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PRAYER

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Besides looking at the actual prayers of the Bible, we should consider also the Scripture's theology of prayer—the reasons in God and in our created nature that human beings are able to pray. We are told that Jesus Christ stands as our mediator so that we, though undeserving in ourselves, can boldly approach God's throne and cry out for our needs to be met (Heb 4:14–16; 7:25). We are also told that God himself dwells within us through the Spirit (Rom 8:9–11) and helps us to pray (Rom 8:26–27) so that even now by faith we may gaze and contemplate the glory of Christ (2 Cor 3:17–18). Thus the Bible gives us theological support for both communion-centered and kingdom-centered prayer.

A little reflection will show us that these two kinds of prayer are neither opposites nor even discrete categories. Adoring God is shot through with supplication. To praise God is to pray—"hallowed be thy name!"—to ask him to show the world his glory so that all would honor him as God. Yet just as adoration contains supplication, so seeking God's kingdom must include prayer to know God himself. The Westminster Shorter Catechism tells us that our purpose is to "glorify God and enjoy him forever." In this famous sentence we see reflected both kingdom-prayer and communion-prayer. Those two things—glorifying God and enjoying God—do not always coincide in this life, but in the end they must be the same thing. We may pray for the coming of God's kingdom, but if we don't enjoy God supremely with all our being, we are not truly honoring him as Lord.

Finally, when we consult many of the greatest Christian writers

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# COULD CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION EDUCATION SERVE AS A MECHANISM FOR INCREASING PEACEFULNESS IN COLOMBIA?

¿PODRÍA LA EDUCACIÓN PARA LA TRANSFORMACIÓN DEL CONFLICTO SERVIR COMO MECANISMO PARA INCREMENTAR LA PAZ EN COLOMBIA?

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## Resumen

Los enfoques convencionales para la construcción de paz no han llevado a sociedades más pacíficas. Es necesario un nuevo enfoque de la educación para así producir el alcance político y los cambios sociales que muchos educadores para la paz han previsto. La Educación para la Transformación del Conflicto (CTE) es un enfoque prometedor que busca transformar actitudes a nivel grupal más que individual; y afronta, en lugar de negar, su anhelo político de cambiar normas sociales respecto al uso de la violencia. La CTE puede ser una herramienta útil en el contexto del posconflicto del acuerdo de paz en Colombia.

**Palabras clave:** educación, transformación del conflicto, educación para la paz, paz, universidades.

## Abstract

Conventional approaches to peace education have not led to more peaceful societies. In order to produce the broad political and social shifts that many peace educators have envisioned, a new type of educational approach is needed. Conflict transformation education (CTE) is a promising new approach that seeks to shift attitudes at a group level rather than individually, and embraces rather than denies its explicit political aim to shift social norms regarding the use of violence. CTE could be a useful tool in the post-peace agreement Colombian context.

**Keywords:** education, conflict transformation, peace education, peacefulness, universities

## Introduction

Many scholars argue that formal and informal education can and should play a significant role in making the world a more peaceful place<sup>1</sup>. They suggest that institutions of primary, secondary and tertiary education should promote values of inter-group tolerance and non-violence, that they should provide future leaders with skills needed to address conflicts constructively, and that informal education should be used as a tool to increase inter-group equality. The field of peace education has emerged since the end of World War II based on the idea of replacing a “war culture” with a “peace culture” (Aspeslagh and Burns, p. 46) characterized by non-violent approaches to conflict, equality, justice, and respect for human rights and the natural environment.

Colombia might seem to be a place in great need of peace education following the signing of an historic peace agreement in late 2016 between the government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) that formally ended more than half a century of civil war. However, this paper takes a critical stance toward contemporary peace education, and proposes a new approach – Conflict Transformation Education (CTE) – that would better respond to contemporary political realities related to peace, conflict and social change. CTE also would address a serious gap in terms of “scaling up” the effects of peace education from the individual to the social and political levels that contemporary practice/theory usually fails to acknowledge. CTE proceeds from the controversial assumption that creative conflict transformation represents the vanguard in terms

<sup>1</sup> Citing Dewey (1916) and Putnam (2000), authors Iftikhar Ahmad and Michelle Y. Szpara write in “Education for Democratic Citizenship and Peace: Proposal for a Cosmopolitan Model” (2005) that, “education should be about creating a peaceful world, both locally and globally a world that binds humanity together across national and territorial boundaries.”

of promising approaches to conflict that can lead to increased and more sustainable peacefulness on a societal level. This paper will bring Gutmann's theory of democratic education through the exercise of conscious social reproduction and Ben-Porath's concept of "expansive education" into conversation with theories of conflict transformation and peace education. This conversation will illustrate the potential for education to increase acceptance and use of the principles of conflict transformation in order to influence how modern societies attempt to build peace.

Through its exploration of why CTE may be a more effective mechanism for building peace than traditional peace education, this paper will examine how CTE could play a positive role in the successful implementation of Colombia's historic peace deal, specifically as part of the Development Programmes with a Territorial Based Approach (PDET) that is a significant part of the Colombian peace agreement intended to help rural areas most affected by violence become re-incorporated into the state. I will argue -- based on my 15-plus years of experience working on university-based peace and conflict studies programs in Iraq -- that universities in Colombia, and particularly the Escuela Superior de Administracion Publica (ESAP) could have a very significant role to play in implementing CTE.

The paper will begin by exploring the question of why peace education has, until now, failed in its attempts to build broad support for conflict transformation

theory and practice. Next it will examine five concepts -- grounded in theory -- that should serve as the foundation of a dynamic CTE program; the paper will argue that a CTE program should be: dialogical and deliberative; explicitly political; challenging in terms of raising difficult questions about peace and conflict; focused on building constituencies for conflict transformation, and; accommodating of multiple perspectives on peace and conflict

### Methodology

To develop this paper, I conducted a thorough literature review of contemporary published sources related to peace education and conflict transformation. I then sought to find connections and tensions between those theories and educational theories from authors such as Freire, Bordieu and Passeron, Gutmann and Ben-Porath who write about the transformational power of education as well as its limitations. Next, I constructed a model of conflict transformation education (CTE) based upon those theories and offered examples from my work in Iraq that speak to the importance of each of the core concepts of CTE. Finally, I offered some preliminary thoughts on how CTE might be applied in the post-2016 peace agreement Colombian context.

## Why has peace education failed to result in greater acceptance of conflict transformation?

Peace education is a broad – and broadening – field. Over the past few decades, much debate has occurred about the goals and strategies of peace education, particularly as the most commonly understood threat to international peace has changed from the Cold War to international terrorism. This paper does not attempt to summarize or evaluate these myriad debates, but focuses instead on the question of why peace education has not been more successful than it has in terms of fostering wide acceptance and implementation of core principles it teaches, including conflict resolution, conflict management and – more recently – conflict transformation.

Rather than focusing on specific content issues, this paper examines the general approach of peace education as an intended method of social change. One assumption, in particular, must be evaluated: that providing peace education to increasing numbers of students – youths and adults – eventually will result in broad-based political, social and/or economic change in terms of how societies approach conflicts. As Alger (1996) writes, a core mission of peace educators is to ensure that their messages reach as large an audience as possible.

... [G]iven the poor record of states and the interstate system, in assuring either positive or negative

peace for most of the inhabitants of the world, it should not be necessary to argue that peace education should be provided for as many adults as possible. This will enable them to be more effective in pushing states toward positive and negative peace policies (p. 267).

This argument underlies much of the contemporary peace education literature: if peace educators expose more and more people to lessons about peace education's central themes – human rights, conflict resolution, gender equality, and, more recently sustainable environmental practices – the eventual result will be broad awareness of these issues, leading to progressive political action and changed policies at the national and international levels. The field has grappled with the tensions of individual vs. systemic change. As Burns and Aspeslagh (1996) note, there has been a shift toward “holism” that:

links the individual directly, rather than through stages, to the wider environment ... individual change is directly related to global or universal change ... A move from societal peace to peace culture is central (p. 11).

Despite the apparent commitment of peace education to work for global change, it remains difficult to decipher a coherent methodology for transmitting behaviors and attitudes developed in classroom settings into a broader political realm. Beyond simply assuming

an additive effect upon society through the education of ever-larger numbers of students with knowledge, awareness and skills needed to build peace, peace education is concerned with shifting norms toward a culture of peace.

Most peace educators claim a supranational rather than national or sub-national sectional order ... [with] normative appeals to justice, a common humanity and survival of the planet. Survival is the key underlying concern, and the focus is on averting war, and on alternatives to war, which is considered a major threat to human life. And the advocates of education for peace see education as central to efforts to change actions and consciousness in order to stop war and bring about a more desirable human and ecological state (Aspeslagh and Burns, 1996, p.9).

More than 60 years since peace education became a formalized entity and the first academic college-level peace studies program was founded, it seems appropriate to ask whether the approaches of peace education actually are serving to bring about the broad international changes that it seeks to catalyze. War certainly has not disappeared and, though it has diminished in frequency in recent years, it does not appear to be disappearing. In 2016, 28 wars – violent conflicts

responsible for more than 1000 battle-related deaths – were ongoing; this represented a significant decline from the 41 wars of 2000, but an increase of four wars since 2010.<sup>2</sup> A new measure that may be even more significant – the Global Peace Index, which seeks to quantify the peacefulness of states and the world as a whole – suggests that the world became 2.14 percent less peaceful during the decade from 2008 until 2017 (Global Peace Index). So, whatever success peace education may be achieving at the individual or local level, it would be difficult to argue that it is having a major effect on the overall peacefulness of modern society. Part of this failure can be attributed to a logical flaw in the basic theory of change employed by peace education.

According to Harris, one of the foremost scholars of peace education, the field is dependent upon an “important symbiotic relationship between peace movements, peace research, and peace education.”

The activists lead, developing strategies to warn people about the dangers of violence, whether it be wars between nations, environmental destruction, the threat of nuclear holocaust, colonial aggression, cultural, domestic, or structural violence. Academics studying these developments further the field of peace research. The activists, hoping to broaden their

<sup>2</sup> Data from Project Ploughshares’ Armed Conflicts Report 2017, retrieved from: <http://ploughshares.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2017-ARMED-CONFLICT-REPORT-final-proof.pdf>

message, teach others through informal community-based peace education activities, such as holding forums, publishing newsletters, and sponsoring peace demonstrations. Teachers observing these activities promote peace studies courses and programs in schools and colleges to provide awareness of the challenges of ecological sustainability, war, and peace (Harris, 2008).

Harris' account explains an educational system designed to develop awareness about violence and strategies for ending it. By his reckoning, activists and teachers share knowledge developed by academics with community-based groups and students enrolled in schools and universities. The only certain outcome of such awareness-raising is raised awareness, not normative change. Harris acknowledges that although a 1984 study by Eckhardt found that "after peace education training, college students have a change in their attitudes toward peace and away from violence," a 1992 study he conducted himself indicated that "college students most often are most interested in changing their own behavior after such training, rather than trying to work on external circumstances that cause violence" (Harris, 2000, p.404).

... [M]ost graduates of peace education classes take the content matter of these classes and proceed to work directly on issues of violence in their own lives, as opposed to

becoming peace activists and attempting to stop violence in the external world (p. 415).

Harris acknowledges that peace education "has not really taken hold in school systems around the world" and that "[f]ormal school systems have largely ignored the educational insights provided by peace activist educators" (2008). What are the reasons for this poor treatment of peace education? Harris points to "cultural and economic pressures to ramp up ... curricula to include more math and science so that school graduates can compete in a high tech global economy" as well as fear among citizens of many countries that peace education does not provide sufficiently strong strategies to confront "imaginary or real enemies" (2008).

Harris, somewhat startlingly, does not address peace education's failure to explain how individual attitudes related to peace are supposed to translate into broader political shifts. It is worthwhile to consider Kelman's focus on shifting political attitudes, and how he moves "from an individual to a collective unit of analysis" through interactive problem solving workshops that sought to "[change] people not as isolated individuals but as members of an ethnic coalition and representatives of broader political constituencies" (Baron, p. 17). Baron connects Kelman's workshops to the educational theory of Vygotsky, who argued that a child's actual potential development is best measured by a zone of proximal development, determined by which problems she is able to

solve “under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). Baron argues:

... [M]uch as a person can achieve a higher level of cognitive achievement in the context of social support, so can a political attitude become more positive when people are part of a cross-ethnic coalition than would occur without such a context ... This example is, in effect, a new way to spin Lewin’s (1948) proposition that it is easier to change a person as part of a group than as an isolated individual (Baron, p. 17).

If collective attitude shifts leading to political action are much more likely to occur when participants (learners) are treated as members of “broader political constituencies,” (Baron, p. 17) as Kelman’s work suggests, then the field of peace education may be operating at a distinct political disadvantage by seeking to catalyze social change through the education of ever-greater numbers of individuals who may share little more than membership in an academic class.

Ben-Porath (2006) offers an important criticism of peace education that brings the issue into greater focus, and helps to explain why peace education has not – and possibly cannot – succeed in gaining support for principles and practices of conflict transformation. She argues that peace education typically is “all too often based on definitions that are either too broad or too narrow” (p. 74). Peace educators, Ben-Porath claims, tend toward either a “pedagogic approach” or a “holistic approach.” Those favoring the “pedagogic approach” focus on development of “identifiable capacities” for violence reduction

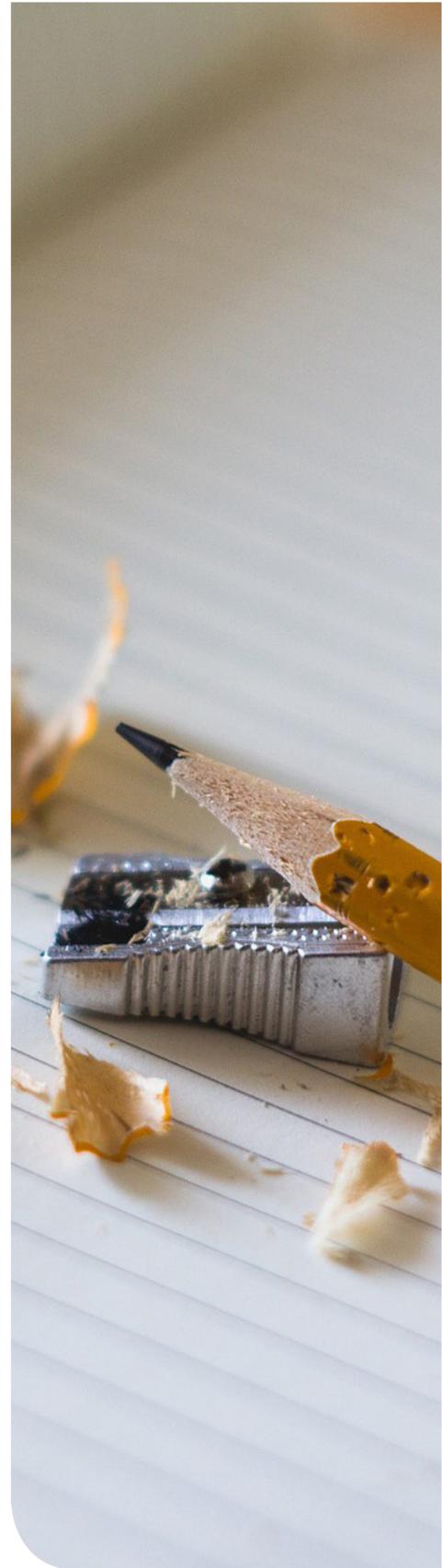


Figura 1: Sin título, fuente: Pixabay.

and consequently share a rather modest vision of peace that often is limited to ending or avoiding direct violence (pp. 61-62). Educators who utilize the “holistic approach” seek “to devise a comprehensive program to eliminate all aspects of violence” (p. 65). Ben-Porath believes both groups are guilty of oversimplification – “pedagogic” educators by reducing the problems of violence to issues that can easily be handled in a classroom setting, and “holistic” educators by suggesting strong linkages between all forms of violence that may be effectively addressed with a unified strategy. (Harris’ concerns about school leadership and curriculum development would qualify him for the “pedagogic” school while Galtung, with his attempts to develop systematic approaches to all forms of violence, would fit in the “holistic” school).

Ben-Porath reserves her ultimate criticism for both schools, claiming that they are too “apolitical.” She argues that a failure to directly address political issues – because they seemingly are too big or too small, depending on which school’s viewpoint is considered – threatens to render meaningless the entire peace education enterprise. She writes that the “failure to envision a different future is the weakest side of peace education approaches of both trends” and that the presentation of vaguely peaceful images or the promise of marginally-improved relations are not sufficiently compelling alternatives to people experiencing actual violence.

How do citizens contribute to the continuation of violence or to its alteration? How can the enchanting images of peace be realized? ... Absent responses to these questions peace education fails to tackle the rigidity of and stagnation that are the hallmarks of belligerent citizenship (p. 73).

In “expansive education,” Ben-Porath offers a concept that answers her own questions, builds upon Gutmann’s model of democratic education and suggests a possible better way for principles of conflict transformation to gain credence through mainstream education. Ben-Porath envisions “expansive education” as a deliberative approach to civic education in wartime that would accommodate patriotism through notions of pluralism and “shared fate,” focus on visions of a peaceful future that encourage “questioning the basic assumptions of war” (p.129) and, above all, understand and represent itself as a political project intended to build truly democratic peace. It is worth noting that Kelman also points to “shared fate” as crucial for the shifting of images, attitudes and behaviors within adversarial groups in conflict situations.

Expansive education, thus, offers an appropriate model for CTE because it is a highly contextualized approach that must be interpreted locally. As Galtung writes, “[i]n the end, there is no substitute for the analysis or ‘diagnosis’ of the conflict and the articulation of specific proposals for solutions or transformations” (2014,

p. 144). CTE could further draw upon the example of expansive education in the following ways:

1. CTE should define itself as an explicit political project. Theorists such as Galtung, Curle, Kriesberg and Lederach all advocate for transformative approaches that openly address power imbalances and other inequalities in conflicts as a step toward altering conflict dynamics and building peace. Expansive education defines itself as a political project. Conflict transformation seeks to respond to increasingly complex understandings of conflicts that may be “asymmetric, marked by inequalities of power and status” and “protracted, crossing repeatedly into and out of violence and thus defying cyclical or bell-shaped models of conflict phases” (Miall, 2003, p.3). Conflict demands interventions that address not only power issues that lie at the heart of realist thinking, and unequal access to resources as Marx might suggest, but a full range of issues that lie at the heart of politics, including identity, history, culture and social organization;
2. CTE should be as multidisciplinary in its focus as it is in its roots. Understanding the history of relationships is a central component of conflict transformation; so is changing individual and group attitudes and behaviors, which demands both psychological and sociological approaches, as well as nuanced understandings of history

and economics. Expansive education aims to include all these disciplinary perspectives;

3. CTE should focus on themes of individual change, shifts in relationship patterns, as well as structural change. Focusing on learners’ personal experiences, encouraging notions of shared fate and taking a critical posture towards war and violence – as expansive education aims to do – offers possibilities for the three types of change that conflict transformation demands;
4. CTE must develop and occur in context. Despite Galtung’s visions for vast structural changes in society that would result in positive peace, later theorists such as Lederach understand “the long-term goal of transformation as validating and building on people and resources within the setting.” (Lederach in Miall, p. 4). And, as Ben-Porath writes, expansive education “should aim to overcome specific challenges, to acknowledge a specific ‘other’ ... in the face of particular threats” (p.128).

Now that an appropriate model has been identified for CTE, the next section of this paper will focus on developing a theoretical framework for CTE. This framework could serve as a guide for development of a broad-based education program as part of PDET that could catalyze significant political and social transformations in the areas most affected by Colombia’s

violent conflict. Such a program could be implemented by a higher education institution, specifically ESAP, because of its national reach -- with more than 100 educational centers nationwide, including in many of the areas least served by other higher education institutions -- and focus on development of governance capacities for peace (Perez, M, & Wills, E.). PDET is supposed to include “an action plan for regional transformation, which will strive to include ample participation from the relevant sectors of the community, in the plan’s formulation, execution and follow-up.” (Summary of Colombia’s Agreement to End Conflict and Build Peace, p.9). CTE would be consistent with this approach, and would contain potential to strengthen it.

### Which theoretical concepts must guide an effective Conflict Transformation Education program?

CTE must be carried out in ways that are consistent with its own theoretical foundations, as well as with theories that explain why education can be both an appropriate and effective vehicle for increasing broad consideration and application of its core principles. Because CTE represents what Kenneth Boulding calls a “normative science” – a bold attempt to realize social change – it also must employ matching content and form that emphasize new and better ways for societies to approach conflict. And although conflict transformation is – as Lederach writes – both descriptive and prescriptive, it must

emphasize universal principles – such as the power of conflict to serve as a constructive social force – without losing sight of its need for practice always to occur in context.

The following sections attempt to articulate five significant concepts, drawn from both conflict transformation and education theories that could form the basis for a mainstream educational program. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather as the beginning of an argument for development of an interdisciplinary field of CTE distinct from peace education. I have included in the list examples from my work with universities in Iraq that hopefully will serve to concretize the concepts.

### CTE Must Be Dialogical and Deliberative

Though it must be based on the latest and strongest theories in the field, CTE should constitute a mutual and balanced search for knowledge about peace and conflict between learners and instructors that minimizes the distance between them. Freire argues that the central conflict in society is between the oppressors and the oppressed, and suggests that only by breaking this dichotomy can peace be achieved. He sees conflict mainly in structural terms and proposes an educational program that he calls “pedagogy of the oppressed” as the path to transformation of the relationship between oppressor and oppressed that would lead to an elimination of structural violence through

a fundamental shift at the individual, relational and systemic levels.

Freire argues that education must not be of the “systematic” sort that “can only be changed by political power.” He proposes a program of educational projects to be “carried out with the oppressed in the process of organizing them” and liberating them in two stages. First, the consciousness of oppressor and oppressed must be addressed, and a “confrontation occurs through the change in the way the oppressed perceive the world of oppression.” Second comes an “expulsion of myths created and developed in the old order” (2000, pp. 54-55).

Freire argues that a “dialogical” approach to education – and all cultural action – is the only response that can succeed in transforming relationships between the oppressor and the oppressed. He writes that dialogue is “the encounter of men and women in the world in order to transform the world” (2000, p. 129) and that this transformation must be modeled in an educational system that eliminates the hierarchy separating teachers from students, thereby “resolv[ing] the contradiction between teacher and student” (2000, p. 93).

Because Freire’s vision of oppression is so closely connected to structural violence, it can be said that the dialogical educational program he proposes is intended not

just to eliminate oppression, but to lead to positive peace<sup>3</sup>. Like Galtung, Curle and Lederach, Freire does not seek to eliminate conflict, but understands it as a natural phenomenon that becomes destructive when powerful parties utilize structural violence or oppression to achieve their goals. Thus, Freire’s conception of education offers not only a criticism of predominant educational practice in the service of powerful individuals and polities, but also a normative suggestion for how education might address structural violence and help produce positive peace through transformation of conflict.

Education as the exercise of domination stimulates the credulity of students, with the ideological intent (often not perceived by educators) of indoctrinating them to adapt to the world of oppression ... Education as the practice of freedom – as opposed to education as the practice of domination – denies that man is abstract, isolated, independent and unattached to the world (2000, pp.78-81).

Freire, like Galtung, is a structuralist. They both see revolution as the path to positive peace, characterized by Freire as liberation of the oppressed. Freire’s “pedagogy of the oppressed,” though, serves as a concrete “theory of transforming action” and a guidepost that can help determine how education could play a role in increa-

<sup>3</sup> Galtung (1985) defines “positive peace” as not only the absence of violence but also the presence of “harmony, ‘co-operation’ and ‘integration.’”

REFLEXIÓN

sing acceptance and practice of conflict transformation. In order for education to serve as transformative vehicle, Freire would argue, consciousness about peace and conflict must be raised, hierarchical boundaries between teachers and students must be truly erased, humanity of all men must be affirmed and dialogue must occur in a way that allows for free exploration of subject matter.

Because this view of education starts with the conviction that it cannot present its own program but must search for this program dialogically with the people, it serves to introduce the pedagogy of the oppressed, in the elaboration of which the oppressed must participate (2000, p. 124).

Though extremely critical of existing educational practice, Freire's theory is grounded in hopefulness, and stands as an encouraging argument for possible greater acceptance and growth of conflict transformation. Freire, in fact, writes that "transformation of the world" is a "dialectic process between two actions: denouncing the process of dehumanization and announcing the dream of a new society" (1998, p. 74). Freire argues that his critical theory leads to the conclusion that "to change things is difficult but possible," and that it is of no importance whether desired change is "in the area of adult or child literacy, health, evangelization, or the inculcation of new technical skills" (1998, p.75). Consequently, it becomes possible to see how Freire's concept of

dialogical education could be employed in the process of achieving normative social change in the direction of conflict transformation.

When Freire writes, "[i]t's in making decisions that we learn to decide" (1998, p.97), he expresses a confidence in educational process as a potentially constructive agent of social change that is thoroughly absent from the critical evaluations of Bourdieu and Passeron, who view democratic access to education as a cynical path that purports to provide genuine access to dominated classes, but which, in fact, offers only enough access to education to stifle any serious claims for more (1990). Freire's thinking connects with Gutmann's approach to "conscious social reproduction" as a means of preparing citizens for "deliberative decision making" that, she argues, is core to active participation in a democratic society.

Deliberation is not a single skill or virtue. It calls upon skills of literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking, as well as contextual knowledge, understanding and appreciation of other people's perspectives. The virtues that deliberation encompasses include veracity, nonviolence, practical judgment, civic integrity and magnanimity. By cultivating these and other deliberative skills and virtues, a democratic society helps secure both the basic opportunity of individuals and its collective capacity to pursue justice (1999, p. xiii).

Gutmann's conception of "conscious social reproduction" offers a third possibility, distinct from Bourdieu's and Passeron's pessimistic view that no educational reform is possible unless it directly benefits the dominant class at the expense of the dominated, and separate still from Freire's more hopeful – though still rather humble – claim that certain segments of civil society led by activist educators could implement a radical education program such as conflict transformation, provided that it does not become the responsibility of the "dominant classes" who are capable of "being 'progressive' [only] when it suits them" (1998, p. 91).

Gutmann claims instead that – at least in a democratic society – citizens possess not only the authority, but also the responsibility, to determine the form and content of mainstream education such that it serves to transmit cultures from one generation to the next. She considers this neither an impossibility, as Bourdieu and Passeron might, nor as a radical struggle to be conducted on the fringes of society, as Freire might, but instead as a central part of "deliberative decision making" in a democratic society. Gutmann (1999) insists that the reproduction function of education must be considered separate from "political socialization," which she considers "unconscious social reproduction" that results in transmission of "political values, attitudes and modes of behavior to citizens" (p. 15).

Gutmann's theory suggests that citizens, through a "deliberative decision making" process, must determine which values

and behaviors it prefers to transmit to future generations, and then to develop and implement an educational program matching those priorities (p.xiii). She argues that a democratic society "can choose among and give content to these [educational] aims only by developing a normative theory of what the educational purposes of our society should be." Gutmann distinguishes her normative theory of democratic education from three theories she attributes to Plato (who argues for education by the state), Locke (who argues that parents alone should determine their children's education) and Mill (who argues for education controlled by a neutral authority).

If my criticisms are correct, then these three theories are wrong. None provides an adequate foundation for educational authority. Yet each contains a partial truth ... A democratic state of education recognizes that educational authority must be shared among parents, citizens and professional educators even though such sharing does not guarantee that power will be wedded to knowledge, that parents can successfully pass their prejudices on to their children, or that education will be neutral among competing conceptions of the good life (1999, p.42)

How does Gutmann's theory of democratic education – and, more specifically, "conscious social reproduction" – apply to the question of CTE? First, it offers

a potential vehicle (that Bourdieu and Passeron, and Freire do not) for citizens to decide that the values inherent to conflict transformation are worth transmitting to future generations through mainstream education. If citizens find sufficiently compelling the broad concept of addressing conflict by seeking to transform individual attitudes, group relationships and societal structures through processes that involve consciousness raising, are not overly reliant on perceptions of power, are based upon history and context, and are led by local actors, then such an educational program could become part of an effort to re-orient a society's thinking and actions relative to peace and conflict.

Gutmann's theory of democratic education also is significant because it appears to be deeply compatible with some of conflict transformation's foundational thinking. Her emphasis on deliberation as the most proper method of public decision making for a democratic society resonates strongly with Galtung's emphasis on dialogue between parties in conflict as a path to transformation. Similarly, "consentization" and "dialogical education" – as offered by Freire and built upon by Galtung, Curle and Lederach – are consistent with Gutmann's view of deliberation as the cornerstone of a democratic society.

To the extent that a democracy is not deliberative, it treats people as objects of legislation, as passive subjects to be ruled, rather than as citizens who take part in governance by accepting or rejecting

the reasons they and their accountable representatives offer for the laws and policies that mutually bind them (1999, p.xii).

Deliberation, as Gutmann views it, includes a non-adversarial relational dimension. She writes of commitments between citizens and a shared society, as well as placing the limits of "non-repression" and "non-discrimination" on democratic education. The practice of each of these principles would be as essential to conflict transformation as it would be to democratic education.

Adoption of CTE in specific programs likewise should be the outcome of a deliberative process among educational decision-makers – the state, parents/learners and professional educators – that affirms a commitment to conscious social reproduction of basic conflict transformation principles. Societies that practice deliberative decision-making as the route to conscious social reproduction – as envisioned by Gutmann – and then adopt CTE in their educational programs, would be modeling a key element of conflict transformation both inside and outside the classroom by raising awareness of existing conflicts and seeking balanced relations between all stakeholders in the educational process.

Recently, I observed an exchange between learners in a course I was teaching that suggested to me that the dialogical dimension of CTE could make its application extremely important during the

reconstruction of Mosul in Iraq. During an exercise focused on identifying “dividers” and “connectors” as defined by the Do No Harm framework (Anderson), the idea of forced displacement emerged as an experience that potentially connects Iraqi Kurds who live in Duhok, a city located approximately 40 miles north of Mosul, and Iraqi Arabs, who fled to Duhok from Mosul when Da’esh captured their city. One of the Kurdish participants in the group mentioned that her family’s forced displacement to Turkey during the early 1990s might be considered similar to what residents of Mosul experienced in 2014. In response, one of the Arab participants from Mosul said that the two experiences actually were quite dissimilar. Others among the displaced from Mosul suggested that living in the mountains, as the Kurds did, might have been similar to living in tents and displacement camps, as many of those displaced from Mosul did. As the Kurdish participant later recalled:

Then they said: well it was only for one or two months and you have returned back home and it was not burned... So, I replied that how as a three-year-old child I was suffering and still have those pictures in my mind ... I don’t know why we ended up comparing about who did suffer more (personal communication, January 7, 2018).

CTE would encourage thoughtful dialogue and deliberation around issues of deep personal importance, and would seek to develop explicit understandings of

various groups’ truths at the community level that could be utilized to develop educational programs aimed at strengthening community capacities for conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Ultimately, a successful CTE program in Colombia would support ex-combatants, survivors of violence and other community members to explore their different experiences in order to build empathy and positively transform the relationships between groups.

CTE could become the cornerstone of ESAP’s efforts to transform conflict dynamics in rural Colombia, where decades of armed conflict have left many people outside the formal education system. As of 2016, just 27.4 percent of rural students were enrolled in high school (compared to 46.1 percent in urban areas) while just one percent of the country’s offers to attend higher education went to students in rural areas and the other 99 percent went to students in urban areas (Sorza). A CTE program could help to reconcile these very different educational experiences through dialogue and deliberation involving both urban and rural Colombians.

### CTE Must Be an Explicitly Political Project

Realist thinkers do not attempt to cloak their competitive and power-based approaches to conflict in apolitical language; nor should scholars committed to conflict transformation. Obscuring the true intention of educational projects is an approach that aids in the reproduction

of dominant cultures and existing power structures, as Bourdieu and Passeron argue. Because “conscientization” – or awareness-raising about conflict, as envisioned by Freire, Galtung, Curle and Lederach – is a basic objective of CTE, the scholarly field must be transparent about its objectives to educate leaders and average citizens who will seek to transform unpeaceful relationships into peaceful ones, wherever political, social or economic conflicts exist. One approach to encouraging such shifts may be found in Kelman’s work in “escalatory dynamics,” which shows “small positive changes in the negotiation of identities to result in powerful distal effects at the political level” (Baron, p. 16). Such an approach is consistent with Ben-Porath’s model of expansive education, which advocates for development of clear visions of peaceful futures for societies experiencing violence. Another avenue for CTE to operate in a political realm is for scholars in the field “communicating with the people,” to “exercise pressure on the elites,” as Galtung urges (1996, p. 28).

Galtung depicts conflict transformation as a revolutionary process that will require serious alteration of existing cultures and structures that have supported violence. His language leaves little doubt that he supports a mass effort that would re-shape society. He writes that “conscientization, raising the general level of consciousness, will and must take place” and that “[t]he goal is an acceptable formula, defining a new formation; new structures, new institutions” (Galtung

1996, p.265). Galtung argues that conflicts must not be hidden from view. All parties to a conflict must be aware of all of its elements, including the “deep culture” and “deep structure.” Only with such awareness will it be possible to address the fault lines. He writes of “lifting” attitudes and assumptions and contradictions “up from the subconscious, partly even from the unconscious.”

The process is basic, for how can a conflict be consciously transformed unless the parties to a conflict are conscious subjects, true actors? Otherwise, the conflict will transform the actors as objects ... The party is only a passenger taken for a ride, not a driver presiding over the process. (Galtung, 1996, p. 74)

To Galtung, conflicts must be made conscious, and education stands as the vehicle for consciousness-raising that is a vital part of conflict transformation. He insists that knowledge must not be kept secret lest it become “cultural violence.” He sees peace research with the people as “peace education,” and insists that peace researchers always must be “in dialogue with the people, always retaining complete academic freedom” (Galtung, 1996, p. 28).

[C]onflict transformation is a never-ending process ... A solution in the sense of a steady-state, durable formation is at best a temporary goal. A far more significant goal is transformative capacity, the ability to handle the transfor-

mations in an acceptable and sustainable way (Galtung, 1996, p.90).

My work in Iraq has highlighted the difficulty of working in explicitly political ways. My academic colleagues often caution me that our education work must not appear “too political” to leaders who might view it as a challenge to their authority. Yet we have worked together to ensure that our work is not, in Ben-Porath’s words “apolitical” (p. 73). From 2014-2017, I led a community-based peace education project in collaboration with the University of Duhok’s Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies that designed and delivered a three-day peace education workshop to more than 4000 youth participants in and around Duhok. Without explicitly addressing political issues, the project aimed to send strong normative messages about the need for peaceful coexistence by having host community trainers bring the workshops into the Domiz Camp for Syrian Refugees as well as into several of the camps near Duhok for internally displaced persons. Nearly half (1976) of the total 4068 workshop participants lived in these camps (New York University, 2017).

During the final stages of the same project, University of Duhok trainers developed and delivered workshops on peacebuilding thought to faculty from the University of Mosul who were displaced to Duhok because of Mosul’s continued occupation by Da’esh. This cooperation between public universities -- one of them operating under the authority of the Kurdistan Regional Government’s ministry of higher education and the other answering to Iraq’s federal ministry of higher education -- served as a significant public signal about possibilities for cooperation across the political divide even while remaining out of

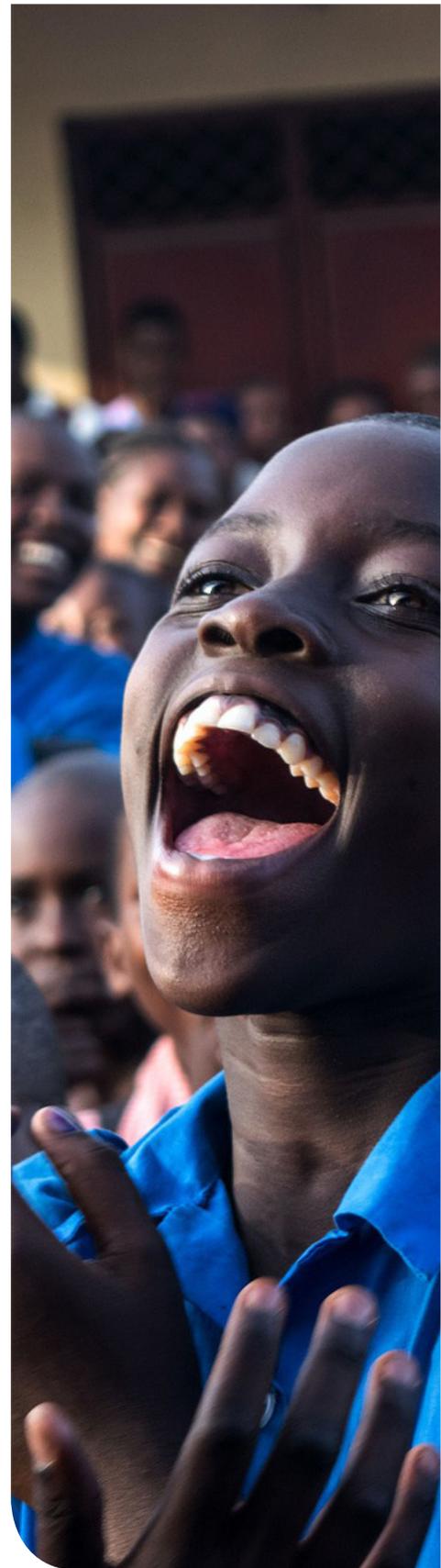


Figura 2: Sin título, fuente: Pixabay.

the public political dispute between Iraq's central government and the Kurdistan Region's government.

For CTE to be fully implemented in Colombia, it would be necessary to conduct full and open discussion -- without significant political limitations -- about the meaning and characteristics of building peaceful relations between the federal government and the territories that remained outside of direct government control throughout the violent conflict between the government and FARC. Then it would be necessary to develop a plan of education and action, including tangible policies and practices for achieving that vision. ESAP could play a significant role by using CTE to help current and future public officials reimagine their roles as leaders of peaceful communities living in harmony with the state. The conduct of politics would need to follow -- rather than drive -- a process developed by these leaders/CTE learners. ESAP, as a government-run institution of higher learning focused on public administration education in more than 100 locations across Colombia, is uniquely positioned to undertake the political project of explicitly transforming relationships between former adversaries.

### CTE Must Creatively Explore the Most Challenging Questions about Peace and Conflict

Peace education, as Ben-Porath notes, often has been too modest in its approach, limiting itself to promoting skills and strategies for achieving negative peace.

CTE must reach beyond such cautious thinking and offer plausible, contextually-appropriate strategies for addressing and transforming conflicts at the individual, relational and structural levels, in line with modern theory. To do so, practitioners and scholars must work together in research initiatives that will document conflict transformations, explain political, social and economic shifts in the language of conflict transformation, test and refine theories, and bring the latest knowledge to learners and the field of practice. In order to ensure that CTE does not become an exercise in cultural domination -- or cultural reproduction -- academic research must occur "in dialogue with the people, always retaining complete academic freedom" (Galtung 1996, p. 28).

Conflict transformation theorists distinguish themselves from two schools of thought that preceded them: conflict resolution and conflict management. Conflict resolution aims to address the needs of parties in conflict and "is about how parties can move from zero-sum, destructive patterns of conflict to positive-sum constructive outcomes" (Miall, 2003, pp.4-5). However, as Lederach writes, the concept of conflict "resolution may conceptually and subtly promote the impression that conflict is undesirable and should be eliminated or at least reduced" (1995, p.16). Some theorists question whether ending conflict is either possible or desirable.

Conflict management takes a more circumspect view on that issue and accepts

both the inevitability and possible benefits of conflict in many relationships. It raises questions about “how to design a practical, achievable, cooperative system for the constructive management of difference” (Bloomfield and Reilly in Miall, p.3). As Lederach notes, however, conflict management also is a “[h]eavily Western” concept built on the assumption that “conflict follows certain predictable patterns and dynamics that could be understood and regulated.” (1995, p.16).

Conflict transformation theorists draw on both sets of thinking, and conclude that conflicts must not be reduced to the re-imagining of parties’ positions at the urging of external actors in order to achieve acceptable short-term outcomes. Rather, the parties to a conflict themselves must undertake a change process in order to alter conflict dynamics and, as Galtung suggests, “to channel [conflict] energy constructively” so that they, their relationships and the structures through which they interact all are transformed into a more peaceful state.

Unlike resolution and management, the idea of transformation does not suggest we simply eliminate or control conflict, but rather points descriptively toward its inherent dialectic nature. Social conflict is a phenomenon of human creation, lodged naturally in relationships ... [T]ransformation more closely acknowledges what social scientists have been suggesting for some time about the role

and dynamics of social conflict: it moves through certain predictable phases transforming relationships and social organization (Lederach, 1995, p. 17).

CTE can serve as a mechanism for further exploration of conflict and constructive responses to it. It must respect both the need for broad models of conflict and their inevitable failure because “understanding conflict and developing appropriate models of handling it will necessarily be rooted in, and must respect and draw from, the cultural knowledge of a people” (Lederach 1995, p.10). CTE must serve as an intellectual and practical space for deepening understandings of the complexity of peace and conflict as well as the tensions that these inquiries necessarily produce. My colleagues and I have sought to take advantage of conflict transformation thinking in Iraq by aiming to privilege the knowledge of our Iraqi partners and then supporting them in their processes of inquiry. Our research endeavors all have been designed using an insider-outsider model characterized by research teams usually consisting of one researcher from NYU and one from the University of Duhok. In this way, I believe, we resisted the typical urge to develop projects based on outsider notions of local conflict dynamics, but also took advantage of outsiders to support local researchers in their desire to tackle questions that might be considered too politically sensitive at a local level. Several examples emerged during a course I co-taught with a University of Duhok colleague from 2012

until 2014 that brought together students and recent graduates of our two institutions to conduct peace research projects. Research subjects included: religious conversion and its effects on peacefulness; public service provision in Iraq's disputed territories and the effect of unemployed university graduates on regional peace and security. Any of these subjects might have been overlooked by international researchers and might have been considered too sensitive for local researchers to undertake. Instead, because of our unique partnership, significant research was conducted on these subjects and the outcomes brought into the public sphere for discussion, contributing to what Freire might call "conscientization."

In Colombia, ESAP, as a national institution, is uniquely positioned to enter into such insider-outsider research partnerships that could stimulate new forms of inquiry that encourage creative exploration of conflict dynamics. Participatory research processes could help CTE learners and other community leaders develop new understandings of inter-group relations that take into account historical events but are not completely constrained by them. ESAP, in fact, already seems to have embraced this role. It's "Institutional Development Plan: 2010-20" lists among its priorities creating "an international research network of ESAP in partnership with public and private organizations in the global context" (<http://www.esap.edu.co/portal/index.php/red-de-investigadores/>).

## CTE Must Be Explicit in its Attempt to Develop Constituencies for Conflict Transformation

Galtung has argued that peace and conflict studies should be developed into a robust field of graduate study focused on knowledge and skills training. "Badly needed in the world would be postgraduate training, in as many places as possible, for a Master of Peace and Conflict Resolution, similar to a Master of Business Administration. There is no substitute for creative conflict resolution in the search for peace" (1996, p.36). In fact, as of 2000, there were 80 peace and conflict studies graduate programs in the United States, and 130 worldwide (Windmueller et al.). Harris (2008), meanwhile, has noted that "[i]n most countries, peace education is carried out informally in community settings and through national peace organizations," representing "by far the most widespread use of peace education at the beginning of the new millennium." The existing field of peace education has based much of its strategy on increasing numbers of students in all types of formal and informal programs in an apparent quest for a normative tipping point.

Kelman's work on "interactive problem solving" suggests that greater emphasis should be placed on developing political constituencies committed to conflict transformation rather than focusing on raw numbers of students. Kelman (1965) explains that shifts in political attitudes become possible because attitudes are merely the collection of images that in-

dividuals create and hold of other people, groups and objects. To transform relationships that define how conflict is pursued, images and resulting perceptions must change. Such change is undertaken most successfully in a relational context, creating somewhat of a circular (or perhaps spiral) pattern of pursuing relational transformation of conflicts by seeking to alter images and attitudes within a relational context.

CTE emerges as a promising mechanism for shifting images and attitudes related to conflict, particularly if instructors can be envisioned as third-parties leading groups of students through an exploration of conflict with a focus on the political manifestation of critical concepts. It may be worthwhile to consider again Kelman's (1997) argument that "[o]ne of the central tasks of the third party is to structure the workshop in such a way that new insights

and ideas are likely both to be generated and to be transferred effectively to the policy process." Envisioning Kelman's interactive problem solving as an educational process provides a model for how CTE might play a role in shifting societal norms in the direction of conflict transformation. Although inclusion of CTE at all levels of formal and informal education might seem to be a worthwhile objective, focusing on learners with the greatest likelihood of applying its lessons to policy development would be a better use of resources. As Lederach (2005) argues, "[i]n social change, it is not necessarily the amount of participants that authenticates a social shift," but rather "the quality of the platform that sustains the shifting process that matters" and that "the focus on numbers has created a misunderstanding and misapplication of the concept of critical mass" (p.89).



Figura 3: Sin título, fuente: Pixabay.

The argument about “quality of the platform” points directly to institutions of higher education as well-positioned bodies to carry out CTE. In Iraq, my colleagues and I have made an explicit decision to work with universities because they have linkages both with high-level leadership and with grassroots communities, and are the spaces in which future leaders are forged.

In Colombia, ESAP seems even more appropriately-situated to carry out CTE because of its identity as a governmental institution that has strong connections both to the presidency as well as to local communities in more than 100 locations countrywide. A CTE program in Colombia would have to provide space for diverse members of those communities to explore and redefine the images, perceptions and resulting attitudes they hold about one another. ESAP could, through its undergraduate, graduate and high government programs, develop a broad constituency for conflict transformation as a core principle of public administration.

### CTE Must Accommodate Multiple Perspectives on Peace and Conflict

Because it seeks to represent the leading edge of scholarly thought about conflict and peace, CTE must be inclusive of its intellectual forerunners such as conflict resolution and conflict management, and welcome contributions from scholars from all disciplines, including political science, sociology, psychology, anthro-

pology, history, philosophy, law, education, the natural sciences and others. “... [h]ow does the study of peace relate to the social sciences? They are all important” (Galtung, 2014, p. 140). Even between conflict transformation theorists, significant tensions exist, and these must be made explicit and open for exploration. CTE must, for example, allow for consideration of power as both an essential element of conflict and as a potentially significant obstacle to constructive transformation. As Kriesberg (1998) writes:

... the argument of traditional ‘realists’ is that wars are prevented by having the military strength to prevent attack. On the other hand, critics of that approach argue that as each side arms to deter the other, the resulting arms races generate mutual fear and hostility and escalate disputes into wars (p. 171).

Galtung is similarly critical of the “‘realist’ assumption that only military power counts” as “the least realistic of all” (Galtung, 1996, p. 2). He argues that such simple polarized representations of power – which he calls “cognitive simplifications” (1996, p.91) -- lead to errant conclusions, misguided strategies and, consequently, failures to reduce violence. If parties invest in simplified ideas of their own relative power, escalation and tension may result, “depriving themselves of possible avenues for successful conflict transformation” (Galtung, 1996, p.92).

Despite Galtung's and Kreisberg's basic agreement regarding the effect of power on matters related to conflict transformation, they separate in terms of prescription. Kreisberg advocates for individualized strategies for transformation of particular power-laden conflict relationships. For Kreisberg, each conflict must be approached individually and appropriately, and many methods must be developed in order to do so. "Thinking about each case as freshly as possible, and not assuming it is just like another struggle, is a good general rule" (1998, p.366).

Galtung meanwhile offers prescriptions for broad categories of conflicts: structural conflicts; frustrations; elementary actor conflicts and complex actor conflicts. For example, in structural conflicts, Galtung argues that four steps must be taken to achieve conflict transformation, culminating in "recoupling," meaning the construction of a "horizontal structure

with human rights instead of repression, equity instead of exploitation, autonomy instead of penetration, integration instead of segmentation, solidarity instead of fragmentation, participation instead of marginalization (Galtung, 1996, pp.93-94).

CTE needs to accommodate both of these perspectives and many others. Building upon Ben-Porath's model of expansive education, CTE must address not only cognitive understandings of conflict, but also social and emotional realities.

In order to encourage the most creative practice of conflict transformation, CTE should be expansive in its understandings of conflict and peace, encouraging exploration of multiple and conflicting theories and practices that incorporate issues related not only to power and access to resources, but also to identity, history, culture and social organization.

Accommodating multiple perspectives on conflict has stood as a great challenge for my colleagues in Iraq. The enormous traumas that people have experienced -- because of the oppression they suffered under Saddam Hussein's regime, the United States-led occupation or from living under Da'esh control or fleeing from it -- has made it difficult for them to accept perspectives different from their own. CTE needs to provide safe opportunities for learners to consider alternative perspectives without feeling that they are abandoning others in their identity groups.

The experience of Colombians with their own violent conflict should not be conflated with or compared to the experience of Iraqis. The only certain similarity is that in both cases many different perspectives on conflict exist and must be respected and explored. ESAP, because of its extensive presence in both urban and rural areas of Colombia, could play an important role in CTE by helping learners understand and acknowledge the very different realities experienced by many people throughout Colombia, and their resulting divergent views of both the armed conflict and the

peace agreement that formally brought it to an end.

## Conclusion

Conflict transformation represents the latest thinking about approaches to conflict that can generate sustainable peace. It builds upon and complicates previous strains of conflict theory by acknowledging conflict as a phenomenon that can lead to constructive social, political and economic change. But in Colombia, like in Iraq, conflict transformation thinking may seem counterintuitive following the extreme suffering of large segments of the population due to violent conflict in recent decades.

But why has conflict transformation until now remained a marginal school of thought in so many places that have not felt the direct pain of violent conflict? Many peace education and peace and conflict studies programs exist worldwide that include consideration of conflict transformation principles and practices. They rely, however, on the concept that educating ever-greater numbers of individuals ultimately will lead to a political sea-change with regard to issues of peace and conflict. Limited research about graduates of peace education programs does not support this hypothesis, suggesting that the field may be depending on flawed logic. Re-considering the work of Kelman suggests that attitudinal shifts related to conflict occur most easily when education occurs in coalitions of different identity groups. Thus, a new approach to

education about conflict transformation is needed.

CTE could be the answer to this dilemma in Colombia, and elsewhere, provided that programs are developed dialogically, embrace their explicit political nature, tackle the most difficult conflict issues, seek to develop cross-communal constituencies for conflict transformation and accommodate a wide variety of perspectives about conflict and its dynamics. If those conditions could be met, CTE could serve as one important piece of the peacebuilding puzzle that helps Colombian communities reformulate their thinking about past and present conflicts.

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