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Chapter

Peace Education in Times of Covid-19: Rethinking Other Kind of Logic from the Imagination, Fantasy, Creativity and Utopia

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Abstract

This article aims to reflect on the challenges of peace education in times of Covid-19 global pandemic from a positive perspective, understood as a new opportunity for education to consider the teaching of how to make peace from our daily experiences; and in this way, humanity can forge a more peaceful future. In this task, the use of imagination, fantasy and creativity as educational resources will be revalued. Likewise, utopia is proposed as that unknown horizon, still to come, that will show us, in the face of so many doubts and uncertainties, those possible scenarios which will motivate us to continue working for cultures of peace. This reflection starts from the Reconstructive-Empowering Peace Education approach that I have been proposing in my research as a member of the Interuniversity Institute of Social Development and Peace.

Keywords: education, peace, imagination, fantasy, creativity, utopia

1. Introduction

The proposal of the Peace Education Reconstructive-Empowering approach (hereinafter REM approach) invites us to reflect on what logic and rationality we have established as human beings and on which, therefore, education is based. Apparently, from politics, from the media, from the dominant culture, from the interaction of life itself, in general, we are taught the logic of violence, destruction, competitiveness and exclusion. The exclusion of those who does not conform to the generalized mold, to what is imposed, to what is standardized, to what is considered valid, to what does not belong to us, to what is strange and different, and this entails every type of conflicts. Taking this into account, the Peace Education REM approach is proposed as a tool to be able to peacefully transform conflicts, highlighting, on the one hand, our capacities and competencies to make peace [1, 2] and our empowerment for action [3] and, on the other hand, making use of the recognition of the other [4–6] and of our creative thinking [7–9] to find different positive alternatives.

> *We have to be at home with our own capacity to fantasize. We need to be able to weave together our knowledge of history, geography, and culture; to imagine a different future. On the one hand, we need analytic knowledge: we need to know what the social*

> *scientists and physical scientists can count and measure. We need that, but we need intuition to know when to break loose from conventional categories of thought [10].*

In this sense, the Peace Education the REM approach calls into question the logic in which we insert ourselves and the one we use to understand and transform conflicts, since we know that we can do things in different ways, we have alternatives to do peace. We know that violence is not a biological fatality included in our genetics [11], but that it is learned through processes of socialization and acculturation, in the same way that we can learn nonviolence and peace [12]. Learning nonviolence and peace means entering into the logic of transformation, reversing course, learning to go against the current, breaking the rules of the unfair game in an imaginative, creative, and non-destructive way, learning, in short, other logics that not those of violence and destructiveness, other more hopeful, illusory and fantastic ones [13].

2. The peace education reconstructive-empowering approach

The Peace Education REM approach is defined, therefore, as the reconstruction of our human competencies, in the sense of capacities or abilities to make peace, and our empowerment to take them to action. It shows that making peace is possible for all people, and, taking this into account, it challenges us to seek alternatives to transform our conflicts, daily and inherent in human relationships. Thus, the reality understood many times by Western culture is subverted, which seems to indicate that there is only a single logic, that of responding through violence and/or destruction to any difference, disagreement, shock or conflict. Thus, this approach also proposes unlearning the culture of war and violence [14] and learning cultures of peace, through elements such as [15]:

- The recognition of all human beings as valid interlocutors, recognition that would go from the physical integrity of people, legal rights, as well as the different forms and life's styles [4–6].

- The ability to change our perceptions and perspectives to accept the difference, the strange and the divergent [16].

- Empowerment to bring peace into action [12, 17, 18].

- Nonviolent Communication [19] to know how to express an opinion, dialog, question, even disagree, without hurting the other party.

- The ethics of care and sentimental coeducation to be able to educate in the deconstruction of gender roles and ensure equality and equity among, turning care into a human value, and not a gender one [20].

- Understand the conflict as positive and the possibility of its transformation by peaceful means, which can become in learning opportunities [21, 22].

- Cooperation is used as an essential concept to transform our conflicts and make peace, since we need to be able to cooperate with the other party for understanding, pact or consensus [23].

- The importance of fantasy [13], imagination [21] and creativity [9, 15, 24] to overcome conflicts and find alternatives ways of making peace.

For the delimitation and focus of interest of this article, I propose to develop only this last aspect of the REM approach, which would be the use of fantasy, imagination and creativity as an alternative to modern rationality based on the logic of contempt, of competitiveness and violence, thus presenting and understanding human interaction in a more respectful, cooperative and peaceful way. In this sense, it is necessary to yearn for a society in which war and the system of organized destruction for conflict resolution have disappeared, as well as the destructive spirit of marginalization, exploitation, violence and injustice, among others. And develop, therefore, a culture of peace that reaches the brain, to the consciousness of the people [17]. We assume, as we mentioned before, that one of the objectives of the Peace Education REM approach is to learn to subvert the arguments, for example, that cultures for peace should replace those of violence, war, marginalization and exclusion. War and the use of violence are not the solution to the problems of the world, and we can seek other peaceful alternatives through our awareness, will, union and commitment. In other words, it is our responsibility the search for other types of more creative and peaceful alternatives to violence. In this sense, we have the contributions of Rodari [13], Italian pedagogue, inventor of fables, pacifist, fantastic, who wrote stories and tales in order that "they could be useful for those people who believe in the need to let the imagination occupy a place in education, for those who trust creativity and fantasy" [13]. From here, fantasy is interpreted as the art of inventing, which we need so much for making peace, since it requires to be imagined, fantasized, invented and created.

3. The peace imaginary from the REM approach

From various researchers [3, 9, 25] we found that one of the greatest obstacles in education for peace is the feeling of the impossibility of its implementation due to the inability of many people to imagine peace as a real project to carry out. It is required, then, from formal, informal and non-formal education, to imagine peace, to recognize the value of its visualization as a previous step to be able to put it into practice. Just as violence is found and manifested in different ways, direct, structural and cultural [26] it is also possible to find different forms of peace. The point is that these *many peaces* [27] appear discreetly, without fanfare, noise, scandal, they are usually silent peace(s), whose manifestations tend to go unnoticed. However, we cannot remain mute and deaf to these experiences and we must be attentive and sensitive to hear and claim their voices. Thus, silent peace must be noted to account for its breadth and its great importance in the trajectory of historical development [9]. Rescuing these peace(s) is of the utmost importance to realize the existence and naturalness of peace from different spaces, times and actors. Our interest, then, is to highlight peace as a natural characteristic of human relationships and everyday experiences. Within this framework, there are a series of contributions that focus on defining violence as the rupture of the naturalness of things, thus considering peace as natural. For example, in *La Enciclopedia de la Paz y Conflictos* [28] it is stated that most Spanish-language dictionaries speak of violence when an action is carried out that leads to a state "out of the ordinary", a breakdown of harmony and balance. In this sense, we could say that violence is experienced as the breakdown of an "established order", of a pre-existing harmony, of conditions of life that are supposed to be peaceful. Likewise, Martínez Guzmán [1] also defines violence as a concept linked to force, vis in Latin, even to the sense of power, plus the suffix lent that gives intensity to the accompanying root. Thus, analyzing its etymological roots, doing something violently would be doing it with great force, exercising power [2].

According to the above, it is interpreted that violence is to change the natural state of things using force, it is the violation of something or someone by force, for example, we see it in behaviors as socially institutionalized as breaking the law, raping a woman, violating a code of conduct, among others. Then, we would say that peace is more original than war or violence "human capacities to make peace are more natural, more basic or original, than capacities to exercise violence" [2]. Taking this into account, we could point out that each civilization, each culture has created its own images of peace, they are rare, but, even so, they are visibly manifested in popular stories, in tales, in mythologies or utopias, promoting, through them, models of being, expectations and hopes [3]. However, there is a lot of uncertainty when it comes to imagining and defining peace, it is an abstract concept, difficult to determine as it happens with many other related terms such as happiness, harmony, justice, freedom. All of them are easy to recognize more by their absence than by their meanings in themselves [29]. In reality, nobody is against peace, peace has a tremendous capacity to achieve consensus; all humans propose peace as a goal to be achieved, but, at the same time, each one takes advantage of it and manipulates it for their own ends and interests. In this sense, there is practically no political or educational program that does not promise and pretend to achieve peace. There is no person who admits not wanting to live in peace. We see, then, how one of the challenges posed to us in peace education is the creation of a peace imaginary which will include positive concepts and images of peace, to keep hopes alive, decision-making capacity, expectations and motivations of all those who want to commit to implementing peace.

Following the reflection on the peace imaginary, I will use an old fable that Gandhi [30] once told his grandson. The story is as follows:

> *Once upon a time there was a king in ancient India who was curious to know peace. The king called many teachers, sages, and diviners from his reign to explain its nature and significance, but none of them could give him a satisfactory answer. Then, one day a philosopher stopped at the king's palace to ask for lodging and the king took the opportunity to ask him. He replied that he did not know the answer but indicated that there was a sage who lived just outside his kingdom who could surely show him the nature of peace. The next morning the king called the old man who, hearing the king's question, went to his kitchen and brought him a grain of wheat. Placing the wheat seed in the palm of the king's open hand, he said: "Look here and you will find the answer." The king was perplexed, but because of the pride of admitting his little understanding to the old man, he went to his palace and put the grain in a small gold box. Every morning, as if it were a ritual, he would open the box and look at the grain, but he could not find an answer to his question. Weeks passed and the king's heart broke because he couldn't decipher any meaning. At the end, the philosopher returned to visit the king, who immediately took out his little gold box with the grain and asked him to explain. "It is very simple sir. The longer you have your grain stored for your safety, nothing will happen, it will create roots and it will perish. However, if you put it in interaction with other elements, such as air, water, sunlight, it will grow and multiply and soon you will have a wheat field". Therefore, the same thing happens with peace, the philosopher continued: "If we keep the peace that we have discovered in life kept in our hearts, it will perish. But if it interacts with the other elements, cultures and people, it will expand. And one day there will be peace around the World."*

When analyzing the content of this fable, we realize the importance of human motivation and responsibility to interact the inner peace with the peace of others, thus being able to sow peace through our daily actions. We see that these kinds of

stories emphasize the importance of ethics, morals and values and try to help to change the impositions of ourselves and the narrow-minded views that limit our understanding of the meaning of life in general and the meaning of peace culture, in particular. Likewise, they invite us to fantasize and imagine the beauty of peace, highlighting the importance of making peace from our personal and every-day experiences, key in the Peace Education REM approach. Finally, this fable shows us that what we learn from experience is wisdom, and peace, specifically, needs to be put into practice, in interaction with others, to gain experience so that it continues to flow "Your mind is like a room with many open windows, let the breeze flow in from all directions but refuse to be blown away by anyone" [30]. Thus, we also see the need to make peace from a holistic perspective, that is, with oneself "intrapersonal", in interaction with human beings "interpersonal" and with Nature and the cosmos "transpersonal" [31, 32].

> This holistic awareness, therefore, allows for a cosmic and ecological awareness that in the educational plan translates into overcoming the old paradigm, founded on the fragmentation of science and knowledge [...]. Thus, this global vision of peace and culture considers that the educational function, in its new interpretation, is not the only objective of the school, but that its responsibility also falls on all elements of the social context and shows how all life circumstances can be an opportunity to learn [32].

With the above in mind, it is about defining peace as a rich, broad, positive and full of content term. Likewise, peace must be defined by itself and not by comparison with its antagonism, war or violence, as it has been interpreted historically. In this sense, it is necessary to overcome that lack of palpable content that this popular intuition about peace normally entails, and create a more natural, complete and positive imaginary of peace [25]. This imaginary will also help us to place peace as a possible and viable goal to achieve. Thus, education must be able to help to build futures of peace, to be able to build positive images of the future that favor personal, social and political change [3]. In this sense, we question, then, how we could approach peace through this imaginary? There are many search and response scenarios, which could be indicative of its broad existence. There are different ways and possible strategies to follow, we will comment below on some of them [3]: 1. Through the word and the concept (how we speak and think about it: what is it, why, what for, where does it come from, how do we use it); 2. Through the emotional (how we live it, evoke it, feel it); 3. Using moral judgment (how we judge and value it: positively, negatively, neutrally, to justify it, condemn it, affirm or deny it) and 4. With praxis (what we do or what we can do in the face of its reality, how we implement and carry it to everyday action).

Following Muñoz's research [33] we agree, once again, with the idea of peace as a characteristic of human beings originating from remote times, considering it a primal reality in all human times, in biological and historical times, a condition linked to human beings since its inception "peace allows us to identify ourselves as human". This assumption interests us because we return to the peace proposal from a daily and intrinsic sense to our interpersonal relationships, although, from this perspective, it is interpreted from the concept of imperfect peace by Muñoz [33]. This author affirms that he could continue to speak only of peace, but the adjective "imperfect" that accompanies it serves to open, on the one hand, its unfinished meaning, and, on the other hand, the different definitions and nuances of peace throughout the History. Indeed, peace is not perfect, finished, it is not an objective achieved, hence its character of imperfection, not in a negative sense but in a

processual sense, in constant construction, in search of its perfection. Imperfect peace "changes the perception we have of ourselves by recognizing that historically most of our experiences and realities have been" peaceful ", which is why it generates hope and mobilizes us" [33].

> *We state that, like any process, peace is not made, it is a gerund rather than a participle, and it is our responsibility to establish it and consider it our future, our challenge. We must not only consider it a utopia, a dream to achieve; but to assume it as a real and possible objective, since, it depends largely on human responsibility and will [25].*

In this sense, Lederach [21] also proposes a worldview of peace that can be interpreted through his concept of moral imagination defined as "the ability to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world, but at the same time capable of give birth to what does not yet exist" [21]. Thus, this art of imagining enables us to achieve new challenges, such as peace, because if you do not imagine something, you cannot work to achieve it. In this way, the nature of the imagination will lead us to the peaceful social change and the breaking of cycles of violence [21]. In sum, it is worth highlighting the importance of creating a broad and positive imaginary of peace, both of the related concepts and of the associated images, to enable us a more real and closer understanding of what peace means; and to realize that we can make peace from our daily lives. This peace imaginary marks a horizon for us to reach with our compromised or even with our accidental action. Accidental because through our imaginative and creative thinking and acting, peaceful alternatives are found almost by chance, by "fluke" in the words of Martínez Guzmán [34] what Lederach [21] calls serendipity, interpreting it as the spontaneous discovery of things that you are not really looking for, but that you find them by a kind of luck or sagacity.

We reiterate, in this way, that one of the objectives proposed by the Peace Education REM approach is the creation of a peace imaginary [25], this imaginary comes from a relationship of concepts, expressions, phrases and terms that we use in our daily life, but, I understand, that we are not even aware of it, thus, we underline, once again, the naturalness and everydayness of peace:

> *We could relate peace to the absence of war or violence, which would become the negative conception of peace. But, also, with more positive terms such as the human condition (she is a very peaceful person); with health (being healthy, not suffering from illness, would be feeling at peace); with the body (feeling good physically would give us a feeling of peace); with oneself (having an acceptable level of self-esteem and personal satisfaction, because you have acted well in the face of an event or circumstance or have fulfilled your obligations, we would call being at peace with yourself); with conscience, morals or a sense of duty (it would be said to be at peace with oneself); with the world in general (having good interpersonal relationships with others and an acceptable socio-cultural context would also make us feel at peace); with the term reconciliation (when two or more people come together again it is said "They have already made peace"); with forgiveness, pact, agreement, negotiation (one would say make peace); with the beautiful moments; with the music; with smells; with happiness; with the family; with the concept of justice, equality or equity (for example, when someone owes something to another person and returns their debt, it is said "we are at peace"); with the satisfaction of basic needs (having to eat, drink, sleep, dress, and with the necessary resources to live without suffering, one would say "to live in peace"); with nature we could use expressions such as "what a peaceful environment"; with pleasure or sex we could define it as physical*

> *peace, with silence (peace reigns), with freedom (feeling at peace) and even with death, the phrase that is said when one dies "may rest in peace."*

Through this peace imaginary that is interpreted from the REM approach, from that association of images, concepts or sentences, we can have emotions, ideas, stereotypes, definitions (more or less concrete or abstract, subjective or intersubjective, personal or cultural) that allow us to think about peace, recognize it, devise it, imagine it; as well as talking about it, defining it, describing it, narrating it; and also feel it, evoke it, react to it and, where appropriate, implement it. In this way, this imaginary allows us to confirm the existence of peace through historical evolution and present it in a broader, deeper and more everyday sense than we might initially think.

4. The promotion of imagination and creativity as key elements of peace education

This section will highlight the value of imagination and creativity as key elements of peace education [7–9, 21, 24, 34]. Creativity so important, and so neglected by educational systems, relegated only to a few, geniuses, artists and bohemians. Creativity that we rescue as a natural concept that all people have, that we enjoy since childhood and it is so useful for our development and for our adaptation to the environment [15], "it starts from the possibility of a gene innate, but without a doubt creativity is common to all human beings, to a greater or lesser extent, and it is educable" [35]. In this sense, we consider creativity as an essential aspect to work and empower, as it can help us, among other things, to: 1) create new knowledge and ideas to give different responses to concerns and projects, 2) transform our conflicts peacefully using our divergent thinking and our moral imagination, as well as 3) becoming creative citizens in order to carry out positive social transformations [15], "devise, excite, imagine, invent, they must be verbs that are given the welcome for the construction of peace" [3]. Taking this into account, we revalue creativity as a human quality "the human capacity to generate more, new and better ideas" [7], which must start from simplicity and from our daily and personal experiences, to making it easier for us to face our goals, vicissitudes and challenges "there is no challenge that is beyond the creative capacity that distinguishes the human species" [36]. Here it is highlighted, the importance of creativity for the formation of a creative citizenship (Sátiro, 2018: 51). It is a line of social creativity, which makes a simultaneous and systemic perspective approach: from the internal point of view of the person (creative ethos), from their interactions as a citizen and from the whole society. It connects thought, feeling and action, collaborating with the development of subjects capable of ethical imagination (utopia) and who, at the same time, propose and carry out micro-political projects in their contexts. Taking dialog as a democratic value and as a method to develop the ability to think and act, it proposes methodologies of reflective and creative processes that generate action and social innovation [8].

According to the latest research by García-González [9], we show that imagination is, without a doubt, a resource of special relevance to think and generate situations of peace. One possibility to circumvent possible scenarios of violence in a peaceful way is using imagination. García-González alludes to the term ethical imagination, which implies the capacity for invention, always thinking about it with others and giving rise to the construction of a communal and peaceful identity. The ethical imagination must enable us to creatively overcome the warmongering logic and conceive of nonviolence and peace. Thus, the imagination allows us to give rise

to other original, new and ingenious situations to be able to glimpse another way of seeing reality. In this sense, we consider imagination as an element of change and transformation "this change implies re-educating and reconstructing forms of thought and life". The ethical imagination considers peace as an objective to be achieved as a new scenario capable of becoming a reality. Here we highlight the aspect that the imagination can bring to the present images that are not before the eyes, it has a magical character, as well as ethical. The ethical imagination implies a fertile imagination, seeking solutions, fixing things in the world in the hope that they are better. This ethical imagination is, in turn, creative, because looking at the present and analyzing it, it proposes creating alternatives to a better world. It has the ability to say "no" to the present to forge decisions for the future, "so when that cry is of rejection and indignation is when that evil can be relieved through imagination, and from there give way and place to a state of things envisioned as better". In this sense, the imagination, which we call ethics, is revolutionary and reforming because it frees us from the real as unworthy, guiding us towards the possible, to what gives light to dignify human life. Thus, thanks to the imagination, the human being can transform, detach from himself and contemplate other ways of life, other thoughts and open himself to various forms of humanity. Imagination empowers our abilities, skills, sagacity, and ingenuity to create new possible scenarios of peace. The search for the imaginable or unimaginable, for the unexpected and for what emerges from creativity, is what can illuminate different forms and projects of peace. This imaginative capacity allows us to develop our abilities for perception beyond what is apparent and visible than what is given to us. Thus, from that new space to be able to erect another reality that is more just, livable and peaceful. These new possible horizons must be built to address the questions of humanity with others, with different people, with strangers, with enemies. Thus, imagination, invention and creative inquiry are fundamental to build peace in a framework of culture of violence [9].

Therefore, creativity is interpreted as the ability to create what seems improbable to us, or as Freire calls it "the unprecedented viable", a confusing mixture of the pedagogy of indignation and that of hope. In this sense, Lederach [21] opens a new light to us regarding the human capacity to create beyond the conscious and premeditated, as a kind of specific "accidental sagacity" that we have in everyday experience and for which we often, there are some casual, spontaneous or naive discoveries capable of turning around situations that we have to transform or resolve. This ability to come up with fortuitous solutions is called, as we have already mentioned, "serendipity", which in Spanish we could call "chance or fluke" [34]. Thus, creativity is more than a product, it is considered as a source to stimulate emotions, activate personal strengths and establish strategies for thinking and coping [35]. We understand it, thus, as a process that includes being sensitive to problems, being able to define difficulties, identify the invalid element, seek solutions, make assumption and communicate the results [35]. Likewise, it empowers us to be decisive people, looking for alternatives to everyday problems and to be happier people.

Then, creativity is very useful to help us to contribute to cultures of peace, in the search for peaceful alternatives for the transformation of conflicts and in solving problems "it sharpens our creative imagination, from the assumption of disorder and initial confusion from which, we create the most systematic knowledge" [34]. Thus, from Peace Education, we are interested in approaching peace as a creative process of "making" conflicts so that they are productive. We are interested in making people aware of the conflicts that surround them and those who participate. The objective is to teach our students to be able to critically observe conflicts, their dynamics and evolutionary processes, improve their empathic capacities for

listening, perception and understanding "of the other", of their adversary, and finally, promote their possibilities to imagine and create alternatives for the peaceful transformation of conflicts [21]. Thus, the educational system should be concerned with promoting creativity from the youngest and throughout life, so that, although it is true that we have creativity as a human characteristic, it requires training and experience to be useful in our daily lives [15].

Likewise, the importance of including imagination and creativity in education I interpret that it would be in line with the pillars that UNESCO proposes as the objectives of education in the XXI century [37] which would be: 1) *Learn to Know*, creativity would provide us with more skills to know society, the environment, culture and also what is foreign, 2) *Learn to Do*, creativity would provide us skills to solve problems, make decisions, as well as the values of humans to perceive to others and live in a social context, 3) *Learning to Be,* creativity would allow us greater self-confidence, self-esteem, self-respect and motivation for spontaneity, improvisation, to be ourselves. Also, to promote active listening and the recognition of the other and of the Nature, and 4) *Learning to Live Together*, creativity would facilitate us to develop more positive, respectful, inclusive and peaceful social relationships [15].

To work on these objectives, the Peace Education REM approach relies on educational resources such as books, novels and short stories because with their narratives one learns in a reflective, analytical and fun way. They not only entertain, but also transmit values and certain ethical, moral and social codes [38]. From different researchers [30, 38, 39] it is stated that more is learned and with less effort through stories, fables, legends and stories, since their content is impregnated in the minds of people, their learnings are easy to memorize and last over time, as opposed to what is learned by rote which is usually hard to remember. In addition, according to Puig Oliver [39] the stories and tales transmits values and ways of being, from an ethical and moral point of view, promotes fantasy, teaches the peaceful trans-formation of conflicts, socializes and creates a feeling of group, of belonging to a community. In turn, most of the tales and fables are a delight for the senses, inviting the reader to the imagination and conspire the existence of other possible worlds, highlighting the goodness and creativity of the human being to overcome any obstacle in a positive and peaceful way. All these contributions that the literature provide interest us within the framework of this article, which is not, but rather, revaluing imagination, fantasy, creativity and utopia so that humanity can forge a more sustainable and peaceful future within the framework of this global crisis of covid-19. In this sense, we could use fantastic classical literature or as Alberto Chimat [40] calls it "imagination literature", as well as cinema, both feature films, short films, documentaries or animation videos. The speeches and messages that are transmitted, both in written and visual narratives, enhance the imagination, both of children and adults, and motivate us to rethink from fantasy and creativity, other possible worlds that allow us to contribute to the cultures of peace. Unfortunately, these worlds can be interpreted from the positive as well as the negative utopia, in this case, it is called dystopia, which is nothing but imagining the world and the future from a negative and pessimistic point of view, believing that what awaits us it will always get worse. Due to the interest that this article occupies, I have selected only utopian literature that allows us to glimpse scenarios of greater levels of goodness and peace among people. Some classic works, arranged chronologically, could be:

- The Odyssey (by Homer, S. VIII a. C)

- The Aeneid (by Virgilio, S. I a. C)

- The Republic (by Plato, 370 BC)

- Utopia (by Thomas More, 1516)

- The City of the Sun (by Tommaso Campanella, 1602)

- The Thousand and One Night (by Geraldine McCaughrean & Richard F. Burton, 1704)

- Gulliver's Travels (by Jonathan Swift, 1726)

- Beauty and the Beast (by Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve, 1740)

- Alice in Wonderland (by Lewis Carrol, 1865)

- Erewhon: Or the Other Side of the Mountains (by Samuel Butler, 1872)

- Looking back: from 2000 to 1887; Equality (by Edward Bellany, 1888 and 1897, respectively)

- News from Nowhere (by Morris, 1890)

- The Time Machine; A Modern Utopia; Men Like Gods (by H. G. Wells, 1895, 1905, and 1923, respectively)

- The Wonderful World of the Wizard of Oz (by Lyman Frank, 1900)

- Peter Pan and Wendy (by James M. Barrie, 1904)

- Herland (by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, 1915)

- Brave New World or The Island (by Aldous Huxley, 1932 and 1962, respectively),

- The Little Prince (by Saint Exupery, 1943)

- The Aleph (by Jorge L. Borges, 1949)

- The Lord of the Rings (by R. R. Tolkien, 1954)

- The Hope Principle (by Ernst Bloch, 1954)

- Make Room! Make Room! (by Harry Harrison, 1966)

- The Left-Hand Darkness and The Dispossessed (by Úrsula K. Le Guin, 1969 and 1974, respectively)

- The female Man (by Joanna Russ, 1970)

- Ecotopia (by Ernest Callenbac, 1970)

- Momo; The Neverending Story (by Michael Ende, 1973 and 1979, respectively)

We could also use some other more recent works, here I include a list of names arranged chronologically:

- The Color of Magic (by Terry Pratchett, 1983)

- Culture (by Ian M. Banks, 1987)

- Elmer (by David McKee, 1989)

- Rice and Salt Times (by Kim Stanley Robinson, 2002)

- Brave Story (by Miyuki Miyabe, 2003),

- Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norell (by Susan Clarke, 2004)

- Archaeologies of the future: the desire called utopia and other science fiction approaches (by Frederic Jameson, 2005)

- The Name of the Wind (by Patrick Rothfuss, 2007)

- Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children (by Ransom Riggs, 2011)

- The Fall of the Kingdoms (by Morgan Rhodes, 2018)

- Stories to understand the world/*Cuentos para entender el mundo* (by Eloy Moreno, 2020)

Finally, it must be said that much of the literature mentioned is also taken to the cinema, but, nevertheless, I have compiled some films that I have seen recently with my 6-year-old son Hache, which I consider motivate us to imagine and fantasize in the possibility of a world of values of culture of peace:

- The Tiger and the snow; Life is Beautiful (by Roberto Benigni, 1986 and 1997, respectively)

- Chain of Favors (by Mimi Leder, 2000)

- The Chronicles of Narnia (by Andrew Adamson and Michael David Apted (Trilogy of 2005, 2008 and 2010, respectively))

- Bridge to Terabithia (by Gábor Csupo, 2007)

- Wrinkles/Arrugas (by Ignacio Ferreras, 2011)

- Strings/*Cuerdas* (by Pedro Solís García, 2013)

- Alike (by Daniel Martínez Lara, 2015)

- Peter Rabbit (by Will Gluck, 2018)

- Champions/*Campeones* (by Javier Freser, 2018)

- The Boy Who Could Be King (by Joe Cornish, 2019)

- Dora and the Lost City (by James Bobin, 2019)

- Abominable (by Jill Culton, 2019)

- Spies in Disguise (by Nick Bruno and Troy Quane, 2019)

- Jumanji: The Next Level (by Jake Kasdan, 2019)

- The Adventures of Dr. Doolittle (by Stephen Gaghan, 2020)

- Onward (by Dan Scaulon, 2020)

We underline, then, that in the Peace Education REM approach, imagination and creativity are presented to us as tools for positive social transformation "thinking about the imaginable that arises from creativity is what can illuminate and promote peace projects. The imaginative capacity is an act of creation, since it transcends what is given to go towards what is beyond the apparent and visible, in search of better stadiums" [9].

5. Utopia and hope as seeds of a future of cultures of peace

From the Peace Education REM approach, it is proposed not only the need to use imagination, fantasy and creativity to make but also the trust in utopia and hope as seeds to create a more peaceful future, a future of cultures of peace [25]. However, we find that the term utopia has different connotations and some of them we do not even share because they are too far from reality. In this article, however, we interpret utopia from various authors peace [9, 41–43] who define utopia as that longed-for reality possible to build with the commitment of the humanity. Utopia starts from an umbrella of imaginary worlds, but they are not impossible, they are not spooky, but rather seek to be implemented from practical attempts to make those chimeras, those dreams come true. However, in the face of utopia, human beings remain imperfect and resist changes, and we manifest great skepticism clinging to the idea that there is nothing more to [9]. As an alternative to this human chimera of resistance to change, we define utopia as the maximum human motivation for the achievement of a goal or objective, as we previously pointed out in the words of Freire [41] "the unprecedented viable". Torres [43] takes a step further since he not only considers utopia as viable, but also proposes it as the goal or the horizon to follow for positive social change "recovering the value of utopia as a motor for the transformation of society" [43] in the face of passivity, indifference, conformity, the generalization of laziness and resignation to a single thought. In this sense, Boulding [42] proposes utopia as a necessary element to motivate people to nourish themselves with positive visions of how things should be. Thus, "these visions that utopias represent become normative horizons, goals or challenges that would help us to make peace [42]. The idea of utopia is, in a deep sense, a critique of the present, an escape from reality to go to a better place. Boulding [42] agrees with Torres [43] in the idea that utopia is presented to us as a resource for positive social change, away from violence and injustice and towards a human social order. Boulding believes that the path of utopia is difficult on macro levels, but on a small scale it can be a good challenge. In this sense, Boulding comments that it is ironic that utopia that was defined by Thomas More in 1516 as "nowhere" has now become synonymous with a flight from reality" [42].

García-González [9] also highlights that utopias are, in turn, an excellent resource to educate for peace. According to the author, they help us to pose imaginative situations that seek new possibilities framed in moral ideals that structure peaceful identities. With this, it is sought to insert the possible into the real in order to imagine peace from there- The link of the creative imagination with the utopia allows to creatively conceive aspirations. Utopia suggests an ideal society model projected into the future that criticizes the present. It is about opening the field of the possible beyond the current and the present in order to think of being and social reality in another way.

> *Utopia appears to us as an anticipated image of the future rooted in reality and with an ethical dimension that supposes the conviction that one must know in some way what it should be to judge what it is and where it is necessary to go. Utopia indicates the end and the goal, and from there it is considered as a criterion of judgment that begins with the critique of reality that drives action [9].*

So, we see that, from the perspective of education and a culture of peace, utopia represents efforts to develop ways for people to live together in nonviolent ways. For this, creativity is necessary in the search for alternatives, which allow us to imagine "the other" how it could be better in the future. In this sense, some authors [44, 45] consider Freire as a forger of utopias, which they interpret as the maximum motivation of the human beings to enable their action in order to change the oppressive and unjust reality "to venture on this path for the construction of libertarian paths pregnant with utopia" [44].

Currently, in this situation of generalized crisis (health, economic, educational, social) caused by the global pandemic of the Covid 19, we emphasize that utopia could give us the ability to imagine something different and better than what exists. Utopia could be a human resource for the possibility of the desired social change in that it shows us a desirable objective where to arrive. So, it could motivate us to envision a more egalitarian, sustainable and peaceful future for humanity, and join common efforts to achieve it. There is still hope and desire that one day we will behave more responsibly and establish a global community based on the needs of the planet and its inhabitants, a planetary society that is just and sustainable, and not characterized by violence [29].

> *Women and men have inordinate distinctive capacities, since we are capable of thinking, imagining, anticipating, innovating... creating! And, this creative faculty not only defines every human being without distinction, but, very especially, constitutes our hope [36].*

Thus, in these times of the Covid 19, world citizens have shown solidarity (economic donations, food, sanitary material to hospitals, among others), cooperation (public and private spaces have been assigned to serve as hospitals, people have made masks to donate free of charge, to name a few examples), recognition (the work of health personnel has been applauded in Spain every day at 8:00 p.m. from balconies and windows) and other values such as imagination and creativity have arisen in a sudden way in order to do new and different things and to carry the confinement and loneliness of the pandemic with resilience and good humor. There has also been a greater awareness of the fact that humanity is one and that together, we can overcome adversity, phrases such as *Together we can, Everything will go well, Stay at home, for you and for everyone,* have been the slogan of awareness campaigns, advertising, as well as they have decorated windows of many homes. This planetary, peaceful and resilient attitude would be values that should continue to accompany us to build that future of cultures of peace that we long for.

> *We need an essentially new way of thinking if mankind is to survive. Men must radically change their attitudes toward each other and their views of the future. Force must no longer be an instrument of politics. Today, we do not have much time left; it is up to our generation to succeed in thinking differently [29].*

In this sense, and within the framework of Freire's proposals [46] the power of the human being is trusted to jointly and through peaceful and liberating action transform social reality, considering hope as an ontological necessity that leads us to action which moves us to transform the world. However, although hope is necessary, it is not enough by itself to improve the world, it needs to anchor its purposes in real and emancipatory practice hope does not win the "fight", but without it the fight falters. "We need critical hope as fish need uncontaminated water" [46]. Hope, which I interpreted here as the motivation we require to transform social structures and systems, such as education, which have become obsolete and do not respond to the demands and challenges posed by the current XXI century, in general, and the global crisis of the Covid 19 in particular. Hope, itself, in a more peaceful, just and more sustainable and happier world. Therefore, an important slogan for the Peace Education that we wish is to educate in hope (45, 46). Bearing this in mind, from the Peace Education REM approach, I propose the need of hope and utopia as germs for a peaceful future. But not just any hope, but a positive one, contrasted by ethical codes, based on criteria of justice and respect for the dignity and equality of people "hope versus fear, hope versus disappointment will be educational challenges necessary to face our lives and the own educational function" [45]. We see, then, that hope is an ontological necessity "I do not understand human existence and the necessary struggle to improve it without hope and dreams" [46]. Paraphrasing the Palestinian poet Mahmud Darwish [47] we must follow the course of the song, although roses are scarce.

In sum, in the educational context of creating peace we have the resource of utopian thinking, of utopia. And hope arises from this utopian thinking, when we face a better horizon to reach [9]. Thinking of hope within the framework of utopia keeps us in the belief of human perfectibility or in the claim and longing for an ideal society. Therefore, utopian thinking is a philosophy of hope, where hope is essential for any attempt to change society to be better. It is important to point out that the possibilities that make the path of utopias are linked to hope and that path is paved through peace [9]. In any case, utopia has many forms and uses, but one of the functions that we are most interested in highlighting its role of satirizing society to, alternatively, describe another more desirable way of organizing human affairs and relationships. Therefore, these characteristics of utopia are what interest us in the Peace Education REM approach.

> *The pedagogy that we defend [...] is itself a utopian pedagogy. Utopian, not because it feeds on impossible dreams, because it is affiliated with an idealistic perspective, because it implies an abstract profile of the human being, because it tries to deny the existence of social classes or, recognizing it, tries to be a call from the dominant classes so that admitting their mistake, agree to commit themself to building a world of brotherhood. Utopian because "without domesticating" time, it rejects a prefabricated future that would be installed automatically, without counting on the conscious action of human beings. Utopian and hopeful because, pretending to be at the service of the liberation of the oppressed classes, it is made and remade in social practice [...] [46].*

Thus, from the REM approach and within the framework of García-González's proposal [9] we set our sights on the search for peace to find directions towards

which to go, rethinking and investigating possible alternatives from the ethical imagination, from creativity, from hope and from utopia. With this, we will be able to reformulate the future from the present towards new paths of peace. The possibilities of human action from the ethical and creative imagination are those that will devise new opportunities and perspectives to the cultures of violence "things are not as they are, they are how they can be. The real can be built from the imaginary. Only from utopia can reality move. To move reality, you must place yourself beyond reality, utopia is the Archimedean support point" [48].

6. Conclusions

Hence, thinking about hope and peace in difficult and uncertain times, in which we find ourselves, caused by the global pandemic of the Covid 19 involves the motivation to build utopias carried out in action. Utopias that are not fictions, although they do not have an effective reality, their existence is planned, in the idea of "not yet", but it shows us possibilities for hope. Utopia based on imagination and human inventiveness, without it, our imprints towards a better future would vanish, they would be lost in nothingness. Thus, these impulses that utopia offers us open our minds and empower us in the search for better situations of justice, well-being, understanding and peace. Being aware of the possibility of change is essential in the Peace Education REM approach as it takes into consideration our commitment and power that we have as human beings to do things in different ways than the logic of violence and exclusion "we know that we are also competent for peace, solidarity, integration. So, we must be hoped, excited and start walking" [49]:

- Mr. Pussycat - Alicia began, with a certain shyness, not knowing very well if she would like that name; but the Cat kept smiling and this encouraged the girl to continue (it seems that it takes it well):

- Could you tell me the direction I should take from here?

- "That depends," said the Cat, "where you want to go."

- "I don't care where…" Alicia started to say.

- In that case, it does not matter which direction you take- said the Cat

- "In order to get somewhere," Alicia finished saying.

- "That is easy to do," said the Cat. You just have to keep walking! (Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland, ch. VI).

By way of conclusion, it should be said that this article emphasizes the value of imagination, creativity and utopia to face the challenges generated by the global crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is believed that both creativity and imagination are competencies that allow us to adapt, much more easily and in an empathic and resilient way, to new situations and to overcome the challenges we will encounter. Likewise, it is considered that they make it possible to face these situations in alternative ways to those accustomed and to be able to see a future from a positive and hopeful perspective, a future in which humanity can forge higher levels of well-being, peace and sustainability. The Peace Education REM approach is committed to continuing to work in this regard.

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