya Sen; collectivity.

Resumen

Objetivo: reflexionar en torno a dos conceptos medulares en el Enfoque de Capacidades (EC) propuesto por Amartya Sen, 'capacidades' y 'agencia', a partir de la revisión documental y posiciones teóricas de diversos autores. **Metodología:** esta es una investigación cualitativa basada en la revisión documental y la reflexión teórica-conceptual, la cual permite profundizar en los postulados del EC y retroalimentarlos a partir de otros paradigmas que posibilitan cruzar las fronteras de sus nociones conceptuales. **Resultados**: el EC ha revolucionado la forma en que concebimos el desarrollo humano y el bienestar de las personas a partir de la ruptura con las teorías de desarrollo tradicionales. Si bien esto constituye un avance importante, se debe seguir trabajando por una teoría sólida que se ocupe de las personas a escala humana y colectiva. En un primer momento, se abordan las críticas que diversos autores le hacen al enfoque, los cuales lo acusan de individualista. Luego, se exploran algunas propuestas conceptuales que exaltan el potencial de la dimensión relacional en las nociones de

'capacidades' y 'agencia', lo cual posibilita ampliar el EC más allá de sus fronteras. **Conclusiones**: la principal conclusión es que, si bien el Enfoque de las Capacidades presenta un individualismo ético, no puede caracterizarse como individualista desde el punto de vista ontológico y metodológico. Esta condición permite ampliar la base conceptual del enfoque hacia dimensiones más relacionales y colectivas.

Palabras clave: Enfoque de Capacidades; agencia; capacidades colectivas; Amartya Sen; colectividad.

Resumo

Objetivo: refletir sobre dois conceitos centrais da Abordagem de Capacidades (AC) proposta por Amartya Sen, "capacidades" e "agência", com base em uma análise documental e nas posições teóricas de vários autores. **Metodologia**: trata-se de uma pesquisa qualitativa baseada em análise documental e reflexão teórico-conceitual, o que permite um estudo aprofundado dos postulados da AC e o feedback de outros paradigmas que possibilitam cruzar as fronteiras de suas noções conceituais. **Resultados**: a AC revolucionou a maneira como pensamos sobre o desenvolvimento humano e o bem-estar das pessoas, rompendo com as teorias tradicionais de desenvolvimento. Embora esse seja um importante passo à frente, é preciso trabalhar mais em uma teoria sólida que lide com as pessoas em uma escala humana e coletiva. Em primeiro lugar, abordamos as críticas à abordagem feitas por vários autores, que a acusam de ser individualista. Em seguida, são exploradas algumas propostas conceituais que exaltam o potencial da dimensão relacional nas noções de "capacidades" e "agência", o que torna possível estender a EC para além de seus limites. **Conclusões**: a principal conclusão é que, embora a Abordagem de Capacidades apresente um individualismo ético, ela não pode ser caracterizada como individualista do ponto de vista ontológico e metodológico. Essa condição permite que a base conceitual da abordagem seja ampliada para dimensões mais relacionais e coletivas.

Palavras-chave: Abordagem de capacidades; agência; capacidades coletivas; Amartya Sen; coletividade.

Introduction

Indian economist and philosopher Amartya Sen proposed the Capabilities Approach, which conceives of human development differently from utilitarian economics. It views development as the deprivation of basic freedoms and not merely the lack of income. From this perspective, the real freedoms and capabilities of each person matter more than measuring income, wealth, or capital accumulation. In other words, the Capabilities Approach is concerned the development on a human scale rather than a numerical one.

> Development has to be more concerted with enhancing the lives we live and the freedoms we enjoy. Expanding the freedoms that we have reason to value not only makes our lives richer and more unfettered, but also allow us to be fuller sociable persons, exercising our own volitions and interacting with —and influencing— the world in which we live. (Sen, 2000, p. 31).

This article is based on a documentary review that enabled identifying various conceptual contributions from a collective and relational dimension. The aim is to address the criticism of individualism often directed at the Capabilities Approach. To begin the reflection, the key central ideas of the approach, revolving around the notions of "capabilities" and "agency," are presented. According to Sen (1985), "capabilities" refer to the various combinations of functions that a person can achieve, expressing the agency to attain what is valued. Capability is, therefore, a type of freedom: the fundamental freedom to achieve various combinations of functions —or, in less formal terms, the freedom to attain different lifestyles— (Sen, 1985).

That freedom is to be able to do something, and in order to do "that something," the ability to function is required. As Delgado (2017) makes clear, "the difference between function and capability is assimilated to what is realized and what is effectively possible; to achievements and freedoms or valuable options from which one can choose" (p. 204). In this manner, the crucial factor is that individuals possess meaningful opportunities manifested in capabilities, enabling them to live the kind of life they value, do what they desire, and become what they aspire to be. Functions constitute the achievements, and capabilities are the abilities to attain them.

For Sen (2000), "individual freedom" is a valuable notion within the concept of "development" because it is related to evaluation and effectiveness. From a normative approach, evaluation examines the freedoms enjoyed by individuals, and effectiveness allows for evidencing the initiative of the individual who acts

and provokes changes according to his/her preferences, taking into account the conditions sponsored by the normative and institutional context (Carvajal, 2014, 2015). In this sense, institutions complement capabilities and agency by fostering individual freedoms, which, according to Sen (2000), should be a social commitment. With this in mind, the author proposes a relationship between the agent and institutions, where the latter motivate, in the best possible way, the strengthening of freedom of agency.

Sen supports his concept of "capability in freedom" as both a means and an end. In other words, freedom should enable action based on the real opportunities that individuals have in a heterogeneous society (Comim et al., 2008). In the words of the Nobel economics laureate, "encompasses both the processes that make freedom of action and decision possible and the actual opportunities that individuals have, given their personal and social circumstances" (Sen, 2000, p. 55). The author assumes the conception of positive freedom and rejects the idea that all human beings are rational, free, and equal beings (Henríquez, 2013). Positive freedom indicates the elements that make its execution possible and guarantees real opportunities in accessing it (Carvajal, 2016).

Based on Sen's theory, Nussbaum (2012) has established a minimum of 10 capabilities for people to lead humanly dignified lives (Di Tullio, 2013). Sen (2004), for his part, has openly refused to endorse any version of basic or core capabilities as an important goal for the entire world population, connected to the very idea of social justice. "I have nothing against lists of capabilities, but I do rise up against a large, closed, and complete mausoleum of an exclusive list of capabilities" (Sen, 2004, p. 80). The author argues that people should be allowed to choose these matters on their own; otherwise, democracy would be obstructed by endorsing a set of fundamental entitlements. Each country and/or region should be in charge of choosing the minimums they consider valuable for living a good life. It must be taken into account that not all countries and cultures value the same things in the same way.

Now, in the Capability Approach proposed by Sen, the notion of "agency" has proven to be convenient. It is defined as the freedom enjoyed by the individual to act in accordance with his or her evaluative conception of what is good and valuable in life. This generates changes in the world in accordance with those individual evaluations (Sen, 1992). This notion implies the existence of individual intentionality and action based on desires, goals, or objectives that have been set; in other words, the action depends on preconceived intentionality. Thus, the agent carries out an action and, at the same time, is the judge of it (García, 2014), since only he or she can evaluate the success of the objective according to what he or she considers valuable.

"Agency" or "freedom of agency" is a notion that goes beyond welfare and other finite objectives. The Senian agency is broader; it is not limited to the achievement of a particular objective. There is, then, an open conditionality that is characteristic of freedom of agency and that is proposed in a transversal manner for the achievement of, among other things, a state of well-being and happiness (Sen, 2004).

Amartya Sen believes that human agency is paramount in breaking the social, political, and economic inequality gaps faced by many countries around the world. In *Development and Freedom* (Sen, 2000), the author confronts one of the most enduring inequalities in human history: sexual inequality. In light of this, Sen delves into the study of women's agency and how it has been important for the reconfiguration of traditional regimes that deny or hide female agency. The denial of female agency, then, is seen as a lack of recognition of the freedoms that make a woman an individual agent responsible for bringing about change. In their studies on women in India, Nussbaum (2012) and Sen (2000) show that lack of opportunities and/or combined capabilities are the reasons why women have been deprived of freedom of well-being and agency as well as capabilities.

Therefore, "human agency" is one of the pillar concepts in Amartya Sen's work because it not only helps to understand the world, but also how it is possible to transform it in such a way that freedoms are not a privilege for some but for all. Likewise, the commitment to the recognition of agency helps to reduce inequality gaps and drives toward a world with social justice, oriented toward the universality of individual agency freedom (Pereira, 2016; Pinzón, 2017).

The concepts of "agency" and "capabilities" have been important in CA, which has led authors from the social and economic sciences to pay attention to their analytical development while contributing in their construction. The authors of this article attempt to gather insights by CA scholars, in the interest of an interdisciplinary academic dialogue with a view to exploring other perspectives that allow the understanding of human action. In view of this, it was necessary to deepen the postulates of the CA by emphasizing two specific concepts, namely, "capabilities" and "agency."

This concern also arises from multiple discussions among researchers who participated in the "Weaving political capabilities for transitions in territories" project, which is focused on the actions and capabilities of communities that have been affected by the armed conflict in Colombia as they strive to heal and overcome. This led to the initiation of a systematic review, which was conducted by consulting databases such as Jstor, Redalyc, Scielo, Redib, EBSCO, Web of Science and Scopus. With the exception of classic works, the idea was to search for publications no older than 20 years. The descriptors for the search were: agency, freedom of agency, capabilities, Capabilities Approach, collective capabilities and

political capabilities. From this research, 89 articles and books were obtained and subsequently reviewed, which were organized in the Mendeley digital library. An analytical file was prepared for each of these documents and the most significant ones were coded in the ATLAS.ti qualitative analysis program.

From the bibliographic review, the need to analyze the relational or communitarian orientation of CA became evident. In fact, the question that guided this reflection was: does the Capabilities Approach respond to an individualistic or a communitarian approach? The information related to this question was analyzed and systematized, resulting in research that culminates in this conceptual-reflective article.

After this introduction, a discussion on the criticism of individualism present in the CA follows. Subsequently, the article focuses on other analytical perspectives that propose categories that do not invoke the individual subject but rather the relational and collective subjects. Next, the concept of 'agency' as seen from the theories that announce its relational character is explored. Finally, the conclusions drawn from this documentary research are presented.

Criticisms of the Capability Approach from a relational point of view

According to Delgado (2017), the criticisms of CA proposed by Amartya Sen can be summarized as: a) the markedly individualistic orientation; b) the lack of a detailed description of all capabilities; c) the relationship between capabilities and rights is neither adequate nor relevant; d) it assumes capability only as opportunity; and e) it presents difficulties in measuring capabilities. For the purposes of this reflection, special attention will be given to the individualistic character and the conception of capacity as an opportunity of the approach.

Robeyns (2005), an outstanding disciple of Sen, recognizes that CA is based on ethical individualism, since individuals and only individuals are considered to be the ultimate units of moral concern. The starting point is the understanding of functions and capabilities as properties of specific individuals. The approach could not be qualified as individualistic from an ontological (there are only individual persons) or methodological point of view (everything is explained in reference to persons considered individually) (Colmenarejo, 2016). This approach is shared by Gore (1997) and Dubois (2007) when they state that it is necessary to differentiate ontological and methodological individualism from ethical individualism, where the environment, processes and social interactions are ignored. It would be a mistake to confuse the latter (ethical individualism) with

methodological individualism, because unlike the former, it acknowledges that individual choices and actions are not separate from society. This perspective is concerned with the ways in which social influence affects what individuals value (Henriquez, 2013).

Robeyns (2005) considers that the ethical individualism characteristic of the Capabilities Approach does not imply an incompatibility with social dimensions, relationships or the insertion of people in society. For her, the approach, at least theoretically, takes into account social relations, constraints and opportunities that social structures represent for individuals. The approach seeks a balance between the social and individual condition of the person. In the words of Sen (2010):

> Individual freedom is essentially a social product, and there is a two-way relationship between 1) social mechanisms to expand individual freedoms and 2) the use of individual freedoms not only to enhance their respective lives but also to make social mechanisms better and more effective. (p. 49).

As can be seen in Sen's words, the approach acknowledges the impact of the social environment and social relations defining capabilities based on public debate; however, it considers it important to focus on individuals. "We are individual beings, we have different interests, values and judgments. One must start from individuals to arrive at social judgments, at judgments about social well-being or about the freedom offered by a society" (Sen, 2010, p. 4). In the words of De Munck (2014), the approach recognizes the need to contemplate the social genesis for understanding the process of capability formation.

This qualification does not imply denying social contents or collective concerns in the approach, but emphasizing that the evaluation of collective or group contents is not among its priorities. Neither does it seek to discuss the social concern of Sen, who has always shown a clear commitment to the vision of the relationship between individual freedom and social agreements, as acknowledge by his critics (Prendergast, 2005).

Gore (1997) bases his criticism of the approach on the argument that, by focusing on individual freedoms, it narrows the evaluation to what is good for individuals, for each one separately, but lacks an evaluation of well-being as a collective category. In other words, consciousness of freedom for Sen is consciousness of oneself as a unique person acting in the world. This interaction as a dominant value, according to Dubois (2007), could deepen the individualistic content of the approach and simplify the analysis of social inequalities. In other words, there is a risk of not being able to evaluate well-being as a collective category (Gore, 1997).

> This is the major limitation: not recognizing that there are other objects of value for people, for the quality of their individual lives, but which are the property of society; which are not and cannot be found in the sphere of each person and which, nevertheless, must be included in the valuation of justice and individual well-being. (Dubois, 2007, p. 55).

Sen recognizes the limits of the approach and the need to broaden the view, however, he does not develop an alternative in an exhaustive manner. In response to this, authors affiliated with the communitarian stream in political philosophy, such as Gore (1997), Evans (2002), Dubois (2007, 2014), Reyes (2008), and Jiménez (2016), have suggested that Sen's theory fails to completely dissociate itself from ethical individualism, since the spheres of social interaction have a merely instrumental importance that excludes the relational aspect in the measurement of well-being. Therefore, it should be expanded to include group environments and collective spaces as inherent in the formation of subjects, and central in correcting unjust social structures. From this perspective, a merely instrumental conception of groups and social environments in evaluative terms is not possible, so the inclusion of "agreements, institutions and social assets is proposed as a substantial part of human development" (Dubois, 2007, p. 38).

Another criticism made of the Capabilities Approach is supported by the conception of "capability as opportunity" as it does not incorporate the role of the social environment, social structures, and power dynamics in their formation (Otano, 2015, 2016, Jiménez, 2016). These, according to Cejudo (2007), are part of the historical process of achieving social well-being. Van Parijs (1996) states that "a society whose members are truly free requires freedom to consist of security, self-ownership and opportunity, and not just the latter" (p. 42).

CA allows accounting for the impact of social institutions on individuals' real opportunities, but leaves out the analysis of social forces and the interactive role of human beings in the production of society. That is to say, it does not allow accounting for the dialogical relationship of individuals, social environments and social structures in the process of reproduction.

By giving lower priority to the processes of production and reproduction of social order, there is a risk of overlooking the power relations and struggles that shape the socio-institutional contexts, wherein the scope and meaning of freedom are determined (Deneulin & McGregor, 2010).

From another perspective, Ortner (2016) criticizes Sen's Capability Approach focusing on the concept of "individual agency." The author argues that this concept refers to deep ethnocentrisms, as it prioritizes individuals over contexts and is grounded in Western ideas. She also posits that an overemphasis on individual agency simplifies the analysis of the impact that social and cultural forces

have on history, leading to the rejection of the pulse of collective "forces." The relationship between intentions and outcomes is often overlooked, particularly in denying the significance of unintended consequences inherent in all historical processes.

In summary, the Capability Approach (CA) encompasses two major criticisms. The first criticism asserts that the CA does not sufficiently integrate the role of the social environment, social structures, and power dynamics in the development of capabilities, which are understood in terms of opportunities. The second criticism accuses CA of ethical individualism and neglect in considering collective capabilities in the measurement of well-being. In this view, the approach overlooks the fundamental role of social interactions, collective work, culture, history, and commonality in the creation of capabilities. The authors of this paper acknowledge both criticisms and recognize the contributions of CA in fostering a conception of human development rooted in positive freedom and the real opportunity to choose a life deemed valuable. However, they also admit the necessity of broadening the theoretical foundations to transcend the boundaries of the approach and achieve an interdisciplinary dialogue that contributes to both social and economic theory. The criticisms of the Capability Approach support the identification of conceptual contributions from a relational standpoint to complement the CA proposal.

Proposals to Broaden the Capability Approach

Public Goods, Irreducibly Social Goods, and Structures of Living Together

The literature review revealed that various authors, adopting a communitarian and relational perspective, have ventured to propose concepts that may enhance the Capability Approach. This section outlines concepts such as "public goods," "irreducibly social goods," and "structures of living together," considering that they provide elements to conceive CA beyond their notions.

According to Dubois (2007), the notion of "public good" refers to a category of collective goods that are essential for understanding individual human well-being. "The extent to which a good is perceived as 'public' does not depend as much on its inherent characteristics as on prevailing social values within a given society" (Deneulin & Townsend, 2006, p. 23) The priorities and values inherent in each society are pivotal in determining the notion of a public good. This notion is not merely viewed instrumentally about individual welfare; rather, it is intrinsically desirable for the well-being of the community and remains

independent of an individual's welfare status. Examples of public goods include traditions and modes of celebration.

Additionally, Gore (1997), building on Taylor's framework, establishes a connection between irreducibly social goods and human development, a notion subsequently explored by Deneulin (2006). Gore considers that irreducibly social goods are not adequately considered in Sen's Capability Approach. "They are regarded as constituents of individual well-being, but are not recognized as collective goods worthy of evaluation without reference to their impacts on individuals" (Deneulin, 2006, p. 55).

> Irreducibly social goods are items of value that resist reduction to a set of acts, choices or predicates, they cannot be divided into isolated components. In other words, they cannot be explained in terms of individual characteristics, nor can they be fragmented into a sequence of events occurring at an individual level. Irreducibly social goods transcend individuals, yet their existence is contingent upon being assumed or adopted by individuals. (Dubois, 2007, p. 54).

Irreducibly social goods form the foundational basis for the creation and choice of capabilities representing real opportunities for action. From this perspective, benefits arise from collective action, and an exclusively instrumental conception, as proposed by Sen in terms of evaluation, is not feasible. Gore's proposal constitues a significant contribution to the integration of the Capability Approach into the systems of moral norms —both formal and informal, explicit and tacit— which define the legitimacy of actions and normative sanctions; the interpretative schemes, modes of discourse, and government, state-centric, and informal. These define the systems of power relations through which things are accomplished. According to Reyes (2008), "normative, interpretative, and power systems constitute the core contexts that demarcate and enable human activity. Simultaneously, they are shaped through that activity" (p. 143). Irreducibly social goods are the result of historical struggles, collective constructions, and community welfare valuations rooted in traditions and values.

Deneulin (2008) introduces the notion of structures of living together as a conceptual category originally from Ricoeur of structures of living together. This underscores that the subject of human development is not solely the isolated individual nor a collective entity; instead, both co-constitute each other. Structures of living together are based on Ricoeur's notion of "institution," understood as "structures that belong to a particular historical community, which provide the conditions for individual lives to flourish, and which are irreducible to interpersonal relations, and yet bound up with these" (Deneulin, 2008, p. 110). According to Dubois (2007), structures of living together are proposed to

designate collective goods and are closely related to irreducibly social goods. This concept reflects the idea that these structures emerge from the fact that people live together, constituting the real condition under which human lives can develop.

Before becoming an agent endowed with the capacity to make autonomous decisions, individuals must undergo development with the assistance of a community, and the establishment of interpersonal relations. The community precedes individuals. This is what imparts meaning to the lives of its members and provides them with identity. Human beings achieve their moral development, identity, and the meaning of their lives only through their connection with the community (Deneulin, 2008, p. 120).

Structures of living together exhibit core features to overcome the individualism and collectivism dichotomy in the Capability Approach: a) what is considered meaningful and valuable to be chosen can only be understood within the context of community and history; b) irreducibility to interpersonal relations; c) the explanation of success or failure of countries to foster capabilities that individuals choose and value; d) help to understand how the influences of what is considered valuable may reflect the interests of those with greater economic and political power.

Public goods, irreducibly social goods, and structures of living together share similar approaches. All three concepts seek to integrate the role of the social environment, social structures, and power dynamics in the creation and evaluation of capabilities. The aim is to illustrate that individuals are not passive agents who merely respond to offered opportunities; rather, they tailor opportunities and values that have become socially and institutionally legitimized.

Public goods, irreducibly social goods, and structures of living together are categories that encompass the logic of life as the way people organize themselves in a world that is inherently interrelational. Public goods include the social values that outline what qualifies as public good and what does not. For their part, irreducibly social goods transcend individuals, although they cannot exist without being influenced by them. In any case, the raison d'être of irreducibly social goods has a social, collective, and contextual explanation. Finally, structures of living together acknowledge the structural conditions under which individuals and communities develop. This acknowledgement is crucial for the cultural definition of collective values, which in turn, determines the scope of the kind of life individuals aspire to.

Collective Capabilities

The second major criticism of the Capability Approach pertains to accusations of strong notions of ethical individualism. Therefore, the theoretical assumptions asserting the significance of group capabilities and collective capabilities propose that these notions should be considered when theorizing and implementing instruments to measure human well-being.

Stewart (2005) emphasizes that group membership, directly and indirectly, affects people's well-being; he distinguishes, however, between the impact of primary or inherent groups in the development of a human being's life and voluntary participation in a group or collective setting. The existence of a group significantly impacts individual capabilities and, especially, in terms of well-being, whether directly or indirectly. In other words, group affiliation affects well-being, and such effects can be expressed in capability terms.

The affiliation to a community means a capacity of being part of, as it implies a consciousness as being related to other people and, in general, with the social world. According to Nelson (2004), "to belong to something larger and interdependent makes sense to existence in the world" (p. 314). Dubois (2007) states that membership should be taken into account in CA along with freedom as they are complementary. Membership has two functions: to make people feel more than themselves, and to enable them to undertake collective commitments. It should have a more explicit development in the approach, thus to understand the motivations of functions in the family within the society or in any type of collectivity.

Hence the need to include collective capacities and collective/relational spaces in the measurement of well-being. Ibrahim (2006) concerned about the need for a new theoretical-epistemological framework that allows the transition from categories such as "individual agency," "individual freedom" and "individual capacity," to wider and potential categories; "as a collective agency," "collective freedom," and "collective capacities." The expansion of the conceptual repertoire responds to the following reasons:

"Firstly, agency acts are mainly affected by prevailing community values and social structures" (Evans, 2002, p. 5). Secondly, the actors are built and make structures. Individual agency leads to change not only by individual performance, but by collective action; both formally and informally (Deneulin & Stewart, 2001, p. 16-17). Thirdly, in an individual agency a person individually pursues her or his own perception of good, "through acts of collective agency, individuals can pursue their perception of good, collectively, by connecting or participating in a group with similar goals" (Ibrahim, 2006, p. 405).

Collective agency calls for an expansion of human freedoms and capabilities, especially in those poor populations that seek to act and transform their environment. Thus, it is no longer a mere aggregation of individual capabilities, but they have their own and differentiated entity. According to Ibrahim (2006), what differentiates collective from individual capacities is that they are expressed only through collective action, and the fact of being collectives can benefit the results of action and not just the individual ones.

Collective capabilities are generated by the commitment with collective action, with social networks to which one belongs; it contributes to building life that is considered valuable (Otano, 2016). Ibrahim (2006) highlights the importance of collective capacity for poor communities, because their opportunities for access to financial, physical, and human capital are limited, and these communities turn to collective action to try to overcome this deficit in the name of group well-being.

Baser and Morgan (2008) define collective capacity as the collective ability or aptitude of an organization to perform a particular function or process inside or outside the system. As Evans (2002) stated:

> My ability to choose the life that I value often depends on my ability to act with others who value similar aspects. The ability to choose (and act) in itself can be a collective capacity rather than an individual capacity. (p. 121).

Reyes (2008) proposes communities of meaning as collective capacities that arise from voluntary associations composed and organized by individuals and "modify values, beliefs, goals, or priorities of an individual, i.e. conception of good" (p. 151). Participation in a community of meaning has consequences in the process of building individuals' identity, as well as the conception of good that develops thanks to the capacity for reflection and self-understanding. This development involves the individual's freedom of agency and it can therefore be characterized as a capacity under Sen's parameters. In other words, according to Reyes (2008), the establishment of a community of meanings has direct effects on capabilities as real opportunities, since the enlargement of the set of what is desirable generates enlarged possible options. To reach new goals and values can mean developing freedom of agency to other people's welfare achievements, and to increase the capacity for reflection that ultimately allows a more careful analysis of the good and what is considered valuable.

The outlined collective capacity proposals refer to organized communities, people take on a commitment that is directed toward the kind of life they value. Freedom, affiliation and values, beliefs, purposes, or priorities of the person are involved and expressed as a consequence to the collectivities; it generates

new reflections and conceptions that lead development of collective capacities. Collective capacities are not antagonistic to individual capacities; they recognize history, are contextual, are given within social structures, and collective agency processes are key in their constitution.

The Concept of "Agency" from a Relational Dimension

From this review, it is considered that, as the concept of "capacities" can be expanded to integrate a more collective and relational dimension, the notion of "agency" can as well. Gangas (2016), for example, considers that with Sen this is not marked by an individualist conception. It allows a broader conceptual transition, the individual is not the only object of study but also the actions of groups or collectives. However, the concept of "agency" has been the theme of multiple analyses by authors who share Amartya Sen's presumption, such as Deneulin's, and others who differ themselves more like those proposed by Butler, Mahmood, and Ortner. In order to problematize the concept, some analytical perspectives are exposed although they are heterogeneous and not incompatible among them.

Deneulin (2008) proposes the notion of "socio-historical agency" as a category concerned with ways of living in community. From this perspective, the agency is located in a community structure in a specific historical context. There is no agency without a collective structure that has a social and narrative framework that governs human action in a given context.

To focus on the individual agency without confronting it with the limitations and possibilities offered by its historical reality, leads to a naive view of life; as if the achievement of well-being was a personal adventure that depends on each one to initiate correct and necessary actions, without taking into account the particular structures of "live together" that built it.

It is possible to frame Deneulin and Gore's theoretical proposals within a political-relational interpretation of CA centered on its failures; it refers to social structures (institutions, systems of moral, interpretative, and normative norms), where the common understanding of economic, political, social conditions, and shared identity frames human action from socio-historical agency and, therefore, must be included in measuring well-being to have a comprehensive understanding of it.

Butler (2001) as Foucault, considers the idea that the individual is formed by power while enabling it. It means, power makes the invocation of the individual linked to power possible, it is constant becoming subordinate and, therefore, becoming a subject (Butler, 2001). This is what subjection or subjectivation is

about. However, subjection does not invalidate power,[1] but it makes it possible; just as it makes the individual itself possible.

Butler (2001) means that the individual is not only a production of power, but is also an individual of power; an agent of power that can even resist the power that created it, minimizing power through power. In Butler (1997), the agency capacity "is not a property of the individual, a will or an inherent freedom but an effect of power" (p. 228). Thus, agency arises into subordination or subjection, in the process of becoming an individual that is in a chain of social relations of power.

Butler and Athanasiou (2017) argue that individuals are produced from the process of subjectivation, as well as that they are also individual-disposed. According to the authors, "depossession" has two meanings. The first considers deprivation as a condition in which individuals are deprived (of land, a home, livelihoods, among others) and raped.[2] On the other hand, depossession refers to the interdependent and relational life of human beings. (Butler & Athanasiou, 2017; Cano, 2017). In this way, "depossession" is a term that marks the boundary of human self-sufficiency, and establishes individuals as interdependent and vulnerable beings, thus they need co-existence. While deprivation implies the capacity for social relationships and links, it also refers to structural dependence on social norms that are not chosen or controlled by individuals (Butler & Athanasiou, 2017, p. 117). This is also important because it is an approach that marks a double dependency that ends up determining the possible subjects and their agency frameworks. In the social, institutional, and linguistic contexts, therefore, understanding the frames of reference of social, political, and performative action is important (Castillo, 2012).

In a similar way to Butler, the anthropologist Saba Mahmood (2019) takes refuge in the approaches on the constitution of the subject proposed by Michel Foucault. Mahmood shares the idea that the subject is a product of the power relations that subordinate him/her, while making his/her existence possible. However, Mahmood criticizes Butler for considering social agency as synonymous with resistance to power. The Pakistani author, instead of focusing on resistance, is interested, rather, in the capacity for action that certain specific relations of subordination create and make possible. It does not focus solely on the subversion of hegemonic norms, but rather on seeing other possible currents that can take social action in the midst of situations of subjection.

Now, continuing with his conception of "agency," Mahmood argues that social agency requires docile subjects. With the term "docility," the author

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4 "Power" as the possible agency of the individual, or also as potential agency.

5 The authors oppose this type of dispossession because it is both forced and privative.

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does not want to suggest an abandonment or absence of agency but, rather, an acquisition of skills necessary for social agency. For example, social agency as the capacity to "be taught," which implies a condition of "being opened to being taught" (Mahmood, 2019, p. 11). The author makes her main argument about agency known in the following paragraph:

> In a nutshell, my argument is this: if the capacity to effect change in the world and in oneself is historically and culturally specific (both in terms of what "change" means and the capacity by which it is effected), then its meaning and sense cannot be fixed a priori, but must emerge from the analysis of the particular networks of concepts that enable specific modes of being, responsibility, and effectiveness. Seen in this way, what could seemingly be a case of deplorable passivity and docility, from a progressive point of view, may very well be a form of social agency, which must be understood in the context of discourses and structures of subordination that create the conditions of their representation. In this sense, the capacity for social agency is involved not only in those acts that produce (progressive) change but also in those whose objective is continuity, stasis and stability. (p. 13).

In the same vein as Mahmood, anthropologist Sherry Ortner (2016) considers agency not only as resistance or opposition to regimes of truth, but also as intentionality. Agency as intentionality refers to actions that pursue defined desires, goals and projects, both individual and collective (Ortner, 2016; Mora, 2008). For Ortner, agency is always culturally and historically constructed (while being strongly linked to power and inequalities).

This means that the form of the agency depends on the place and time in which it is located. This type of agency is called "project agency," that is, when life is socially organized in terms of culturally constituted projects that provide meaning and purpose. Individuals seek to achieve an objective that they consider valuable in their own framework and with their own categories of value, around a local logic of the good and the desirable (Ortner, 2016).

For his part, Ibrahim (2006) also prioritizes what he calls "collective agency," which invokes a relational action that affects an entire community structure. If a community shares a territory and also social rules and representations, then collective agency is, on the one hand, essential to maintaining the structure, and, on the other hand, to proposing agreements, goals, projects, objectives, customary and formal rules, among other things, in the name of the common good.

The agency invoked by a community is especially beneficial in precarious contexts where it is difficult to achieve individual objectives (Cota, 2019; Álvarez & Sebastini, 2019; García et al., 2018). Vulnerable agency is possible if the

approaches of Butler (1997; 2001; 2017) and Mahmood (2019) are taken into account, which account for the existence of an agency outside of power and scarcity. Precariousness, while generating discomfort, enables an agency from vulnerability that is not limited to resisting, but also to building other paths in the name of a better well-being, that are possible thanks to the same agency (Gandarias, 2019; Álvarez & Sebastiani, 2019; Santacruz, 2019).

In the same logic as some ideas presented above, relational sociology conceptualizes "agency" as an interrelational and interdependent phenomenon (Burkitt, 2016; López, 2004). Understanding agency in this way allows distancing from individualism and the autonomous subject acting on its own account. Agency cannot be individual and possessed by a reflective and autonomous subject, but rather emerges where, precisely, this autonomous subject ends. The capacity for action is possible because there are other interactants who are located in the same space-time, and who build joint actions through relational ties such as family, work groups, organizations, among others. A solo agent never faces a social structure, whereas a collectivity or group does (Burkitt, 2016).

Conclusions

The Capabilities Approach proposed by Amartya Sen represents an important advance in the conception of "human development." The latter is understood as the overcoming of basic deprivations and freedoms. At the same time, this notion goes beyond the understanding of traditional economic paradigms that define development in quantitative terms. Thus, the approach does not ask questions such as how much wealth does a country have? But is interested in questions regarding what people are capable of being and doing. That is, the real capabilities and freedoms to enjoying a full and dignified life. Capacities, understood as the real opportunities that individuals have to lead the type of life they value, have a marked evaluative emphasis where the State is a fundamental actor for the guarantee of fundamental freedoms.

The CA represents an incomplete theoretical-methodological proposal that has been the subject of two fundamental criticisms. The first has to do with the marked individualistic approach and an informational base restricted to the evaluation of well-being at the level of individual agency, therefore, a new epistemological theoretical framework is necessary that allows the transition of categories, such as individual agency, individual freedom, and individual capacity, to broader and more potential ones, as collective agency, collective freedom and collective capabilities. The second criticism comes from some authors affiliated

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with the communitarian current. These authors pay special attention to the omission of social processes, institutional agreements and power structures as constitutive parts of human development.

Different theoretical proposals emerge from the communitarian current, which seek to complement the CA from the relational field and respond to the shortcoming from the approach to social structures, institutions, and the inclusion of systems of moral and interpretive norms; components that allow a comprehensive understanding of human well-being. Categories emerge such as Irreducibly Social Goods (ISG), Structures of Cohabitation, and Socio-Historical Agency, all aimed at understanding economic, political, social, cultural, historical, institutional and identity conditions.

The proposal to include the category of collective capabilities in the measurement of well-being is also strongly identified, which are developed within the framework of power relations and are understood as those that arise from collective or organizational processes, where common objectives that are in a constant reflective process coexist.

Conversely, the concept of "agency" has also been essential for the theoretical formulations of the CA. However, the conceptual notion of "Senian agency," although valuable, is limited and has been criticized for its individualistic character. Thus, to expand the referential framework of this category, contributions from the theory of practice (Ortner, 2016), post-structuralist ideas such as those of Judith Butler and Saba Mahmood, and insights from relational sociology were considered valuable.

The theory of practice assumes the importance of agency in practical and intentional terms, as well as its individual and collective character. Furthermore, it is important to note the existence of the determination of the socio-cultural and historical context, where the repertoire of a situated agency is developed, which, in turn, is found in a network of power relationships. Precisely, this last point constitutes a transversal axis in the constitution and development of the vulnerable, dispossessed, interdependent and linguistic-semantic subject that some post-structuralist authors mention. From this current of thought, "power" is a core notion to understanding the agency or power of subjects that is at a crossroads that represses it while enabling it; or, in other words, it is found in the paradox of subjectivation. Finally, relational sociology starts from the relational and interdependent agency that is found within a group and collective structure.

The previous theoretical postulates of agency, which are not specific to the CA, are essential if we want to complement and nourish the same approach in conjunction with other proposals, such as the communitarian one, that seek the inclusion of socio-historical agency, social structures, social institutions,

and collective capabilities, that complement the approach with other disciplines concerned with the theoretical development of human action.

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Re
search

Bonding Profile of Coffee Harvesters in the Municipality of Circasia (Quindío)*

[English version]

Perfil vincular de los recolectores de café del municipio de Circasia (Quindío)

Perfil dos colhedores de café no município de Circasia (Quindío)

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Abstract

Objective: The objective of this research was to determine the bonding profile of a sample of coffee harvesters in the municipality of Circasia, Quindío. **Methodology**: The

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design was based on a quantitative approach, descriptive in nature, and exploratory in scope. Fifty coffee harvesters were interviewed through non-probabilistic purposive sampling. The information was collected using The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale, Social Well-Being Scale, Rootedness to Place Scale, and Perceived Social Support Scale. **Results**: It was found that harvesters show low percentiles in social contribution and cultural rootedness. Likewise, some associations between variables were found, among which the association between the perception of familial relationships and social acceptance ($X^2 = 10.409$; P = 0.03), and also between relationships with coworkers and cultural rootedness ($X^2 = 12.041$; P = 0.00). The study variables were correlated; most correlations are reported between the dimensions of perceived social support and self-concept. **Conclusions**: It is concluded that the Bonding profile corresponding to the indicated sample is constituted on the basis of the perception of social and familial support, and that these are related to the capacity for rootedness and self-concept.

Keywords: Coffee industry; labor profile; family; social support; self-concept.

Resumen

Objetivo: el objetivo en esta investigación fue determinar el perfil vincular de una muestra de recolectores de café del municipio de Circasia (Quindío). **Metodología**: el diseño se basó en el enfoque cuantitativo, de carácter descriptivo y de alcance exploratorio. Mediante un muestreo no probabilístico de tipo intencional, se entrevistaron 50 recolectores de café. Se usó la escala de autoconcepto de Tennessee, Escala de bienestar social, Escala de arraigo al lugar y Escala de apoyo social percibido de familiares. **Resultados**: se encontró que los recolectores manifiestan percentiles bajos en la contribución social y el arraigo cultural. Asimismo, se hallaron algunas asociaciones entre variables; dentro de las que destacan la asociación entre la percepción de relaciones de familiares y la aceptación social ($X^2 = 10.409$; P = 0.03), y relaciones con compañeros de trabajo con arraigo cultural ($X^2 = 12.041$; P = 0.00). Se correlacionaron las variables de estudio; la mayoría de las correlaciones se reportan entre las dimensiones de la percepción del apoyo social y el autoconcepto. **Conclusiones**: se concluye que el perfil vincular que corresponde a la muestra señalada se constituye a partir de la percepción del apoyo social y familiar, y que estos se relacionan con la capacidad de arraigo y el autoconcepto.

Palabras clave: Industria del café; perfil laboral; familia; apoyo social; autoconcepto.

Resumo

Objetivo: o objetivo desta pesquisa foi determinar o perfil relacional de uma amostra de colhedores de café no município de Circasia (Quindío). **Metodologia**: o delineamento foi baseado em uma abordagem quantitativa, descritiva e exploratória. Utilizando uma amostragem não probabilística e intencional, foram entrevistados 50 colhedores de café. Foram utilizadas a Escala de Autoconceito de Tennessee, a Escala de Bem-Estar Social, a Escala de Enraizamento no Lugar e a Escala de Apoio Social Percebido dos Parentes. **Resultados**: verificou-se que os catadores apresentam baixos percentis em contribuição social e enraizamento cultural. Foram também encontradas algumas associações entre variáveis, entre as quais a associação entre a perceção das relações familiares e a aceitação social (X^2 = 10,409; P = 0,03), e as relações com colegas de trabalho culturalmente embebidos (X^2 = 12,041; P = 0,00). As variáveis do estudo foram correlacionadas; a maioria das correlações é relatada entre as dimensões de suporte social percebido e autoconceito. **Conclusões**: conclui-se que o perfil relacional correspondente à amostra indicada é constituído com base na perceção de suporte social e familiar, e que estes estão relacionados com a capacidade de enraizamento e autoconceito.

Palavras-chave: Indústria do café; perfil profissional; família; apoio social; autoconceito.

Introduction

Coffee is a product of national and international demand. Countries such as Brazil, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Colombia comprise more than half of international market in coffee production (Figueroa et al., 2019). During the late twentieth century, until the beginning of the millennium, coffee was a key factor in the Colombian economy. Specifically, Coffee culture is one of the characteristic economic sectors of the so-called "Colombian coffee triangle region," to the point that it is part of the traditions and cultures of this region (Cataño, 2012).

However, the organization and continuity of coffee production are threatened. Aguilar (2003) warns that the crisis in the production of coffee directly affects the development of regions that once depended on the coffee industry, such as the aforementioned Coffee Triangle in Colombia, formed by the departments of Caldas, Quindío, and Risaralda. A way to measure the impact of the crisis is the number of planted hectares. According to data from the *National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia* (2020), since 2002 there has been a downward trend at the national level. In the year 2010 914,400 hectares were planted, in 2019, there were 853,700.

This phenomenon can be understood as a response to an international trend, according to authors such as Baker (2010), Cano et al. (2012), and Esguerra and McAllister (2013). Studies conducted from approximately 1920, conclude that the coffee industry is very volatile and depends on many factors, among which are climate change and economic fluctuations. In the Colombian case, according to Turbay et al. (2014), climate change does indeed operate as a determining factor in coffee production. However, economic and political factors are also involved. Ocampo and Alvarez (2017) point out that "the increase in the production price, labor shortage and price volatility" (p. 140) are other relevant elements to consider.

According to Aguilar (2003), the specific problem regarding coffee production lies in its production cost and the overproduction occurred in 1990 decade. Regardless of the reasons for the coffee production crisis, there is an impact on the economy and regional development, as well as on communities that depend on coffee culture.

As an industry, coffee is composed of several production segments: planting, harvesting, production, and commercialization, among others. In each of these segments, there are people, communities, regions, and institutions that are economically dependent on the industrial process. For this reason, focusing studies on the communities linked to each of these segments can constitute a relevant perspective. These perspectives contribute to the understanding of the

phenomena associated with coffee culture and the industry, as well as with the general social reality of the region already mentioned.

The present study focused on the communities that practice the coffee harvesting trade. This profession is one of the most dynamic and changing in its characteristics, due to changes in the commercialization of coffee and in its production system. This, in turn, has led to modifications and adjustments in social groups, lifestyles, and relationships between people in relation to coffee harvesters (Arango, 1977; Duque, 2004; Machado, 1986; Palacios, 2009; Ramírez, 2010).

In effect, market dynamics have been significantly modified, which has caused the consequent replacement of coffee crops in the region by other plantations or other forms of economy. This signifies an important problem for the families that have traditionally been dedicated to coffee harvesting. However, perhaps even more importantly, cultural symbolisms are woven around this work dedication that also generates types of relationships with the land, with the community, and with oneself. There is no way to practice a trade without identifying oneself and elaborating a series of beliefs about oneself as a member of a certain social group.

Rojas (2015) sustains that coffee in Colombia has passed through three historical phases. The first is when the coffee industry became the main sector of the agricultural economy, which occurred before 1920. The second, which lasted until 1960, was the pinnacle of the coffee industry and its focus on certain regions, such as the Coffee Triangle. In this phase the cultural identification of Colombia as a coffee-growing country takes place. The last phase, up to the present, is marked by the coffee crisis and the entry into the international market.

For these authors, coffee adhered to the early neoliberal productive model developed in Colombia at the beginning of the 90s. It would be framed in the rupture of the International Coffee Pact. This element, in addition to the drop in coffee prices and the situations that affected the production process led to the displacement of families and individuals. Subsistence methods based on taking advantage of the harvests were then established and many of the coffee harvesters became nomadic, constantly migrating according to work opportunities.

This panorama may imply a social and individual impact that has not been diagnosed or studied, especially with respect to coffee harvesters, who are not very visible as a group in this industrial process. Coffee harvesters are a population that stands out in Latin America because they live in rural areas and contribute to the local economy, as well as to the cultural trajectory of each region. According to Ramírez et al. (2002), Coffee harvesters are connected to culture, identity, and communication, which influence their decision-making in daily situations.

However, the people who carry out this work have several conditions in common that can become vulnerabilities to copy external and internal factors. This is related to the scarce economic resources, the working conditions, inherent

to their trade; the presumably precarious social conditions they experience during their life cycle, and the exposure to public health problems.

For example, research based on coffee bean production, such as that carried out by Garzón et al. (2017), concludes that aspects such as the condition and geography of the cultivated land, added to the commitment of harvesting greater quantities of coffee, may be possible occupational risk factors. In addition, the weight that harvesters must carry when performing their tasks and the long distances they have to travel in a workday imply a medium- and long-term risk of musculoskeletal problems.

Nevertheless, this population problems in the Coffee Triangle, and particularly in the department of Quindío, are notable for the lack of scientific knowledge. Therefore, conducting an exploratory study that allows for the recognition of psychosocial conditions in this population is important. Specifically of interest is the bonding and affective environment in which these people are immersed, especially if the role of this environment as a condition of protective factors and as a main predictor of unfavorable mood conditions is considered.

In psychology, the research tradition in this regard has focused on studying peasant communities in general, rather than productive industries. The common conclusions in studies with peasant communities propose that communal identity depends on what is sown, because symbolic productions are developed around it. An example of this are regional festivals, forms of dress, dances, songs, and narratives. In this context, the coffee harvesters, as a community dedicated to coffee bean production, have developed a distinctive identity. Furthermore, rural communities foster ancestral knowledge, concern for the environment, and political empowerment (Bonomo & de Souza, 2020; Múnera & Piña, 2016; Sánchez et al., 2019; Vergara-Buitrago, 1970). Indeed, approaching these conclusions within the specific context of coffee harvesters remains to be investigated, as research concerning these characteristics is scarce, as mentioned before.

Regarding living conditions of coffee harvesters, the sole available source found in databases was a study conducted by the Colombian Coffee Growers Federation (2016). A sample of 7,578 individuals was used to characterize the labor market, as well as specific aspects pertaining to the role of coffee harvesters. A notable finding was "the prevalence of informality in hiring, coupled with low efficiency and a seasonal labor shortage that influences production costs and the profitability of coffee growers" (p. 35). However, the sample used does not allow analysis of the specific conditions in each region due to the extensive scope covering the entire country.

As a result, the problematization framework of this study can be categorized into general and specific perspectives. In general, a comprehensive understanding of the coffee crisis is imperative due to the significant role that coffee production

plays in shaping the cultural structure of Quindío. The ongoing loss of this structure entails considerable economic implications and psychosocial consequences. Specifically, acknowledging a frequently overlooked segment of the population is essential: understanding the psychosocial traits of coffee harvesters can enhance the visibility of their needs. As a result, this understanding can serve as the basis for the formulation of alternatives for improving their conditions and directly contributing to the preservation and cultivation of coffee culture. Subsequently, as indicated in the previously mentioned study, coffee growers are facing increasing difficulty in recruiting harvesters for their crops. Hence, it can be asserted that the crucial role of coffee harvesters might be overlooked, because they have a very important role within the coffee industry.

Although findings suggest the need for greater discussion and expansion of scientific information regarding the psychosocial situation of coffee harvesters, it is noteworthy to mention the prevailing "industrial" trend observed throughout the studies. Hence, it may be appropriate to adopt an approach from a psychological perspective that prioritizes subjective aspects. Additionally, the argument can be made that coffee harvesters cannot be viewed as isolated individuals; instead, they can be represented within an interconnected network that is essential to the formation of the self-concept. Therefore, considering the potential for defining boundaries in the patterns of relationships individuals establish amongst themselves, their environment, and their work, this study aims to understand this process as a bonding profile.

This understanding entails their connection to the role of coffee harvesters, their familial and social context, as well as their individual perceptions. To achieve this objective, the following question will be explored: What comprises the bonding profile of a sample of coffee harvesters in Quindío? This study employs an exploratory design based on the following dimensions: self-concept, perception of well-being, perceived family support, and place attachment.

Components of the Bonding Profile

This study examines the concept of "bonding" to better understand the psychosocial reality of this population. Bonding is defined as a psychic relationship with affective nuances that connects individuals with their diverse contextual entities. It is internalized in their psychic perception of themselves. Bonds tend to establish and remain relatively stable over time, so they can be analyzed in terms of their patterns. Therefore, these patterns allow for an understanding of the ways individuals weave their social and subjective reality, as well as how

they appropriate their life context through feelings of belonging, perceptions, opinions, and cognition, among others.

Furthermore, a description of bonding patterns across various levels of societal life implies an approximation to the bonding profile. From this perspective, this can be a construct that represents the individuals' current situation, allowing for the understanding of key dimensions to comprehend context appropriation, place perception, and their societal role satisfaction. Hence, it may be a crucial topic for evaluating subjective life dimensions within a community, as well as understanding the relationship between the environment and culture.

One of these dimensions is self-representation: self-concept. Similarly, the family bond contributes to the formation of a representation of the support offered by social system. Additionally, individuals are connected to a larger social group as community members, and they form a representation of the well-being they derive from this bond. Finally, individuals establish a bond with their territory, characterized by a relationship of place attachment.

Self-concept

As previously stated, the bonding profile in this study comprises multiple dimensions. The dimension most theoretically relevant, and, therefore, encompassing the most remarkable information, is self-concept. This paper first briefly addresses the core concept before exploring related dimensions.

The self, or self-concept was initially explored as a psychological construct by James Gergen (1971), who pursued other phenomenological studies. In his studies, Gergen emphasizes the critical importance of self-representation as a context of individual perceptions and attitudes toward the world, others, and one's own cognitive and affective processes. Syed's (2017) studied self-concept from the perspective of social psychology, focusing on the self within a context. They examine how expressions of identity are associated with various conditions, including interactions, social situations, and perceptions of self and others. This implies focusing the analysis on the identities that are activated in settings of different group membership and the consequences of that salience of behavioral and attitudinal interplay styles. Also, they are connected to the social contexts inhabited (Syed, 2017).

Canto and Moral (2005) propose the study of self-concept based on the theory of social identity. Social identity can be defined as a component of the self that encompasses the perception and feeling of similarity with others. results from the recognition of group membership and the associated value judgments. Permanent categorization processes assist individuals in arranging their social

environment by forming stereotypes based on the perceived similarities among group members. Similarly, categorization aids in establishing a reference system that defines and demarcates an individual's position within the social context, based on similarities between their social identity and a particular group (Canto & Moral, 2005). These processes within social identity not only facilitate the formation of affiliations among group members but also have the potential to lead to the exclusion of individuals from an outgroup.

Furthermore, a perspective on individual and evolutionary interests, as proposed in L'Ecuyer's Integrated Model, as cited by Martínez (1992), posits that the self is a complex system comprised of multiple dimensions, resulting from a range of lived, perceived, symbolized, and conceptualized experiences. This system is built upon fundamental structures, which include more specific segments of the self (substructures), further encompassing concrete elements (categories). These categories provide meaning and content to the multiple dimensions of the self-concept. This multidimensional perspective of the self-concept has been embraced by other authors. Esnaola et al. (2008) explored the concept of self within an academic context and defined "global self-concept" as "a collection of partial self-perceptions (multidimensionality) organized within a hierarchical framework" (p. 70). Various researchers have stated three distinct components of self-concept: identity, which depicts the cognitive dimension; self-satisfaction, encompassing affect and behavior; and behavior which is influenced by the interplay of the first two components (Amar & Hernández, 2005, p. 3).

The exploration of this construct has led to the creation of multidimensional scales designed for its measurement. Specifically, Fitts (1965) structured his scale based on the following factors: Self-criticism, physical self, moral-ethical self, personal self, familial self, and social self. Amar and Hernández (2005) explain these constructs as follows:

> Physical self: is the individual's perception of their own material body, state of health, physical appearance, capacity, and sexuality. Ethical-moral self refers to the individual's perception of their own moral strength, their relationship with God, their conviction of being a decent and morally attractive person, and satisfaction (or lack thereof) with their own religious life. Personal being refers to the self-perception of the subject's inner values, his feeling of adequacy as a person and the valuation of his personality independently of physique and relationships with others. Familial being reflects the individual's own feeling of valuation and importance as a member of a family and as belonging to a restricted circle of friends. Social being has to do with self-perception in relation with others. It refers to a person's sense, adaptability, and the value of social interactions with other people as a whole. (p. 4).

The dimension of "I'm a professional" might be added to the previously mentioned dimensions of self-concept. According to Garavito-Bermúdez and Lundholm (2017), a "professional identity " refers to a fluid, multifaceted entity that bridges personal and professional interests. This cycle is mediated by historical, social, cultural, and psychological factors. Another author mentioned by Garavito-Bermúdez and Lundholm (2017) is Reynolds, who mentions the following factors as mediators for this construct: the person's environment, what others expect of her, and the factors she permits to have an impact on her identity. The intersubjective conditions established in the workplace environment, allowed by the interpretation of social situations and actions carried out. The ways in which a person feels, thinks, and behaves are related to expectations of others, of herself (in relation to what she hopes to accomplish), and to any sense of competition, she may feel in relation to the unassumed professional role (Leitch & Harrison, 2016).

For this reason, the established relationships with family members and other significant individuals greatly influence the dimensions of self-concept. Early on, children start to develop an idea of who they are, according to the way they relate to their parents and what they hope for them in terms of their goals, accomplishments, and potential (Villarroel, 2001). To establish a positive and competent self-concept, children will need their parents to help them recognize who they are and what they are trying to become (Martinez, 1992). A frame of reference for one's self-concept and value judgment that endures over time and confers some stability is provided by references to expectations, traditions, and skills that have been recognized and internalized through primary connections, even in crucial later stages (Garavito-Bermúdez & Lundholm, 2017). According to Herrera and Ramírez (2002), the pairs and other significant outsiders to the immediate family replace this last connection as the primary source of self-information.

Perception of Family Support, Social Well-being, and Sense of Place

Vargas (1994) suggests that perception has been misunderstood when referenced as an aspect of individual attitude. He states that the process of perception involves the identification of stimuli and the presence of a context. From this, the organization of sensitive information is achieved. In a complementary line, Yudhitia et al. (2020) point out that perception allows individuals to organize and understand information, allowing it to assume meaning in their lives.

Thus, in the context of family and work life, individuals conduct an evaluative act regarding the support received by an individual from the members of their familial nucleus. The identification of that support is dependent on both cognitive and affective factors. An example of this is what Bazán et al. (2007) claim in their study that the academic involvement and support provided by parents impact the interest and effort in children's learning process.

In this way, when it comes to coffee harvesters, one of the components of a person's relational profile in the context of their work performance is the way in which they perceive support from their family environment is to be expected. In other words, the more this variable is present, the more likely it is that the person will develop a close, meaningful relationship with their environment and, naturally, with their work.

On the other hand, the concept of "social well-being" encompasses aspects related to subjective satisfaction with life and social relationships, such as identity and social interaction (Espinosa et al., 2015). These characteristics are expressed in terms of community, friendship, and family.

The perception of social well-being is organized within the framework of situations in which one acts, that is, at work, home, and in the community. As a result, work is a component of the relationships that make up the human being and through which one can construct a picture of social well-being. At the same time, the work may contribute to the development of this representation and, thus, to a sense of overall well-being. Because coffee collectors are not the exception, this study views this as one of the dimensions that can be used to profile the relational reality of a population like this.

The last of the dimensions that have been suggested as part of the bonding profile is "sense of belonging." In general terms, it can be understood like "the subjective bond that individuals develop with places" (Maldonado & Kronmüller, 2020, p. 3). Aspects such as the characteristics of the place, the connections with the surrounding community, and the psychological processes involved in this bonding experience complicate defining this construct. According to Pinto and Cornejo (2018), this can be understood as a symbolic relationship between a person and a certain environment. This relationship becomes evident in the emotional meanings that are shared; it emerges from culture, a place that is physically and symbolically built as a home and is shared on an individual, collective, and political level. In their perspective, feeling a sense of belonging or attachment to a particular place has implications for psychological well-being and mental health. In this sense, uprooting implies conditions of vulnerability because the individual does not identify with the established symbolic space in the place they inhabit. Under these conditions, one can consider a loss of sense of life and other psychological risk factors (Di Masso et al., 2008). Berroeta et al. (2015)

consider that attachment to a place is the most important element to consider in empowering vulnerable communities regarding their issues. The conditions that lead to positive change are not created by the individuals themselves if they do not feel an adequate connection to the location.

Methodology

Research Design

The study was designed from a quantitative approach, descriptive in nature and exploratory in scope. The descriptive study was transversal and the descriptive model, given the characteristics of the non-probabilistic sample, was selective. The design of this research is justified by the scarcity of socio-relational information that could establish a certain hypothetical model. Thus, according to Ato et al. (2013), descriptive research is used when: "it is intended to describe things as they occur, without any manipulation of variables, nor comparison of groups, nor prediction of behaviors, nor testing of models" (p. 1,042).

Population and Sample

The study population was the coffee harvesters of the municipality of Circasia (Quindío). The research team consulted with two organizations that were assumed would have information about the number of coffee collectors in this municipality, but in both cases, there were no statistics available that could have contributed to an appropriate parameterization of the sample. However, the team decided to conduct a non-intentional probability-based demonstration. For this purpose, the following inclusion criteria were considered:

— Being a coffee harvester by profession.
— Becoming a resident of Circasia, Quindío.
— Signing the informed consent form.
— Being of legal age.

The following were the exclusion criteria:
— Being under the influence of alcoholic beverages or psychoactive substances.
— Being a minor.
— Working sporadically in coffee harvesting.

Re
search

The sample consisted of 50 subjects. The main sociodemographic characteristics will be described in the results.

Ethical Criteria for Research

The current research was approved by the Research and Bioethics Committee of the Universidad de San Buenaventura, Medellín. Additionally, the research was carried out in accordance with the recommendations made in Law 1090 of 2006, specifically in its Chapter VII. The participants were instructed on the following ethical considerations: confidentiality and good information management, the right to abstain, the right to information, the right to accompaniment, and respect for privacy.

Instruments

Sociodemographic chart (ad hoc). Individual, familial, and fundamental social factors such as gender, age, educational attainment, type of housing, access to health care, relationship with social security, parent-child relationships, and thought patterns are all evident. Basic requirements for harvesters include hours worked, pay, relationships with coworkers, and consumption of psychoactive substances.

Tennessee's scale of self-concept (Fitts, 2014). Consists of 100 items. Likert-type scale for adults. Participants rate a series of statements between 1 (completely false) and 5 (completely true). The dimensions it evaluates are: physical self, ethical-moral self, personal self, familial self, social self, and self-critical self. In the study conducted for its validation, its author obtained a respectable degree of reliability (α: .89). In Colombia, it has been used with an alpha.85 (α: .85) by Gamboa and Gracia (1997). The same methodology has been applied in other studies where it has demonstrated statistical reliability (Amar & Hernández, 2005).

Social Well-Being Scale (Keyes, 1998). A 25-item Likert-type scale for persons 18 years of age and older. There are three possible responses: 1, agree; 2, neutral; 3, disagree. The dimensions it evaluates are: social integration, social acceptance, social contribution, social actualization, and social coherence. In the Spanish adaptation, the dimensions ranged from α: .68 to α: .83. In a validation in Colombia, it obtained α: .75.

The scale of attachment to place (Torrente et al., 2011). A 16-point Likert scale with ratings ranging from one (none at all) to five (a lot). Measures the three following dimensions: cultural, ecological, and socio-labor. Original scale α:.89.

Scale of Perceived Social Support from Family (PSS-FA) (Procidano & Heller, 1983). A Likert scale of 20 reactives. They are divided into three options: 1 – yes; 2 – no; 3 – I do not know. It measures the following dimensions: perceived social support from family and friends (PSS FA PSS- Fr), a-dimensional measure that evaluates the degree to which an individual perceives his/her needs for support; and information and feedback from friends (PSS - Fr) and family (PSS - Fa). For this case, only fa (family) version will be used. For the authors, it demonstrated a consistent reliability with α:.87, in a Chilean population an α:.82 and in Colombia it has been used as a measure of perceived support from family (Molina & Arbeláez, 2014).

Procedure

This study belongs to an internal research project from the Universidad de San Buenaventura, Medellín. The authors had the participation of research assistants and students of the College of Psychology. The empirical phase of the research reported in this article was preceded by a background review on coffee harvesters, and by a review of available literature. Additionally, along with the parameters of the research construct, a search for scales was conducted to measure the factors associated with the link profile. The information was submitted to the Bioethics Committee and then the fieldwork took approximately a month. All biosafety recommendations for the contingency caused by COVID-19 pandemic were followed.

Analytic Strategy

Data was processed in JASP (version 0.14.0.0). The analytical-selective methodology leads the analytical strategy of the data. Descriptive statistics were carried out and the results of the quarter scales were recoded. An association analysis was performed for nominal contextual variables with the variables of an ordinal, using Pearson's statistical Chi square as there were at least three subjects per dimension. The exact Fisher test was not applied. Finally, a correlation analysis between the variables was carried out using Kendall's statistical Tau-B, for the polytomic nature of ordinary variables.

Table 1. *Frequencies of Sociodemographic Factors.*

Factor	N	%
Gender		
Female	3	6%
Male	47	94%
Schooling		
High School Graduate	19	38%
None	6	12%
Primary	23	46%
Technician	2	4%
Housing Type		
Rent	30	60%
Quarters	1	2%
Different quarters	4	8%
Tenancy	10	20%
Own House	5	10%
Permanent job		
No	41	82%
Yes	9	18%
Psychoactive Substance		
No	42	84%
Yes	8	16%
Payment		
Daily	4	8%
Monthly	4	8%
Bi-weekly	7	14%
Weekly	35	70%
Support Network		
No	16	32%
Yes	34	68%

Table 2. *Measures of Central Tendency Sociodemographic Data.*

	Age	Time as Coffee Harvester (years)	Worked Time (months)
Media	42.72	8.70	7.06
Typical Deviation	12.93	12.40	2.76
Minimum	22.00	1.00	2.00
Maximum	70.00	50.00	12.00

According to Table 1 the majority of respondents are men (94%) and they only have basic primary education (46%). The majority live in rented houses (60%) and they only work in coffee harvesting (84%). Eighty-four percent do not consume psychoactive substances, and the majority receive a weekly salary (70%). Coffee harvesters mostly report having a support network, such as family, friends, and acquaintances (68%). Table 2 shows an average age of 42.7 years. They have been picking coffee for an average of 8.7 years and they spend seven months harvesting per year.

Table 3 records the main dimensions of the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale with their recoded dimensions. Table 4 presents the scale results of social well-being, family support, and attachment to a place.

Table 3. *Frequencies of Self-concept.*

Variable/Dimension	N	%
Social Integration		
High Social Integration	9	18%
Low Social Integration	14	28%
Medium Social Integration	27	54%
Social Acceptance		
High Social Acceptance	10	20%
Low Social Acceptance	16	32%
Medium Social Acceptance	24	48%
Social Contribution		
High Social Contribution	11	22%

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Variable/Dimension	N	%
Low Social Contribution	21	42%
Medium Social Contribution	18	36%
Social Actualization		
High Social Actualization	12	24%
Low Social Actualization	15	30%
Low Social Actualization	23	46%
Social Coherence		
High Social Coherence	9	18%
Low Social Coherence	14	28%
Medium Social Coherence	27	54%
Perceived Familial Support		
High Perceived Family Support	11	22%
Low perceived family support	13	26%
Medium Perceived Family Support	26	52%
Cultural Attachment		
High Cultural Attachment	7	14%
Low Cultural Attachment	26	52%
Medium Cultural Attachment	17	34%
Ecological Attachment		
High Ecological Attachment	13	26%
Low Ecological Attachment	10	20%
Medium Ecological Attachment	27	54%
Socio and Labor Attachment		
Low Social and Labor Attachment	23	46%
Medium Social and Labor Attachment	27	54%

Table 4. *Frequencies of Familial Support, Social Well-being, and Attachment to Place.*

Variable/Dimension	N	%
Integración social		
Social Integration	9	18%
High Social Integration	14	28%
Low Social Integration	27	54%
Medium Social Integration		
Social Acceptance	10	20%
High Social Acceptance	16	32%
Low Social Acceptance	24	48%
Medium Social Acceptance		
Social Contribution	11	22%
High Social Contribution	21	42%
Low Social Contribution	18	36%
Medium Social Contribution		
Social Actualization	12	24%
High Social Actualization	15	30%
Low Social Actualization	23	46%
Low Social Actualization		
Social Coherence	9	18%
High Social Coherence	14	28%
Low Social Coherence	27	54%
Medium Social Coherence		
Perceived Familial support	11	22%
High Perceived Familial Support	13	26%
Low Perceived Familial Support	26	52%
Medium Perceived Familial Support		
Cultural Attachment	7	14%

Variable/Dimension	N	%
High Cultural Attachment	26	52%
Low Cultural Attachment	17	34%
Medium Cultural Attachment		
Ecological Attachment	13	26%
High Ecological Attachment	10	20%
Low Ecological Attachment	27	54%
Medium Ecological Attachment		
Socio and Labor Attachment	23	46%
Low Social and Labor Attachment	27	54%
Medium Social and Labor Attachment		

Table 3 shows all recoded dimensions of self-concept scale in average percentile ranges. Likewise, the other dimensions of variables of social well-being, familial support and attachment of a place, with the exception of social contribution most results are in a low percentile range (42%); as cultural attachment that belongs also to a lower percentile area (52%). Table 5 shows the results of significant associations between variables.

Table 5. *Associations of Qualitative Variables.*

Contextual Variables	Variables	X²	P
Gender	Physical Self-concept	9.083	0.01
Parallel Job	Ecological Attachment	10.044	0.00
Substance Intake	Social Acceptance	6.132	0.04
Work Time	Social Actualization	29.706	0.00
Familial Relationships	Social Acceptance	10.409	0.03
Familial Relationships	Social Actualization	10.571	0.03
Familial Relationships	Perceived Familial Support	11.420	0.02
Friendships	Perceived Familial Support	12.229	0.01
Coworkers Relationships	Physical Self-concept	6.253	0.04
Coworkers Relationships	Cultural Attachment	12.041	0.00
Coworkers Relationships	Ecological Attachment	6.218	0.04

According to Table 5, significant associations were compiled (P value less than < 0.05). In the case of perception of relationships with family and coworkers, higher associations with variables were observed. Table 6 presents the results of the correlations between the variables.

Table 6. *Variables of Correlations between the Variables.*

Variable	Variable	Tau-B	P
Social Actualization	Physical Self-concept	0.25	0.04
Social Actualization	Perceived Familial Support	0.25	0.04
Social Contribution	Physical Self-concept	0.39	0.00
Social Coherence	Physical Self-concept	0.31	0.01
Social Coherence	Physical Self-concept	0.29	0.02
Social Coherence	Social Self-concept	0.32	0.01
Social Integration	Familial Self-concept	0.29	0.02

Table 6 shows that the main correlations between variables in social well-being. The correlations are low, ranging between 0.25 and 0.39, but signified an important heuristic value in guiding the significant relationships between the variables in the general construction of the link profile.

Discussion

The goal of this research aimed at determining a link profile, built from relationships with oneself, family, perception of social and familial well-being, and attachment to a place in coffee harvesters. This to explore a relational perspective of psychological dynamics in this population, so important within the coffee industry and production. The main findings of the research follows. It surveyed a sample of harvesters from the municipality of Circasia (Quindío). This sample does not allow generalizing results.

The only data group currently available, from a reasonably large sample (n= 7,578) of coffee harvesters, that can serve as a reference point for this research was conducted by *Dirección de Investigaciones Económicas de la Federación Nacional*

de Cafeteros de Colombia in 2016. Some of the results confirm statistical trends; for example, gender: in both researches, this occupation is occupied mainly by men. There is also a concurrence in age, with an average of 42 years. Another concurrence is the level of education; the majority of coffee harvesters only have primary school education. The average number of months of coffee harvest is seven in this research compared with the research of the National Federation of Coffee Makers (2016). It shows that the Coffee Triangle is the region of the country with the longest harvest time. Another concurrence was how the coffee harvesters learned about the work on the farms: in this research, the majority indicated that it was through neighbors or friends, as the National Federation of Coffee Makers (2016) also reported.

In addition, in the study carried out by the National Federation of Coffee Growers (2016) it was found that the department of Quindío is one of the largest departments with coffee harvester migration (17%); which makes it an important location for collectors from other regions. This could be explained by its atypical geographical characteristics, including having three thermal floors and, therefore, the possibility of three production seasons per year: the municipalities located on the mountain range, in valleys, and along foothills.

In another study carried out by Ortegón (2018), through analysis of the literature and data content on coffee harvesters, a sociodemographic profile of coffee harvesters is carried out with an economic approach. This study also finds the same trends as that of the National Federation of Coffee Growers (2016). However, unlike the present study, this approach stems from a fundamental interest in finding strategies to help increase production and economic performance. Likewise, other trends in documents and other studies focus on the productive capacity or on the coffee harvester as a labor agent who must achieve certain productive objectives (Amaya & Ruiz, 2018; Amaya et al., 2017; Garzón et al., 2017; Rojas, 2015; Trejos et al., 2016; Villegas-Bueno et al., 2005).

Beyond the studies about the productive capacity, aimed at improving the production of the bean, other studies have focused on understanding the social dynamics around the practice of coffee harvesting, not only as an occupation, but also as a social amalgamator and identity generator.

From this point of view, it can be affirmed that there is a coincidence in the findings of the present study. It is noteworthy in this regard that an association has been found among the coffee harvesters' relationships with their colleagues, and cultural and ecological roots. This would suppose – of course with the need to carry out further research with a greater heuristic possibility – that it is possible to think that the place in which a coffee harvester inserts himself, within his own guild, influences the relationship that establishes the place, as well as the countryside and the same coffee region's cultural landscape. Moreover, with the

possibility of linking with himself from the recognition of his role of care and attention to the environment, not minor aspects within any mode of psychosocial approach to the population.

This associative trend of variables is significant since it confirms what previous studies have found about the correspondence between the roots or bonds that a person develops in a certain place and the work that they perform there (Jackson, 2020; Reyes-Guarnizo, 2020). This implies that belonging to the culture and the region in which the life of coffee harvesters unfolds, would be associated with the way in which relationships with their peers are woven. This is also relevant because it is a labor force that generally does not receive any type of guidance or support that would maximize the nature of their ties. In other words, on the coffee farms where they work, no intentional actions are directed to qualify this component. This not only supposes that it is a phenomenon that is worth understanding through the development of the psychological discipline, especially with regard to the psychology of rurality, but also implies a horizon of work that may be relevant for the conservation of the coffee culture and its production.

In addition, the social contribution and cultural roots also draw attention. In other words, just as it can be said that the strengthening of ties between coffee harvesters would be associated with their cultural and ecological roots, it must be said that the relationship that they establish with themselves as collectors is affected by the perception of performing a job of little importance. In turn, it is logical that the same phenomenon occurs with respect to cultural roots; that is, the constructed social identity seems to indicate the possibility of finding there a work route to qualify the psychosocial environment of the collectors, but also the industry itself. It has already been suggested that this population may be critical in maintaining the coffee culture and production.

Indeed, in a study carried out in 2010, Castaño analyzes the social representations of poverty among coffee harvesters. Arriving at the conclusion that part of the academic and family conditions make up a negative perspective of the world among coffee harvesters. Thus, it could be affirmed with Castaño that the perception of little or low social contribution could depend on the negative productive tendencies of coffee, reported by coffee harvesters themselves. Their relationship with the perception they have of their work within the production chain of the coffee industry, could also be questioned.

In addition, regarding cultural roots, in people with labor characteristics in which there is migration, the symbolic ties of a person with their community deteriorate. These results were also found by Garavito-Bermúdez and Lundholm (2017) with fishermen, who also migrated to find their source of work. However, this finding does not stop suggesting the need to go deeper, because although

in the past it was common for coffee harvesters to travel great distances, it was also common for the coffee farms to have shelters during the harvests, this being an increasingly obsolete practice. In other words, migration would not explain cultural uprooting in the case of coffee harvesters.

Another element to highlight within this link profile is the association of familial relationships with the capacity for acceptance and social updating. Certain studies have shown the relationship between these two variables, which conclude, as in the present, that there is a relationship between how relationships are developed in the family niche along with the belief of feeling socially accepted (Coppari et al., 2013; Medellín et al., 2012; Thomas et al., 2017). In the same sense, regarding social updating, it could be proposed that the fact that family relationships constitute a dimension that is strong in this population, is related to the perception that the social context of which they are part "moves" in a somewhat beneficial direction. This constitutes a strong belief that the coffee harvesters and their social network largely control their own destiny. Obviously, these are remarkable dimensions within the construction of identity and its social characteristics.

This implies that any intervention approach to improve production conditions in the coffee growing process that considers the harvesters, could not fail to consider the family as a fundamental component. Another aspect that would nourish the understanding of this finding is that, on average, the coffee harvesters perceive that they have a support network, which allows deducing that a good part of the perceived social well-being has to do directly with the nature of these networks. Its empowerment may be pertinent to foster a relationship of social identity with their job and with the region. Finally, it was found that there is a correlation between the dimensions of the perception of social support and some of the dimensions of self-concept. This relationship has already been previously explored in research (Cavallo & Hirniak, 2019; López, 2017; Yokouchi & Hashimoto, 2020). There would be a dialogical relationship between social relationships and how subjects build their self-concept. In the case of coffee harvesters, this could be explored later. These relationships belong to a rural community, with the social components that characterize it; but, in addition, their social bond is complemented by belonging to a particular guild, which is related to the land, crops, and a particular industry. The dimensions, particularities and meanings related to these social components could be the orientation of further studies.

Making use of the findings of this exploratory study to formulate a design and a broader sample, which would allow to consolidate and generalize its results is recommended for subsequent studies. Beyond the sociodemographic profile, understanding the forms of social, family, rooted and self-relationship,

which are considered as components of the linked profile of coffee harvesters is necessary. In addition, emphasizing family dynamics and their relationship with the perception of social well-being, as well as emphasizing the link between relationships with coworkers and rootedness is recommended. Likewise, the link between the perception of social support and self-concept should be explored.

Conclusions

The coffee harvesters of the municipality of Circasia, Quindío constitute their link profile, mainly, from the perception of social and familial support, which at the same time, are related to the ability to take root and self-concept. These findings, in addition to explaining the possibility of continuing with a line of studies regarding this population, point to an interesting direction for research in other populations and, particularly, around the way in which social relationships are related to the self-concept, at the same time in which belonging to a region, to a job, to an environment interacts with psychological variables. This simultaneously involves various fields of psychology, such as the psychology of organizations and work, environmental psychology and, for that matter, the psychology of ruralities.

These results also point to the general claim of the study, to be able to recognize the quality and characteristics of the social, familial, personal and organizational relationships of the coffee harvesters, and with this aim at studies with a larger sample scope, including other variables in order to recognize risk and protection factors. An investigative path was paved here on a very particular and little-recognized phenomenon that involves a population that should have greater importance in the production of the coffee bean, a regional symbol of the Coffee Region. Among the main limitations of the study, a certain reluctance was found on the part of some collectors and their employers to access the interviews since local and national government institutions constantly conduct interviews and surveys that exhaust coffee harvesters. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic delayed fieldwork and the expansion of the sample or, at least, conducting research probabilistic tests.

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Europe and the Environmental Kuznets Curve: A Move Toward a Sustainable Economy*

⸤English version⸥

Europa y la curva medioambiental de Kuznets: un avance hacia una economía sostenible

A Europa e a curva ambiental de Kuznets: um movimento em direção a uma economia sustentável

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Abstract

Objective: To test the hypothesis of the Environmental Kuznets Curve (EKC) on Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) and greenhouse gas emissions for European Union (EU) countries during the period 1990-2012. **Methodology**: Input was taken from the World Bank database, which contains 21 indicators: agriculture and rural development, efficiency, economic growth, education, energy and mining, environment, the financial sector, health, infrastructure, labor and social protection, poverty, the private sector, the public sector, science and technology, social development, urban development, gender, sustainable development objectives, climate change, external debt, and trade. Based on this, a panel data model was estimated using three methods: random effects, fixed effects, and first differences. **Results**: It was found that there is an inverted U-shaped relationship between income level (GDP per capita) and pollution indicators. However, high levels of pollution are present with an income level of a country like Luxembourg, which may be due to a decreasing underperformance in GDP per capita with respect to pollution levels. Likewise, it was found that energy use, population, and the industrial sector contribute to increasing levels of environmental deterioration. **Conclusions**: The relationship between economic growth and environmental degradation should not focus only on the economic structure. Solutions to this type of problem must be a part of the economic policy of EU countries and the policy's implementation in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Keywords: Environmental Kuznets Curve; Carbon dioxide; greenhouse gas; economic growth.

Resumen

Objetivo: comprobar la hipótesis de la Curva Medioambiental de Kuznets (CMK) en las emisiones de Dióxido de Carbono (CO_2) y gas invernadero para los países que pertenecen a la Unión Europea (UE) periodo 1990-2012. **Metodología**: se tomó como insumo la base de datos de Banco Mundial, la cual contiene 21 indicadores: agricultura y desarrollo rural, eficiencia, crecimiento económico, educación, energía y minería, medio ambiente, sector financiero, salud, infraestructura, trabajo y protección social, pobreza, sector privado, sector público, ciencia y tecnología, desarrollo social, desarrollo urbano, género, objetivos de desarrollo sostenible, cambio climático, deuda externa y comercio. Con base en ello, se estimó un modelo de datos panel bajo tres métodos: efectos aleatorios, efectos fijos y primeras diferencias. **Resultados**: se encuentra

que existe una relación en forma de U invertida entre el nivel de ingreso (PIB per cápita) y los indicadores de contaminación; sin embargo, presenta niveles elevados de contaminación cuando se tiene un nivel de ingreso de un país como Luxemburgo, lo cual puede deberse a un bajo rendimiento decreciente en el PIB per cápita respecto a los niveles de contaminación. Así mismo, se encuentra que el uso de energía, la población y el sector industrial contribuyen a incrementar los niveles de deterioro ambiental. **Conclusiones**: la relación entre el crecimiento económico y el deterioro ambiental no solo debe enfocarse en su estructura; también es necesario que este tipo de problemática realmente sea parte de la política económica de los países de la UE y su aplicación en los objetivos de desarrollo sostenible (ODS).

Palabras clave: curva medioambiental de Kuznets; Dióxido de Carbono; gas invernadero; crecimiento económico.

Resumo

Objetivo: testar a hipótese da Curva de Kuznets Ambiental (ECK) sobre o dióxido de carbono (CO_2) e as emissões de gases de efeito estufa para os países pertencentes à União Europeia (UE) no período de 1990 a 2012. **Metodologia**: os dados foram extraídos do banco de dados do Banco Mundial, que contém 21 indicadores: agricultura e desenvolvimento rural, eficiência, crescimento econômico, educação, energia e mineração, meio ambiente, setor financeiro, saúde, infraestrutura, trabalho e proteção social, pobreza, setor privado, setor público, ciência e tecnologia, desenvolvimento social, desenvolvimento urbano, gênero, metas de desenvolvimento sustentável, mudança climática, dívida externa e comércio. Com base nisso, foi estimado um modelo de dados em painel com três métodos: efeitos aleatórios, efeitos fixos e primeiras diferenças. **Resultados**: constatou-se que há uma relação em forma de U invertido entre o nível de renda (PIB per capita) e os indicadores de poluição; no entanto, há altos níveis de poluição quando o nível de renda é o de um país como Luxemburgo, o que pode ser devido a um baixo retorno decrescente do PIB per capita em relação aos níveis de poluição. O uso de energia, a população e o setor industrial também contribuem para o aumento dos níveis de degradação ambiental. **Conclusões**: a relação entre crescimento econômico e degradação ambiental não deve se concentrar apenas em sua estrutura; também é necessário que esse tipo de questão realmente faça parte da política econômica dos países da UE e de sua implementação nos Objetivos de Desenvolvimento Sustentável (ODS).

Palavras chave: curva de Kuznets ambiental; dióxido de carbono; gás de efeito estufa; crescimento econômico.

Introduction

In recent decades, there has been continuous productive development based on the utilization of productive factors, one of which is natural resources. In this sense, the question: *Does continuous economic development bring with it a deterioration of the environment?* is worth asking. To answer this question, analyzing that the economic structure in recent years has undergone a transformation due to technological innovation is important. This has led to the improvement of production processes in favor of the efficient use of natural resources (clean technologies). Moreover, if legislation is added against environmental deterioration, remedying the effects of productive activity on the environment is possible.

This is why establishing the causes and consequences of economic activity on the environment is a crucial issue on the global (and, therefore, European) political and economic agenda. An example of this is the position of the European Union (EU) on sustainable development through the implementation of the United Nations Agenda 2030 on the European political framework. This agenda aims to establish and ensure compliance with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which include protecting, restoring, and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources. In this sense, international policy has become aware of the need for sustainable economic growth— in other words, a change in its productive structure that allows for the transformation of production processes in conjunction with technological development to preserve the environment.

One method for estimating or approximating the effects of productive activity on the environment is the well-known Environmental Kuznets Curve (EKC), which involves establishing an empirical inverted U-shaped relationship between economic growth and environmental detriment. Countries with high indicators of environmental degradation are correlated with decreasing income levels, and as per capita income increases, countries tend to experience lower levels of pollution (Grossman & Krueger, 1995).

The work entitled Economic Growth and Income Inequality, developed by Simon Kuznets (1955), becomes the basis of what is known as the Environmental Kuznets Curve (EKC). The idea is that there is an inverted U-shaped relationship between economic growth and income distribution in the long run, mathematically known as the relationship between variables and being strictly concave. In other words, for low-income countries, there is lower income concentration. As income increases, its concentration tends to rise, reaching a maximum point (inflection), which then leads to a decrease in concentration for countries with high income levels. Due to the lack of a formal model to establish this relationship, Kuznets relies on empirical evidence to demonstrate that changes in income distribution are

associated with the economic growth of countries. This relationship is based on three components. The first is the population structure, which establishes that the population tends to concentrate in urban areas, where it can be employed in activities with higher wages. Therefore, this concentration contributes to economic growth and generates a change in income distribution due to an increase in the income share of low-wage families. The second is changes in economic activity in favor of industry, which generate an increase in per capita income, mainly in the lower deciles of the income distribution. And finally, the concentration of savings makes it possible to generate investment, translating into the accumulation of productive factors, greater productivity, and economic growth.

Grossman and Krueger (1995) conducted the first seminal study to explore the empirical relationship between economic growth and environmental degradation. Their objective is to establish the effects of trade on the environment for the years 1977, 1982, and 1988. Using a panel data model, the authors found that countries characterized by low levels of GDP per capita exhibited higher indicators of environmental degradation. However, as income level (GDP per capita) increased, pollution indicators decreased. They concluded that high-income countries have undergone changes in their productive structure facilitated by technological development. Concurrently, strict environmental regulations have contributed to the improvement of environmental quality indicators.

Shafik and Bandyopadhya (1992) examined the correlation between environmental degradation and economic growth (GDP per capita) across 149 countries from 1960 to 1990. They established an inverted U-shaped relationship between economic growth and environmental degradation indicators, including airborne particulate matter and deforestation. However, water pollution indicators specifically pertaining to clean water and dissolved oxygen levels show a negative correlation with income levels. According to the authors, high water treatment costs may indirectly reduce income levels.

Grossman and Krueger (1995) conducted the first seminal study to explore the empirical relationship between economic growth and environmental degradation. They used GDP per capita as a variable to measure the level of income and four types of environmental indicators. Using a panel data model, the authors identified an inverted U-shaped relationship between economic growth and environmental degradation indicators. The authors also estimated that countries with a GDP per capita ranging between $8,000 and $10,000 USD exhibited lower pollution rates in comparison to countries with lower income levels.

However, they clarified that this relationship is not deterministic; implying that past information including the monitoring of a country's income, does not precisely forecast its level of contamination. Although, the relationship does

indeed exist from an empirical standpoint. Their assertion posits that the implementation of strict environmental regulations implemented as public policies, a shift in preferences toward less pollution-intensive goods among agents, and substantial investments in clean technologies lead the most developed countries toward sustainable growth.

Similarly, Bruyn et al. (1998) examined the KEC in three European countries (Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom), as well as in the United States for various time intervals between 1960 and 1993. The authors introduced a growth model based on the intensity of the emission of pollutants such as Carbon Dioxide (CO_2), Nitrogen Oxide (NO_X) and Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2). This model offers more effective means of analyzing changes in productive structures, technology, and environmental regulations. Estimates indicated a positive correlation between economic growth and pollutant emission intensity due to a positive effect attributed to changes in production processes and environmental regulations.

Similarly, Stern and Common (2001) endeavored to establish the KEC hypothesis for 73 countries during the period from 1960 to 1990. The authors suggested a correction to the specification of the structural model that originally used sulfur (S) emissions as the dependent variable. As per the authors, the lack of a specific variable to determine pollution behavior implies the possibility of bias stemming from potentially omitted variables or simultaneity. Therefore, sulfur emissions emerge as an indicator, given that technology plays a role in emission control. These results demonstrated that the KEC exists for both developed and undeveloped countries, with a significantly lower turning point (maximum) in pollution levels among developing countries. This is because certain indicators including coal emission production cannot be effectively managed by developing countries due to the high cost associated to their treatment.

Along the same lines, Ahmed et al. (2016) explored the causal relationship between economic growth and Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) emissions in 24 European countries over the period from 1980 to 2010. The authors used a dynamic panel analysis to substantiate the existence of a KEC relationship between economic growth and greenhouse gas emissions over the long-term. They also identified that bioenergy, defined as energy from biomass, which is material of biological origin, does not exhibit a significant relationship. Alternatively, technological progress has had a negative and significant impact on environmental degradation. The findings of the authors suggest that achieving sustainable economic growth may be feasible through the implementation of public policies fostering the use of renewable energy sources.

Pablo-Romero and Sanchez-Braza (2017) analyzed the relationship between residential energy consumption and income for 28 European Union countries,

spanning the period from 1990 to 2013. The authors used the estimates of a panel data model and a multilevel mixed-effects model to confirm the KEC hypothesis for the residential sector in the 28 European countries. Furthermore, the findings revealed that Denmark, Luxembourg, Finland, the Netherlands, and Sweden were the countries reaching the highest values for their KEC turning points.

For G7 countries, Raza and Shah (2018) examined the impact of trade, economic growth, and renewable energy from 1991 to 2016. The authors used a panel data model and a fixed-effect model, employing fully modified ordinary least squares (FMOLS) and dynamic ordinary least squares (DOLS) techniques to estimate the long-run coefficients. Findings revealed economic growth, (imports and exports) and trade increase CO_2 emissions in the long-run, whereas renewable energy consumption reduces them in the long-run. The authors concluded that these results support the KEC hypothesis in G7 countries and demonstrate a bidirectional causal relationship between renewable energy sources and CO_2 emissions in these countries.

Altintas and Kassouri (2020) examined the nexus between environmental and economic development in a long-term relationship. To this end, they disaggregated the environmental component into CO_2 emissions and the ecological footprint (the amount of biological land necessary for a human being to absorb carbon dioxide emissions) as the dependent variable. The authors followed four panel data models and implemented an estimation approach, which incorporated cross-sectional dependence and conducted a slope heterogeneity test for the 14 European countries. The data pertained to the EU-14 including countries that ratified commitments to increase their share of renewable energy, spanning the period from 1990 to 2014. Their findings demonstrated that the KEC hypothesis is highly responsive to variations in disaggregated variables within the environmental component.

Similarly, Pontarollo and Serpieri (2020) used a spatial panel econometric technique to empirically demonstrate the existence of the KEC hypothesis for certain counties in Romania over the period from 2000 to 2014. They conclude that an inverse U is present, indicating higher levels of urbanized areas for the highest levels of wealth.

Boubellouta and Brandt (2020) sought to test the KEC hypothesis used as an environmental indicator for electronic wastes in 30 European countries (countries that are part of the European Union, Norway, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland) from 2000 to 2016. The authors used generalized methods of moments (GMM) and two-stage minimum square (MC2E) method to generate robust estimators. The results show that there is an inverted U-shaped relationship between economic growth and the generation of electronic waste; however, although sustained economic growth may infer lower levels of e-waste,

income levels (GDP per capita) must be very high. Thus, the authors propose a coordinated effort between each of the actors (Government, businesses, and families) to generate an effective and efficient collection scheme for electronic waste.

For the countries of the European Union and the Western Balkans, Pejovic et al. (2021) analyzed the relationship between economic growth (with GDP per capita), energy consumption and CO_2 emissions from 2008 to 2018. They developed a data panel model with a vector autoregression (VAR) approach and evaluated estimators with generalized methods of moments. The authors concluded that the KEC exists depending on the country's income level.

Also, Filippidis et al. (2021) linked variables such as economic growth and energy consumption, energy use and income inequality, and economic development and energy production for approximately 200 countries from 2000 to 2019. They used a nonlinear data panel regression. The authors conclude that in the economic growth and renewable energy relationship there is a U-shaped curve, while in the relationship between economic growth and the consumption of fossil energy there is an inverse U-shape, demonstrating the KEC hypothesis.

In France and Germany, Ma et al. (2021) quantified the ratio between real GDP, CO_2 emissions and the consumption of renewable and non-renewable energy for the available data from 1995 to 2015. A data panel model was developed and cross-sectional dependency test, unit root test in panel data, and co-integration test were applied. The research reveals a relationship between the inverted U-shape in the variables of CO_2 emissions and real GDP over the long term in the two European countries that demonstrates the KEC theory.

Sharman et al. (2021) developed a data panel using Arellano-Bond dynamic and estimations of dynamic systems for the 27 countries of the European Union. They analyzed the relationship between the consumption of renewable and non-renewable energies and economic development over short and long terms. The authors stated that over the short term, the KEC hypothesis is not fulfilled, but over the long term the relationship reflects an inverted U.

To begin with the analysis of this issue in the European Union, Figure 1 shows carbon dioxide emissions (CO_2) greenhouse gas (gases that absorb the infrared radiation from the sun and increase the temperature of the atmosphere) as per capita gross domestic product (GDP) for EU countries during 1990 and 2012. There is a concave correlation between per capita GDP and both indicators. Low-income countries have a positive correlation with environmental deterioration indicators; however, it seems that as countries have higher income levels, carbon dioxide emissions (CO_2) and greenhouse gas increase, it reaches a peak, then tends to decrease. However, this kind of analysis is not enough to assert that there is an inverse U-shaped relationship.

Figure 1. *Carbon Dioxide Emissions (CO$_2$) and Greenhouse Gas vs. Per Capita GDP for the European Union Countries during 1990 and 2012.*
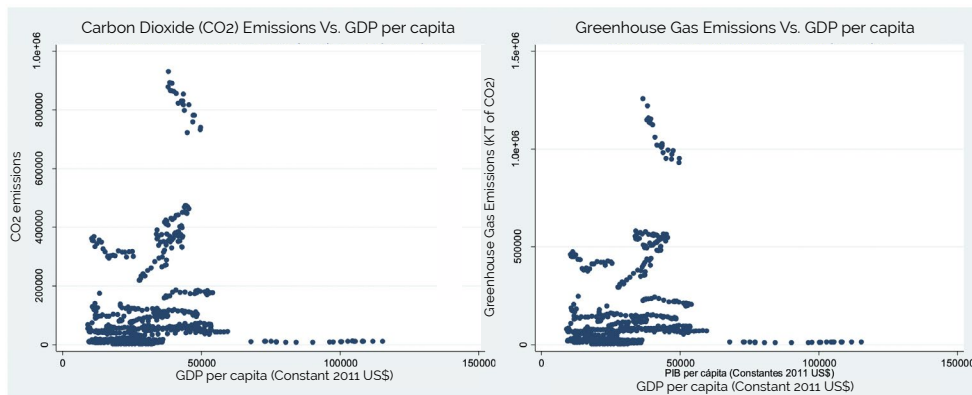
Source: Author's elaboration based on data from the World Bank.

Figure 2 shows the separation between the increase in carbon dioxide emissions (CO_2) and greenhouse gas in relation to per capita GDP for EU countries during 1990 and 2012. Data show that there is a possible negative convergence between the growth rate of environmental pollution indicators (CO_2 and greenhouse gas) and income level (per capita GDP). In other words, countries with higher income levels tend to have lower carbon dioxide growth rates (CO_2) and greehouse gas.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data from the World Bank.

However, to state that there is a certain correlation between CO_2 emissions and greenhouse gas in relation to income level (GDP per capita) in EU countries through figures is not enough. The Environmental Kuznets Curve emerges as an empirical method that allows verifying whether there is a relationship between economic growth and environmental deterioration. It also helps to generate public policies that enable sustainable economic growth with the environment. The effects of production on natural resources can be established through their use, as well as through the externalities of pollution that it can generate. Thus, the aim of this research is to empirically verify if the relationship exists between the Environmental Kuznets Curve in carbon dioxide emissions (CO_2) and greenhouse gases for EU countries during the period 1990-2012.

Method

The World Bank database was used to develop this research (The World Bank, 2020). It contains information on seven regions, 264 countries and 21 indicators (gender, health, education, agriculture and rural development, climate change, science and technology, social development, urban development, aid effectiveness, energy and mining, infrastructure, environment, poverty and economic policy and debt). This research contains information from the member countries of the European Union; it has an explanatory approach, as seeks to empirically verify the existence of the KEC. According to Grossman and Krueger (1995),

the following equation presents the quadratic relationship of the KEC through a data panel model:

$$y_{it} = \alpha_i + \varphi_t + \beta_1 PIB_{it} + \beta_2 PIB_{it}^2 + \sum_{j=1}^{k} \beta_j X_{j,it} + v_{it}$$

Where y_{it} indicates the environmental pollution variables (CO_2 and greenhouse gas), GDP is Gross Domestic Product per capita; $X_{j,it}$ eis the matrix of variables that may be correlated with environmental deterioration (energy use, methane emissions, service sector value added, industry value added, manufacturing value added, natural resource depletion, education and population); α_i is the cross-sectional unobservable heterogeneity (across countries); and φ_t includes the unobservable heterogeneity over time. Similarly, β represents the vector of estimators; the subscripts *it* indicate observations for different individuals (countries) and time periods.

There are three methods to estimate the equation. The first, known as fixed effect, explains that the unobserved cross-sectional heterogeneity (α_i) is correlated with the independent variables. In other words, the estimator does not take into account changes in the variables over time. The second method on the contrary, assumes that the unobserved heterogeneity among individuals (countries) is not correlated with the independent variables; that is, both α_i and φ_t are considered as error components (v_{it}). This method is known as the random effect.

Finally, the third method, called first differences, aims to eliminate unobservable cross-heterogeneity by using the difference between them for each period as variables; however, this method generates a loss of information (observations), which can change the analysis of the results and their robustness. To determine, from a statistical point of view, whether the unobservable heterogeneity of individuals (countries) is correlated with the independent variables, generating efficient estimators, the Hausman test is applied, which compares the two types of heterogeneities (α_i and φ_t). If differences exist between them, it establishes that the unobservable cross-observable heterogeneity (α_i) is correlated with the independent variables, which leads to the use of fixed effects.

However, as Lieb (2003) states, this type of method presents problems mainly of heteroscedasticity and autocorrelation. To identify and address the first two issues, the Wald and Wooldridge tests are used. Once this is done, the robust error method is used as an alternative estimation method for models that present this type of problem.

Results

Figure 1 displays in order of income (GDP per capita), the Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) and greenhouse gas emissions for the countries that are part of the EU during 2012. As can be seen, there is no correlation between income level and environmental degradation, given that countries such as Germany – which ranks sixth in the EU in terms of income ($49,769 USD) – have a high concentration of carbon dioxide (170,310 kilotons) and greenhouse gases (951,717 kilotons). The opposite is true for countries such as Latvia, which has a low GDP per capita ($23,912 USD), but low levels of pollution (7,063 kilotons of CO_2 and 13,944 kilotons of greenhouse gas).

Table 1. *GDP Per Capita, Carbon Dioxide (CO2), and Greenhouse Gas Emissions in European Union Countries for 2012.*

Country	GDP Per Capita	Carbon Dioxide	Greenhouse Gas
Luxembourg	105,557	10,664	12,611
Austria	53,591	62,273	90,460
Ireland	52,887	35,592	62,433
Netherlands	52,104	170,310	195,874
Denmark	51,339	36,428	53,703
Germany	49,796	739,861	951,717
Sweden	48,942	47,048	65,768
Belgium	48,249	95,107	133,374
Finland	45,993	49,134	69,073
France	42,968	333,228	499,147
Italy	41,691	369,469	482,634
Spain	35,840	264,779	348,257
Czech Republic	33,711	101,030	138,957
Malta	32,758	2,681	-
Slovenia	32,758	14,782	21,075
Cyprus	31,679	6,920	7,431
Portugal	30,194	46,014	72,524
Estonia	29,198	17,624	23,293
Greece	28,808	80,043	100,571
Lithuania	27,381	13,832	29,442

Re search

Country	GDP Per Capita	Carbon Dioxide	Greenhouse Gas
Slovakia	27,245	32,765	46,301
Poland	25,562	299,931	414,607
Hungary	24,769	44,583	62,988
Latvia	23,912	7,063	13,944
Croatia	23,757	17,994	30,421
Romania	21,358	81,723	121,762
Bulgaria	17,955	44,708	67,943

Source: Author's elaboration based on data from the World Bank.

Due to the difficulty of establishing a correlation between income and pollution levels through a simple descriptive analysis, the following table presents the results of the model proposed above for carbon dioxide CO_2. emissions. The estimates show that there is an inverted U relationship between income (GDP per capita) and carbon dioxide emissions for the EU countries when using the three estimation methods. However, only random effects *(β_1=1.5131; β_2=-0.0000074)* and fixed effects *(β_1=3.3755; β_2=-0.1305)* are statistically significant. Regarding the other variables, in terms of energy production, an increase in energy use (kg equivalent of petroleum) increases CO2 emissions by 313.17 and 324.82 kilotons for random and fixed effects respectively.

In terms of economic activity, estimates show that only the industry sector has a positive effect on carbon dioxide emissions which is mainly because this sector has production processes that focus on the transformation of raw materials and, therefore, generates environmental pollution. Finally, as expected, an increase in education and population expenditures reduce and increase carbon dioxide levels respectively. Applying the Hausman test confirmed that unobserved heterogeneity over time is correlated with the independent variables, which establishes that random effects estimates should be used.

Table 2. *Results of Estimation for Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) Emissions.*

Carbon Dioxide	First Differences	Random Effects	Fixed Effects
PIB	1.0435***	1.5131***	1.6075***
GDP	(0.2896)	(0.3219)	(0.3257)
	-0.0000053	-0.0000074***	-0.0000077***
GDP Square	(0.0000069)	(0.0000022)	(0.0000022)

Carbon Dioxide	First Differences	Random Effects	Fixed Effects
	1314.1***	593.70***	705.54***
Methane Emission	(285.16)	(182.96)	(193.23)
	455.17***	313.17***	324.82***
Energy Use	(55.901)	(37.567)	(38.632)
	-0.000000085**	-0.00000015***	-0.00000011***
GDP Per Capita	(0.00000003)	(0.000000012)	(0.000000018)
	0.00000048***	0.000001***	0.000001***
GDP Industry	(0.0000001)	(0.000000073)	(0.000000074)
Manufacturing GDP	-0.00000013	-0.0000007***	-0.000000082***
	(0.00000011)	(0.000000083)	(0.000000088)
Education	-355.09	-1462.9*	-1544.03*
	(847.29)	(821.19)	(802.62)
Population	0.0055	0.0057***	0.0042***
	(0.0023)	(0.0004)	(0.0011)
Natural Erosion	1343.98	675.96	655.96
	(2176.57)	(25.058)	(2467.7)
N Observations	478	504	504
R	0.374	-	-
R Within	-	0.654	0.659
R Between	-	0.959	0.951
R Overall	-	0.957	0.949
Hausman Test	-	4.24	-
Prob (Chi2)	-	(0.3748)	-

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

Similarly, in Table 3, estimates for greenhouse gases are presented. It can be seen that it also has an inverted U-ratio relationship between greenhouse gas emissions and GDP per capita for random effects *(β_1=1.4304 ; β_2=-0.000008)* and fixed effects *(β_1=1.5914 ; β_2=-0.0000085)*, which are statistically significant. However, according to the Hausman test, fixed effects estimates are used, because there is correlation between the independent variables and unobserved heterogeneity

between countries. In relation to energy use, an increase in one kg of oil increases greenhouse gas emissions by 285.19 kilotons. The results for the economic sectors show that only industrial activity generates a positive effect on greenhouse gas emissions, similar to the estimates obtained for carbon dioxide. Finally, an increase in population increases greenhouse gas emissions.

Table 3. *Results for Estimation for Greenhouse Gas Emissions.*

Greenhouse Gas	First Differences	Random Effects	Fixed Effects
GDP	0.8728**	1.4304***	1.5914***
	(0.3324)	(0.1773)	(0.3779)
GDP Square	-0.000066	-0.000008***	-0.0000085***
	(0.000078)	(0.0000026)	(0.0000025)
Methane Emission	3084.25***	1694.5***	1905.7***
	(325.51)	(213.56)	(223.09)
Energy Use	403.56***	285.19***	309.92***
	(63.816)	(44.111)	(44.665)
GDP Per Capita	-0.00000006*	-0.0000002***	-0.0000013***
	(0.00000003)	(0.000000014)	(0.000000021)
GDP Industry	0.00000047***	0.0000012***	0.0000011***
	(0.00000012)	(0.000000086)	(0.000000086)
Manufacturing GDP	-0.00000025**	-0.00000074***	0.00000096***
	(0.00000012)	(0.000000097)	(0.0000001)
Education	-494.08	-560.82	-742.01
	(968.66)	(980.44)	(936.34)
Population	0.0014	0.0070***	0.0024*
	(0.0026)	(0.0005)	(0.0013)
Natural Erosion	4261.8*	1782.9	2341.9
	(315.73)	(2955.06)	(2849.6)
N Observations	475	502	502
R	0.332	-	-
R Within	-	0.730	0.741
R Between	-	0.969	0.957
R Overall	-	0.968	0.953
Hausman Test	-	2.98	-
Prob (Chi2)	-	(0.5619)	-

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data from the World Bank.

As mentioned above, Table 4 shows the Wald and Wooldridge tests. The estimates confirm that the model presents problems of heteroscedasticity and serial autocorrelation. An alternative to control these types of drawbacks is to use the robust error method, because these types of models are insensitive to atypical data.

Table 4. *Wald and Wooldridge Tests.*

Tests	Wald		Wooldridge	
	Chi2	Prob>Chi²	F	Prob>F
Carbon Dioxide	270000	0.000	10.43	0.003
Greenhouse Gas	64205.1	0.000	128.6	0.000

Source: Author's elaboration based on data from the World Bank.

Additionally, Table 5 presents the estimates with robust fixed effects for the environmental pollution indicators used. As can be seen, the estimates show a result similar to that obtained without controlling for heteroscedasticity and serial autocorrelation. That is, the existence of the KEC in European Union countries can be empirically inferred. However, it is worth clarifying that variables such as population and education under robust errors are not statistically significant.

Table 5. *Results of Estimation with Robust Fixed Effects.*

Variables	Carbon Dioxide	Greenhouse Gas
GDP	1.6075**	1.5914**
	(0.7041)	(0.7090)
GDP Square	-0.0000077*	-0.0000085**
	(0.0000038)	(0.0000043)
Methane Emission	705.54**	1905.7***
	(327.78)	(349)
Energy Use	324.82**	309.92**
	(125.78)	(125.01)
GDP Services	-0.00000011	-0.0000013
	(0.000000078)	(0.000000093)
GDP Industry	0.000001***	0.0000011***

Variables	Carbon Dioxide	Greenhouse Gas
	(0.00000036)	(0.00000031)
Manufacturing GDP	-0.00000082*	0.00000096**
	(0.00000041)	(0.0000004)
Education	-1544.03	-742.01
	(1280.4)	(1103.8)
Population	0.0042	0.0024
	(0.006)	(0.0056)
Natural Erosion	655.96	2341.9
	(5045.09)	(655.07)
N Observations	504	504
R	-	-
R within	0.659	0.741
R Between	0.951	0.957
R Overall	0.949	0.953

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data from the World Bank.

To check the existence of the KEC in the EU countries, the parameters obtained previously (β_1 and β_2), are used, as described in Figure 3. According to estimates, European Union countries reach the maximum emissions of carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas when they obtain a GDP per capita of $102,236 and $89,400 USD respectively; that is, an income level consistent with Luxembourg (in the case of pollution indicators). However, despite having high implicit inflection points (maximum), the results do not contradict the proposed hypothesis, which confirms that EU countries have an inverted U relationship between their income levels (GDP per capita) and pollution levels (CO_2 and greenhouse gas emissions).

Figure 3. *Environmental Kuznets Curve (EKC) for Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) and Greenhouse Gas in European Union Countries..*
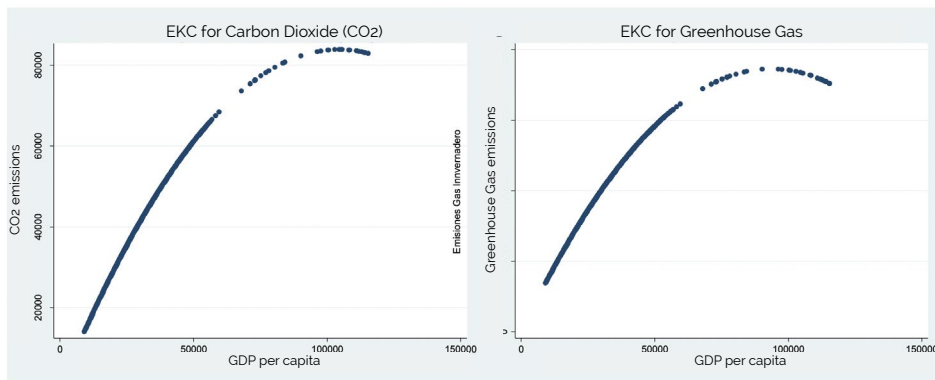
Source: Author's elaboration based on data from the World Bank.

Conclusions

It should be noted that this type of work seeks to contribute to the analysis of the impacts of economic growth on environmental pollution. It is also intended to determine whether the development of economies through changes in their productive structure, clean technologies, and the development of environmental regulation policies, and even more so, without a formal structure, can contribute to a general analysis of this problem, despite establishing an empirical relationship that may be biased.

The results obtained prove the existence of the Environmental Kuznets Curve (EKC) for carbon dioxide (CO_2) and greenhouse gas emissions in European Union countries. Likewise, it presents high implicit turning points in terms of GDP per capita consistent only with a country like Luxembourg, due to low diminishing returns in income and pollution levels. In relation to the other variables, energy use and population generate a positive effect on pollution indicators. In terms of economic activity, only the industrial sector increases CO_2 and greenhouse gas emissions, and finally, an increase in spending on education leads to reducing pollution (though only carbon dioxide emissions).

To establish robust results, the Hausman test was applied, which establishes whether unobserved heterogeneity (between countries and over time) is correlated with the independent variables. The test shows that the random effect method

presents consistent estimators. However, there may be different effects for different sub-regions or countries. For this, making several estimates is pertinent. Likewise, the Wald and Wooldridge test was performed, which establishes the presence of heteroscedasticity and serial autocorrelation. To control for these problems, the robust fixed effects method was used. The results show a similarity with the fixed effects model, reaffirming the presence of the KEC in European Union countries.

Finally, it should be noted that the solution to this problem should be based on a diagnosis. What matters is to improve the formal structure to determine this type of problems, as well as focus on making this type of analysis part of regions' economic policy. In the case of the EU, the application of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in the 2030 Agenda, represents progress in these types of guidelines for a problem that long ago ceased to be individual and that now requires joint work.

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Ethnoagronomy and Knowledge: Supporting the Agricultural Development Model amid the Fourth Transformation in Mexico*

[English version]

Etnoagronomía y saberes: soporte al modelo de desarrollo agrícola ante la Cuarta Transformación en México

Etnoagronomia e conhecimento: apoio ao modelo de desenvolvimento agrícola em face da Quarta Transformação no México

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Abstract

Objective: To analyze ethnoagronomy as a discipline that re-values, rescues, and builds upon agroecological principles, knowledge, experiences, and productive practices of peasants and indigenous people, laying the foundations for rural development alternatives. **Methodology**: Hermeneutic in nature. Discussions on these topics with leading experts in the field aim to foster a discussion that enables a fresh perspective on the primary sector. **Results**: Discussions of the Green Revolution process promoted by the Mexican state introduced technological options distinct from the majority of productive strategies implemented by the producers. Alongside the neoliberal model, which has accentuated economic and social polarization over the years, agriculture has continued to experience a clear process of neglect and a departure from policies aimed at the primary sector. Worth noting, however, is the fact that a small group has been subsidized within this model. **Conclusions**: Given pressing national issues, including social and food crises, there is potential for generating dialogue and agreements, driven by both progressive governments and public educational institutions, to pave the way for a new productive scenario with social participation.

Keywords: Rural development; ethnoagronomy; knowledge; agriculture.

Resumen

Objetivo: analizar la etnoagronomía como una disciplina que revalora, rescata y construye en torno a los principios agroecológicos, saberes, experiencias y prácticas productivas de campesinos e indígenas; los cuales permiten sentar las bases para construir alternativas al desarrollo rural. **Metodología**: es de corte hermenéutico. Se reflexiona sobre los tópicos con los principales exponentes del tema, tratando de generar una discusión que permita una mirada renovada del sector primario. **Resultados**: se discute el proceso de la Revolución verde, que promovió el Estado en México, con opciones tecnológicas distintas a las lógicas productivas y reproductivas de la mayoría de los productores. Junto con el modelo neoliberal, que con el transcurso de los años ha acentuado una polarización económica y social, y mantiene la agricultura en un franco proceso de atraso y abandono de las políticas dirigidas al sector primario; aunque cabe destacar que se ha subsidiado a un pequeño grupo en el modelo referido. **Conclusiones**: ante los acuciantes problemas nacionales: crisis social y alimentaria, con visiones progresistas tanto de gobiernos como de instituciones públicas educativas,

es posible generar diálogos y acuerdos que permitan un nuevo escenario productivo, con participación social.

Palabras clave: Desarrollo rural; etnoagronomía; saberes; agricultura.

Resumo

Objetivo: analisar a etnoagronomia como uma disciplina que revaloriza, resgata e constrói os princípios agroecológicos, o conhecimento, as experiências e as práticas produtivas dos camponeses e dos povos indígenas, o que permite estabelecer as bases para a construção de alternativas para o desenvolvimento rural. **Metodologia**: é de natureza hermenêutica. Reflete-se sobre os temas com os principais expoentes do assunto, tentando gerar uma discussão que permita um olhar renovado sobre o setor primário. **Resultados**: discute-se o processo da Revolução Verde, promovido pelo Estado mexicano, com opções tecnológicas que diferem das lógicas produtivas e reprodutivas da maioria dos produtores. Juntamente com o modelo neoliberal, que ao longo dos anos acentuou a polarização econômica e social e manteve a agricultura em um processo de atraso e abandono das políticas voltadas para o setor primário, embora deva ser observado que um pequeno grupo foi subsidiado no modelo mencionado. **Conclusões**: diante de problemas nacionais urgentes: crise social e alimentar, com visões progressistas tanto dos governos quanto das instituições públicas de ensino, é possível gerar diálogos e acordos que permitam um novo cenário produtivo, com participação social.

Palavras-chave: Desenvolvimento rural; etnoagronomia; conhecimento; agricultura.

Introduction

> The peasant farmers, who are the nucleus of the popular economy, are suffering a war of extermination promoted by transnational corporations and imperial governments. This is because once the small and medium-sized food-producing agriculture has been subdued, we will be at the mercy of capital. (Proyecto Alternativo de Nación, 2010, p. 183).

Mexico and the world are in a process of social, political, and economic transition. This occurs due to the interest of its people in wanting a change, which seeks to modify a hegemonic neoliberal model imposed more than 40 years ago. This model, as a center of power, seeks to systematize, legitimize, and rationalize the regulation of the world system in a particular phase. Thus, it aims to give preeminence to global financial power (Dávalos, 2008) that economically satisfies only a minority of people. It leaves the rest of the marginalized population abandoned due to their limited capacity to cover their basic needs, especially economic, food, and quality of life.

The neoliberal model, imposed in the early 1970s, constructed an economic policy that, through corporate support, encouraged the development of the capitalist market economy. It restructured the state and legitimized government actions, facilitating the transition from the welfare state to the neoliberal state through social reforms that favored the holders of capital (Huerta, 2005). This means, according to Gudynas (2014), that large national and transnational corporations, which the State expected to promote development in return for their consideration, were protected:

> As a set of ideas centered around continued growth, driven by the economy, and expressed especially in the material field [...] It is considered that this economic growth is possible in perpetuity, denying the existence of real limits, whether social or environmental. The continued progress would be fueled by science and technology. (p. 65).

The market imposes forms of development and modernity, based on fashions, models, quality certifications, full freedom to operate, and socioeconomic lifestyles typical of industrialized cultures (Lemus, 2021). In addition, the market plans and determines the prices of commodities and superfluous products, pushing them further away from the less well-off. This is due to its system of production and use of labor, situated on a global scale, which posits that nature is placed outside

of society, devoid of organicity, and is reconverted into a set of goods or services to be exploited by humans (Gudynas, 2014).

The neoliberal development model has entered into crisis. Since 1990, numerous critiques have questioned the category of development and its manifestations, as rooted in certain components that are replicated repeatedly (Gudynas, 2017). This is due to its extractive form of production, centered on the export of raw materials, which ignores or disregards the social impacts of its activities, including the effects on people's health, rights, quality of life, their communities, and the environment. (Domínguez, 2021). These impacts have caused serious damage to the country and the planet, modifying the climate, reducing biodiversity, and degrading the quality of life for inhabitants. As a result, socioeconomic, health, and nutritional disorders, as well as diseases such as cancer, diabetes, stress, and others, emerge.

These results and their critical approach have been taken into consideration by the current government. They are presented in a document —for public discussion— called the "Program of the National Regeneration Movement" (MORENA). This document consists of ten points that take into account biological diversity and indigenous peoples, given the biogeographic and cultural position of the country. Both are factors considered to be of great wealth by those who confirm that:

> Mexico is among the three most culturally and biologically diverse countries in the world. The core of this dual wealth, a millennia-old heritage, lies in the indigenous peoples and agrarian communities, in their relationship with nature and in community life. Cultural colonialism has denied diversity, imposing a singular and exclusive national vision, much like agro-industrial models eradicate the vast variety of natural resources and the peasant way of life. (Proyecto Alternativo de Nación, 2010, p. 5).

In another aspect, the document addresses the issue of rural areas and food sovereignty, contending that the primary crops cultivated in Mexico are facing loss, including many domesticated varieties, along with the traditional knowledge held by farmers. This is due to several factors, with one of the main contributors being the intrusion of colonial, Europeanizing, and U.S. agricultural knowledge through extensionism. This practice is often conducted by universities, private companies, and governmental entities related to the countryside. These organizations view this form of education, training, and support as the sole economic development option available to them. They have effectively pushed farmers to the precipice by promoting it, thereby making them dependent on seeds and

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technological inputs. This was the outcome of an agricultural policy promoted in Mexico between 1950 and 1960, which did not thrive as expected, nor did it address the issues of hunger. On the contrary, it propelled the peasantry toward national and international migratory flows (rural-urban, rural-countryside), leading to the modification of labor markets (Carton de Grammont, 2021).

In Mexico, agricultural education in the 20th century was dominated by a Western scientific vision that promoted the agricultural model known as the Green Revolution. The Universidad Autónoma Chapingo (UACh), the foremost agricultural education institution in Latin America, promoted education, research, and extension based on Western scientific canons. This advanced the knowledge of addressing the problems of large producers through technical assistance and high crop yields —benefiting the minority— while leaving the majority of producers without those opportunities.

At UACh, the agricultural vision of the Green Revolution is promoted, emphasizing commercial production with the goal of obtaining merchandise and profits to achieve the agricultural development of the country. However, at the same time, agroecology is promoted, as it has scientific support. For producers, it represents an alternative form of sustainable, economic, and social production (Ferrer et al., 2022). In this regard, Gudynas (2014) notes, "development is desired and advocated by almost all partisan political actors, is generated and reproduced in academies and educational institutions, and is culturally disseminated to the great majorities" (p. 67). He further states that:

> Post-development makes it possible to identify discussions that aim at transcending the development discourse, reveals hidden or subordinated knowledge and sensibilities, attends to previously dismissed critiques, particularly those coming from indigenous peoples, and encourages new hybridizations in the exploration of alternatives (p. 69).

This is closely related to agroecology, as it rescues the ancestral knowledge of producers who, through their practices, generate new forms of relationship between nature and humanity. This promotes food sovereignty and local economic development (Rivera, 2021).

Methodology

This work is of a qualitative nature. It is based on the results and reflections of a group of researchers from UACh who, for more than three decades, have conducted *in situ* research with peasants, indigenous peoples, and mestizos in the Mexican territory. The hermeneutic approach was privileged, starting from the idea that humans are in permanent dialogue with themselves and others. In that sense, "hermeneutics is conceived as a dialectical and dynamic method, linking text and reader in a flexible process of openness and recognition, construction, and deconstruction" (Rojas, 2014, pp. 42-43). In this way, the texts of the main exponents of the subject under discussion —ethnoagronomy— are interpreted, analyzed, and explained in a critical and proactive manner.

The primary documentary source supporting the recovery of traditional agricultural systems and their knowledge from an agroecological perspective is the work *Xolocotzia* by Master Efraín Hernández Xolocotzi. His experience in fieldwork with peasants in Mexico, Central, and South America is synthesized in what he called the *huarache research*. That is, to learn their knowledge, which is easily accessible but, due to acculturation issues, prevents them from recognizing it (Hernández, 2007).

Over time, this agronomic perspective has provided the foundation for a group of researchers to promote the ethnoagronomic research line, which is included in some of the degrees and postgraduate programs offered by the UACh. The National Regeneration Movement 2018-2024 (MORENA) project is another important source of documentation for this study. It advocates for a change in the country where there is potential to improve the agricultural sector through scientific and technological innovations that take into account the social groups that have received the least protection from previous governments. The Strategic Restructuring Plan of the National Council for Science and Technology 2018 (CONACyT) states that there is an advocacy for science that is committed to society and the environment. Above all, there is an emphasis on supporting and strengthening the biocultural wealth and the dialogue of knowledge among vulnerable groups in the national territory. This situation calls for a fresh look at public policy and its connections to both public and private institutions of higher education, directing actions to preserve and restore the nation's social and economic fabric.

Alternatives to Development

The current development paradigm, which is thought to be in crisis, needs to be replaced with other pathways, according to questionings; endogenous models like the *Living Well* or "sumak kawsay" (Cuestas, 2019) provide a range of options for development. The significance of such models in indigenous communities is in posing alternatives to capitalism and Western-style development, and stems from the idea of achieving a post-developmental society. It feeds on indigenous knowledge and claims to be post-capitalist and post-socialist, oriented beyond modernity; therefore, it should be considered in constitutional debates, as this would recognize and value the contributions of indigenous and peasant knowledge (Gudynas, 2014).

The great majority of peasant production units in the country have little opportunity for access to land and funding. With these meager resources, they carry out an agriculture of self-sufficiency based on ancestral knowledge and an agricultural management style known as traditional agricultural technology (TAT), which refers to the agricultural implements, primarily manual ones, that indigenous and rural peoples possess, such as the pickaxe, hoe, shovel, axe, machete, hoe, and native seeds. Mechanized technology is weak or nonexistent. This is distributed throughout the country's center and south, where indigenous and poor farming groups predominate and account for around 80% of the nation's agricultural and forestry production units.

Agricultural Production Geared toward Commerce

During the last 50 years, through public policies, programs, and produc-tion-oriented projects, the State encouraged the establishment of commercial agriculture; in doing so, it sought to recover the invested capital. The producers that had the most level land, were in remote areas, and had the ability to buy industrial and biological inputs to boost their output and market share benefited from the policies that were put in place.

The term "small-scale landowner," which refers to those who use traditional technology, implies that those involved in agricultural activity are individual people, but in reality, these are family units (families of farmers with less than five acres) engaged in agricultural activity as well as other economic pursuits that are not necessarily agricultural. These units were forgotten from a production standpoint, and became objects —being a target of public policy—, not the same as being an object of social programing. The policies put into place only benefited a small number of farmers in the north and center of the country, where

the transportation, logistics, and service infrastructure needed for agricultural production were readily available. There is the marginalization of the small producers in the central and southern states of the country who typically have ties to community processes and call for institutional actions that support socially equitable development (Muñoz, 2021).

Given that it is difficult to produce on hostile soils with definite and time-bound deadlines, the role that agro-academic institutions have played in this context has been the development of human resources that can respond to these development policies and structures. Consequently, agricultural extension was designed based on a Western, modernist, and imposed framework.

The Green Revolutionary Model

Globally, the Green Revolution model is being seriously considered by social scientists because the unrestrained use of productive resources and highly polluting chemical intake has resulted in irreversible environmental and economic damage (Mirafuentes & Salazar, 2022). These are recognized as one of the primary contributing factors to the global warming associated with climatic change. However, politicians from highly industrialized nations often ignore the need to change the current contaminated farming practices and deny the negative effects on the planet.

The traditional agricultural producers who rely on ancestor-based knowledge and skills are represented throughout the country by 62 ethnolinguistic groups (Navarrete, 2008). Also included are mixed-race farmers, whose technological and productive characteristics include a number of traits linked to an agriculture that is more sensitive to environmental protection and is based on the rational use of natural resources and non-polluting low-impact technologies. In other words, environmentally conscious and capable of sustainability because they don't cause unbalances in the working environment.

It is undeniable and essential that President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's proposed policies and statements reflect a fresh perspective on the Mexican people and, above all, the rural sector. Ideas such as "the poor first," support for rural communities in terms of "autosufficiency" and "food sovereignty," guarantee prices, "word credit," a program to rehabilitate crows, one million acres of rural communities' agroforestal systems, temporary employment, and more illustrate future trends for the countryside and its inhabitants. In the creation and implementation of alternatives suited to the new agricultural, livestock, and forestry policies that are hoped to be implemented with a different perspective, the rescue and support of these small subsistence farmers' technology, production,

and vision represent an invaluable heritage. These small subsistence farmers were neglected by previous regimes.

Local Knowledge and Agriculture

As human processes and products, knowledge is embedded in the culture of the people. It is from this point that it is accepted and acknowledged that indigenous communities, small-scale farmers, and rural workers are the main carriers of this knowledge, having passed them down orally over many years and contributed to the variety of traditional production methods and local innovations that are still used in conventional agriculture.

Local knowledge is difficult to generalize since it implies the existence of an active player. It can be described as a specific strategy that enables achieving a high level of control and dominion over a highly varied local situation (Van der Ploeg, 2000). In response to this, Gómez (2006) examines the prevalence of a wealth of traditional agricultural knowledge in rural communities and regards it as practices, techniques, knowledge, and worldviews that address issues with agricultural production. Toledo (2005) classifies it as local knowledge and explains that it is a variety of empirically based understandings that are transmitted verbally and are a result of non-industrial forms of nature appropriation.

Understanding local knowledge necessitates both an analysis of practical relationships and the belief system of the culture or group to which the relationships belong. It is situated geographically because it depends on deeply ingrained cultures in the environments and is based on an emotional and direct relationship with nature (Toledo & Barrera-Bassols, 2008).

In this sense, one might think of "local knowledge" as a cultural heritage because it encompasses practices, representations, expressions, skills, instruments, artifacts, objects, and all kinds of working tools. Additionally, there are communal cultural spaces where the social groups and individuals that make up that cultural wealth can grow and maintain a close relationship with nature.

Knowledge related to agriculture involves a process of passing down productive usages and practices that have been perfected over time by farmers in rural and indigenous communities. This is a delay from the western perspective that is based on modern scientific rationality, especially since the dominant agricultural vision has promoted the use of agricultural technologies and inputs produced by western science, which are seen as the foundation for the growth of agriculture (Cruz et al., 2015).

Traditional agricultural technology and its associated knowledge continually evolve, benefiting both indigenous communities and mestizo farmers, as time has

demonstrated their efficiency in terms of cost, economics, and the utilization of natural resources. Although it is understood that not all agricultural practices are appropriate and social relationships between farmers are not always healthy (Bartra, 2003; 2010), Bartra asserts that indigenous and mixed-race farmers produce more than just corn, chili, and beans. They also produce a variety of agrobiologically diverse social and cultural landscapes, a variety of odors, tastes and textures, and clean air, among other things. The rural world is not only about the production of commodities but also about the conservation of nature and culture.

The previous section includes a millennial-scale productive activity called agriculture. Mexico is recognized as one of agriculture's seven origin countries (Vavilov, 1931). It is believed that this activity was discovered or invented there at least nine thousand years ago. The authors of this article understand agriculture as the "art of cultivating the land." It is both a science and an art, and both ideas imply the production of necessities for societies (Hernández cited by Mariaca, 1997). Knowledge primarily refers to the ability to perform tasks with skill and elegance. In the context of science, it involves the search for and definition of the laws governing the behavior of the phenomena involved in the production and survival of those who manage them. Traditional agriculture draws from traditional and fungicide knowledge. Their characteristics and peculiarities, according to Hernández (1985), imply:

> Long-term empirical experience that has helped to shape the current production processes and management practices based on producers' intimate knowledge of the physical and biological nature of the environment. Non-formal education for the transmission of the necessary knowledge and skills.

> A cultural awareness in the agricultural population's minds. As it happens with modern or commercial agriculture, the knowledge is based on Western sciences, in what is produced in laboratories and experimental fields of private institutions and universities dedicated to agricultural research; whose products are transferred in technological packages, making them dependent peasants and producers who have the need to use them. (p. 420).

It is considered that the generation of both types of knowledge, traditional and modern, can be functional in both cases despite the origin. The problem is the generation of technological dependence, economic controls, and inadequate public policies applied to the field by institutions or governments in turn.

It is important to establish connections with agricultural research institutions to engage in knowledge dialogues, and not to neglect contemporary

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scientific and technological knowledge or traditional knowledge. This statement, of course, demands an integration compatible with social, physical and economic reproduction of traditional agricultural production systems. They are based on local practices of use and exploitation of resources and traditions and customs within communities. It also involves eradicating predatory impositions that affect the soil and the planet (Ochoa, 2022).

Within this social and institutional context, local knowledge-bearers interact with other subjects, social actors, public and private institutions. These can act as articulating axes of alternatives to rural development, that from Escobar's perspective (2012), arise from indigenous struggles that links with other movements: environmentalists, students, Afro-descendants, as well as women and young people.

"Living Well" presents itself as a new way of thinking and a lifestyle of individual, community, and social life, since it is in constant search for the balance among nature, what humans are and the place they inhabit (Rengifo et al., 2022). In short, it is a crossroads of knowledge that aims to improve living conditions from the local level without neglecting the global, and to address problems such as national and global food shortages. The latter is not the result of lack of production, but of neoliberal policies that have left food distribution in hands of free trade, and that are putting food self-sufficiency at risk.

It is important not to depend mainly on imports of basic cereals, meats, and other food products that can be produced —and very well— in Mexico. This would mean moving away from the global market for agro-food products from the Green Model (GM) seeds without enough information on the impact of consumption on human health, and consequently make them a serious problem for human health and biodiversity.

Ethnoagronomy as a Tool and Alternative for the Agricultural Development of Mexico

The research on ethnoagronomy originates at the Universidad Autónoma Chapingo, and it is getting importance from visions promoted by their social scientists who were trained from the academic perspective of Efraín Hernández Xolocotzi in the exploitation of natural resources and traditional agricultural technology.

Although the concept of "ethnoagronomy" is new, its foundations go back to the origins of agriculture. It brings a background of over thousands of years; however, as a result of the conquest of Mexico and other countries of the Americas, a capitalist system of production and control over national knowledge

was imposed. Therefore, it is sought to reconsider its possible generation and growth, and its techno-productive legacy; because in Mexico there is enough technology to develop its own type of agriculture, as well as universities able to train technical personnel to respond to this proposal, integrating and improving the knowledge owned by national farming.

If in Mexico more than a hundred food and utilitarian plants were domesticated, why not create the country's own technologies by recovering traditional knowledge? The producers of modern technology are classifying us with their products. The roots of these products belong to Mexico and were extracted from the country without consent. This is a situation that must be taken advantage of now that the Western capitalist development model, as well as the socialist model, have entered a crisis, and also now that these models' efficiency and social quality are being discussed.

To summarize, there is a global development crisis facing cultural, civilizational, ecological, and food production. The alleged modernization of the Mexican countryside has shown to be ineffective. In 1910, agriculture was in hands of farmers; with Lázaro Cárdenas (1936-1940), a larger part of the peasantry had access to land, which meant a boost in agricultural production.

Between 1960 and 1970, national agricultural censuses show that small-scale producers lacked modern technology, were self-sufficient, and had scarce subsidies for seed and fertilizer production, or for machinery, among other elements. Large producers dominated the consumption of those resources as if they were their right exclusively for several years. Since 1990 the Secretariat of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Natural Resources (SAGARPA) only funds this type of producers (Cervantes-Herrera et al., 2016).

Small producers have become aware and support the country's food security. They have shifted from being objects to becoming development subjects and forgers of their own destiny. This feature or general fact in the spaces occupied by small producers forces a redefinition of the concept of "development" and its various denominations (rural, sustainable, sustained, economic, and social, among others). It tends toward post-development. Concepts such as *Buen Vivir* (Good Living) are an intrinsic quality of every Mexican. This concept also implies the protection of culture, nature, and food sovereignty; but mainly, it encompasses the survival of the human race and the planet's animals and plants.

In this regard, and in the face of the decline in the quality of life in the countryside, international organizations such as the World Bank (2008) have pointed out the importance of traditional agriculture in the production of safe food and in creating income for the maintenance of peasant unity.

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Results

In Mexico, industrial agricultural production is based on the use of technological innovations that are generally controlled by large agro-industrial corporations that leave small production units unprotected. Most of these small production units are managed by peasants and indigenous peoples who share worldviews and experiences of long history in their territories.

Out of 112.3 million people, the total population of the country, 15.7 million are officially indigenous (13.98%). Most of them reside in the states of Chiapas, Oaxaca, and Guerrero (INEGI, 2010), regions with cultural richness, biodiversity, knowledge, and technologies related to the management of natural and environmental resources: flora, fauna, medicinal plants, soil, water and domestication of plants in inhabited places (Cervantes-Herrera et al., 2015).

Within this scenario, the persistence and importance of peasantry and indigenous groups in Mexico is crucial in these times. A new economic vision of production is needed to rescue the Mexican countryside. Especially because the countryside is being abandoned because of the lack of guarantees for employment. This phenomenon is akin to the loss of a right and to the loss of labor sovereignty. The country is slowly being destroyed due to the inability of its politicians to provide dignified and well-paid activity to peasants of the countryside.

A solution to this problem will not be achieved by itself. It demands a genuine and complete agricultural reform that considers ecosystems, the disparity of regions, crops, food necessities, knowledge, and the population of communities. But mainly, the solution should propel a total revival of internal markets with domestic products, and thereby a revival of rural development that restarts peasant agriculture, food production, and also guarantee prices and promote crops that reduce the uncontrolled use of fertilizers. "Foundations should be established for equitable development in the countryside over the medium and long term through a comprehensive development and institutional coordination plan" (Vilaboa-Arroniz et al., 2022, p. 432).

An unmistakable fact is that the transformations that have taken place in agriculture, based on cutting-edge technologies, have their support in Western sciences. They obey productive practices completely different from the local production in the Mexican territory. For example, in the United States, with the promotion of the technological package of the Green Revolution (abundant soil and water, improved seeds, uncontrolled use of fertilizers and chemical inputs and machinery) there was an agricultural boom between 1950 and 1960.

However, the uncontrolled use of this type of agriculture has caused a serious deterioration of natural resources due to the technological inputs it

uses. This in addition to the cost that it implies for small producers who are left out of the use of these technologies. Cervantes-Herrera et al., (2016) state "The Mexican government has made increasing investments to modernize the Mexican countryside, however, from 1950 to 2007, a healthy number of peasant family farming units have not been incorporated into modern technology" (p. 137). These family farming units use traditional agricultural technology, that is understood as:

> The knowledge necessary for the exploitation of natural resources used by the peasant population, many of them indigenous, belong to any of the more than 50 ethnic groups that survive in our country. This knowledge is an independent manifestation of the vision of Western science, and that results in a knowledge of its own. The existence of another way of generating knowledge is accepted, the existence of another science, based on the peasant vision that has enabled the survival and development of different civilizations in our country and elsewhere in the world: the ethno-science that, applied to agriculture, is called ethnoagronomy. (Cruz, 2008, p. 117).

In Sinaloa, Sonora, Jalisco, Guanajuato and other states, certain producers who own flat land, water, and economic resources use agricultural infrastructure with cutting-edge technologies:

> In 2011, Sinaloa was the state of the country with the largest number of hectares with machined agriculture, the use of agrochemicals, GM seed, irrigation, phytosanitary techniques, and technical assistance. Of the 1,626,551 planting hectares, 99% was machined and 94% had agrochemicals used on them. (Chauvet & Lazos, 2014, p. 10).

In the state of Sinaloa, there is also another reality:

> The watering hill slopes and plains, populated by indigenous Mayan and poor Mestizos, are still cultivated by native Mayans. In the study by the National Commission for Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO), nine races of native corn are reported: Tabloncillo, Tabloncillo Perla, Tuxpeño, Elotero, Blando de Sonoran, Onaveño, Vandeño, Reventador, and Jala. (Chauvet & Lazos 2014, p. 12).

Reflec
tion

From the study by Chauvet and Lazos (2014), it is important to highlight that the main problem detected with Sinaloa producers is the introduction of inappropriate technology —the study deals with the commercial planting of transgenic corn— due to the involved economic costs; above all, due to the social, environmental, and cultural repercussions that its implementation represents.

The biggest problem for large and medium producers is the marketing of grains. Worth highlighting is the fact that production by small producers for personal consumption contributes to the preservation of native corn, due to agricultural practices they use and the adaptation to the environmental conditions that they have developed. Implicit in this situation is the recognition of local knowledge, which is emphasized in this work.

In addition to this, production based on the use of scientific and technological innovations affects the food chain. Due to changes in the use of technologies and the division of labor, there is an increase in the flows of trade in goods, services, investments, and financial capital, as well as changes in consumer preferences, the emergence of new products, technological developments, and changes in the forms of relationships amongst countries (IICA, 2001).

Linked to this, new relationships are established between producers and consumers, as a result of the specifications in the demand for products. These products have to meet certain standards related to health, better taste or dietary quality, including productive systems with certain ethical values, which imply specific production negotiations (Lamine, 2005). The new scenarios for agricultural producers require different assessments from the existing ones about the role that production and technology should play in the construction of development alternatives. This context demands a new productive behavior related to quality and market demand, increasingly more careful of diet and the consumed products. Barkin (2001) states that:

> For them to be efficient productive systems, they have to be complemented with other activities that add value, and at the same time prevent exploitation from becoming another mechanism of destruction of nature, the sources of wealth and environmental and life quality, that is: healthy, sustainable, and accessible to all. (p. 13).

In this perspective, ecosystems and natural regions, as shared social spaces, play a fundamental role in rural studies. Especially when betting on alternative development in which local actors are the protagonists of the definition, execution, and control of development strategies. In it, the sense of belonging and cultural identity gain strength as factors of social, economic, and institutional transformation in the mid and long term (Vázquez, 2005).

It must be kept in mind that peasants, whether small farmers or associations, are the core of the popular economy and suffer a war of extermination driven by transnational corporations and imperial governments. Once medium and small agriculture (which produces food) collapses, human beings will be at the mercy of capital. From that point, the interest in recovering traditional knowledge —Mexican technological knowledge— made by Mexicans for anyone to whom it may be useful arises. This knowledge must continue to be developed, promoted and placed at the same level as Western knowhow, to demonstrate that we are capable of conducting science using Mexican resources and philosophical concepts. This knowledge, when interspersed in a dialogue of general knowledge, is enhanced through the methodological contribution offered by other of knowledge areas.

Ethnoagronomy, as a synthesis of knowledge, gains relevance and validity because it offers a new look at the pressing problems of the primary sector in Mexico. Since, from the existing commercialized and utilitarian education, it is difficult to find guidelines for its redirection. However, given the change of government, the public policy of the National Council of Science and Technology (CONACyT) recognizes the creation of a new national project, where the development of an endogenous national science with social and community awareness is proposed, as highlighted in the third guiding principle, which says:

> Planning for long-term national scientific development, guiding national science: (i) to combat social lags, (ii) to eliminate the gender gap, (iii) for environmental restoration, (iv) to create a true dialogue of knowledge and foster the protection of community territories and their biocultural wealth, (v) the prevention of natural disasters and a response to them,
>
> (vi) to the promotion of systemic and preventive health approaches, (vii) to create frontier biomedical research to mitigate the impacts of the diseases that most afflict our population, (viii) to promote the agroecological production of healthy, diverse foods, sufficient, and culturally appropriate, (ix) to care for water, (x) to evaluate the impacts of extractivism and various industries, (xi) to promote the creation of clean national industries and environmentally friendly energies, (xii) and to promote social research to prevent violence, among others. (Álvarez-Buylla, 2018, pp. 2-3).

In what is proposed, the task of ethnoagronomy is established, in the sense of promoting traditional social research combined with modern research, which has been subjugated by the supremacy of biased, commercialized, and utilitarian knowledge. So, the horizontality and verticality of the sciences are necessary in order for them to meet and establish a dialogue. A recognition process is necessary

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through an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and intercultural scientific combination and complementation. The challenges that this new vision implies must be supported by processes of social participation actions.

Educational institutions play a determining role. Therefore, some principles of attitude, behavior, and commitment, both of technicians and facilitators (social scientists), are taken from the AGRUCO Program, of the Universidad Mayor de San Simón in Cochabamba, Bolivia. This, due to the relevance that in this collegiate body of researchers, studies on the dialogue of knowledge, revaluation of indigenous peasant wisdom, agroecology as an alternative for development and the revaluation of local technological innovations have, which are closely related to ethnoagronomy. These principles (Villarroel & Mariscal, 2010, p. 11) are a starting point for achieving alternative development projects in different modalities, and consist of:

- Respecting and valuing local wisdom and the knowledge of men and women.
- Promoting complementarity between local wisdom and scientific knowledge.
- Not imposing rules, but rather promoting agreement, dialogue and mutual respect.
- Focusing attention on people and nature; not just on economic development.
- Building before displacing and/or replacing.
- Facilitating, not managing, local self-managed processes.
- Contributing to the change processes; not taking responsibility for the changes.
- Participating in the processes of local development and sustainable endogenous development.
- Promoting social learning and the reflection-action (learning by doing).

The top-down view is largely in the past. Currently, the role of agriculture and food production is strategic in the face of eventual climate change. Peasants and indigenous people require productive strategies based on their conditions of social reproduction, assumed and shared by the residents. Knowledge (folk knowledge) arising from their own experiences, accompanied by local and scientific knowledge, is essential. Therein lies the importance of ethnoagronomy, which systematizes the knowledge used by mestizo and indigenous peasants. Cruz (2008) states that: "with this, we would be on the path proposed by the search and systematization of the knowledge of peasant communities for its registration, assessment and possible use in sustainable development proposals" (p.125). In a recent publication, titled "Ethnoagronomy: Utopia and Alternatives

to Development," Cruz and Franco (2021) compile 16 works that deepen the theoretical vision, community work, and the construction of alternatives to develop from this perspective.

Conclusions

Ethnoagronomy is a great challenge for Mexico. Especially when, in the last four decades, agricultural public policy has been directed at the global market. For its part, agronomic education must be directed to the change processes in Mexico. Therefore, it is necessary to promote primarily agricultural education that breaks with traditional teaching-learning schemes and integrates situated knowledge; this is starting point in new teaching practices. The decolonization of the Mexican educational system is required, which implies "an educational revolution that [must be supported] by a double investment: a new orientation of research work and a new understanding of the educational style of an emerging counterculture" (Illich, 1985, p. 55).

For the Universidad Autónoma Chapingo, reorienting its teaching-learning processes with attachment to ethnosciences is a challenge and a great opportunity, understanding these processes as the set of disciplines that account for indigenous, peasant, and popular wisdom, and that have contributed to an assessment in the field of scientific knowledge (Argueta, 1997; Pérez & Argueta, 2022). According to the Law that creates it, it mainly receives young people from rural Mexico. Therefore, putting the teaching-learning of ethnoagronomy into practice brings them closer to its reality.

This presents institutional difficulties, which involve reforming study plans and programs, and adjusting them to a perspective that prioritizes local knowledge, innovations, and technologies. The starting point could be the reformulation a of a liberating and creative pedagogy of a new style of development, compatible with the government program that is currently promoted, in which the foundations are being created for the achievement of food self-sufficiency and education with quality and coverage, at the middle school and high school level in Mexico, in which prevails:

> An educational practice in accordance with the country's transformation program, with the necessary flexibility to be enriched and modified to incorporate a sustainable perspective, based on plural, diverse, inclusive coexistence, with a clear identity, with historical memory and founded on the incorporation of knowledge and supportive relationships with other peoples, in a true practice of

interculturality [...] an educational transformation that involves authorities but also teachers, directors, students, parents, and communities to achieve quality education with humanistic and supportive values. (PAN, 2018, p. 23).

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The Social Function of Art. A Comparative Study of the Tale "El Canto de la Cigarra" ("The Song of the Cicada") by Onelio Jorge Cardoso and the Aesop Fable, "The Ants and the Grasshopper"*

[English version]

La función social del arte. Estudio comparativo del cuento «El canto de la cigarra» de Onelio Jorge Cardoso y del mito «La cigarra y las hormigas» de Esopo

A função social da arte. Estudo comparativo entre o conto "O canto da cigarra" de Onélio Jorge Cardoso e o mito "A cigarra e as formigas" de Esopo

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Abstract

Objective: To highlight the power of art to transform an individual's ethical behavior and support them in their struggle against unjust power, through the study of the story "El Canto De La Cigarra" ("The Song of the Cicada") by Cuban author Onelio Jorge Cardoso (1914-1986) and the fable "The Ants and the Grasshopper" by the Greek fabulist Aesop (6th

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century B.C.). **Methodology**: The starting point was a historical journey through Platonic, Pythagorean, Aristotelian, and Cynic philosophy, as well as the philosophy of the German philosopher Schopenhauer, regarding the ability of art to mitigate humanity's pain and appease its passions. Emphasizing that in the story "The Song of the Cicada," the Cuban writer emphasizes the relationship between art and power and illustrates the creation of a healthy and constructive society through aesthetic cultivation, a comparative study was conducted of this story with the fable "The Ants and the Grasshopper" by Aesop. Both authors use the world of animals as a microcosm of the human community. **Results**: The social importance of the artist and their work was demonstrated. Although not immediately evident, the usefulness of this importance can lead to the moral improvement of the entire community, fostering a solidary and anti-dogmatic future. **Conclusions**: Through the allegorical paradigm of the animal community, it becomes clear that art introduces perfection and ethical beauty into society. Hence, in a world in full social crisis, the artist, through his work, manages to topple the powerful from their thrones, exalting the most humiliated and creating an ideal world.

Keywords: art; fable; society; power; injustice.

Resumen

Objetivo: resaltar la fuerza del arte para transformar la conducta ética del individuo y apoyarlo en su lucha contra el poder injusto, a través del estudio del cuento «El canto de la cigarra" del autor cubano Onelio Jorge Cardoso (1914-1986) y de la fábula «La cigarra y las hormigas» del fabulista griego Esopo (siglo VI a. C.). **Metodología**: se partió de un recorrido histórico por la filosofía platónica, pitagórica, aristotélica cínica y la del filósofo alemán Schopenhauer, sobre la trascendencia del arte para mitigar el dolor del hombre y apaciguar sus pasiones. Con la finalidad de recalcar que en el cuento «El canto de la cigarra» el escritor cubano hace hincapié en la relación del arte con el poder y exhibe la creación de una sociedad sana y constructiva a través del cultivo estético, se realizó un estudio comparativo de dicho cuento con la Fábula «La cigarra y las hormigas» de Esopo ya que ambos autores utilizan el mundo de los animales como microcosmos de la comunidad humana. **Resultados**: se demostró la importancia social del artista y de su obra cuya utilidad, aunque no sea evidente de inmediato, puede conducir al perfeccionamiento moral de toda la colectividad construyendo un futuro solidario y antidogmático. **Conclusiones**: a través del paradigma alegórico de la comunidad de los animales se hace claro que el arte introduce la perfección y la belleza ética en la sociedad.

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De ahí que, en un mundo en plena crisis social, el artista con su obra logre derribar del trono a los poderosos enalteciendo a los más humillados y creando un mundo ideal.

Palabras clave: arte; mito; sociedad; poder; injusticia.

Resumo

Objetivo: evidenciar o poder da arte para transformar a conduta ética do indivíduo e apoiá-lo na sua luta contra o poder injusto, através do estudo do conto "O canto da cigarra" do escritor cubano Onelio Jorge Cardoso (1914-1986) e da fábula "A cigarra e as formigas" do fabulista grego Esopo (séc. VI a.C.). **Metodologia**: o ponto de partida foi um percurso histórico pela filosofia platónica, pitagórica, aristotélica, cínica e do filósofo alemão Schopenhauer, sobre a transcendência da arte para mitigar a dor do homem e apaziguar as suas paixões. Para salientar que no conto "O Canto da Cigarra" o escritor cubano enfatiza a relação entre a arte e o poder e mostra a criação de uma sociedade sã e construtiva através do cultivo estético, foi efetuado um estudo comparativo deste conto com a fábula "A Cigarra e as Formigas" de Esopo, uma vez que ambos os autores utilizam o mundo dos animais como microcosmo da comunidade humana. **Resultados**: foi demonstrada a importância social do artista e da sua obra, cuja utilidade, embora não seja imediatamente evidente, pode conduzir à melhoria moral de toda a comunidade, construindo um futuro de solidariedade e antidogmatismo. **Conclusões**: através do paradigma alegórico da comunidade dos animais, torna-se claro que a arte introduz a perfeição e a beleza ética na sociedade. Assim, num mundo em plena crise social, o artista com a sua obra consegue derrubar os poderosos do seu trono, exaltando os mais humilhados e criando um mundo ideal.

Palavras-chave: arte; mito; sociedade; poder; injustiça.

Art and Its Social Function

The cicada and its association with art can be traced back to antiquity, in Aesop's fables (6th century B.C.). In recent times, Onelio Jorge Cardoso —a Cuban writer who lived from 1914 to 1986— was concerned with the social function of art and the artist. He also used the song of the cicada and its symbolism as a means of escaping the harsh reality of his time, convinced of its ideological dimension. As such, the role of the artist is not limited to entertainment and amusement but to serving as an instrument for the education and awareness of its recipient regarding the problems "of the spatial-temporal reality in which they live" (Pandis Pavlakis, 2015, p. 163). The aim of the present article, through a comparative study, is to highlight the theme of the power of art to transform the behavior of the individual and to support them in their struggle against unjust power.

The cicada that appears as the protagonist, both in Onelio Jorge Cardoso's story and in Aesop's myth, is also found in Plato's *Phaedrus* (1970). There, Plato presents Socrates conversing with another man, a lover of the Muses, to whom he reveals a legend about the origin of the cicadas and his mission of informing the Muses about who pays homage to them.

> It is said that these little animals were once men that existed before the Muses were born. When the Muses were born and singing appeared, some of them were so transported with pleasure that, singing, they neglected to eat and drink and died without noticing it. From these was born later the race of the cicadas that received the ability to go without food as a gift from the Muses. They sing from the moment they are born until they die, without eating or drinking. After their death, they go to notify which of the people of this world they pay homage to. […] But it is to the eldest, Calliope, and to Urania, the next oldest, that they give notice of those who spend their lives devoted to philosophy and cultivate the kind of music over which they preside. And these, precisely, being among the Muses, those who deal with heaven and with divine and human discourses, are the ones who emit the most beautiful voice. (259 b-c, 259d).

In these statements, emphasis is placed on the fact that, thanks to this metamorphosis, those men turned into cicadas "only to the song they were born" (Luque 37) received the privilege of singing without ever ceasing, thus defeating death itself. In addition, Pythagorean philosophy is highlighted here by referring to Urania, the Muse of astronomy. Therefore, from a cosmological explanation, even music could reveal "the harmonic structure of the universe" (Garcia, 2013, p. 23). The above explains the presence of this artist creature both in Onelio Jorge

Cardoso's tale and in Aesop's fable, and justifies its supposed frivolity, laziness, and aversion to work.

Other Greek philosophers, such as Pythagoras and Aristotle, have granted special importance to art, and more specifically, to music (Garcia, 2013, pp. 15-21) and its extraordinary power to please men and mitigate the pain of the sorrowful (Garcia, 2013, pp. 15-21; Tatarkiewicz, 2000, pp. 15-190). Precisely, for the Pythagoreans, music expressed the harmony of numbers and of the cosmos, which was reduced to melodic numbers that provided "all the intelligible and sensible fullness of being." For them, music served as a mediator between the human being and God (Rojas, 2005, pp. 1, 37 and 83). In this regard, the German philosopher Schopenhauer (2005) saw art as a liberating force to free one from pain.

In "The Song of the Cicada" (1962), Jorge Cardoso uses the animal world as a microcosm of the human community, just as the cynics who speak of "a humanized animality that, wise by nature [...], shows teachings, behaviors" (Flores, 2015, pp. 3-4). In this world, animals and insects coexist in harmony. There are the industrious bees, the crickets, the little parrot, the malevolent toad, the mayor —or the beetle— with its fat, difficult to move body, powerful but unhappy, and the cicada, the agile artist who possesses the gift of music. All, except the head of the executive branch of the community, are characterized by a natural wisdom.

The story highlights the importance and social necessity of art, whose value is not just recognized by those who are moved by dark and petty feelings. In this particular story, the beetle, jealous of the merit of others, cannot stand the artistic prowess of his antagonist, the cicada. Thus, considering art as a useless and unproductive craft, he continues to spend his time and energy defaming and disqualifying it to eliminate its seduction (Pavlakis, 1996, pp. 48-49). And, although some ardent defenders of the cicada appear, such as the crickets, the firefly, the little parrot, and the bee— the insect "emblem of work and obedience" (Cirlot, 2006, p. 63)— the mayor persists in his idea, as seen in the following dialogue:

> The crickets, who are very good musicians, praised the cicada very much [...] It croons and entertains, do you suggest, dear Mayor —replied the same bee; yet I will not deny that the melody resides within the breadth of the wind and reaches out all around [...] Just then, a tiny parrot [...] chirped: [...] Only yesterday while raising my hand to chastise one of my kids, the melodic tune of our fellow, the cicada, danced into my ears. There, my hand suspended and remained in the middle of the air, unable to be lowered [...] Within her melody lies a magic that mends a woman's heart. "Oh, indeed, something paralyzing," teased the mayor. "Be it paralyzing or otherwise [...] the point is: my hand did not descend upon

my child." Ah, well, no matter! I inquire if equity resides in our collective toil while she remains at rest. "Her job is crooning, dear Mayor," uttered a beautiful cold-light firefly [...] "Let her articulate the rationale behind her idleness; let her unveil her guilt." [...] "I," the cicada began calmly, "was born for crooning, and if that is my fault, fault it is not mine to bear". (Cardoso, 1975, pp. 483-485).

These utterances emphasize the boundaries separating the two characters. On the one hand, there is the cicada, the diligent artist who opts to devote her life solely to her craft. On the other hand, there is the mayor, a stark juxtaposition to the cicada, who derisively considers that the cicada's melody is noxious or "paralyzing." This underscores his philosophical skepticism as he posits that the music's force is merely illusory, briefly diverting the listener's focus while lulling them toward a state of "laziness, drunkenness and ruin." Additionally, upon the cessation of the music "the unhealed mind falls back into feelings of anger, apprehension and sorrow" (Tatarkiewicz, 2000, p. 191). This segment certainly captures the author's perspective, esteeming the artistry of the cicada, which, in this case, resembles the artist and unquestionably deems him "essential, cons-tructive, and enlightening toward the suitable development of a robust society" (Pavlakis, 1996, p. 49). Thus, underscoring the music's value and influence on the soul because it manages to build "the disturbed harmony of the individuals' spirit" again (Montero, 1989, p. 51). As it happens with the tiny parrot who, thanks to the effect of singing, is calmed down and prevented from chastising her child (Pavlakis, 1996, pp. 48-49).

Similarly, the disciples of Pythagoras resorted to medicine for the purifi-cation of the body and to music for the soul (Tatarkiewicz, 2000, p.89). Music, in this situation, leads to catharsis through musical healing. Based on Aristotle, what is associated with "purification of the emotions" is rather a restoration, a mental and physiological unburdening toward emotional harmony (Amigo, 2014, p. 472). In particular, in his *Politics*, Aristotle claims that through music individuals change their behavior as a result of the arising strong emotions, allowing them to take the lead in the development of an ideal city (García Peña, 2013, p. 34). Thus, through the prism of Aristotelian philosophy, musical practice has various benefits (Aristotle, 1994 [*Pol.*], 1352a]).

In this realm, the beetle-mayor, enchanted by envy —that "minuscule obscure seed which, should it find haven within the heart's chambers and elude timely eviction, develops and grows until the tainting heart" (Cardoso, 1975, p. 483)— finds that he is incapable of grasping the cicada's artistic essence. As evident in the following excerpt imbued with Cardoso's wit, the mayor exploits his political dominion to incarcerate and chastise the cicada deeming it guilty of crooning without working.

"Oh, dear Mayor, what an earache I have!" lamented a pretty butterfly. That's the Eustachian tube [...] an instrument [...] susceptible to discordant harmonies. [...]-So is blame to be pinned on her, the cicada? [...] The cicada forever croons to demise! [...] So much so that some time later, nearly all of them, covering it up, left to evade the cicada's melody. Upon a morning's arrival [...] the mayor and his four tiny worms with their weapons, descended upon the abode of the cicada: -Submit yourself, youth, in the name [...] of the "Law of the ears". Needless to recount, that very night and no other, the young cicada's window blazed with light. And that's how most of the winter went. The people were not listening to the melody, and their palms descending sternly upon their children's bottoms, who were crying their eyes out and could not understand the cause of their chastisement. (Cardoso, 1975, pp. 485-487).

The preceding dialogue exemplifies that in a society characterized by the absence of democratic justice, the law of the strongest prevails. Consequently, the mayor ultimately achieved the tarnishing of the artist's reputation and her subsequent imprisonment, aided "by four tiny worms." The selection of this animal is not a matter of chance; as per Cirlot (2006), the worm, owing to its innate inferiority and subterranean existence —akin to that of a snake— represents "an example of the slithering and convoluted force [...] it bestows death instead of life." In this context, the worm symbolizes the demise of the superior entity (p. 239). Henceforth, within the realm of creatures, a sense of both material and spiritual dearth is accentuated by the artist's departure. The imperious need of her art, whose societal role intervenes "the aesthetic with the ethical and the pedagogical amplifies" (García, 2013, p. 34).

Nonetheless, the vice of ingratitude is chastised through an incident that alters the circumstances: the arrival of a toad, a malevolent creature,[1] who demands maintenance and threatens to destroy the community if denied. The urgency of the situation compels individuals to regard the strength of the cicada's craft as the most effective weapon against the imminent danger of the toad, and thus "the creatures themselves [...] offer mankind the tenets" (Reyes, 1965, p. 74) of wisdom. The mayor's facade of deceit is unveiled at this moment, He stands feeble and craven when facing the toad's threats, prepared to barter away his honor to preserve his position of power, as demonstrated in the following dialogue:

"Sir, how might we be at your service, Your Excellency?"

"In diverse and nourishing food," replied the toad.

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3 "Whose mission encompasses none but the shattering of the astral light" (Cirlot, 2006, pp. 262-400).

"An action must be taken swiftly," the mayor exclaimed nervously.

"You possess no duty!"

"I am the mayor, right?"

"It was [...] because since he called that beast excellence, it ceased to be so for us."

"Brothers, the cicada [...] Its music makes people better, it paralyzes the enemy. [...] as the tiny bee opened the door of the cicada's cell [...] she was writing on a lined paper."

"Sister, today we crave your melody as never before! [...] Let us proceed," the cicada uttered with simplicity, grasping her violin. [...] Slowly, a fine melody was ascending from the village, emanating from the cicada's window [...] At first, the huge beast began to smile mockingly, as time progresses his body was motionless, and eventually, akin to two huge, corrugated awnings, his eyelids descended. Subsequently, the villagers forsook their hiding spots, circled behind the hill, and embarked on their labor with heightened determination, undermining the earth, until, with one voice, they all turned away, and the earth gave way. The toad fell backwards, rolling into the abyss and his demise consummated. (Cardoso, 1975, pp 488-491).

These utterances reveal, on the one hand, the artist's magnanimity, her absence of bitterness, and her defiance against malevolence through her music, the sole weapon against oppressive power. On the other hand, the real and mixed personality of the mayor, whose power collapses; "what's not good can't last long" (Cardoso, 1975, p. 488). Thus, after the salvation of the people, everyone ended up recognizing the value of the artist and his task, respected and essential in every society. Their melodies expressed themselves universally "more secret life, desires, sufferings and joys, the flow and reflux of the heart" of the community (Schopenhauer, 2005). After a few years the grasshopper died, but no one forgot it. Its art was immortalized; it is not art but the artist who dies.

"The Grasshopper and the Ants" tells the story of two antagonistic animals. It is perhaps Aesop's most famous fable even though it is barely two paragraphs long. The lazy grasshopper lover of music and parties, singing all day long, completely forgets the coming winter, while the hard-working and sensible ants only gather food, wheat grains for the winter. Once winter arrives, the hungry and half-dead grasshopper asks for food from the ruthless ants, they let it die and even mock it:

> In winter ants dried wet grain. A hungry grasshopper asked them for food.
>
> The ants said: "Why didn't you store any food during the summer?"
>
> It said: "I didn't laze, but rather sang melodiously."
>
> They laughed and said: "So if you sang in the summer, now dance." (García, 1993, p. 154).

This dialogue contains the cruelty of the powerful being, the rich, toward the weaker who asks for help. The characters in Aesop's fables are almost always animals. There is a skeptical view and harsh perspective of power and strong attacks against powerful "animal that abuses its strength" (Rodríguez, 1986, p. 22). This view coincides with cynical philosophy, as a systematic denunciation of the old social order and traditional values (Rod, 1986, p. 22).

On this basis, it can be deduced that the grasshopper, the protagonist of both stories, faithful to the cynical philosophy, is the embodiment of joy. It shows anti-conventionalism and highlights the value of nature and fights against all vanity. The conflict between nature and power is taken to the extreme (Villalobos, 2009, pp. 15, 18 and 26). The two grasshoppers carry all the goods with them without seeking the unnatural social principles; such as the vain appearance of power, wealth or glory (Martín & Zamora, 2018, p. 7), and none of them "desire great things. They accept death after a life that seeks to be pleasant but simple" (Rodríguez, 1986, pp. 23, 25 and 26). Aesop uses these symbolic stereotypes to "morally teach the reader" (Cuesta, 2009, pp. 152-153) and he does not hesitate in placing man at the level of the animal, in continuous struggle for survival (Matic, 2015, p. 158). Cardoso fights against "the arduous and anchored moral order" to build a world with humanity's full realization (Doncel, 2007, p. 419), without the cruel repression of the powerful.

From all the above, the discourse of the Cardosian tale, through the presentation of scenes of daily life of a community of animals, offers messages of a didactic nature, related to the role of art and the artist in human society. Similarly, Aesop, in the fable "The Grasshopper and the Ants," personifies animals to convey a moralizing message, associating the grasshopper with song and art.

Both the Greek fabulist and Cardoso expose an approach to the conflict between the two animals, they leave the possibility of the choice of conduct, always according to the principle of free will and its value (García, 1993, p. 5). According to the narrative theory of Bal (1990), the characters in a work are not necessarily human, therefore, personified and speaking animals are presented. They bear characteristics attributed by the author; the animal receive a symbolic

value, and its anthropomorphic appearance is presented with human qualities and defects. In Aesop's fable there is a conflict between the grasshopper, the loafer that chooses the artistic world without material concerns and is punished for frivolity; and the cruel, powerful and rich ants for storing food and choosing hard work to survive. In Cardoso's story, the two antagonists are the grasshopper (the artist that sweetens the trials of life) and the beetle (the evil mayor able of all sorts of wick), each with its position on the scale of values (García, 1993, p. 5).

In general, both authors tell their stories between time-spatial accuracy and vagueness, and their characters are human types who live in a timeless and constant place; behavior patterns and actions that could happen in different places and times are achieved. García (1993) states that:

> In the allegorical mirror of the animal world, a tough society is reflected, in a constant struggle for survival. Despite its apparent non-historicity, with its reference to beings guided by their natural senses, this conception of the animal universe as a competitive and ruthless society leaves an unavoidable historical background to be felt. (p. 6).

The story is developed within a fixed and unchangeable "nature of animals" (Martín & Zamora, 2018, p. 8) in a *locus amoenus, a* figurative place, synonymous with a paradise that enjoys life, *carpe diem.* García (1993) through the scene of a fantastic animal world, states allegorically the moral of a tale to the real world. In both stories, the speaking animal characters do not try to avoid reality, but they signify a meditation on the world of humans. In this microcosm, animals with their *logos* capacity, i.e. "reason and word," state that: "The world is like this; as merciless and pragmatic as the one reflected in these incredible images" (García, 1993, p. 4).

In Aesop's fable, an "austere style" and "ascetic simplicity" are noted. From this simplicity of telling all the accessory is removed and the essence of narrative is better captured, without "historical costumes" or decorations (García, 1993, p. 4). Despite the fact that sometimes comic traits are attributed to the animals by the satirical and realistic nature of the myth, they are not allowed to move away from the cruelty of life, from other animals or from humankind in constant struggle, "some to impose their power and others to avoid being subjected to it" (Montaner, 2013, p. 184). Cardoso always chooses to write a simple, almost schematic way to manage the conflicts of the characters (Bueno, 1963, p. 450). The stories also mix the serious and the funny, humor and truth, the tragic and the comic, to teach and attack at the same time; to "avoid mocking the errors of the soul" (Villalobos, 2009, p. 36). Since it aspires to entertain, as well as denounce

the evils affecting people and proposes the creation of a better society through the modification of human behavior.

Although Aesop's fable presents the defense of the weak against the strong and powerful animal, although naive and, most of the time, "the small triumphing over the great" (Rodríguez, 1986, p. 22). This particular fable does not have a happy ending, as the artist dies in winter due to cold and starvation. It aroused much criticism from intellectuals who considered this fable an example of selfishness and inhumanity. Perhaps for this reason, in other versions of "The Ant and the Grasshopper," by different authors it turns out that the ants change their attitude and take pity on the lazy singer, giving her shelter and food; the artist, for her part, offers them good music that sweetens their hard life (García, 1993, p.9). Speaking of this fable, Rousseau criticizes the morality that emerges from it, for corrupting young people, showing that the winners in life are the strongest (García, 1993, p. 5): "The most hateful of all monsters would be a greedy and tough child who knew what was asked of him and what he denied. The ant does even more, she teaches him to mock his refusals" (Rousseau, 1990, p. 144).

At this point lies the great difference between this fable and Jorge Cardoso's story that has modified Aesop's original tale and its moral by presenting a new version with "a conscious desire to correct the original sense, [which] is a very repeated process in literary history" (García, 1993, p. 9). In the Cardosian tale, art manages to knock down the powerful from their thrones, exalting the weakest and most humiliated, which shows an ideal and righteous world where art, according to Schopenhauer (2005), makes the true essence of the world being discovered by using their own language, unknown by reason.

These two great authors wrote immortal narratives successfully, each in his own time and social context. Indeed, the artistic quality and universality of the work of Onelio Jorge Cardoso is evident. In the words of García (2013), the ideas that emerge from his texts:

> Can serve as an incentive to be a little better, and help build a supportive, anti-dogmatic, collectivist future, where prejudices and taboos, selfishness, misunderstandings and hypocrisies are banished, and where culture makes a discouraging function of the individual and the community. (p. 87).

In the same way, Aesop shows universal values and norms of behavior and, with his acute observation, presents the vices and virtues of men in an accurate and ironic way. Likewise, he has served as a source of inspiration for several authors during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, among which the French writer Jean de La Fontaine and the Spanish Félix María de Samaniego stand out (García, 1993, p. 16).

In "The Song of the Cicada" by Cardoso, there is a protest against the powerful villain, his punishment and the superior value of artistic talent and kindness, features of the cicada in front of the ruler. Thus, the Cuban author undertakes the defense of the value of the artist and his work, whose first and most universal purpose is to serve the moral improvement of all and make them better, although the usefulness of his task is not immediately evident (Hernández, 1985, p. 95). In this way, art is identified as "a very particular socio-cultural attitude and not the palliative of human misery" (Prada, 1988, p. 142) that helps the spirit to open the doors to save itself from the suffocation of the world (Prada, 1988, p. 38) introducing into society "perfection and beauty" (Prada, 1988, p. 142). For this reason, in the story, the community of animals realizes that they need art to refine their sensitivity and enjoy emotion and feelings in a world exempted from the abuse of power, the origin of all evils. In Aesop's fable, "The Ant and the Grasshopper," at a time in full social crisis or decadence of cultural values, a lesson in inhumanity is given (Rousseau, 1990) against the artist and his talent, who falls victim to the insensitivity of the most powerful and is sentenced to death, without scruples, by those who do not understand the true value of art which, according to Schopenhauer, constitutes the quintessence of life and could be "one of the possible solutions to the 'misery of the world'" (Rodríguez, 2011, p. 95).

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Reflective Minds: A Bibliographic Review of Ancestral Practices in the Worldview of Amerindian Peoples toward the Healing of the Spirit*

[English version]

Mentes reflexivas: revisión bibliográfica sobre prácticas ancestrales en la cosmovisión de los pueblos amerindios hacia la sanación del espíritu

Mentes reflexivas: uma revisão da literatura sobre práticas ancestrais na cosmovisão dos povos ameríndios para a cura do espírito

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Re
view

Abstract

Objective: To expose central aspects of ancestral practices and cosmovision as explanations for spiritual healing and mental balance in the Amerindian population. This is based on the guiding principle that each language, practice, and conception of life embodies the unique cultural wisdom of a people and ancestral knowledge, which are transformed through collective narratives in ancestral healing events. **Methodology**: A documentary review is used through a qualitative approach; and, in turn, the tracking is framed in indexed journals and academically validated books by means of the Boolean operators AND, NOT and OR. The categorical axes that guide the tracking are "Ancestral Practices," "Cosmovision," and "Mental Health," and these words are related to criteria and content analysis. **Results and Conclusions**: It is understood that the use of language is substantial in effectively achieving desires for healing, restoration of well-being, and quality of life in the individual. Likewise, ancestral practices, ancestral elements, spiritual notions, and the healing of the spirit play a significant role in the balance of humanity.

Keywords: ancestral practices; language; cosmovision; mental health.

Resumen

Objetivo: exponer aspectos centrales de las prácticas ancestrales y cosmovisión como explicaciones de la sanación espiritual y equilibrio mental en población amerindia, partiendo del principio rector que cada lengua, práctica y concepción de la vida encarna la sabiduría cultural única de un pueblo y los conocimientos ancestrales; los cuales se transforman a través de las narraciones colectivas en eventos ancestrales de sanación. **Metodología**: se emplea una revisión documental a través de un enfoque cualitativo; y, a su vez, el rastreo se encuadra en revistas indexadas y libros validados académicamente por medio de los operadores Booleanos AND, NOT y OR. Los ejes categoriales que guían el rastreo son 'Prácticas Ancestrales', 'Cosmovisión' y 'Salud Mental', y dichos vocablos se relacionan con análisis de criterio y contenido. **Resultados y conclusiones**: se comprende que el uso del lenguaje es sustancial en la consecución efectiva de los deseos de curación, restauración del bienestar y calidad de vida en el individuo; asimismo, se reivindican las prácticas ancestrales, los elementos ancestrales, las nociones espirituales y la sanación del espíritu en el equilibrio del hombre.

Palabras clave: prácticas ancestrales; lenguaje; cosmovisión; salud mental.

Resumo

Objetivo: expor os aspetos centrais das práticas ancestrais e da cosmovisão como explicações para a cura espiritual e o equilíbrio mental nas populações ameríndias, com base no princípio orientador de que cada idioma, prática e conceção de vida incorpora a sabedoria cultural única de um povo e o conhecimento ancestral, que são transformados por meio de narrativas coletivas em eventos de cura ancestral. **Metodologia**: é utilizada uma revisão documental por meio de uma abordagem qualitativa; e, por sua vez, a busca é enquadrada em periódicos indexados e livros validados academicamente por meio dos operadores booleanos AND, NOT e OR. Os eixos categóricos que orientam a pesquisa são "Práticas Ancestrais", "Cosmovisão" e "Saúde Mental", e essas palavras estão relacionadas aos critérios e à análise de conteúdo. **Resultados e conclusões**: entende-se que o uso da linguagem é substancial para a realização efetiva dos desejos de cura, restauração do bem-estar e qualidade de vida do indivíduo; práticas ancestrais, elementos ancestrais, noções espirituais e a cura do espírito no equilíbrio do homem também são justificados.

Palavras chave: práticas ancestrais; linguagem; visão de mundo; saúde mental.

Introduction

One of the essential elements underlying the understanding of spiritual knowledge and healing is woven through the deities known at different moments of a god's birth. Undoubtedly, one of the clearest examples is Mother Earth, *the Pachamama*, who provides natural elements to ancestral physicians for healing and delivers tools of the same nature to combat mental discomfort or spiritual weakness.

In relation to the above, it's important to note that indigenous peoples, constituting 5% of the world's population, have been victims of social inequities and marginalization due to policies jeopardizing their ancestral roots and knowledge, which in turn affects their mental health. Losing their sense of identity and cohesion as an aboriginal community, this problem results in spiritual instability and undermines their sense of life. In Latin America, this population has gained significant interest in being addressed and recognized through an intercultural approach. This approach promotes and celebrates their ancestral practices rooted in their cosmogony (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean [ECLAC], 2014).

The manifestations, knowledge, and behaviors around the epistemology and etiology assigned by Amerindians to diseases are associated with spirituality from a psychological point of view. This allows recognizing that indigenous peoples possess a valuable accumulation of practices and expertise related to the body. All of the above is crucial for understanding social interactions within their communities, coexistence with nature, and their relationships with the deities. In this sense, praxis is based on animals, plants, spiritual therapies, and chants. These elements represent stability and balance, ensuring the well-being of its members. Ancestral traditions are rooted in the ideology of harmony and the integrity of the triad: body, mind, and Mother Earth.

In native communities one of the most relevant components in the attainment of mental health is "spirituality," understood as "a set of embodied practices, with its correlate of shared community presences, in which the collective identity of the peoples is expressed" (Ochoa, 2019, p. 158). From a cosmic vision that connects all beings in the universe, both human and non-human, there arises the resurgence and emergence of Mother Earth and those who inhabit her. This serves as a living metaphor that fosters meaning and existence. In this regard, Torregrosa (2016) suggests that "spirituality" represents the highest level of being, connecting the individual with themselves and those around them. This definition is closely related to logotherapy, which is a humanistic psychological approach that focuses on people's will to find meaning. In short, how one interprets

and feels their life involves "developing and making people participants and responsible for their human potential, thus assuming responsibility for themselves, others, and life" (Torregrosa, 2016, pp. 153-154). Indigenous people achieve this by attaining a spiritual life in harmony with their cosmovision.

Language plays a crucial role in traditional medicine as many of the methods practiced by ancestral physicians involve communication and energetic connection with spiritual beings, as well as reading and learning through dreams. Practices involving the creation of rituals, which, —through the oral richness of Indo-American peoples and the mystical nexus of their traditions and cultural roots— discover in words and praise the power of interconnection with the deities. This process serves as a source of relief for the soul. Therefore, the rite serves as a source of wisdom and a means of direct communication with the cosmic creator of life. This enables the individual to undergo a process of introspection, aligning their emotions with the supreme entity that governs their existence (Plevin, 2020). Likewise:

> In contrast to modern Western cosmologies that conceive of a single nature and multiple cultures, Amerindian thought embraces multi-naturalistic cosmologies: All subjects, including animals, plants, rivers, stars, etc., possess consciousness and a spiritual dimension, but they inhabit different bodies and have different natures. (Delgado, 2022, p. 400).

The struggle between good and evil, as in other cultures, is detailed in the Amerindian peoples. An antithesis that:

> Also takes place on the soul or spiritual plane with the presence of the *owirúame* and the *sukurúame*, the healer and the sorcerer. In the collective imagination, they enter into tension, positioning themselves in favor of or against one side or the other. (Acuña, 2021, p. 470).

In keeping with this eschatological vision, "it is valid to point out that humanism in the misnamed New Continent was also nourished by the spiritual production of many other great Amerindian societies —a heritage collected in other manuscripts and architectural finds" (Pérez, 2019, p. 16).

Re
view

Methodology

The methodological process of this study is based on the so-called "documentary review," which emphasizes the search and recording of information to support ongoing research (*Ancestral practices and cosmovision as explanations of spiritual healing and mental balance*). Consequently, all the material found becomes a referential source for the research *per se*, pointing to the three major categorical axes that guide the systematization: ancestral practices, cosmovision, and spirit healing. Additionally, the qualitative perspective is the one selected for analyzing the information as it is being systematized. In this documentary review, the authors also reflect on the facts pertaining to spirit and mental health. Likewise, the qualitative approach allows inquiries with better sensitivity toward the individual and their conception of existence and the surrounding world (Santiago, 2018).

Regarding the selection criteria taken into account for the dynamics of the search for scientifically validated texts, during the entire tracking phase, certain filtering parameters are established to select sources considered relevant in the construction of this review article. All this material has been found in the following databases: Scopus, Latindex, Publindex, Zotero, Scielo, EBSCO, Redalyc, and PubMed.

Regarding the criteria of validity, rejection, and reliability, a strategic selection is made to address the redundancy arising from the topics of healing, cosmovision, and medicine. Many of the suggestions provided are discarded because the vocabulary is broad and some findings are framed within the rigid sciences and Western methods of psychological and biological treatments.

In terms of the selection criteria, priority is given to texts published in the last five years, with exceptions made for authors, sources, or titles of fundamental significance in the topics being studied. Regarding exclusion criteria, the authors avoid selecting texts from strictly scientific or rigid perspectives on the subject of healing and the treatment of attitudinal conditions in humans through ancestral practices. Similarly, texts from databases lacking institutional validation and from non-indexed journals are excluded.

Lastly, emphasizing that search engines recognizing logical Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) are used to define affiliations or exclusions during digital searches is important. Efficiency in the search is achieved through the conceptual combinations used with the operators.

Using the descriptors, a set of questions is generated to guide the search and selection of findings in the literature review. Similarly, questioning is carried out using both first and second-level questions, addressing conceptual (what/which) and procedural aspects (how).

Development and Discussion

Ancestral Practices: Rites, Ceremonies and Ethnic Medicine

Q1. What Does the Expression "Ancestral Practices" Refer to?

"Ancestral practices" refers to the wide range of knowledge developed within ancient cultures, which holds significant importance in maintaining and treating both physical and psychological conditions within indigenous communities. This knowledge is transmitted through oral tradition and is profoundly influenced by social and historical contexts, aligning with the unique worldview of the specific community to which it belongs. As such, "ancestral practices represent a significant heritage for all of humanity. Their value extends far beyond the originating people or community, making them a universal resource for humankind" (Betancourt et al., 2020, p. 6). All of these elements constitute a collective heritage, deeply revered through the lens of their cosmology, where the forces of nature and the deities that dwell within it govern the entirety of their symbolic universe. This sacred connection serves to promote and safeguard the well-being of their community.

As mentioned by Choi et al. In 2023, "ancestral knowledge" was defined as a body of practical knowledge and beliefs acquired and developed by indigenous inhabitants through observation and custom, shaped by the distinct characteristics and conditions of their context. This knowledge is essential for preserving all facets of their identity. In parallel, the World Health Organization (2022) defines ancestral medicine as the set of health practices, approaches, knowledge, and beliefs based on plants, animals, and/or minerals, as well as physical, mental, and spiritual therapies. Its primary objective is to provide balance and promote wellness. Similarly, the expertise of their knowledge encompasses concepts, myths, and practices related to the physical, mental, or social imbalances within a community. These elements serve to explain the etiology, nosology, and diagnostic procedures, which, in turn, guide curative approaches aimed at recovery and achieving health (Laforgue et al., 2022).

The practices employed within Aboriginal communities are strongly influenced by their cultural and symbolic vision. Likewise, the approach varies depending on the type of disease to be treated, as the treatment of a physical ailment differs from that of a soul-related condition. In this particular context, certain ethnic groups employ various practices encompassing stones, medicinal plants, and ceremonial rites, among others. In contrast to alternative practices

wherein "cleansings" are conducted in places imbued with magical and spiritual significance aligning with the respective worldview of the practitioners (Jongsma et al., 2021).

In a broad sense, these practices are perceived as mechanisms through which the well-being of a member within the ethnic community is rejuvenated, thereby alleviating instability arising from distress. This process is attainable through the holistic understanding of the individual and is intricately interwoven with the notion of a human being who is ruled and influenced by a complex interplay of social, historical, cultural, political, economic and familial environmental factors.

Consistent with the aforementioned perspective, Urraca et al. (2021) conducted a study involving the participation of indigenous people from the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia. Their findings revealed that among the Kankuamo, the etiological notion of disease is attributed to the intervention of an evil spirit, whereas for the Kogi, Arhuaco, and Wiwa, it is attributed to a loss of homeostasis. In other words, the cause is the internal imbalance of the psyche stemming from a disharmony between needs and satisfaction, as well as between the indigenous and the land. The land, in this context, provides sustenance in terms of nourishment, as well as a foundation for life itself. The indigenous person's existence is intimately contingent on their profound connection with the land, while their detachment from it can serve as a significant catalyst for the onset of disease (Jongsma et al., 2021).

Q2. What Does "Healing" Mean in Spiritual Medicine?

In the realm of Western medicine, clinical professionals including physicians, nurses, paramedics, and specialists in the various branches of biological knowledge, and psychologists responsible for mental health, assume specific roles in the treatment and recovery of patients. Within the Amerindian communities, a similar organizational structure prevails, marked by the presence of traditional indigenous practitioners, which include *sobanderos*, midwives, healers, pray-workers and individuals acting as traditional doctors, a term often interchangeable with shamans in other cultural contexts. Shamans demonstrate greater expertise in the management of disease, owing to their profound ancestral wisdom, enhanced by the energies emanating from Mother Earth. Furthermore, their spiritual mastery enables them to effectively channel the negativity directed toward the community and the spirit of each inhabitant.

Traditional healers and *rezanderos* stand as the sole agents within the indigenous reserves possessing the acumen to address psychological and spiritual conditions. They are guided by the ancestral knowledge bestowed by the gods

and divinities, drawing upon the essential elements requisite for the application of specific treatments tailored to particular ailments. As an Illustration, in southern Colombia, certain indigenous tribes use *Yagé* as the sole plant for medical procedures (Freire & Macías, 2021).

To this respect, individuals who ingest the constituents of the plant undergo hallucinogenic experiences, facilitating the recognition of the psychic ailment affecting them.

In northern Peru, traditional physicians use medicinal plants and various objects in the treatment of mental, neurological, and psychosomatic disorders. Its efficacy has been proven within the Peruvian indigenous populations, stemming from the cultural and doctrinal legacy inherited from their ancestors. This is achieved with the incorporation of a wide variety of objects possessing power, such as stones, sticks, shells, pre-Hispanic ceramics and so on. In many cases, the treatment entails the involvement of the patient in a cleansing or "purification" ceremony. This treatment can range from a relatively simple treatment with perfumes and holy water to more intricate and prolonged all-night ceremonies centered around the healer's altar (Bussmann & Sharon, 2016).

The origin of medicinal plants is believed to reside in spirits situated within another dimension, accessible solely by shamans or traditional physicians. However, the use of these plants will depend on the approval bestowed to the shaman (Garzón, 2016). This can be achieved through the chants and invocations uttered during the ritual. By virtue of this association with the collective memory and history of people, the plant entails profound significance. Its mystical connotations along with its inherent application to the healing process, render it a powerful tool for those connoisseurs of ancestral knowledge.

According to Carvajal (2015), ancestral practices establish a close connection between Mother Earth, or *Pachamama*, and health through the use of cosmogonic ancestral knowledge. This knowledge is intricately associated with social well-being, the adaptation of territory, and the judicious use of resources within indigenous reserves.

The processes, grounded in the legitimizing expressions of ancient expertise, derive their syntactic foundations from the beliefs, traditions, and customs of Indo-American ideology which establish cultural and cosmic cohesion, fostering sense of life. This highlights the power embedded in the uttered words as a formative and impactful tool in the treatment of mental illnesses. Furthermore, this tool facilitates the preservation and fortification of a fundamental triad subject, nature, and community for the pursuit of well-being among diverse indigenous groups across the Americas (Daza & Valverde, 2017).

According to Carvajal (2015), the essence of human beings, spanning from their ancestors to the present, resides in spiritual experience. This psychological

journey fosters an understanding of oneself during active participation in the healing process. They find joy in spiritual chants, and the rituals associated with social events held in the ancestral *bohíos*, which are sacred places for the indigenous community.

Q3. Is There any Relationship between Western Medicine and Ancestral Medicine?

The pivotal aspect shared by both ancestral medicine and psychology revolves around the equilibrium of individuals. This connection with the environment or functionality is essentially the harmonious balance between individuals and nature. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2022), health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. In other words, both psychology and ancestral knowledge emphasize the importance of physical, mental, and social factors in identifying emotional alterations in the subject (Bendixen, 2019).

Although ancestral and Western medicine hold distinct epistemological, ontological, and methodological positions, they both acknowledge a similar concept of "healing" or "recovery." Hence, the etiology of a mental disease could be attributed to supernatural events, such as witchcraft and spiritism, as well as by psychological factors like anxiety, stress, and relationship problems, among others.

While Western knowledge is essential for mental health, the foundations of cultural manifestations transmitted by *taitas* are rooted in the traditions of indigenous communities. *Taitas* possess profound wisdom and play an important role in transmitting spiritual knowledge and facilitating healing within the cosmovision. According to Jaramillo and Betancur (2019), for Western medicine the significance of the individual who falls ill lies primarily in their role as the host of the disease within their body, rather than as an individual inscribed within a specific referential framework. However, for ancestral medicine, the individual examination is approached though the lens of social reality and the epistemological conceptions are grounded in the praxis of psychological thera-peutic processes. Therefore, indigenous communities do not disregard Western medicine, rather they express respect for it according to their culture and beliefs.

With regard to the mental factor, ancestral wisdom does not explicitly delineate the maturation of the spirit through distinct stages that all community members must undergo to attain the expertise to control it. In contrast, develo-pmental psychology offers various theories to elucidate the process of cognitive, affective, and personality maturity of individuals. In this regard, the gap stemming

from the definition of humanity is not as profound as the divergence between scientific and non-scientific knowledge. In terms of Romo (2018):

> For the indigenous Arawak, disease is not solely a pathophysiological dysfunction of the body, instead, it is deeply rooted and motivated by the disruption of the bio-spiritual balance that exists between the indigenous person and nature. (p. 44).

This disruption of this homeostasis is the principal underlying cause for the varied manifestations of death observed in both flora and fauna.

The role of Language in the Healing of the Spirit

Q4. How Is the Influence of Languages and Their Variations Manifested in Ancestral Healing Processes?

Indigenous languages transcend the harmonious structure of a communication system, encompassing a myriad of knowledge and expertise that has evolved over millennia. This point does not overlook culture as a fundamental factor in achieving or attaining a state of social identity and community formation. Culture serves as the cohesive force that intertwines scholarly preservation and free expression of the conceptual content embedded in linguistic and symbolic models (Cevallos, 2019).

Within this context, there exists relational meanings within communities, as their customs and beliefs shape their conduct and behavior. Therefore, when languages face the risk of extinction, so do indigenous peoples (Degawan, 2019).

Within indigenous communities, language reincarnates, among many of its functions, as a strategy for healing and recovery of wounds caused by social oppression and traumatic events originating from "civilized" societies, within the context of globalized and developing economies and social structures. These structures jeopardize their ways of life which are grounded in healing practices based on the use of narratives and symbolic tools that hold profound significance, and value within Amerindian cultures. As well as the rhetoric used as a tool for shaping a coherent sense of self, language plays a role in the presence of culturally identified feelings that individuals use to reaffirm their identity and establish their sense of existence. In this regard, Marquina et al. (2015) determine that "contemporary and salvific discourse serves, in practice, as a healing drama for

the production of spiritual and symbolic kinship during the recovery from mental health problems faced by Canadian Indian reserves" (p. 310).

In the context of semantic changes, that the struggle of aboriginal populations has given rise to a current of thought known as "pan-indigenism" is noteworthy. This ideological stance draws upon rituals, discursive sources, and indigenous cultural imagery as a healing tool. It places subtle importance on concepts derived from the narratives and sacred teachings of grandparents, particularly in relation to the ways of life, knowledge, and healing practices. These contribute to the identity and cultural roots of indigenous communities. This state is closely intertwined with mental health (Marquina et al., 2015).

The conception of health in the majority of indigenous territories is grounded in the belief in the unity of the human being with Mother Earth and the deities that dwell within her. This is manifested in indigenous people's healing oratory, which formulates a terminology concerning the significance of indigenous spiritual life, their constant references to Mother Earth and the creator, as well as the importance of nature and respect for the land of their ancestors. "Language, notably, serves as a distinct, and constitutive element of indigenous identity. Language not only inhabits the worldview, but is also intricately linked to ethnicity, serving as a reflection of a distinct way of understanding and representing reality, unique to each ethnic group" (Osorio, 2017, p. 186).

Therefore, the healing process necessitates that the involved agents share common representative and discursive aspects pertaining to the etiology of the disease, as well as the components that contribute to the recovery of health. In summary, it is a communicative tradition with effective communication channels, wherein symbols uttered carry the validity, and support of the entire community.

Q5. Can Language in Indian Tribes Have an Impact During the Healing Process?

Everything addressed up to this point underscores the significance of language as a healing process within Native American communities. This begins with an examination of their own ideologies and ways of understanding the reality in which they are immersed. It is crucial to acknowledge that each culture or society contributes to a shared identity wherein individuals weave their personality and sense of existence, facilitated through social interaction. Highlighting the profound role that traditions and ancestral knowledge play in the aboriginal perception of health, which guides the adoption of treatments, particularly, those of a spiritual or psychological nature is crucial. In conclusion, a set of abstract concepts or attributes turned into symbols and meanings (words, gestures,

images, objects, and conceptions), configures the factor of social representation with the values and parameters of reality, a continuous hermeneutics, and social constructivism (Palomá & Delgado, 2021). Hawkes et al. (2020) establish that verbalization was a gift given by gods; therefore, it is sacred and impacts on reality. Likewise, in coca there is a ritual of oral verbalization, it is *rafue* (strong, power). Thus, *ra* (thing) is the container where power can be perceived, and *fue* (mouth) which receives the catalyst to establish the needed contacts: all action, all knowledge, all symbol.

The cultural and identity relationship of indigenous groups or communities is framed in the faith of their ancestral actions in the management and treatment of mental illnesses; this relationship between identity and culture creates a relationship between the *individual self* and the social *self.* This duality means well-being and equilibrium for indigenous communities, since insofar as the subject is bound to traditions, culture, and ways of community life, its being is claimed and finds the balance that becomes soul and physical (Muschalla et al., 2021). From language, peoples' health can be sustained efficiently as the loss of their knowledge turns into a denaturalization or disconnection with their roots, which for years has been a holistic health that they maintain among the world around them, exercising a double harmony (Vera et al., 2019). Thus, language is tradition, culture, territory, and everything that surrounds a people, because it allows them to acquire knowledge that levels their life with the cosmos. (Orozco et al., 2018).

For indigenous people in Santa Rosa de Huacaria, Peru, the ceremonial chants or *Icaro* —etymologically may come from the *Quechua* word *ikaray* that means to manipulate smoke in a healing way— are vocalizations of the master. According to the worldview, *Ícaro* is a tool of great therapeutic relevance for healers that generates a healing effect on its receptors. However, the co-dependence relationship between the healer and plants (harmonic relationship), as well as the mediating role of the Ícaro, as the header is understood as the channel through which the plant can exercise its healing power. Therefore, it is deduced that without the healer the plant could not exercise its power and the header without the plant could not do anything either; the action is made possible by the word. This is how the *Ícaro* becomes a way of merging this harmonic relationship; it acquires a power of connection between the soul and spirit of the healer, in symmetry with the knowledge and healing aspects that the mother plant provides. The *Ícaro* demands a high level of concentration, and in this way, the healer, in his ceremonial practice manages to generate balance for those who need it, through chants with symbolic and cultural representations for his listeners. In other words, it becomes a spiritual purification.

According to Jarry et al. (2019), words are abstract symbols, but signs materialize in the things they designate. Through words and signs a culture is being forged with several factors; it is understood as only one in which the self and the individual are part of a social context that learns through the oral tradition, cosmovision, customs, and traditions of their peoples; it is a catalyst for well-being and welfare. Thus, it is inferred that those who do not protect their traditions and reproduce them are condemned to lose their source of life, their sense of existence, their own identity, and, therefore, their mental health.

In short, it is seen how through *atavian* processes —owned by the Amerindians— a rich production of narratives and symbolic meanings is found in the language that meant healing. Its reaches are able to create equilibrium and spiritual liberation through stories, myths, rites, as well as convergent and complementary rhetorical forms with spiritual beings. This enables the ability to provide peace to everyone who believes and connects with them through the word that attracts power —the power of healing (Martínez, 2016). This connection —filled with mysticism and a cluster of beliefs and ideologies marked throughout the times and aimed at achieving well-being and welfare— reaffirms the sense of community, reconciliation, and linkage with the earth; it allows it to sprout in the universe (Vallejo & Quiroz, 2016).

Q6. What Is the Relationship between Ancestral Language and the Psychic Processes of the Human Being?

Through language, psychological disorders are identified. In ancestral rituals, the people express their psychic disturbances between the struggle of good and evil; it is embodied by ancient wisdom that would be in harmony with the human psyche. It is essential therefore to understand healing from ancestral practices to mental health care since indigenous communities do not ignore Western knowledge, which means psycho-ancestralism. The Mental Health Law in Colombia defines "mental health" as:

> A dynamic state that is expressed in everyday life through behavior and interaction in such a way that individual and collective subjects can deploy their emotional, cognitive, and mental resources in daily life, to work, to establish meaningful relationships, and to contribute to the community. (Law 1616 de 2013, art. 3).

In this way, communities carry out their actions under the identity of their ancestral practices for the treatment and cure of mental illnesses in such a way that they interact with emotional, cognitive, and mental resources in healing

rituals. These states allow thinking from the cosmology and cosmological perspective of indigenous cultural identities; they are determinants for the interaction and construction of ancestral knowledge and the conceptualization of the psychological disorders or symptoms present in indigenous territories.

The Political Constitution of Colombia (1991) states that the nation "recognizes and protects the ethnic and cultural diversity of the Colombian nation" (Art. 7). This determines that multiple ethnic groups and peoples with the same number of cultural manifestations coexist in the national territory, which makes the country a multicultural territory (Naranjo, 2019).

The definition of mental health would be intertwined with the practice of several traditional beliefs of communities in the national territory, and that is why ancestral knowledge should be recognized under the concept of "global mental health" and its contributions to new sciences as scientific models and new knowledge. On this aspect, indicating that mental health is the well-being experienced by people according to their efficient cognitive, procedural, and attitude functionality is necessary; all this makes it possible to withstand the stress generated by daily life (Jones, 2023).

Spreng and Turner (2021) consider that mental health, far from being an individual dimension, has a dimension of linkage between individuals and groups; it has a proximity to the interactions that take place in society. Thus, mental health is understood as happening in different social, cultural, family, and work contexts, among others, keeping in mind that there is an efficient and satisfactory engagement of the individual within the environment in which it develops.

Colombia, a multicultural and multi-ethnic country, considers the indigenous people to be one of the largest populations in the country; however, throughout history, they have distinguished themselves from Western society by their traditional or cultural ways of understanding and living life. This has entitled them to a certain percentage of autonomy and self-determination to overcome their community system, through stimulation on issues related to health and education (Fishbach & Woolley, 2022). As indigenous peoples manage their health systems internally, understanding that these communities protect different concepts of health is necessary. For the indigenous, the concept of "health" refers to the multiplicity of life; the imaginaries of each community, its cosmogony, and spiritual balance are imperative (Li & Chen, 2021).

From this point of view, "mental health" for indigenous peoples represents the equilibrium between physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being in relation to oneself, the family, the community, and nature. Accordingly, Valencia et al. (2020) highlights the definition of mental health from the view of indigenous medicine that dissociates itself from the organicist paradigm of the worldview and the configuration of man; it focuses more on biological and social aspects,

as well as recognizing the human being as a product of these two components versus the explanation of mental illnesses. This makes valuing ancestry highly before Western medicine possible.

However, for several indigenous communities, mental health is not seen as different from general health. Therefore, both physical and mental health in the ancestral worldview are much more than the absence of disease. They are the capacity of the individual to be normative with regard to the world, with regard to the scope of establishing their own vital norms and harmoniously transforming the environment according to needs. It is a particular way of being and being in the world as an experience that is learned and exercised through culture. In this way, disease is not understood as a biomedical discomfort but rather as the reason why the person is not in harmony with himself; here, health is considered a sign of harmony.

Thus, the process of diagnosis and treatment from the health perspective adopted by the indigenous territories consists of the use of medicinal plants, animals, spiritual ceremonies, minerals, and amulets, among other practices that benefit the conventional health system of their cosmovision. Indigenous peoples' therapists have perfected various forms of diagnosis; most of them consist of complex ceremonies involving the specialist and a number of elements such as herbs, animals, and minerals; many of them turn into gifts to the divinities.

With regard to treatment, it should be noted that, for its effectiveness, traditional medicine considers the follow-up of special care to be of great importance in order to ensure the efficacy of the procedures carried out and the prescribed remedies. These cares include dietary changes and restrictions, rest or directed physical activities, changes in habits, sexual abstinence, special care with temperature changes, and spiritual actions such as prayer and reconciliation, among others (Apud et al., 2022). Therefore, according to traditional medicine, the effectiveness of diagnosis and treatment depends on full compliance with the recommendations made by ancestral doctors, the prescribed remedies, and the medical follow-up that is carried out.

Q7. How Is Quality of Life Conceived from an Ancestral Perspective?

Another important point of view is the perception of quality of life, since valuing this aspect of the existence of a person or community plays an important role in the relationship between it and health (Rojas, 2020). However, defining it is quite complex because each person has a different concept of what it is. It depends on what he/she feels and possesses. Scarpeta and Molano (2017) state that "quality of life is a state of general satisfaction, derived from the realization

of the potentialities of the person" (p. 16). Also, an alternative medicine and complementary therapies research, conducted by Shankar et al. (2021) states that the concept of "quality of life" must take into account both benign aspects such as happiness and well-being as well as negative aspects such as pain, illness, and even death.

Through its history, indigenous communities have recognized the incidence of social risk factors due to the breakdown of their sociocultural networks and many failures in the aforementioned dimensions. Despite this, information on the prevalence and incidence of problems related to mental health is scarce. Castro et al. (2021) express that it is the breakdown of these sociocultural networks that favors the appearance of physical, organic, psychological, and emotional disorders, turning the indigenous peoples of Colombia into a susceptible population, given that they face violations of human rights from multiple social sources.

Currently, the health situation of the indigenous populations is marked by structural conditions such as social marginalization and abandonment, as well as economic and political factors. In addition to this, social situations such as racism and discrimination, hostility, and abuse can favor the presence of pathologies that affect health (Gómez et al., 2016). Suicidal behavior, anxiety, alcohol and psychoactive substances consumption, and exposure to family and interpersonal violence are some of the most frequent psychosocial problems in these communities. The most recent research confirms that indigenous suicide rates and mental disorders vary between countries and regions, but are usually higher than those of the general population, especially concerning adolescent or young people.

A systematic review made by the Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics of the Hospital Universitario San Ignacio and the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana of Bogotá, identified that the most frequent mental disorders in subgroups of indigenous populations are: major depressive disorder, mood disorders, post-traumatic stress, anxiety disorder, psychotic disorders, dependence on substances of various kinds and alcohol dependence (Gómez et al., 2016). One possible explanation for this phenomenonis related to the limited resources that mental health services receive, where "more than half of the countries allocate only 5% or less of their health budgets to mental health" (Beviá & Girón, 2017, p. 7).

Both the psychologist and the ancestral doctor —in their action of understanding the complexity of these traditional communities and the limitation of their health services— are involved in the task of evaluating mental health while respecting the indigenous tradition, their worldview, and their laws. On the one hand, the ancestral or traditional doctor constitutes a central component of indigenous culture in maintaining the harmony and balance of physical,

mental, and spiritual care. It is the traditional doctor who allows the community to maintain a worldview linked to Mother Nature and her spirits, to strengthen unity, the family and their identity as ethnic groups (Franco et al., 2018). However, on the other hand, the psychologist's work includes implementing institutional mental health programs, integrating the body and mind as part of a whole, understanding the actions of the indigenous communities and ensuring their individual and collective well-being. The issue is to try to integrate the conceptual frameworks, and identify the possible way of applying clinical psychology from the elaboration of the transference. In this way, the practical theoretical approach can be facilitated, according to the different theories (Vélez et al., 2020).

Mental health, seen from the medical system and according to the perspective of Kanyadan et al. (2023), includes three sectors that influence the improvement or not of this on the indigenous community. These are: the professional, represented mainly by the medicine that is practiced in the West; the popular, in which the health beliefs that are transmitted from generation to generation by family members and acquaintances converge and the traditional, which is crystallized through healing, natural and magical procedures, which for some people is directed to indigenous medicine.

Therefore, the idea that health is related to harmony and balance among the environment, culture, and person is an indispensable component of a healthy environment, and increases the feeling that people are in harmony within their cultures.

Between Worldview and Cosmogony

P8. How Is the Ontological and Eschatological Conception Configured in Indigenous Populations?

The concept of "worldview" has its formulation in the ideas of Ortega (2022), who interprets it as the vision of the world that allows the identification and interpretation of various phenomena based on the explanations with which they provide nature, their relationship, and connection, giving shape to the concepts and ideas conceived by a group of people. Consequently, Vásquez (2022) unders-tands "worldview" as the set of assumptions (including values and commitments/

loyalties) that influence the way reality is conceived and responded to, these being the heart of a culture and functioning, on the one hand, as a frame of reference that determines how reality is understood. On the other hand, it is a source of guidelines for people's behavior in response to this distinction from reality (Collao & Gálvez, 2021). The definition of "worldview" is focused on identifying, knowing, classifying, interpreting, and understanding the world. From the worldview it is possible to understand

> Conceptual notions of its nature; that is, the meanings of traditional practices, the real and non-real interaction with which they explain the nature of their creation and existence, as well as the idea of man in life. (Badillo & Bermúdez, 2017, p. 68).

Understanding that all people have different ways of seeing the world and generating questions about its creation and development —and from where visions of the world arise— it is relevant to talk about "cosmogony," referring to myths that show the creation of the world. As Romero (2017) explains: "'cosmogony' —in its etymological semantic perspective— comes from a Greek compound 'Kosmos' (structure, world) + 'Gignesthai' (become)" (p. 205). In other words, cosmogony does not imply what is finished but what is being formed. According to Rivas and Bonilla (2021), the worldview is based on cosmogony, since it refers to beliefs about the beginning of the cosmos, the energies of both life and death, and the life of human beings. Hence, myths serve as an explanation and justification of a way of seeing the world, of legitimation of a social and political order, of how social and moral norms arose (due to the exemplary action of the ancestors or mythical founders) and why they must be fulfilled and respected (Avalo, 2023).

Based on the above, clarifying that the recognition that the different indigenous communities acquire becomes visible to other communities through their worldviews or particular interests is important, which in turn allows the communication of knowledge about the way of life. However, the heir of the indigenous tradition —also a resident of the reservations— recognizes himself as a member of a community that supports his sense of belonging in the relationship with others and nature, as well as in the preservation and recovery of traditional knowledge, from which he builds the life plan of and for his community (Leyva, 2022).

Similarly, from the psychological point of view, elements are taken from the worldview in terms of the transcendence of spiritual healing rituals. Understanding that, from their evocations, Mother Earth represents the feeling of humanity, because there, "care" is defined as an accumulation of tasks and

knowledge based on a comprehensive approach, which comes close to various dimensions of the person and incorporates care, treatments and notifications linked to space-time, cultural expressions, and the spirit (Zhang, 2022). Consequently, the greater purpose is to achieve physical, mental, emotional and spiritual harmony of the individual, as well as of those around him.

In this way, this manuscript is closed, defining the worldview from "the importance of knowing and understanding the worldview of a person, family or community to whom care for health is intended to be bestowed" (Badillo & Bermúdez, 2017, p. 68). This characterization becomes important, especially in indigenous communities, where it is necessary to know and understand care from their vision of the world, the traditional practices they implement in their daily lives to take care of their health and diseases, along with the way they treat them.

Conclusions

Continue critically reviewing the epistemological and etiological aspects of indigenous medicinal practices is urgent. This is important for the protection of ancestral rituals and the identification of the balance between nature and man. Also important is examining the question of what is psyche. human and natural for the indigenous communities and, especially, for the ancestral doctors, which emerge from the Western world through governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations. For example, the terminology used by PAHO and WHO, among others, although seek to reduce the epistemological and etiological barriers of the definition of mental health —from a comprehensive point of view and assuming the relationship between man and nature— continue to represent a dichotomy in the definition of mental health and the healing of the spirit, being considered metaphysical but not scientific.

Failure to overcome these dichotomies of understanding and definition will likely prevent the healing of the spirit, ancestral practices, what is human and natural, and the particularities between the scientific and non-scientific from being recognized. Recognizing the epistemological and etiological foundations of healing linked to the territory, collective well-being and harmony with Mother Nature —comparable to good living, without distinctions of the physical and the mental— would be one more step, necessary to avoid the empty scientific discourses that exist concerning ancestral practices and spiritual healing.

Regarding ancestral practices and healing in spiritual medicine, it is concluded that language is extremely intervening in this process, acting as a means to heal and to preserve cultural ideas through generations. Similarly, plants

and drinks derived from them are always present, accompanied by prayers that tell narratives with sacred words.

The relationship between Western medicine and ancestral medicine is established, but not proportionally. This means that indigenous communities do recognize multiple contributions of psychology to guarantee mental health, as well as prevention and some disease treatment practices. However, in Western medicine there is still a perceived resistance to recognizing diseases as consequences of both physical and psychic aspects, and they relegate the causes to referentially bodily factors.

For its part, the impact that language exerts during healing processes in indigenous tribes is presented as a signing set of images, words and objects with a semiotic charge. This hermeneutical representation helps the social construction of communities. Language is health that is crystallized through the interaction of members, and its interruption in the communicative act would be the impossibility of sustaining the knowledge of ancestral wisdom through generations.

In indigenous peoples, both the ontological and eschatological conception are understood from myths, where nature always intervenes as a transversal axis between the human and the divine. The creation of the world and man —in addition to their due transformations— are elements that make the tribes guardians of the fauna and flora, since they incarnate the explanation and justification of forms of life that are about to be experienced after the end of existence on the earthly plane.

Therefore, the fact of redesigning mental health care models should be kept in mind, which would contribute to the care of cases of psychological illnesses or events, respecting customs, but applying knowledge from psychology. In short, a "psychoancentrality."

In short, developing diverse programs and strategies in mental health, based on multiculturalism and miscegenation, assuming a position of recognition of ancestral wisdom and the training of intervention in spiritual ailments by ancestral doctors is recommended.

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