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PEACEFUL CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION IN CULTURE FOR MAKING PEACE(S): A PHILOSOPHICAL STUDY OF ITS DISCURSIVE RESOURCES

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Abstract. In this paper *Culture for making Peace(s)* is studied as an alternative to cultural violence taking into account that peaceful conflict transformation will be purposed both as an appropriated methodology to resolve conflicts by peaceful means and also, as a consequence, a favorable peace building methodology. However, it is important to mention that, in this essay, the study of the methodology of peaceful conflict transformation will be based on its communication resources in order to emphasize the relevance of the communication in conflict transformation processes. In this sense, it could be stated that forms of communication have to be carefully thought if we would like them to be nonviolent acts, a recognition of the other, cooperating and peace building. The analysis of the communicative resources in the framework of peaceful conflict transformation will be done in these pages from Peace Studies, nevertheless, without forgetting the relevant, and more than necessary, contributions from the philosophical thinking. For example, the research by Habermas, Austin, Arendt and Lederach will be quoted here in order to support the thesis of this article and to show alternative ways of human relations not based on the use of violence.

Keywords: Philosophy, Peace Studies, Conflicts, Culture for making Peace(s) and Peaceful Conflict Transformation

1. Introduction

First, it is necessary to clarify the objective of this study, which is to analyze the characteristic discursive resources of peaceful conflict transformation as an attribute of the *Culture for making Peace(s)(1)* and as an alternative to the various types of action and interrelation that lead to cultural violence. This objective will also be achieved by considering aspects of philosophical reflection, as well as Peace Studies theories.

Our research at the UNESCO Chair of Philosophy for Peace suggests that it is possible to have the choice to do things in very different ways. We can choose to have personal relations based on violence, using powers of subordination, with a lack of recognition and co-operation. However, we can also choose to use peaceful mechanisms that facilitate the growth and reconstruction of human relations. Peaceful conflict transformation is one of these mechanisms, as it is a method which involves a way of communication in which all those affected aim to come together under conditions of symmetry and equality. It is, therefore, an alternative to the violent habits that benefit some parties in a conflict to the detriment of others.

The existence of alternatives shows that the way we act, speak or keep silent is responsibility of each one of us (Martínez Guzmán, 1999). According to Francisco Muñoz (2001), there have been periods of violence and peace throughout history, but only the former have been considered important, and the latter have been overlooked. In order to regain those periods of peace, he suggests the notion of *Imperfect Peace* and encourages us to study those periods in order to gradually perfect them. By doing so, we can understand that violence is just one way of acting among many others, and that whether we wish to continue using it is our responsibility. This has been noted in constructionist theories, which have suggested that it is possible to construct peace socially, in the same way war and violence have been constructed. Using violence leads us into a spiral of violence. However, based on Peace Studies, we aim to use peaceful mechanisms to construct an alternative to cultural violence. We will call this alternative Culture for making Peace(s).

In order to develop my thesis, I will start by considering the definition and characteristics of the *Culture for making Peace(s)* in the face of cultural violence. Having done so, and according to the principles of Communicative Ethics and Austin's Speech Acts Theory, I will analyze the discursive resources for peaceful conflict transformation that can be used as an alternative to negative regulations. Finally, I will synthesize Lederach's principles of communication, using those he mentions in his conception of peaceful conflict transformation based on the reconstruction of human abilities to act without the use of violence, which leads to the creation and establishment of a *Culture for making Peace(s)*.

2. Cultural violence and studies for making peace(s)

Así, como hemos visto en las narraciones de las culturas y en los usos lingüísticos, las culturas de la violencia suponen formas de dominación de algunos hombres contra mujeres y otros hombres, imposición de formas de conocimiento, desapoderamiento, dominación depredadora de la naturaleza, falta de asunción de nuestra condición humana (querer ser como los narradores imaginan que son los dioses), estar descontrolado o «fuera de sí», negación de la libertad comunicativa (2) (Martínez Guzmán, 2001: 126).

Much of Peace Studies Research has focused on analyzing and considering violence. Research has been carried out into the etymological root of this term, and it has been ascertained that in languages with an Indo-European root it refers to a "life force"; in Latin it is related to *vis*, which means strength, vitality, power, influence and energy, and it is related to *virtus*, which refers to the virtue of bravery, mainly among men to whom strength is attributed; finally, in Greek it is related to *bia*, which means force, and *bios*, which means life (Martínez Guzmán, 2001: 117).

Meanwhile, the various possible meanings that can be found within this concept have also been analyzed, and these include the following (Martínez Guzmán, 2001: 118 - 122):

- 1) Violence as a breakdown in harmony, or a violation of the arrangement in the view of peace in the Roman era.
- 2) Violence as a breakdown in *homonoia*, or a loss of the sense of proportionality (*harmoton*) that was present in Greek society. This breakdown involves *hubris* (an overweening human pride that makes us want to be how we imagine gods are), which leads to the violation of justice, and the evils that affect social life and cultivation of land.
- 3) Violence as an offence that alters the original arrangement of relations between human beings. This meaning is found etymologically in the Hebrew word, *Hms*, which means the violation of a norm.
- 4) Epistemological violence, such as the destruction of other types of knowledge that are considered feminine, primitive or savage.
- 5) Violence in its positive sense of "being violent" or "forcing the situation" to make something fit or adapt. An example of this type is when we act violently to control ourselves and to better deal with the needs of others.

The studies about violence in Peace Research are also highlighted by Galtung (1996), who is one of the theorists who has studied this subject in the most depth. He performed one of the most significant classifications when he made the distinction between direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence. At this point, it is interesting to emphasize the concept of cultural violence which refers to those aspects of one culture which are useful to justify or legitimize both the direct violence and the structural violence like some expressions, discourses, songs, pictures, and so on (Galtung, 1996: 261). The cultural violence makes dark the reality because it doesn't show all the circumstances about a violent act or it doesn't show that act as a violent act.

The Culture for making Peace(s) thus becomes an alternative to cultural violence. As mentioned above, there are various ways in which we can do things, and we must understand that we also have the power (3) to act in a way that encourages the development of a Culture for making Peace(s). A long period of time is needed to change the violent ways in which we have been educated into the peaceful ways

of positive regulation. In Freire's pedagogy (1972; 1994; 2004) says that it is necessary to *become conscious* if we want to empower ourselves, and to transform the circumstances surrounding ourselves and our relations. He mentions the appearance of hope as a consequence of the indignation we feel when we understand the conditions of which we form a part.

There are two aspects that need to be taken into account in order to understand the full complexity of the meaning of the expression "the *Culture for making Peace(s)*". First, reconstruction of the initial form of UNESCO's "Peace Culture" needs to be considered in terms of a "*Culture for making Peace(s)*" (Martínez Guzmán, 2001; 2005). The purpose of this change is to acknowledge the variety of ways in which we can make peace(s), because of the many opportunities we have to maintain our relations. We thereby educate ourselves about our freedom and our responsibility at the same time. Second, the etymological root of the word "culture" needs to be remembered. This term comes from a Latin word meaning "cultivation". Culture, or cultures, is the way in which, us, human beings cultivate our relations between ourselves and our environment, or nature. Once again, we are responsible for how we cultivate relations between human beings, as we are ductile and we are able to act in various ways. In this sense, being ductile means that we can be educated or directed in different ways. (Martínez Guzman, 2003a: 58).

Peace researchers have highlighted a wide variety of aspects as being integral and necessary for the construction of the *Culture for making Peace(s)*. There is, therefore, considerable positive content, which can be summarized in the six pledges in the Manifesto 2000 proposed by UNESCO (2000): 1) Respect all lives. 2) Reject violence by making a political commitment to the practice of active nonviolence. 3) Develop my ability to be generous, sharing my time and material resources with others. 4) Listen in order to understand each other in the many voices and cultures in which we express ourselves. 5) Preserve the planet, which means responsible consumption with criteria of justice. 6) Reinvent solidarity and rebuild relations between human beings.

In short, creating, establishing and maintaining the *Culture for making Peace(s)* means that new and much more creative and peaceful ways of interaction must be learned. Peaceful conflict transformation defined by discursive resources is one of these new alternative methods, as it provides the opportunity to understand situations of conflict as processes of exchange without the use of violence, and emphasizes recognition and co-operation (Comins Mingol et al., 2011; París Albert, 2009a; 2009b; 2010a; 2010b; 2013a; 2013b).

3. Communicative violence and pragmatic solidarity

The *discursive resources* of peaceful conflict transformation focus on the reconciliation and/or positive development of human relations by enabling recognition between those affected, and by preventing the violent uses of communication inherent in cultural violence. As mentioned above, they, therefore, become an essential part of the *Culture for making Peace(s)*. Positive adjustments require the perception of others' interests, as well as our rights and duties to account to ourselves intersubjectively for everything we do, say or do not say. The typical way of communication in the transformation becomes the method which enables us to attain these objectives, without using the mechanisms that provoke the appearance of communicative violence.

These discursive resources of peaceful conflict transformation are based on the distinguishing principles of Discursive Ethics, and include contributions by the philosophical considerations mentioned in the introduction of this study. In other words, society is conceived as a *communication community* in which we all speak to each other and call each other to account (hold each other responsible) for the ways in which we act. We need a reciprocal recognition in which we all adopt the point of view of all those who may be affected. The use of cooperative responses which encourage participation under conditions of equality and symmetry by all participants therefore becomes essential (Habermas, 2000). This is the reason why the aim of this way of communication is to reconstruct the universal foundations of the validity of speech (Cortina, 1994a; 1994b).

Reconocer al otro como interlocutor válido es reconocerlo en toda esta pluralidad de canales de comunicación que el propio cuerpo ofrece y es propiciar nuevas vías de tratamiento del conflicto en las que quedan reflejadas las tan plurales capacidades dialógicas de la persona, porque el lenguaje simbólico de la palabra- ya sea oral o escrito- en tanto que simbólico, no llega a poder dar cabida a la multiplicidad y complejidad de sentimientos y emociones que vive la persona tanto en situación de conflicto latente como en el restablecimiento del estado de paz (4) (Burguet Arfelis, 1999: 125 – 126).

At the UNESCO Chair of Philosophy for Peace in the Universitat Jaume I, we believe that Austin's Speech Acts Theory (1976) shows how important communication is in the peaceful ways in which we interrelate. The appropriate use of the speech acts encourages the establishment of pragmatic solidarity against cultural violence that occurs with communicative violence. Pragmatic solidarity implies that we are able to take responsibility for the things that we say or do not say, as well as for their consequences. In order to justify these ideas, we will adapt some of the parts into which Austin (1976) breaks down his theory: 1) The *illocutionary force* or *performative dimension* refers to the force with which we say something. In other words, whether what we have said is a promise, a threat, etc. 2) *Illocutionary effects* such as apprehension and understanding appear in this context. The agent must take up and understand the force of what has been said. This is the illocutionary force that links us to the people we are talking to, by means of illocutionary effects. Understanding takes place when our listeners understand the force with which we are saying something.

3) Finally, there are *perlocutionary acts*, which are the consequences which follow on from what we say to each other. The "self" is responsible for its actions, and as a result it can be called to account for the effect of its words.

Taking each of the these components into account, we can see that pragmatic solidarity arises when, firstly and as *transmitters*, we are able to take responsibility for what we say, and for saying it without wishing to create misunderstandings. Secondly, as *receivers*, we commit ourselves to and are able to understand the messages we receive. Peaceful conflict transformation requires this way of communication and solidarity that encourage cooperation, recognition and the reconstruction of human relations, in order to create a *Culture for making Peace(s)*.

The importance of this way of communication is also made clear in Hannah Arendt's studies of power and violence. This author analyzes what she calls the *vita activa* of human beings, and she points to the need for equality and difference in order for us to be able to communicate with each other. Human beings need to be similar to understand us reciprocally, but at the same time, human beings need to be different to justify the use of both the discourse and the action to understand us reciprocally (Arendt, 1989).

Hannah Arendt (1989) refers to the idea of communicative force when she mentions the ability to reach agreement as a necessary factor in using non-violent force. She suggests that an agreed and appropriate use of force makes the discourse into an alternative to violence and facilitates human contiguity, in which we are close to each other. Violence arises when consensus breaks down and arbitrariness based on the unforeseeable nature of human actions arises.

In short, it can be said that using these discursive resources that are necessary for peaceful conflict transformation and the establishment of a *Culture for making Peace(s)* would lead us a *Non Violent Communication* (Rosenberg, 1999). In other words, towards a way of communicative interaction based on "[...] *expressing one-self and listening which enables us to get in touch with ourselves and others*" (Verdiani, 2002: 67). Without these ways of communication which lead to communication and responsibility, it is very difficult to escape from cultural violence, which leads to the creation of a massive spiral of destruction. However, in the research group of the UNESCO Chair of Philosophy for Peace in the Universitat Jaume I, we suggest that these new discursive mechanisms should be learned, and that work should be done to seek positive alternatives for conflict transformation. We would like to learn new ways of interaction that encourage the construction of a *Culture for making Peace(s)* using creativity, recognition, exchange and cooperation.

4. Lederach's contribution to the communication theory of peaceful conflict transformation

The meaning of dialogue as used in our research group can be summarized as follows:

Acción de comunicarse dos o más personas pidiéndose o dándose razones de por qué se hacen, dicen o callan, lo que se hacen, dicen o callan. Etimológicamente procede del griego diálogos que, a su vez, viene del verbo dialégomai que significa hablar, decir, conversar. Es una palabra compuesta de la preposición dia como prefijo que significa «a través de» y de logos que significa palabra, razón discurso [...] Así «diálogo» es algo que nos hacemos dos o más personas, a través de las palabras, de las razones que nos damos, de los discursos e, incluimos, de los silencios comunicativos (5) (Martínez Guzmán, 2004: 302).

In the previous sections, we mentioned the role of communication in creating peaceful alternatives to cultural violence, and in particular, we focused on its place within peaceful conflict transformation. The importance of discursive resources in human relations is not something that has occurred to us recently. In fact, its usefulness in *rhetoric* has been well-known since classical times. Cattani (2003a; 2003b) studied the various ways in which rhetoric can be used, and underlined their most common characteristics. At this point, we are only interested in mentioning rhetoric to show the importance that has always been conferred on communication and dialogue, as the various uses of this technique, from the perspective of polemics, have a negative and competitive side that is contradictory to the *Culture for making Peace(s)*. In Peace Studies, we aim to develop a way of communication based on recognition and cooperation, as shown by applying Austin's Speech Acts Theory.

The concept of pragmatic solidarity analyzed above can be completed with the research done by John Paul Lederach. Based on the cyclical negotiation model created by Gulliver (1979), Lederach (1995: 40 – 44) formulated an outline for communication, consisting of three aspects: 1) The *expression*, which is based on "I am trying to say," showing the speaker's intention. Social knowledge is important for ascertaining what we mean when we make a gesture, as their meaning varies according to the context in which we find ourselves. In this first step, there is a shift from "what I am trying to say" to "look at what I want to say". 2) *Perception*, which refers to the things in the world to which we pay attention. Perception refers to the "I see" part of the phrase "I see what you mean". 3) Finally, perception is expanded by *interpretation* which makes it possible to attribute a definite meaning to the messages we receive. It involves giving meaning to something in comparison with other things. We, therefore, refer to "I can locate what you mean, so I can say that I see what you mean".

We thereby see that the appropriate progression and movement through each of these three points entails the communicative or pragmatic solidarity mentioned above. The expression refers to our responsibility as the transmitters of the things that we say or do not say, and perception and interpretation refers to our responsibility to commit ourselves, as receivers, to understanding the things we are told.

Once again, if any of these factors is not carried out correctly, this will lead to communicative violence as a constituent part of cultural violence.

The peaceful conflict transformation theory (6) proposed by Lederach (1995) is based on this communication theory, which makes positive discursive resources an alternative to cultural violence. This author calls the model *elicitive*, as compared to the prescriptive model that has traditionally been used. In order to understand the meaning of this term, note that etymologically it comes from the word *elicit* and from the Latin *elicere* (ex lacio), which means taking out something from within, but it that also comes from the meaning of obtain, or coax, (verbum ex aliquo elicere, to coax someone to speak, to make someone talk), even to the extent of making someone sweat. In Spanish, the meaning of *elicito* is derived from medieval scholastic philosophy and refers to what arises spontaneously from the will (Martínez Guzman, 2003b). In other words, the *elicitive model* which Lederach proposes is equivalent to the reconstructive model for peaceful conflict transformation that we propose based on our research in the UNESCO Chair of Philosophy for Peace in the Universitat Jaume I. It is called reconstructive because it consists of regaining the skills and abilities (empowerment) for positive transformation that are already within all of us, although we have not yet recognized their existence. It involves reconstructing our communicative and discursive powers to transform situations of conflict into the construction of a Culture for making Peace(s), to the detriment of cultural violence.

The *elicitive* or reconstructive model emphasises implicit knowledge and the role which those affected in the conflict can play within it. They, therefore, place their trust in the presence of a third party acting as a "facilitator" instead of the traditional prescriptive model which sees the third party as an expert, and only takes explicit knowledge into account. Using this description, Lederach (1995) shows the need for an increasingly larger role for those participating in conflict regulation (the *elicitive* model). However, he believes that we should also remember explicit knowledge, although we should not give it the priority which has traditionally been conferred on it. The advantages of this methodology are also mentioned by Bush and Folger when they say that this methodology let to transform the people who will be more confident and more emphatic (1994: 47).

5. Conclusion

Based on the thesis proposed in the introduction, we have attempted to show that the *Culture for making Peace(s)* is the alternative to cultural violence. The discursive resources of peaceful conflict transformation have been analyzed as an aspect inherent in a *Culture for making Peace(s)* using Austin's Speech Acts Theory. This has shown that appropriate communication leads to pragmatic solidarity by means of the responsibility of each party and mutual understanding. Finally, according to Lederach, it is apparent that the alternative to cultural violence means that our communication skills need to be reconstructed in order to undertake peaceful con-

flict transformation, and to construct a *Culture for making Peace(s)*. As mentioned above, whether we want to act in favour of violence, or in favour of peace is our responsibility. "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed" (From the preamble of UNESCO's Constitution).

NOTES

- 1. Although the plural peace(s) is not grammatically correct, it is useful to express it in this way in this study for various reasons, as explained below.
- 2. In my own translation: "Therefore, as we have seen in the narratives of different cultures and in their linguistic uses, the violent cultures suppose different kinds of domination of some men over women and other men, the imposition of forms of knowledge, disempowerment, nature predatory domination, the need to assume our human condition (wanting to be as the narrators, who imagine themselves as goods), to be out of control or out of oneself, the negation of the communicative freedom".
- 3. *Empowerment* is the term used to define the capabilities, skills and powers that distinguish us as human beings. Our Peace Studies work suggests that we need to be able to understand our powers in order to transform conflicts, and hence to educate ourselves and learn to deal with them on our own behalf, without the help of third parties (Bush & Folger, 1994).
- 4. In my own translation: "To recognize the other as a valid interlocutor is to recognize him within all this plurality of communication channels offered by the own body and, it is also to favour new ways of conflict treatment in which the plural dialogical capacities of the person can be reflected. This is due to the symbolic language of the word- oral or written- and its own symbolism, it could never hold the multiplicity and complexity of feelings and emotions that a person goes through while the conflict is latent or when peace is re-established".
- 5. In my own translation: "The communicative action among two or more people asking for or giving reasons about why they do, say or do not say what they do, say or do not say. Etymologically comes from the Greek *diálogos*, which, at the same time, comes from the verb *dialegomai*, meaning talk, say, chat. This word is composed by the preposition *dia* as a prefix which means "through" and *logos* which means word, reason, discourse [...] Therefore, "dialogue" means something that two or more people do to each other, through words, with the reasons that they share, with the discourses, and the communicative silences are also included.
- 6. The *peaceful conflict transformation* is the latest terminology coined to designate studies of conflicts. First, there was *conflict resolution*, which was followed by *conflict management*. After various criticisms of the methodologies established by these initial meanings, it was decided to accept the term "transformation" in the 1990s. However, the term "resolution" has been very successful and is still

widely used, albeit to designate the methodology and characteristics that stated with peaceful conflict transformation.

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