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Peace, democracy, and education in Colombia: the contribution of the political philosopher Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez*

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to present the main contributions to peace, democracy, and the philosophy of education in Colombia, made by philosopher Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez (Medellín, 1935 – Bogotá, 2013). The work of this Colombian philosopher stands out for its important contributions to political philosophy as the vital, supportive, and responsible exercise of thought concerning the public interest. Using Kant's concept of practical reason, Husserl's lifeworld [Lebenswelt], and Habermas's communicative action as starting points, Hoyos-Vásquez succeeded in going beyond these political philosophers by trying to apply their ideas in the midst of the difficult context of corruption, drug trafficking and armed conflict in Colombia over the past five decades. At the same time, Hoyos-Vásquez developed throughout his life a varied public activity as a thinker and educator, belying the myth of the theoretical distance between the philosopher and his/her political present or historical reality. The thought of Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez, and his public action as an educator, represent a substantial contribution to contemporary political and educational philosophy, maintaining a close connection between theory and practice.

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1. Introduction

On 28 June 2017, the FARC, the oldest guerrilla organization on the American continent, laid down its weapons to become a political movement. This great step forward in the closure of the war in Colombia is a victory for those who, during decades, had insisted upon the need for a negotiated solution to the armed conflict and the opening of Colombian society to positions deviating from the status quo. One of the voices that tenaciously

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insisted upon this objective was that of the Colombian philosopher Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez (1935–2013).

One of the essential objectives of the political education is to understand, individually and collectively, the importance and the mechanisms of ethically oriented communication, which affects the interests of all groups in society. Among the many philosophical activities that this project demands, the work of Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez was fundamental on two complementary levels: the theoretical and the pedagogical. This is because, on the one hand, he makes decisive contributions to the analysis of the conditions of a communications ethics that is viable within the *realpolitik* of a country mired in armed conflict. On the other hand, he continually reflected upon how education can lead to peace and did everything in his power to put this concept into practice in his roles as a teacher and a citizen.

The present article provides a characterization of his contributions to peace in Colombia from the perspective of philosophy. It begins by examining the figure of Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez within the framework of political philosophy in Colombia. It then proceeds to examine the central moments in which his dialogue evolves within the philosophical tradition, until he consolidates his own independent position as a political thinker on peace, democracy, and education.

2. Political philosophy in Colombia

In the Colombian philosophical tradition of the last century, at least four substantive contributions to the philosophical characterization of contemporary political problems stand out: the criticisms of modernity and technology as threats to humanism, presented in the work of Cayetano Betancur (Copacabana, 1910 – Bogotá, 1982),¹ whose ideas are closely related to the philosophy of Ortega y Gasset (Sierra, 1985); the critique of democratic anthropo-theism as the ‘political religion’ of modernity in the fragmentary texts of the reactionary philosopher Nicolás Gómez Dávila²; the attempt to think of philosophy itself as a political problem in the in-depth discussion of the relationship between philosophy and politics (the exemplary cases of Plato, Marx and Heidegger) in *El mito del rey filósofo* by Danilo Cruz (1989), and the work of Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez.

When it comes to showing the contributions of philosophy to peace, democracy, and philosophy of education in Colombia, the role of Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez is much more than that of protagonist. Other professional philosophers, for example, have offered answers to the Colombian crisis (Sierra & Gómez-Müller, 2002) in an attempt to put their general philosophical work to the service of the political urgency raised by the historical present. Some of those compilations were even headed by Hoyos-Vásquez himself (Hoyos-Vásquez & Uribe, 1998). Moreover, there are other important specialized works on topics in political philosophy that have been published in Colombia in recent decades related to peace and democracy (Arango, 2007, 2008, 2012; Botero, 2005; Cortés & Carrillo, 2003; Garzón, 2008; Hernández, 2012; Monsalve, 1999). Many of these works are eclectic compilations of works inspired in his style in different philosophical traditions, sometimes ‘analytical’ or more influenced by Anglo-Saxon bibliography, other more ‘continental’, the dominant philosophical tradition in Colombia in twentieth century (Torregroza & Cárdenas, 2012).

However, the contribution of Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez exceeds them all in the way he managed to integrate his philosophical-political proposals on peace and democracy into

his lifelong practice as an educator, approaching theory and praxis from a methodological proposal of political philosophy, whose point of departure is ethics and phenomenology. At the same time, as we will see, the contribution of Hoyos-Vásquez to the philosophy of education (Hoyos-Vásquez, 1990, 1995, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2012a, 2012b; Hoyos-Vásquez et al., 2007) is articulated with his reflections on politics.

The figure of Hoyos-Vásquez as a political philosopher has been recognized in the international context of Iberian-American countries (Cortina, 2013). He was an interlocutor of many of the most relevant Iberian-American philosophers of the twentieth century, as Adela Cortina (Spain), Fernando Salmerón (México), Victoria Camps (Spain), and Oswaldo Guariglia (Argentina). He must be also highlighted for his understanding of the Latin American philosophical tradition as a political philosophy (Hoyos-Vásquez, 1998).

3. The living thought of Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez

Practical philosophy centred the philosophical interest of Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez. His explicit intention was to influence the life of the nation through reasoning and criticism. He questioned the power and the citizenry, reasonably and firmly. The spectrum of topics addressed in the framework of this area of philosophy reflects this: political theory and law, ethics, and the philosophy of education. In each of these areas, in addition to the texts in which a general theoretical approach is taken, the reader can find writings that delve into the problems of the application of these issues to the 'lifeworld'. His method of philosophical research, originated in phenomenology and hermeneutics, and one of his main interests was to enhance the practical implications of this philosophical method and attitude.

In connection with the issues mentioned, in his writings, he occupied himself with thinking philosophically about the alternatives for, in his words, 'democratizing Colombian democracy': the conditions necessary to make the negotiation of a political peace with the armed groups possible; the conditions to promote, manage, and evaluate the quality of higher education in Colombia; the relationship between university and society; the foundations for peace and democracy through education; and the pedagogy of values education for the youth of Colombia.

It is pertinent, in addition, to mention his defense of the hermeneutic and communicative approach in the social sciences as opposed to recalcitrant positivist attitudes, and his firm defense of thinking in Spanish. In summary, it is obvious that Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez was a tireless fighter for the causes he considered worthy; and, that he conceived of philosophical writing as a means of opening himself and acting in the world. The former is coherent with the patent reality that his written work is not but a fragment of his intellectual contribution, which was developed on various planes simultaneously (Mejía, 2009). He was an important proponent in the development of the field of philosophy in Colombia and Ibero-America,³ an academic and political critic of the Colombian national reality in magazines and newspapers, a theorist and political promotor of peace in Colombia,⁴ a university representative⁵ and an auditor committed to improving the quality of education in Colombia.⁶

Nevertheless, the role to which he devoted his passion, and that for which he is most remembered, is that of the university professor, and particularly, for his philosophy seminars. He ensured that his seminars were authentic exercises of research and learning, not

only at the conceptual level, but also at the level of the emotions, and, in this sense, he provided an example of the ethical attitude toward communication that he defended on the theoretical level. Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez accepted participants from all walks of life in his seminars. He listened to all those who wanted to speak, and although he debated each session with one, or at times, several interlocutors, he always did so with kindness and honesty.⁷

In his classes, he insisted upon reviewing his own philosophical and political positions, pointing to the limitations of his cultural and historical point of view: in his words, in becoming aware of the 'perspective-ness of the perspectives'⁸ (Hoyos-Vásquez, 2012c, p. 347). He served in the capacity of teacher for many students who are now teachers in their own right as an example of the dignity of the pedagogical practice.

4. Kant and the phenomenological heritage

One of the cornerstones of Hoyos-Vásquez's thinking lies in his stance face to face with Kant's practical philosophy. The nucleus of where they coincide is in the recognition of the effectiveness of practical reason (Hoyos-Vásquez, 1998). This entails the recognition that human beings are capable of orienting their action through ideas, despite factual needs pressure them, and the notion that these philosophical ideas are shown to be merely utopian in nature. The ability to pursue utopias makes a man free from the dictates of nature in shaping his own destiny (Hoyos-Vásquez, 1985, pp. 101–102). By virtue of this ability, the possibility of human freedom as autonomy can be conceived.

A prime example of the ideas that practical reason postulates is peace – a utopia that is always humanity's unachieved goal. It is shown to be factually impossible because the mechanism of nature that guides human history is the 'unsociable sociability' (Kant, 1784/1991, p. 44) of human beings by virtue of which competition, the desire for domination, and conflict predominate. Reason, however, presents peace as a duty, and its fulfillment demands, therefore, a difficult connection between the world of feeling and the intelligible world, which occurs with all moral mandates. Hoyos-Vásquez's intention is to critique Kantian thought in order to rethink the current conditions of this connection between theory and practice (Hoyos-Vásquez, 1985, p. 102).

Nevertheless, Hoyos-Vásquez is aware of the danger of linking politics and morals, as recommended by Kant, or of considering morality as the basis of law, because he fears the holistic positions on morality that seek to convert law into a personal code of conduct. He recommends, therefore, rethinking the relationship between morality, politics, and law. According to him, in order to combat monolithic ideas of law and sovereignty, and to achieve favorable conditions for peace, a policy in constant relation with prudence is indispensable, i.e. one that incorporates the ethical use of reason (Hoyos-Vásquez, 2007, p. 18).

Although Kantian ethics is the starting point of Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez's position on political philosophy, Husserlian phenomenology takes the main role in the genesis of his thought, at the same time that Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action provides him with content which is core for his proposals.

In the 80s, after his second trip to Germany, Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez found, in the philosophy of Jürgen Habermas, the opportunity to exercise a 'paradigm shift', from

the paradigm shift that Habermas own thoughts made to deal with thinking about ethical and political problems (Hoyos-Vásquez, 2012c, p. 20). Such a paradigm shift consisted in proposing a ‘detranscendentalization of reason and subjectivity of the Husserlian phenomenology (Hoyos-Vásquez, 2011, p. 14)’, that is, moving from a concept of reason a priori, detached from the rich intersubjective life, to a rationality clearly inserted into the communicative activities of the lifeworld. Such a paradigm shift implies, in turn, favoring the practical ends of reason in society, over the desire for an epistemological foundation of science.

By virtue of this, Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez was later decisively oriented by a communicative political philosophy in which the formative dialogue is the place most favorable for the political act of the philosopher. However, this did not mean a definitive distancing of the Husserlian phenomenology, but rather a development and deepening of its original intellectual and vital commitments, inasmuch as Hoyos-Vásquez (1986, 2011) always considered Habermas’s thought in contrast to Husserl’s, as well as a development of phenomenology, never as its negation or replacement.

From his initial works in Cologne with his teacher Ludwig Landgrebe (1902–1991),⁹ Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez uncovered in Husserl’s work seminal ideas of his philosophical, political, and vital quest. His doctoral dissertation postulated a close link between the teleology of phenomenological intentionality and the notion of responsibility (Hoyos-Vásquez, 1972).¹⁰ Such a link was translated over time into a regulative idea – in a Kantian sense – that guided the philosophical and educational work of Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez, understood as a ‘responsible commitment to thinking’, of which he himself was fully aware (2011, p. 14, 2012c, p. 16).

However, it was not only this seminal work, the phenomenological training received with Landgrebe in Cologne, or the concept of the teleology of intentionality, that were the only aspects of Husserlian phenomenology that determined the philosophical course of Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez. Throughout his life, and until the end of his days, Hoyos-Vásquez remained closely linked to phenomenology, giving seminars on Husserl and translating and publishing articles defined by his phenomenological essence. Proof of this is the publication in 2012, a year before his death, of his book *Investigaciones fenomenológicas*, which includes his works and articles published on the subject from 1972.

In his phenomenological works, Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez drew additional links between ethics, politics, phenomenology, and critical theory, which complement his foundation in political philosophy based on Kantian ethics. The guiding idea of all these efforts was always ‘the lifeworld’ (Lebenswelt), Husserl’s response to the European crisis of the early twentieth century, a concept that has enjoyed widespread application in philosophy and the humanities since then.

The original Husserlian phenomenological project is very focused on the phenomenology of perception and on epistemological and cognitive problems (Ferrer, 2009). However, Husserl himself would have opened the door, according to Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez, to a phenomenological ethic and a phenomenological political philosophy, since he presented the lifeworld as a source of meaning not only for the specific task of the cognitive-instrumental sciences, but also for the humanities, art, and philosophy. More than a theme of philosophy, the lifeworld is the horizon of all praxis (Hoyos-Vásquez, 2012c, p. 429).

The idea that the lifeworld, as a place of shelter from ethical, aesthetic and political life, can escape the cognitive and instrumental pretensions of all science, and not only its presupposition, was not new when Habermas proposed it. It is not only a recurrent phenomenological theme, which can be traced in Hans Blumenberg, for example, who was also a student of Landgrebe, or in the political-philosophical work of Hannah Arendt, although in her the roots are probably more Heideggerian. It is precisely the theme of the lifeworld that refutes the prejudice that phenomenology has said little about politics, when the truth is that it contains the methodical elements for an original philosophical anthropology (Torregroza 2014) and political philosophy.

5. Phenomenological ethics

With Habermas, Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez took other steps forward in his phenomenological path initiated in transcendental phenomenology. With the interpretation that Ernst Tugendhat and Habermas give to the classic work on moral sentiments by Peter Strawson (1962), integrating into the program of communicative rational ethics the experience of moral sentiments as a phenomenological proof of morality, Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez moved towards a phenomenology of the social world that contained at its base a phenomenology of moral sensitivity (2012c, pp. 175–241).

Hoyos-Vásquez takes this step without ever abandoning Husserl. Hoyos-Vásquez recovers the criticism of Kant and empiricism that Husserl formulated in his *Lessons on Ethics* when considering the role of moral feelings as the foundation of ethics. For Hoyos-Vásquez, Husserl's own phenomenological ethics would have evolved from the intentional analysis of the experiences in which we are given moral phenomena, to a reflection on the moral subject that leads to an ontology of the present – in the Foucaultian sense of the term – that is shown, for example, in Husserl's last work, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*.

It is possible to discover in the interpretative efforts of Hoyos-Vásquez, which attempt to highlight the original ethical-political vocation of Husserlian phenomenology – a proposal of phenomenological ethics and phenomenological political philosophy which draws upon different sources that are mutually exclusive, allowing him to trace his own path.

In the context of a contemporary cultural philosophical situation characterized by an 'ethical turn' in which morality has become the 'first philosophy', as he liked to say following Emmanuel Levinás, Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez sees the need to criticize Husserl with the goal of overcoming the risks of a transcendental subjectivity guided by reason that dialogues only 'with itself', that is, one that is mono-logical. This can be viewed as a Eurocentric reason close to solipsism.¹¹

At the same time, Hoyos-Vásquez questions the limits of communitarianism for the development of critical thinking and highlights the motivational weakness of contractualism or communicative ethics 'exposed to the absolutism of reason' (Hoyos-Vásquez, 2012c, p. 14), given that privileging agreement and rational communication reduces the significant role of moral sentiments as driving forces of political action. Therefore, Hoyos-Vásquez ends up supporting a phenomenological ethics that recognizes the moral sensibility of the lifeworld, avoids polarization, renounces consensus as the only goal, and considers dissent not only possible, but also desirable (p. 15) – an idea that feeds all of his political proposals.

A key article in the development of the political philosophy of Hoyos-Vásquez is 'Comunicación y el mundo de la vida',¹² where he exposes his appropriation of Habermas's thought after the communicative turn and with it the central thesis of his ethical and political proposal about the lifeworld. Hoyos-Vásquez had already translated to Spanish the Habermas's article 'Knowledge and Interest' (1975) (Habermas 1973), but it was only after his internship in Wuppertal (1985–1987) that Hoyos-Vásquez took the step towards a theory and praxis of the communicational act in which the philosopher shifts from being an observer to a participant in the construction of the public. This is an inevitable step of the phenomenological imperative of 'going to the things themselves' that Hoyos-Vásquez deepens in an ethical and political sense, since the Colombian philosopher interprets this programmatic mandate of Husserl as the duty of philosophy: returning to the lifeworld and, therefore, the political and social world.

Such a return is achieved thanks to the emphasis placed on the communicative dimension of reason, which is reflected in the practical and, therefore, political dimension of all theory, but above all, in the power of language 'as the only power of man, that by its nature is, itself, a non-violent power' (Hoyos-Vásquez, 2012c, p. 276).

6. Conflictive-ness of conflicts, and peace

Phenomenology as the ontology of the present deals with crisis. Hoyos-Vásquez takes advantage of Husserl's reflections on the crisis, together with the theses developed first by the fathers of critical theory (Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse) and later by Habermas, to offer an interpretation of the 'conflictive-ness of conflict', from an ethical-political perspective, which provides insight into the overall Colombian conflict: the fact that the first motive for the conflict is the way in which conflict is interpreted.

Instead of insisting on the 'objective' causes of conflict, the most important thing for Hoyos-Vásquez is how to take steps to resolve it, not through violence but through dialogue. Here the political philosophy does not look backward – repeating the discussion without end on the origins of the Colombian armed conflict – but forward instead, in the sense of thinking about what has to be done and how to do it (duty), and where you have to go (ends) to escape from the crisis and achieve a non-violent end to violence.

The conflictive-ness of conflict lies, for Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez, in the unwillingness to reconcile incommensurable positions, and therefore, in the difficulty of recognizing the 'perspectiveness of the perspectives' (2012c, p. 346). Tolerance is therefore a key element in the treatment of conflicts. To overcome the superficial use of the concept of tolerance, intentional phenomenological analysis reveals how 'the intentionality of tolerating opens those who tolerate, suspending their own judgment, to the lifeworld of the tolerated' so that they can understand its 'cultural, political, and emotional contexts, before proffering any assessment [...] on the style of the philosophy (p. 346)'.

For Hoyos-Vásquez, however, it is necessary to add the step, given by critical theory, of understanding tolerance as a discursive process, for which the long history of religious tolerance constitutes a paradigm. Avoiding the consideration of absolutist worldviews through comprehensive openness to other cultures requires a process of unfinished dialogue, which, although it can and must allow for consensus on minimums that make the rule of law viable, as political liberalism demands, it must leave 'space for disagreements, which must be tolerated, even if they do not appear tolerable (p. 349)'. The cultivation of

intercultural democracy, therefore, occupies a central place for Hoyos-Vásquez to emerge from the crisis, not only as a procedure that conveys and institutionalizes communication and dialogue, but also as a set of values that are built thanks to it, and which makes a peaceful society possible (p. 350).

Hoyos-Vásquez was, therefore, a promoter of the idea of dialogue to achieve peace in Colombia, since the most important aspect of dialogue is not its instrumental value in reaching agreements, but the simple fact that by accepting dialogue the interlocutors already commit themselves to pluralism, the public, and communication, which are for Hoyos-Vásquez the 'substance of the possibility of democracy and the rule of law (p. 387)'. For this reason, the responsibility for dialogue lies with all the actors in the conflict (p. 387).

7. Democracy as praxis and ethos

Habermas enriches the concept of the lifeworld as a social world based on the sociological works of phenomenological inspiration by Alfred Schutz (1967), who was a disciple of Husserl, and of his students, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1991). Hoyos-Vásquez goes beyond sociological theory and draws from it consequences of a normative order (2012c, pp. 273–314): it is the plurality of given perspectives, and the cultural diversity of the social world, which permit arguing in favor of democracy as an *ethos* and practical imperative in the framework of an ethic of responsibility and the ends of Kantian lineage. Here again, the political and social philosophy cannot lose its intentionality or its ethical horizon.

The lifeworld, for phenomenology, is the place of the understood, the space of the given that is not questioned on a daily basis (Blumenberg, 2013, p. 11; Husserl, 1936/2008). Although it is a subject of interest and an object of questioning, its main function is that of a universal horizon and a foundation of meaning. This is how Habermas (1985, p. 348) understands it, by emphasizing the lifeworld as a place of the genesis of scientific, cultural, and social development due to communicative action. But it is also for this reason that the lifeworld is 'an inexhaustible resource of reasons to verify the various pretensions of validity' (Hoyos-Vásquez, 2012c, p. 122). From here, Hoyos-Vásquez proposes the ontology of the lifeworld as an irrefutable starting point of political life.

The premise of Hoyos-Vásquez' argument about the necessity of democracy is analogous to Arendt's starting point of politics. That is, the idea that the basis of political life is the plurality of men, which is understood as a fact impossible to reduce to the univocity of any pre-established concept or ideal of the human (Arendt 2008; Torregroza, 2009). Hoyos-Vásquez departs from a lifeworld, which is pluralistic, in which intersubjectivity is a premise and not the *a posteriori* conclusion of the transcendental phenomenology of subjectivity. In this lifeworld, what is given are experiences rich in subjectivity (e.g. moral emotions) and not the objectified and materialized reality of positivism. The cultures and traditions, ways of living life, and historically constituted value systems, are an irrefutable part of that plurality on which politics can and should be built.

In this sense, it is necessary to grant to communitarianism and historicist criticism of liberalism the need to recognize the role of traditional cultures and values as a starting point for the communicative interaction of the lifeworld, inasmuch as they are what give rise to the inevitable perspectivism of the intersubjective experience in a

multicultural world. Democracy cannot then be conceived as an abstract construct that derives from the absolutism of reason, nor as a product of telluric powers that are embodied in the absolutist myth of a single ethnic group or nation.

Without losing its sense as a regulative idea, while being an ethical model of ideal human interaction not yet realized and never fully realizable – democracy ‘to come’, in the future that Derrida (1991/1992) speaks of – democracy is, in the political philosophy of Hoyos-Vásquez, a praxis – the necessary political *ethos* that is given as a response to the realities of a world of cultural life with pluralistic values of finite, historical beings. Such democracy as praxis can only be realized through communication, dialogue and intersubjectivity, encountering its rationality there.

Democracy, understood as such, is, therefore, also the necessary response to the contemporary challenge posed by multiculturalism in the globalized world of the twenty-first century. For Hoyos-Vásquez, it is not just a matter of assuming the ethical-political commitment as a mandate of the Colombian constitution of 1991 to make a multicultural nation viable in law. Hoyos-Vásquez is aware of the pitfalls of multiculturalism (Garzón, 2000) and prefers the notion of interculturality. In its descriptive function, multiculturalism barely manages to provoke a weak concept of tolerance, which hides a form of exclusion of the other, when what is at issue is to incite a true intercultural dialogue that relativizes one’s own points of view.

For that reason, Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez not only deals with the Colombian political context but the international arena as well, and he believes it necessary to emphasize the theoretical-political tools formulated in that regard in the political liberalism of John Rawls. Specifically, the idea of a rational pluralism, viable thanks to communication, which allows for true respect for difference in the context of intersubjectivity and cultural diversity, and permits the search for cross-referenced consensus and minimalist ethics (Hoyos-Vásquez, 2012c, pp. 363 and 380). The Eurocentrism of Husserlian phenomenology encounters its most forceful limit here. Thus, the construction of rational pluralism requires communicative action as a practical inter-subjective and intercultural path in the context of globalization.

The deliberative concept of politics and participatory democracy that combines the republican and the liberal traditions – the idea of direct and representative democracy, overcoming their mutual limitations (Habermas, 1996, pp. 277–292) – thus becomes a model for Hoyos-Vásquez (2012c, p. 384). The need to realize the ethical imperative of peace in Colombia, travelling the political road, requires a re-foundation of the political order in creating an inclusive nation, a process in which participatory democracy is essential (pp. 385–386). The dialogue to reach a peace agreement in Colombia requires returning to the origins, to the re-foundation of Colombian society based upon its differences, including ‘cultural, regional, origin, and class, through agreements which include everyone’. The rule of law is the indispensable guarantor of this process, ensuring the mechanisms for inclusion, participation and deliberation necessary to solve conflicts fairly (Hoyos-Vásquez, 2013a, p. 128). At the same time, the search for peace requires education (pp. 387–388) – an education and ethics for a cosmopolitan citizenry sensitive to diversity, pluralism, and dissent.

In the practical arena, Hoyos-Vásquez participated in many peace commissions in Colombia. Despite the failure results of this effort, his participation is an indicator of his commitment to the dialogue praxis and his concern with peace (Mejía, 2009). Hoyos-

Vásquez also work improving the Colombian national policy for education: he never regrets to collaborate with the educational high authorities in Colombia in giving ethical and philosophical orientation to relevant education and science policies. At the Universities where he works, he leads projects to integrate their philosophical inquiries with educational performance and public interventions in the political arena and media discussion about peace matters in Colombia (Tovar-González, 2013).

8. Conclusions: education and democracy

It is from the interests of corporeal live citizens from which the construction of the nation should be discussed, and it is in complex contemporary societies where the habits of ethically oriented discussions should be consolidated, where the participants are aware of the perspective-ness of their perspectives. Therefore, the environments in which citizens are educated constitute fundamental scenarios where efforts must be made to make the moral imperative that 'there should be no war' tangible – the ideal of deliberative democracy and respect for the values associated with these two ideas. It is precisely in the conflictive and multiple societies of students and teachers of colleges and universities fully immersed in their world, where communication must be articulated with ethics, morality, and democracy. For this reason, Hoyos-Vásquez's thoughts on education for peace and democracy figure centrally in the concluding remarks of this article.

The notion of Habermas's communicative action allows Hoyos-Vásquez to propose a political philosophy in which ethics, morality, communication, democracy and education are perfectly articulated. Perhaps where this articulation is most clearly seen is in the work on education and pedagogy, subjects to which Hoyos-Vásquez devoted the last years of his life, and which are exemplified in the posthumous compilation by EAFIT University of Medellín entitled *El ethos de la universidad* (2013a) and in the posthumous publication of the transcript of his last doctoral seminar at the Technological University of Pereira, entitled *Filosofía de la Educación* (2013b).

In his 1998 conference at the Universidad Industrial de Santander (2013a, pp. 15–38), Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez formulates his criticism of the historical models of universities in Colombia, questioning their political role: neither the modernizing university of the 40s, nor the revolutionary and fundamentalist university of the 60s; nor the university of research and excellence (the 'narcissistic' university) of the 80s, or the neoliberal university of the 90s would have succeeded in solving the problem of their relationship with civil society, from which they are born and to which they are indebted. Hoyos-Vásquez questions the belief that all the problems of the universities would be solved with the insistence that they be modernized according to a single model, when it is that model that is in crisis, and not the universities 'for not adapting to said model' (2013a, p. 19).

Therefore, coming directly from the philosophy of Alasdair MacIntyre (1981), Hoyos-Vásquez defends not only the plurality of university types but also the plurality within each of them. The pluralistic university starts by 'recognizing the depth of our differences;' It does not resist 'the radical confrontation of nearly incompatible ways of life and thought;' It does not let itself be 'pressured by the urgencies of modernization alone;' and it reconstructs its tradition, in such a way that the university becomes a place in which 'concepts and criteria of rational justification are discussed and elaborated, so that civil society can learn from the university how to conduct its theoretical

and practical debates reasonably and through dialogue' (Hoyos-Vásquez, 2013a, pp. 23–24).

This is one more dimension of the problem of the relationship between theory and praxis that Hoyos-Vásquez reads in Kant, and that he tries to correct, for the case of the relationship between philosophy and life, by means of the concept of the lifeworld and, for the relationship between science and society, both with his criticism of the research policy of the contemporary university, as well as his proposal for a discursive theory and practice of pedagogy of Habermasian inspiration, but also nourished by other duly articulated sources.

Hoyos-Vásquez theorizes about philosophy reflecting in his own personal commitment as an educator and his practical, daily exercise of responsible pedagogy, both within the university and outside of it, which is ethically oriented, with consistent political commitments, without ever blurring his roles as philosopher and educator.

Philosophy for Hoyos-Vásquez is fundamentally the practice of communicative rationality embodied in communicative interaction, which is the formative dialogue, as well as in pedagogical exercise, even when this may be an activity-oriented by transcendent or unrealizable aims (the mandate of the 'infinite task' resounds here, of philosophy and science in Husserl and the Kantian moral imperatives and their regulative ideas). Therefore, instead of defining education beginning with philosophy as its guide, understanding pedagogy as an application of theory, Hoyos-Vásquez proposes to define philosophy starting with education, and with a clear political horizon in the lifeworld (1999, p. 32).

For Hoyos-Vásquez education is essentially communication. It is, therefore, perfectly natural for him to propose trying a theory and practice of pedagogy that is inspired by communicative ethics. For Hoyos-Vásquez, in addition, 'communication constitutes citizenship and is, therefore, a starting point for the understanding and practice of democracy (2013a, p. 40)'. Communication is 'citizen power par excellence (2008)'. Therefore, if communication is inseparable from politics, education is also inseparable, in its deepest sense.

The reasoning that applies to education also applies to philosophy. If philosophy is education, and education is essentially communication, philosophy for Hoyos-Vásquez is not only a theoretical-scientific practice in the modern sense, or a 'way of life', in the former sense, but above all, a way of implementing and living politics as governed by ethics. Philosophy is, therefore, essential to making democracy a reality. Without being platonic in his theses, goals, methods or presuppositions, Hoyos-Vásquez exemplifies another case of philosophy, defined at the same time as political philosophy and *paideia*, which recalls the identity between them in the birth of Western philosophy with Plato.

The concept of education for cosmopolitan citizenship proposed by Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez is composed of several elements. In the first place, education cannot be mere instruction, nor can it be reduced to the mere transmission of knowledge or techniques. Scientific competencies can never be the priority, especially in a country with a crisis of violence (2013a, p. 127). If there must be education in competencies, these must be in the really 'basic' subjects taught in the humanities. Here Hoyos-Vásquez agrees with Martha Nussbaum in her defense of a humanistic education that enables democracy and intercultural cosmopolitanism, in the face of a world society that orders subsuming the ends of education to the interests of the market, the society of knowledge and

cognitive capitalism. It is an arduous task, above all, because of the contemporary mistrust concerning 'values education'.

For Hoyos-Vásquez, education must begin by reconciling codes of conduct and norms with values in such a way that their necessary distinction does not imply the arbitrary imposition of either one of them. Hilary Putnam (2004) proposes, in her radical pluralism, that ethics be sustained like a four-legged table: responsibility in the presence of the other (Lévinas), universalist and egalitarian morality (Kant), human development as *telos* (Aristotle), and the ethical and political sense of communication and agreement in public space (Dewey). For Hoyos-Vásquez, this image of Putnam is not far from the formally mentioned proposal of John Rawls in his *Political Liberalism* of a reasonable pluralism that allows for respecting all-encompassing and incommensurable moral points of view, while at the same time reconciling them through the overlapping and interwoven consensus of a minimalist ethics expressed in norms. For Hoyos-Vásquez an education that emphasizes the political culture – in the sense of Rawls (2001), – which allows citizens to resolve the dichotomy between values and norms – maximum values, minimum norms, – neutralizing intolerance and thus strengthening the exercise of public reason is required.

Such an exercise entails, however, education in the relativization of one's own points of view, helping understand the point of departure of the other, and generating modes of encounter with differences that do not imply their submission or cancellation. In addition to the distinction between norms and values, Hoyos-Vásquez cautions being very aware of the way in which moral sensitivity is understood in the educational process, since this is definitive for personal development (Martínez-Martín & Carreño-Rojas, 2014). A purely rationalist conception runs the risk of 'distorting the meaning of values'.

In conclusion, for Hoyos-Vásquez, the best way of putting into practice an ethically oriented political philosophy is through education. His fundamental contribution is not reduced, therefore, to having put into evidence the pragmatic needs a deliberative, intercultural democracy must face as well as the challenges of peace in Colombia, or of living with cultural diversity in a globalized world. His essential contribution is also to the philosophy of contemporary education, in underlining the ethical and political effects of an education understood under the rubric of 'communicative'. An education sensitive to the limits of rationalism and moral sensitivity, promoting the practice of tolerance that is evidenced in dialogue and open, therefore, to the construction of a cosmopolitan citizenry.

Notes

1. Cayetano Betancur was one of the founders of the Institute of Philosophy in the National University of Colombia (1945) and of the Journal *Ideas y Valores* (1951) of the same university. His role in the cultural history of philosophy in Colombia has been considered fundamental in what has been called the process of 'normalization' of philosophical activity in Colombia (Betancur, 1933, 2015; Botero, 2009; Herrera, 1976, 2003; Hoyos-Vásquez, 1999; Ortiz, 2008; Rodríguez, 2003; Rubio, 1980; Sierra, 1978, 1985).
2. Nicolás Gómez Dávila is the Colombian philosopher of greatest international recognition (Torregroza & Cárdenas, 2012; Volpi, 2005), despite having been excluded for years from the history of Colombian philosophical thought such as the work of Sierra (1978, 1985). An approximation of his philosophy is found in Torregroza (2018), work, and style is found in Mejía-Mosquera (2007, 2018).

3. Guillemos Hoyos-Vásquez was a professor at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana between 1973 and 1975. From there he transferred to the National University of Colombia where he was an Assistant Professor and an Associate Professor between 1975 and 2000. As an actor in the field of philosophy in Colombia, aside from the great impact he had as a teacher, he participated in the refounding of the Colombian Philosophy Society in 1978, and in the organization of numerous national and international meetings and conferences that sought to disseminate philosophic research in Spanish and the exchange among Latin American thinkers. In this sense his activity, beginning in 1992, as a member of the Academic Committee of the Ibero-American Encyclopedia of Philosophy and as vice president of the Colombian Association for the Advancement of Science, stand out.
4. In 1984, during the government of Belisario Betancur, he was a member of the Commission of Verification for the Peace Agreements with FARC and coordinator of the Commission for a National Dialogue on the University with M-19, ELN, EPL and Patriotic Union [*Unión Patriótica*]. In 2007, he was the last coordinator of the failed Commission for a Negotiated Solution with Patriotic Union.
5. Hoyos-Vásquez was the faculty representative on the High Commission of the National University between 1982 and 1984; dean of the Human Sciences Faculty of the same university, Bogotá campus, between 1988 and 1990, director of the Instituto Pensar of the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana from 2000 to 2010 and director of the Bioethical Institute at the same university beginning in 2010.
6. Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez was a member of the National Commission on Doctorates and Master's Degrees in Colombia between 1995 and 1998 and of the National Council on Accreditation of Higher Education in Colombia (CNA) between 2000 and 2005.
7. The authors of the present article attended his classes on many occasions and were his students at the National University of Colombia in the decade of the 1990s.
8. In Spanish: *La perspectividad de las perspectivas*. To be aware of the social and historic limitations of each perspective.
9. Ludwig Landgrebe (1902–1991), German philosopher, student of Husserl and editor of the last work of his teacher *Experience and Judgment* (1939). Hoyos-Vásquez' other phenomenological teachers were Klaus Held, Heinrich Hüni, Lothar Eley, and Antonio Aguirre (Hoyos-Vásquez, 2012c, p. 24).
10. The intentionality (being directed to) of every act of consciousness implies a purpose (*telos*). There is, therefore, no thinking without practical guidance or philosophy without ethical vocation.
11. Garavito (2013), in a just homage to Guillermo Hoyos-Vásquez' phenomenology, has questioned this reading of Husserl by Hoyos-Vásquez, showing that several of the corrections of Husserl proposed by Hoyos-Vásquez, Husserl himself would have endorsed. Husserl from the beginning would not have been as idealistic, solipsistic and Eurocentric as he seems.
12. 'Communication and lifeworld'. In 2012, Hoyos-Vásquez adds the subtitle 'Elementos para una interpretación fenomenológica de la teoría de la acción comunicativa de Habermas', which is a clear indication of how he interprets Habermas without detaching himself from phenomenology.

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