Going through a Culture of Peace-Violence and Trafficking in Women for Sexual Exploitation

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Abstract

Structural violence has shaped our society affecting the lives of people [mainly women] by keeping justice out of their reach. This justifies the need to strive for a culture of peace and respect. One which can both successfully challenge and put an end to violence in general, and specifically target human trafficking; a serious crime that typically targets women. The objective is to eradicate or redirect violence in all its expressions, specifically gender violence, in order to promote a culture of peace and justice.

Keywords: *Cultural violence, Gender violence, Human trafficking, Reflection of violence, Structural violence.*

Introduction

The Need to Understand Violence

Reflecting on violence helps us to comprehensively understand it. Such a reflection could be the beginning to the end of violence; considering this a human privilege since it only takes place in anthropology. In other words, only people have the capacity of unlimitedly violence; so says Hobbes: "man is wolf to man". On the other hand "wolf is not wolf to wolf" [1].

The history of the reflection of violence is one that expands throughout ages. Plato and Aristotle's thoughts on the matter are still crucial to finding its root causes, mainly regarding human desire of ownership as if it were a means to "being more". These claims make us fight against each other in order to achieve powerful and prosperous positions. We tend to forget Aristotle's words – it is possible to carry out noble acts without controlling sea and land.

The argument based on the unrestrictive aim to possess has been continuously revisited in reflections throughout history, culminating during the first half of the XX century, specifically during the interwar period of the First and Second World War. Recently just as the Greek thinkers, contemporary authors have reconsidered violence in its diverse forms and specificities. Among them we find paradigmatic examples such as Walter Benjamin, René Girard, Pierre Bordieu, Johan Galtung, and etcetera.

Walter Benjamin, follows the same line of thought as the Greeks, stemming from his experience with violence, he states that "for individuals in society, the need to accumulate is one of the precursors of death" [2]. The tendency to historically generate violent situations implied in this statement detonated serious and profound reflections.

In this paper I attempt to create guidelines to comprehensively understand the phenomenon of violence, specifically related to both structural and cultural violence affecting women at global and local levels in the case of human trafficking. I present theoretical legacies that suggest possibilities to overcome violence and potentially reach a state of peace.

Structural Violence and Cultural Violence

The study of the phenomenon of violence is a complex one. However, at this stage some theoretical lines are well established allowing us to rethink violence, its diverse facets and manifestations. Hence, we can strive to identify direct violence, as well as structural and cultural violence. Being the latter, much less visible than the direct type.

Walter Benjamin noted that violence "possesses […] the authority of the conquered" [3]; his reflections, for the first time, represented a critique to literary works regarding myths, symbols and allegories studied by him, due to the concern and fear that never left him: the matter of neglect. By studying these questions he thought that Modernity could not erase the past. He was concerned with the possible replacement of the inherited experience, given that at the time it was commonly substituted by fascist propaganda art, capitalist mercantilism and the corresponding artifices. His view tried to avoid such artificiality, and so he felt "abandoned by the crowd"'. He was a deep, quiet and inquisitive observer who took up what the crowd left aside, he distanced himself and fought to overcome and protect himself from experiencing the world.

Benjamin discussed violence without a face, manifested in fascism preceded by the violence of the much-honored Modernity. Progress – thought Benjamin-had left behind the sought-after humanity. He avoided it by seeking alternatives at any cost. His search for the genuine and the undistorted, that is, the aura of things, led him away from the frenzy of consumerism and the maelstrom of the modern world. In this sense, cruelty found and enclosed in one-dimensional human beings was possible in so far as it was isolated from real human experience. Therefore, Benjamin reflected on both, the structure of violence and the recurrent coordinates of violence, instead of the momentary, occasional, and circumstantial episodes of violence. His analysis was based on the underlying type of violence that takes place in diverse forms of human change [industrial, social, aesthetic, cultural and political] evoked by Modernity.

His text *Critique of Violence*, written in 1921 [when he was 28 years old] is still useful even if we take into account changes over time of circumstances and class conflicts, doctor's strikes and other revolutionary strikes. Benjamin discusses the need for structural violence in regards to the establishment and preservation of the State.

The Hobbesian contract avoids anarchic war by yielding freedom to ensure security is provided by the sovereign, who in turn assumes the monopoly of violence. As this power moves from citizens to the State [4], it constitutes an element of political power. Benjamin is aware of this and states "the origin of any contract remits us to violence" [5]. Legal institutions turn to violence for their preservation. Law is related to power, and power

functions only if it appeals to violence. In this essay, the German philosopher asks himself if it is possible to solve a conflict without violence: "undoubtedly it is". The humanist and optimistic content highlights that "when the culture of the heart provides clean means of agreement, non-violent conformity takes place". According to him, those non-violent means involve "subjective preconditions" that include sincere kindness, love for peace and trust, all aligned with contemporary ethics. In this sense, dialogue becomes a key element for civil agreement. It allows the existence of "peaceful human agreements" and of "mutual understanding" [34]. Despite the fact that Benjamin succumbed to a violent moment, he underpins this possibility when he suggests that "even the hardest mentality would very often prefer both clean and non-violent means, as it fears the common disadvantages that could result from a violent clash independently of who the winner may be". His essay on violence ends with the following statement "the critique of violence is the philosophy of its own history"; thus exposing his Hegelian reminiscences pointing to the analysis of the results of violence as a form of critique. Humanities history shows evidence of the effects of violence as it has resulted in the "slaughter" with a worldwide scope.

Benjamin's radical nature leads to the question of what to do with the victims of violence; Arendt's losers, conquered and superfluous, Bauman's wasted lives and Butler's unlivable lives? [6]. What to do with the remnants of history? How can we pay off this debt? This is a mystery constantly discussed in philosophical reflection.

Some philosophers like Leibniz, concluded that after all, there was no need to disgust this world since it is the best of all possibilities. Others like Hegel comforted themselves thinking that in the midst of the collapse of individuals, towns and empires only "the needed subsisted". Enigmatic conclusion. Others, perhaps the majority, bowed their heads in resignation and silence. This was the case of Voltaire. "Let us work without reasoning" he concluded bitterly. "It is – he added – the only means of making life bearable". He ended up assigning himself what he called a "laudable objective": let's tend the garden. He sought through actions that which reflection denied [7].

Benjamin's response during his life between wars –that accumulated so much rubble– makes his work dark, melancholic and fragmented. A recurrent consideration of the past of the oppressed determines his thinking, which evokes with great sadness and impotence the ruins of

history. Paul Klee´s painting *Angelus Novus* motivated Benjamin's *Thesis on the Philosophy of History*.[i] Injustices remain like ruins and there is no one to take them away, suggesting that victims have no future. This was something unacceptable for Benjamin, therefore he tried to balance it through the articulation of his dialectical materialism and atheist theology which represents the possibility to not forget.

Analogically, sustained on beliefs by Ortega and Gasset-we *are*, in comparison to ideas, which we *have*-it appears that in violence we also *are*. As such, the problem is not how to avoid violence but how to get out of it [1]. For Benjamin, non-violence is a challenge that can be achieved through a culture of the heart. Today, daily examples show us that we cannot forget that in order to exist human beings need not only heart, but also material resources that are currently diminished by economic forms for the majority of human groups. Hence, it is necessary to draw from consciousness a more equitable distribution of assets and possibly overcome existing forms of violence. Otherwise non-violent discussion will be reduced to mere rhetoric. We should all reflect on this since "we are concerned not only with the victims, but also with the executors of violence, as they all represent the human condition", which means that they, as much as their victims, compose "humankind's heritage" [8]. They should be integrated into a collective memory to remind us [similar to Arendt's perspective, of the possibility of common people generating evil] that anyone has both the opportunity and capacity to be a victim or an executor.[ii]

Violence against women has been recurrent throughout history and it is still present. It manifests itself in a direct manner but also as structural and cultural. Although it is certain that they are not the only group affected by violence, they are in fact the largest group affected, even in more developed societies. Violence is understood as "the type of behavior that constitutes a violation or deprivation of elements that are essential for human beings [physical, psychological or moral integrity, rights, and freedoms]" [9]. It is not only a matter of acting upon it, but also of "failing to do" so, and with that neglecting the person or people in question the possibility to fully develop.

In 2000, the 191 Member States of the United Nations agreed to meet the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] by 2015. The eight proposed goals are focused [to a great extent] on the improvement of the status of women, which

plays a key role in issues related to both health and education for families and communities around the world. Currently, structural violence understood as - the systematic exclusion of a group of people from required sources for the full development of his/her human potential – still remains a significant barrier in terms of women's development and threatens the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals [10]. The greatest challenge is how to mitigate and extinguish diverse types of violence, specifically those aimed at women [both direct and structural].

The term structural violence has presently been redefined -since 1969- by the social scientist Johan Galtung in the *Journal of Peace Research,* as "the systematic exclusion of a group of people from sources required for the full development of their human potential" [11]. This concept is useful not only to highlight systematic exclusion, but also to provide the necessary sense of both brutality and intention to shape the lives of the poor and marginalized. Recently, structural violence has been used to describe violence based on gender, such as unequal gender roles that are introduced into social fabric.

Direct violence is evident; structural and cultural violence are not and have devastating effects on people. Structural violence emanates from the social structure itself; it promotes and endures social inequality and prevents the relief of priority needs [Income, housing, precariousness of health services, lack of employment, malnutrition, poor education, and minimal entertainment].

Cultural violence is linked to the symbolic expressions a given community uses to justify structural violence; it makes certain situations of great violence appear normal. Often, direct violence is justified by the emergence of both structural and cultural violence. Situations [justified and supported by common discourse] such as the abuse of power and the unequal distribution of assets increase inequalities and difficulties in accessing basic necessities. Society's intervention in these situations is mandatory, and such an intervention must seek the reduction of structural and direct violence.

This normalisation means turning away from the suffering of others and not only seeing the behaviour as normal but even coming up with excuses as to why it occurs. In terms of this paper we can take as an example what happens with girls and women forced into prostitution but more so let's focus on the "consumer". Men paying to have sex with women and girls sexually exploited

would seem to be unaware of the consequences their acts can have in the lives of these people and much more worryingly they seem to have no clear idea as to why they do it. In the research by the Mexican organisation GENDES, entitled "Men who buy bodies: looking at the consumption associated to the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation"[iii] . The question as to why is it that men look to buy sex is addressed with various answers from the men interviewed. It grabs attention that some of them see it as a way to socialise, in the case particularly of "lap dancing" places, as a rite of passage and even as something necessary to express and to satisfy one's needs. Why is it then, that men see this as something normal? Again if we refer to this study, when confronted with the question as to why would they incur in a practice which most definitely attacks the physical integrity of the woman and one which among others is a manifestation of trafficking in persons it would seem as if there is a detachment from their actions to the consequences. It is precisely here, in this detachment where we can find the clue to the normalisation of violence.

As long as society keeps turning a blind eye to violence, be it evident and particularly cultural and structural we will perpetuate the normalisation of it, with all the implication and undeniable physical and psychological consequences it has on its victims; and so it relies the importance of the proper identification of these practices.

Cultural violence is linked to symbolic violence and is exercised in societies in different ways. Pierre Bourdieu notes, "symbolic violence tears off submissions that are not even perceived as such, relying on 'collective expectations' of socially engrained beliefs" [12]. This means that violence that "tears off submissions" is not perceived as such because it relies on socially engrained beliefs given that it turns relations of domination and submission into affective relations and transforming the "power of charisma". [iv] Here-according to Bourdieu -the idea of debt or a gift is present; "giving" deceptively leads to the ownership or indentureship of the receptor. It conceals the network that co-opts and transforms the exercise of power into an "attitude of generosity".

Symbolic violence is different from violence exerted by an usurer; because it transforms relations of domination into forms of submission based on affective relations, unbalancing the power of charisma. This "symbolic alchemy"

generates symbolic benefits that are often transformed into economic benefits. This is what Bourdieu calls symbolic capital [13]. It is perceived as a "true magical force" [12]. Therefore explicit or direct violence and symbolic violence – which is more refined – easily coexist. Symbolic violence generates a symbolic domination accepted by the dominated. Such violence acts through bodies and minds, creating internalized forms of conformity; the dominant classes are in charge of the transmission of social rules and behaviors. In addition to the normalization exercised by the disciplining of institutions, symbolic violence is the continuous and unnoticed pressure and oppression of how things happen [14].

Symbolic violence silently operates and tends to be invisible. This is exemplified-according to Bourdieu -in plural and diverse forms of male domination [15] and the reproduction of gender violence. In this sense, symbolic violence is composed by the set of ideas, ideologies, beliefs and feelings that, in some way reproduce and justify the exercise of violence against certain groups. The stench of structural violence is always present and therefore we tend to violently discriminate and acquire certain characteristics that make us feel "normal" and "natural" about our habits and way of thinking.

The disarticulation of these types of violence is a real challenge since we must retrace a historical path of violence, and also distort and de-normalize those elements that have been unnoticeably violent. In this sense we should include diverse forms of violence inherited from colonization.

Symbolic violence is also found in communications media, which systematically uses stereotypes-that are literally and symbolically violent-stigmatizing certain groups – among them women - with deeply negative connotations. In this way symbolic violence rooted in cultural violence is part of our daily life affecting our actions and perceptions, in such a way that it appears to be natural and clearly logical. [v]

Our task is to unweave and clear out symbolic and cultural weft in a reflective and critical way in order to reach the core of the matter and be able to de-naturalize such realities.

The Paradigm of Gender Violence: Women Trafficking

"We understand that it would be absolutely false to think that in our current society a woman could be subject to sexist violence"B. Masiá [16]

The invisibility of those who suffer violence is recurrent and leads to their depersonalization and nullification, showing the course of action of both structural and cultural violence. The logic of blindness is expressed in cases of human trafficking, a perverse form of exclusion [17] known as the slavery of the 21st century. It is important that "before thinking how to change social inequality and differentiation or mistreatment, it is necessary to think about making the mechanisms and devices of construction and maintenance of this situation visible" [18]; resulting in possible denaturalization of exclusion.

Discrimination and violence against women generally remain invisible and therefore victims are excluded due to the "existing difference between the excluded and those who are considered normal" [19]. The distinction is then between the superiors– those who are normal, the people, the non-failed, those who do relevant things – and the inferiors – the poorly adjusted, the strange, those who are different. This perception is related to the traditional [androcentric] understanding, attached to our own perception of reality and our customs.

On one hand, we find the failed and the poor [mainly women] and on the other hand the successful and the rich [mainly men]. This is what has been called the naturalization and the antinomic standardizing of genders and gendered relations [6]. The reproduction of this model is sustained by the exclusion and the "persistence of generalized gender violence". These are legitimated and perpetrated as a result of certain "prescriptive myths concerning and surrounding women", that is "stereotypical inventions that have 'naturalized' the subordination of people that are identified as women" [20].

Passivity, dependence, objectification and fragility [among other characteristics related to women] make subordination possible; and income differences between men and women emphasize and culminate a vicious cycle. The denial of women's agency suppresses them considering "all rebellious women as crazy" [21-22]. In this sense "the different socialization towards violence and a culture where men are still considered the dominators, power positions belong to men; and paraphrasing Weber, we can say that the monopoly of violence [still] legitimizes men and makes gender violence a normal and normative expression of our social relations" [20].Such myths are reinforced by social mandates in such a way that gender violence not only persists but is

generalized. The fundamental element that facilitates this type of violence is the denial of its existence as a normalized practice. This explains that some men use marriage as a means to easily enslave and dominate women.

Society has a tendency to both blame and criminalize those who suffer social exclusion and who are themselves usually stereotyped and stigmatized. On one side we find the hated, the rejected and the marginalized, and on the other, the normal ones. It is therefore necessary to compensate for these broken identities through the eradication of all types of violence, which are accentuated by the generalized transgression of global and transnational capital.

Human trafficking is a transnational crime involving sophisticated and new methods. It has expanded all over the globe and has become an important part of the global underground economy [23]. Market economy has monopolized all human spaces affecting people in such a way that they can easily become subjects of sexual exploitation. Job insecurity and economy's decline, together with gender and racial discrimination locate women in an extremely precarious situation. For diverse reasons [including gender and race] women attain lower levels of education and face greater difficulties in terms of accessing well-paid jobs or functioning in the legal economy. The interest around human trafficking emerges from an interdisciplinary perspective [including sociology, law, political science, criminal justice, philosophy and feminist studies] in order to address and possibly solve this problem in a holistic manner.

Human trafficking is considered slavery because victims are deprived from their freedom and forced to work. Article 4 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that: "No one shall be held into slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms". vi Despite this Declaration slavery still exists in developing as well as in industrialised nations. Specialists have defined slavery as the state marked by the loss of free will [24]. An enslaved person, or a person who is forced or threatened through the use of violence, is unable to freely sell his or her labor.

Slavery has three dimensions: the appropriation of work, the control over another person and the use of the threat of violence. Human trafficking is defined by its final result or once the victim becomes a slave. It is not a condition or the result of a process, but the process of enslavement itself . It is not a singular offense and is usually related

to issues such as: global supply and demand, migration and the proper application of human rights.

Trafficking in women is an effect of symbolic violence and is brutally explicit in the cases of enslavement. Today, the crime of human trafficking is one of the most egregious forms of slavery and as such requires the full protection of victims and the prosecution of the exploiters. Trafficking is about victims. The crime is perpetrated against an individual, a victim of the State; and it depends on both the organization and sophistication of criminal groups. It involves threats, extortion, documents fraud and theft, imprisonment, sexual assault, prostitution, rape and murder. Additionally, traffickers perpetrate crimes against the State such as the violation of migration laws, fraud and forgery of documents, corruption of government officials, tax evasion and money laundering among others. Corruption of government officials leads to a moral and legal deterioration in which official corruption is combined with the unlawful acts of criminals. The complexity of human trafficking or modern day slavery shows the way this crime has adapted to the new global economy.

The ratification of the UN Palermo Protocol in 2000, provided both a universal agreement on the basic definition of "human trafficking" and an intervention approach. The definition indicates that abduction, deception, fraud, coercion and/or abuse of power are used to achieve the consent of a person for the purpose of exploitation; which usually means traffickers make promises to engage victims. These promises commonly involve marriage, economic support and a better life. Sometimes parents offer their children to traffickers under false promises of better education or training. Jobs in a formal economy are promised [nannies, domestic workers, waitress, janitors, etc.] and act as the hook that leads to sexual slavery.

The same happens when women are offered jobs as dancers or strippers in the entertainment industry; even if there is suspicion of sexual contact with clients, they are still unprepared to be forced into prostitution and debt bondage. Traffickers control their income, documents, and freedom of movement; in other words they control their lives. Victims are subject to both physical and psychological coercion, usually threatened with the use of violence or [when they are in a country different to their own] with being deported as undocumented migrants. Therefore they live with fear and find difficulties to search for help.

Enabling Factors of Human Trafficking (other than Structural and Symbolic Violence)

Besides structural and symbolic violence, there are other factors that facilitate human trafficking; these are classified into "push" and "pull" factors [25]. The first ones encourage people to leave their place of origin [rural or urban] because of precarious living conditions [involving poverty and violence]. The latter are factors in the destination point [usually promised by the traffickers] that are attractive enough to make them leave. However the reproduction of symbolic violence by society is always present.

Push Factors

- Inadequate job opportunities, combined with
- Living in poverty
- Lack of basic education
- Lack of health services
- Political and economic insecurity caused by poor governability, nepotism and political corruption
- Deficient structural economic policies that result in unemployment, inflation and lack of public social services
- Discrimination in social and economic life excluding certain groups from formal employment
- Family dissolution
- Violence [domestic, gender, etc.]

Pull Factors

- Promises of a better future
- Travel facilities
- Better income and higher living standards at destination points [big cities and more developed countries]
- Migration circuits between origin and destination points
- Demand for active labor in destination countries
- Employment facilities provided by recruitment agencies
- Expectations of well-paid jobs and opportunities in other cities and countries promoted by global communication media and Internet.

"Push" and "pull" factors have structural root causes. Violence and exclusion tend to increase with political, social and economic instability [unemployment and economic crisis]. But other factors such as government corruption, lack of opportunities and expectations for young people, poverty, infant mortality and social conflict are also related [24].

Several examples illustrate the series of elements involved in human trafficking. In the cases where criminal organizations control the recruitment

chain, as well as the transportation and exploitation processes, explicit violence supported by symbolic violence embedded in society is evident. In this sense, societies are, to a large extent, responsible for these crimes since they support and justify forms of symbolic violence as natural practices especially in relation to women. At this point violent processes such as human trafficking simply follow their course.

Traffickers take advantage of gender inequalities and the subordinated position of women and girls, sometimes reinforced by female stereotypes as sexual objects and servants for men. Therefore gender discrimination is one of the most important risk factors associated to human trafficking. Victims are denied this fundamental human right as well as the right to move freely, have access to proper health care and to be free from all forms of slavery among others. Trafficking in persons is the fiercest version of people's commerce [especially women]. It is a globalized phenomenon mostly affecting those who are socially excluded and suffer gender, racial, class and other forms of discrimination. Human rights violations vary according to both forms and structure of trafficking business.

Attitudes of exclusion and discrimination, together with poverty and marginalization have direct effects on women and girls making them more vulnerable becoming prey to human traffickers. It is important to highlight that in the case of indigenous women, these situations are usually worse. A true commitment to the human rights agenda will promote a change in the patterns of both explicit and symbolic violence; and hopefully violent practices such as forced marriages [registered in indigenous communities in the states of Oaxaca, Guerrero, Tlaxcala, Veracruz and Chiapas] will end. Human trafficking as a consequence of the surreptitious validation of violence is supported by patriarchal, conservative and *macho* systems that reproduce structural and cultural violence. An example is clear when referring to the colonial heritage [still extremely powerful in some indigenous communities] that considers women and children a property of the head of household [a male]. According to this logic they are free to sell their women and children, or force them to marriage. These situations enable the exploitation of indigenous women in diverse forms [26].

Traffickers take advantage of the precarious living conditions and practices which hinder women's agency and autonomy, limiting their possibilities to decide how to live or whom to marry. Such practices are much more ingrained within indigenous families as a great majority of them live in extremely impoverished communities and are isolated from social benefits. Moreover, in Mexico the legal age to get married is 18, however provided there is parental consent the age is reduced to 14 for girls and 16 for boys [27]. In 2003, there were 130,000 marriages among children of 12 and 14 years of age [28].

Child labor represents a serious problem in Mexico. One in every ten adolescents, that is between the ages of 12 and 17, are forced to devote themselves to housekeeping, some of them only receiving a meal in exchange for their services while others although they receive a salary this is well below the minimum wage. Practices of slavery combined with a legacy that has historically reproduced the patterns of medieval right or *le droit de seigneur* – which constituted a lordly right – turn the abuse of women into a symbolic ritual of submission.

According to the Network for the Rights of the Child in Mexico [Red por los Derechos de la Infancia en Mexico A.C.] approximately 13% of girls in Mexico are subject to forced domestic labor. They are denied the right to attend school and enjoy recreational activities. This condition attempts against their development and quality of life. In the state of Sonora approximately 5.8% of girls have been identified to live under this condition, while in the state of Chiapas the number dramatically climbs to 28.9%; making Chiapas the entity with the highest rate of girls in forced domestic labour at a national level [29].

How can we identify a real solution for these problems? Is it possible to eradicate human trafficking for sexual exploitation and the reproduction of violence [cultural and structural] embedded in human trafficking? A real possibility exists if changes are brought to education, culture, legislation and public policy. However, is it possible to completely end violence?

Theoretical Legacies on Violence as a Means to Reach Peace

This final section seems to be an unrealistic and ingenuous epilogue; however I do not think that we should ethically abandon such a dark panorama. Appealing to proposals offered by the history of thought might give us clarity and hope. We cannot avoid looking at the way violence is embedded in human lives, or… has it always been like this? Could we consider it to be part of the human world? In the words of Rene Girard, is violence unavoidable? And as such, is it

naturalized by the State? If so, is it necessary to continue making sacrifices in order to keep people appeased? [30]. A reflection on this critical position seems to lead to a dead end. Can we stay there? Is it a necessary and surmountable step, as some extraordinary authors would say? For some, the issue of violence [with all its belligerent excesses] constitutes the starting point of both social construction and socio-political-moral development. Kant stated that we should work for peace even if we cannot know if it is real or nonsense, therefore "we must fundamentally act as if it *were* possible". As he said, it is not something empty, but a performative task that slowly achieves an end.

Constructing peace requires an approach to the problems of war and violence and cannot be achieved without their resolution. The dynamic established between what nature provides and its transformation by humans, compels us to approach politics and law as possible channels to accomplish global justice; which requires the existence of peace as both a condition and essential element since legal order cannot fully guarantee peaceful conditions among States.

As Bloch said, pacifism does not mean the end of wars at any cost, but to prevent the causes of future wars from a principle of hope. [vii] Kant's proposal found in the treaty of *Perpetual Peace* emerges as a philosophical project and tries to investigate the demands and conditions essential for perpetual peace [31]. This text was written in a tone that seems sharp at times, with which he characterizes the illustrated political wisdom and displays "the immoral pursuit of the continual increase of power regardless of its means" with "the cunning tongue of a serpent" [31].

The Kantian concern with the feasibility of peace is embedded in the effective safeguarding of what we consider human rights, as well as democratic self-determination and egalitarian redistribution. The need for the creation of "a just institutional structure and definition of duties to humankind; duties that should be conceived first and foremost to facilitate the creation of such structures" [32]. It is important to point out that these structures involve not only the Nation-State but they also seek to discover and achieve the basic minimums all human beings deserve. Therefore, we must ask ourselves if these basic minimums represents the expected peace that must be sought through institutions according to their implied and materialized right.

If duties for humanity are to be fulfilled, we should focus on those that benefit the greatest number of people through the promotion of well-being. We should abstain from harming these duties and protect them against injustice by developing collective responsibility theories [respecting the individual] as well as peace theories.

Reflection on the possibility of peace requires reflection on war [31]. "Peace is the conquest of man's conscious will and therefore it must be established. In this sense *pax est quaerenda* affirms the Kantian proposal in *The metaphysics of morals* where the veto of irrevocable character is presented: "there must be no war; not between you and I in the state of nature, and not between us as States". Such a proposal is an ideal with a distinctly practical intention. The abandonment of the state of war is possible by appealing to the categorical imperative that compels individuals to join the State and in the same manner, compels States to build a union of States. Unlike Hobbes, who turns to the great Leviathan as the single-limiting physical force through the monopoly of violence in the hands of the State, Kant seeks the constitution of a legal state, which aides the avoidance of war. In order to achieve peace, Kant calls for a social contract between States by analyzing the required elements to achieve and implement perpetual peace; which is necessarily linked to Rousseau's Aristotelian nature legacies connecting moral and politics.

Certainly "pacifism does not mean the end of war at any cost, but the avoidance of future wars and their causes" [33]. Bloch questions the Kantian Society of Nations or a Universal Republic because they might be as predatory states. Kant, however, tried to identify the possible conditions for a universal State and pointed out an ideal horizon for humanity, which does not mean, "it is an unrealistic or purely visionary thought" [34] and has proven to be a catalyst for historical development. Hence, it is a regulative idea that seems to be the only option towards *irenistic thought*. In this case, we could say that peace is possible. Therefore we must act according to this principle, which should serve as both a guide and criterion to judge real situations.

The discussion of these topics represent enormous difficulty due to their multiple dimensions and complexities. However, reflection helps us to better understand and identify possible solutions. The alternative is to resign ourselves to living in violence and accept it as an irreparable *fatum*.

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Remarks

[i] The angel looking to the past horrified by the great catastrophe, ruins and rubble is stunned and terrified. The progress hurricane intervenes between him and the past, pushing him towards the future but he turns his back on the hurricane.

[ii] This is the basis upon which new programs of prevention are to be designed, ones which not only focus on preventing the victim but work in a comprehensive manner towards preventing the victimizer as well. Such work must be geared towards society as a whole but targeting those communities and groups which have been identified as particularly vulnerable.

[iii] Free translation, the research is published in Spanish under the name "Hombres que compran cuerpos: aproximaciones al consumo asociado a la trata de mujeres con fines de explotación sexual", Fernández, M. and M. Várgas,   GENDES,   2012.   Complete   text   is   available   in http://www.gendes.org.mx/publicaciones/HOMBRES_QUE_COMPRAN_CUERPOS.pdf

[iv] Symbolic power in the terms of Bordieu is an invisible power that supposes the complicity of those who surrender to it. Its success will depend on its legitimation by both the oppressors and the oppressed. See, Bourdieu, P. [1999]. Razones prácticas. Sobre la teoría de la acción. Barcelona: Anagrama, pp. 172 y 173.

[v] The normalization of violence and the effects it has on society were back in the spotlight in recent weeks after the Steubenville rape case. The news coverage, particularly that of CNN, NBC and ABC, portrayed the convicted rapists as model citizens and focused on the "irreversible" damage the sentence would have on their lives not the victim's; by doing so, and by describing the victim as a "drunken teenager" the message was clear, the victim was at much fault if not more than the victimizers for the attack. Although the aforementioned news coverage caused great uproar, particularly in social networks and the broadcasters issued an apology it only to show how normalized violence towards women is in society and to which extent "Rape Culture" is still present. For further information visit http://www.huffingtonpost.com/news/steubenville-rape.

[vi] See Article 4 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. About child labor or forced labor see The Departament of Labor's list of goods produced by child labor or forced labor. Report Required by the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Acts of 2005 and 2008. Edited by Bureau of International Labor Affairs, Office of Child Labor, Forced labor and Human Trafficking, 2009.

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