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## Participation and Peace Education

### Introduction

As in any poll, a few weeks before the 2011 Spanish local elections the competing parties got their campaigns under way. In the city of L'Hospitalet<sup>1</sup>, the campaign started under the shadow of the fear (for one part of the electorate) that *Plataforma por Catalunya* (PxC)<sup>2</sup> would gain ground on their previous performance.

Just as with the other parties, PxC used various means to get its message across to as many voters as possible. In the city, vans carrying very young men and women (some only just of voting age) in orange t-shirts could be seen stopping in busy areas to preach the party's racist, xenophobic propaganda. Apart from these young people, it's also well known that many of those wearing the orange t-shirts are unemployed, or workers in extremely precarious jobs, that have been roped into the campaign by the party. And aside from these age differences, they all have one thing in common: they are native-born residents of the Spanish state whose political rhetoric focuses on linking immigration with the economic and social crisis.

This situation – together with others happening every day in our schools, neighbourhoods, etc. – spurred us to launch a discussion on how to promote a form of peace education which could contribute to avoiding conflict between cultures and promote the positive management of these clashes where they have already arisen. The following pages are devoted to this task. Thus we begin with a section on “conflicts in multicultural societies,” where we analyse the concepts of conflict and violence. We continue with “the non-violent peace movement,” basing ourselves on a concept of “positive peace,” a term which, in this chapter, and together with “participation”, will be the essential building block

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<sup>1</sup> L'Hospitalet de Llobregat is a city sharing a border with Barcelona, belonging to the Barcelona metropolitan area. Its population is marked by (a) immigration from the interior of the Spanish state, from other areas of the country, and (b) immigration from outside Spain, from a very wide range of origins (Morocco, Pakistan, the Dominican Republic and Bolivia, amongst others).

<sup>2</sup> PxC is an extreme right-wing Catalan political party. Its programme is based on opposing immigration, which it considers to be a threat to Spanish identity, social justice and “Hispanic Catalanism,” and on defending traditional family values, and it calls for “zero tolerance” of crime and terrorism. The party also demands more robust regulation of immigration, and prioritization of state aid to locally-born people under the slogan “Our people first”.

of “peace education” and “nonkilling”. We conclude with a section analysing the relationship between peace education, nonkilling and participation.

### Conflicts in multicultural societies

Multiculturalism is defined as “the coexistence of different cultures,” and in contemporary Europe it is a living reality opening up new multicultural, multiethnic, multilingual and even multireligious scenarios.

Our main challenge in this context is to discover how we may live and interact creatively with cultural difference. This newly conspicuous diversity is often presented as a source of problems and as the origin of the conflicts found in multicultural societies. Coexistence between groups of varying origins is therefore often a cause of confrontation, and this conflict stems from fear of the unknown, from the uncertainty generated by the insecurity of a continent which has grown too fast without giving time for changes to settle or for society to mature at the same pace. This insecurity, amongst other things, makes “local people” feel afraid of new arrivals, whose mere presence becomes a threat. Being faced with the other means questioning how one acts, where one is going and who one is. Fear of the other can lead to seeing her/him as an intruder, an interloper, an aggressor, in short, as unwelcome. These feelings have been growing in recent years, due largely to the economic crisis which Europe has been undergoing for almost a decade.

Ryszard Kapuscinski<sup>3</sup> notes that there are always three choices in people’s encounters with the Other: they can opt for war, isolating themselves behind a wall, or engaging in dialogue. And he repeats Malinowski’s challenge on how we approach the Other when s/he is not a hypothetical being but a person in the flesh, belonging to another race, with their own faith, value system, customs, traditions and culture (Palou 2010). His two theses are:

- In order to judge, one must be present.
- There are no superior or inferior cultures, there only different cultures which, each in its own way, satisfies the needs and expectations of its members.

The same premises are defended by writers like Panikkar, who in 2000 formulated the concept of “cultural interfecundation” to refer to symmetrical relationships between cultures. One culture is not *a priori* better than another, and the most valuable situation is when all cultures feel the need to borrow from each other in order to address their challenges.

This in turn leads us to the conclusion that all inhabitants of our planet are actually Others faced with Others: ‘I’ facing ‘them’ and ‘them’ facing ‘me;’ and that everything depends on the relativity of the gaze. The basic problem of this

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<sup>3</sup> These arguments come from his article, “No culture is superior to another. Towards the encounter with the Other,” in the Spanish edition of *Le Monde diplomatique*, January 2006.

view is that the Other embodies, in a sense, the enemy, and that currently the shape given to this enemy is mostly the immigrant.

Postures of rejection are sometimes based on past or present conflicts or are simply a defensive response to imaginary fears. We think badly of others for no special reason; people have a hostile or precautionary attitude to an individual simply because s/he belongs to a group different from their own. In other words, prejudices about a person, thing or group are formed even with no real experience of them.

The continuous coupling of immigration with problems by politicians and the media has led to a constantly growing percentage of the population seeing immigrants as a sure source of conflict. Instead of spreading ideas of respect and peaceful coexistence, by one means or another society is incited to reject immigrants.

These facts all contribute to promoting what Mernissi (1990) calls “the deafening discourse of the host society,” referring to the way that people in general adopt the ideology laid down in the law and the media, intensifying, in this case, existing stereotyping and prejudices<sup>4</sup> towards immigrants. This is a highly dangerous situation, especially bearing in mind that the definitions of the “other” that we construct are influenced by stereotypes and prejudices built around them which then become part of popular mythology (Blanco, 2000). Thus the presence of these ideas strongly and negatively influences relationships between the immigrant population<sup>5</sup> and the rest.

Some of the attitudes aroused by those who are dubbed “different” are:

- **Discrimination:** This is prejudice in action. Specific groups are discriminated against because they are identified as “different”. These groups may be isolated, turned into criminals, deprived of a political voice, condemned to live in insanitary conditions, pushed into the worst jobs or into unemployment, denied entry to public areas, subject to police controls, etc.
- **Xenophobia:** This is a Greek word meaning “fear of foreigners,” and a clear example of the vicious cycle: “I’m afraid of those who are different because I don’t know anything about them and I don’t know anything about them because I’m afraid of them.” In the same way as discrimination and racism, xenophobia feeds on stereotypes and

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<sup>4</sup> Already in 1989 the McBride report on information and communication warned of the corrupting role played by the leading media in Western countries (UNESCO, 1989).

<sup>5</sup> In the Spanish state various studies of relationships between the native and immigrant populations have been carried out, especially since 1990, of which the most important are: *Attitudes towards immigration* by the Centre for Sociological Research (CIS); the opinion surveys also initiated by the CIS; surveys carried out by the Centre for Studies of Social Reality (CIRES), which later became the Sociological, Economic and Political Analyses (ASEP); studies done by the Centre for Studies in Migration and Racism at the Madrid Complutense University; and the qualitative studies performed by the Ioé Collective.

prejudices, but has its origin in the insecurity and fear which we project on the “other.” This fear often turns into rejection, hostility or violence against people from other countries or minority groups. Throughout history xenophobia has often been exploited by those in power. With the argument of “protecting” a people from outside influences, control over it is maintained (Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, Ceausescu, etc.).

- Intolerance: This is the lack of respect which one person or group shows towards practices or beliefs different from their own. This arises and shows itself most clearly when a person or group is not allowed to act according to their beliefs, values or opinions. Thus specific people are excluded or rejected due to their religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or even for their way of dressing or their hairstyle.
- Racism: This is probably the most widespread form of rejection. Firstly we should distinguish between two terms which although very different are often confused. These are racism and xenophobia. The Spanish Royal Academy Dictionary defines racism as “a politics based on the racial feeling that on occasions has motivated the persecution of an ethnic group considered inferior;” while the meaning of xenophobia, as we noted above, is “hatred, repugnance or hostility towards foreigners.” In brief the word racism is related to the idea that there exist superior and inferior races, while xenophobia implies repugnance or rejection towards foreigners. One may be xenophobic without being racist and racist without being xenophobic, but one can also be both. Racism is based on the belief that the features defining human beings – their skills, abilities, etc. – are determined by their race. Its forms and expressions vary through time and behaviour considered racist differs from one country to another. Racism is linked to the idea that one human group is superior to another. This idea should be rejected, since we are a single species, and there exists only one race, the human race.

The presence of these negative attitudes, together with other economic, cultural and legal factors, represents a source of conflict<sup>6</sup>. Zapata-Barrero (2003) distinguishes between three types of this in multicultural societies:

Identification of permanent conflict	Type of conflict
Socio-economic reasons	Conflict of needs
Cultural reasons	Cultural conflict
Legal reasons	Conflict of rights

Table 1. Main conflicts<sup>7</sup> arising in multicultural societies (adapted from Zapata Barrero, 2003: 84)

<sup>6</sup> Regarding these conflicts, Maalouf warned as early as 1999 that the more immigrants felt they were respected in their new home and the less they felt they were an offense, or were forced out, threatened or discriminated against due to their different identity, the more they were willing to open themselves to the culture of the host country.

Cortina (1998) identifies conflict for socio-economic reasons with *aparaphobia*. This is a feeling of rejection of the poor, the weak, etc., which arises in times of economic crisis and provokes conflicting and aggressive attitudes towards immigrants. Bilbeny (1996) identifies this attitude with what he calls “xenofear.” Also, Kolakowski (quoted in Pérez-Agote, 1995) observes a correlation between the degree of pluralism and tolerance on the one hand, and economic status on the other. When economic conditions worsen, conflicts appear and intolerance grows. The main argument when this type of conflict arises is that any right awarded to immigrants (work, social benefits, housing, health care, etc.) discriminates against local residents/natives.

Conflicts for legal reasons arise when immigrants claim civil rights. These demands are often the cause of racist and xenophobic reactions, appearing when discriminated groups speak out against the situations of exploitation they suffer and claim their rights as citizens living and working in the same society.

Conflicts for cultural reasons<sup>8</sup> arise when minorities see their cultural differences denied. An example from various European countries is when Muslim girls and young women have worn the *hijab* (headscarf) to school. For some years now French state schools have enforced a law against garments or accessories clearly showing the religious affiliation of students in primary and secondary education. Apart from the hijab, this ban also embraces the kippah (Jewish skullcap) and large crucifixes. This type of conflict occurs when cultural identities are seen in purist, exclusive, etc. terms; when “ours” is considered the only true, valid culture basing itself on human rights (De Lucas y Torres, 2002).

Conflict causes violence: “Violence is the result of the difference between the potential and the effective, that is, when the potential overcomes the effective, and this can be avoided” (Galtung, 1969, quoted in Ospina 2010: 105). Galtung distinguishes between two types of violence: its classic form (physical or direct aggression), which he calls “personal or direct violence,” and “structural or indirect violence.” This second type is an invisible violence inherent to power and the structural forces which cause social, economic, etc. inequalities. Later Galtung related “structural violence” to lack of satisfaction, poverty and exclusion. The concept is thus transformed and engenders two new types of violence: “alignment” and “repression.” “Alignment” refers to a false sensation of peace (“repressive tolerance”) and “repression” to abuse of power, violation of human rights, etc. “Alignment” and “repression” lead to “cultural violence,”

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<sup>7</sup> To combat conflicts stemming from racism and xenophobia two Europe-wide initiatives were made in 1997: the first was the incorporation of a clause against discrimination into the Treaty of Amsterdam, and the second the creation of the European Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia.

<sup>8</sup> Kymlicka classifies collective rights under three main headings: the right to self-government, polyethnic rights and special rights of representation, and indicates the main requisites validating their use: (1) they should preserve freedom within the group (preventing the tyranny of each group's internal rules), and (2) they should foster equality between groups (Kymlicka, 1996: 212).

“understood as that which is found in the invisible structures of societies and accepted by the collective unconscious” (Ospina, 2010: 15).

Galtung calls the relationship between these three types of violence (“direct,” “cultural” and “structural”) the “triangle of violence,” graphically representing the dynamics of how violence is generated in social conflicts.

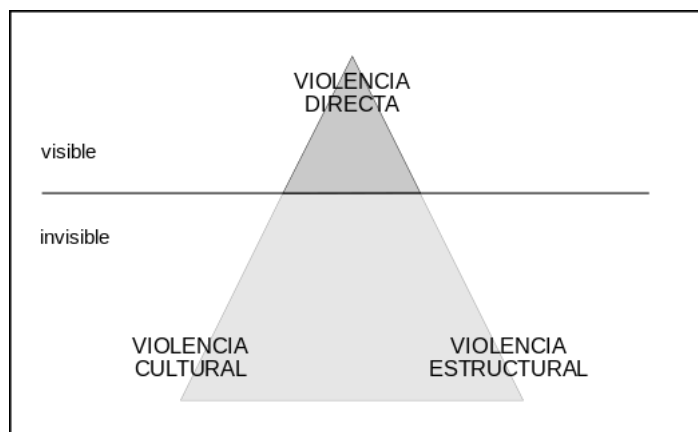


Figure 1: Galtung's Triangle

DIRECT VIOLENCE / CULTURAL VIOLENCE / STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

Along the same lines as Galtung, our concept of violence is closely related to the concept of peace outlined in the following section.

### **Peace in non-violence movement theories.**

Peace may be considered a cornerstone in all psychological, sociological, anthropological, political and historical aspects of human life. It has been a major concern of human beings since our very beginnings.

In general terms peace can be defined as a state of tranquillity and rest or calm, not disturbed by trouble or difficulty, etc., such as the state of a nation that is not at war with any other, or an agreement bringing an end to hostilities between two or more nations: “to sign the peace.” Peace can be understood as synonymous with social justice, as an overcoming of structural imbalances, starting with those stemming from one’s own basic needs, or as the complete fulfilment of human potential. A further step, however, would be to distinguish two more meaningful and defining concepts under which the concept of peace may be properly characterized:

- Positive peace: authentic peace, towards which we should strive. This type of peace is not only opposed to war but also to all forms of discrimination, violence and oppression preventing the self-development all people deserve. We should attempt to put this into practice in all walks of life: in both society and education.
- Negative peace: the currently-held idea of peace is the traditional Western concept of the absence of aggression and/or conflict. An impoverished and classist concept in that it maintains the internal status quo of nations.

The features of these two dimensions are:

Positive peace	Negative peace
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Peace is a complex and broad phenomenon requiring a multidimensional understanding. This in turn demands a wider understanding of violence. By violence we mean everything that prevents people from fulfilling themselves as human beings.</li> <li>2. Peace is one of the highest human values and is connected to human experience at every level.</li> <li>3. Peace affects all areas of life: interpersonal, between groups, national, international, etc.</li> <li>4. It is not solely associated with the international scene or with states. Peace refers to a social structure of "widespread justice and reduced violence."</li> <li>5. Peace requires, therefore, equality and reciprocity in relationships and interactions. Formulated negatively, "there can be no positive peace while there are relationships characterised by domination, inequality, lack of reciprocity, even where there is no open conflict."</li> <li>6. Peace is not only the absence of undesired conditions and circumstances, but also the presence of desired conditions and circumstances.</li> <li>7. Peace reflects three intimately related concepts: conflict, development and human rights.</li> <li>8. Therefore peace is a dynamic process; it is not static or immobile.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Peace is essentially a negative concept when it is defined as the absence of war or as a state of non-war. "Thus it is a very limited concept which has been increasingly defined in terms of war in general and specific wars in particular, to the extreme that, outside of this contrast with war, peace has no real content."</li> <li>2. Predominance of the Western concept of peace, inherited mainly from Roman imperialism, and strongly influenced in the modern era by the birth of nation states. Peace is seen from two aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The maintenance of unity and internal order, a situation which favours already dominant interests.</li> <li>• Defence from outside attack. In both situations, only the state is granted the right to act.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Restrictive concept. The dominant, traditional concept of peace is limited almost exclusively to treaties.</li> <li>4. Together with the foregoing features, we could also cite another, a strong strand of popular tradition which sees peace as harmony, serenity, absence of conflict.</li> <li>5. This negative idea of peace, allied to its meaning as serenity, non-conflict, has resulted in a passive image of peace, lacking in its own energy, created by external factors, which are those lending it dynamism. It is in short the "state of being between wars."</li> <li>6. The negativity and passivity of this concept of peace make it difficult to arrive at a specific, concrete understanding of what it is. Given the wide currency of this traditional thinking, especially in the education system itself, it is easier to delineate the idea of war and all that it implies than that of peace, which seems to be relegated to a vacuum, to a nonexistence which is difficult to state in concrete terms.</li> </ol>

Table 2: Features of the aspects of peace

Therefore, from the point of view of “positive peace,” as well as seeing conflict as inherent in people, groups, institutions, society in general, etc., peace is also understood as a broad and dynamic concept<sup>9</sup>. It is related as much to overcoming or reducing all forms of violence, as to our own abilities and attitudes in turning conflicts into creative situations while simultaneously seeking joint solutions. From this perspective peace is not only an end but also a means; that is, something towards which we progress, a process in which we learn and where the personal and the social interact. As Jarés says:

*Peace, then, does not mean subjecting the individual to the collective or vice versa, and the subsequent sanctioning of the use of force in the case of disorder, but above all, the continual transformation of the individual and the collective. (Jarés, 2003: 46)*

The individual and collective dimensions mentioned by Jarés situate us on the terrain of Bobbio’s “internal” and “external peace” (quoted in Ospina, 2010). Here *external peace* alludes to the absence of conflicts between people and groups, while *internal peace* reflects the absence of “internal” conflicts, i.e. between duty and desire, thought and action, personal and collective interests, etc. Under this framework peace becomes an ethical term denoting a human value, seeking advanced forms of consciousness for an individual self-improvement which in turn influences the collective (Jarés, 2003).

Ferrajoli (quoted in Ospina, 2010), for his part, sees internal peace as the peace which becomes possible when basic rights are guaranteed. Therefore there is a relationship between the degree of peace and the fulfilment of basic human rights: to the extent that these are guaranteed, peace will be more feasible and lasting.

Peace, then, is a social responsibility (everyone’s task), at the same time as an individual duty influencing the collective sphere. This essential meaning of peace should permeate the political, educational and social spheres. In line with Galtung, peace should target not only direct violence but also structural, symbolic and cultural violence. Also we should recognize that peace develops, always, in a highly unjust context (Jarés, 2003), where basic rights, far from always being recognized, are the source of many of the conflicts arising within groups or in society in general.

This broad view implies that we should endeavour to foster basic human rights based on social justice. In this sense, we advocate Peace Education, since it can be a powerful tool for sensitization and social transformation.

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<sup>9</sup> The Peace Education Seminar (2000) has structured the concept of peace in five dimensions: non-violence, economic justice, social equality, political liberty and psychological fraternity.



## Peace education in the theory of non-violence

Peace education is a basic tool for fomenting the commitment to the principles of non-violence and a society based on a culture of peace, dialogue and coexistence. Peace education is both an educational challenge and a value-based education. It can be used to promote changes in attitudes and behaviours relating to problems of economic, social, cultural imbalances and power struggles between peoples, and is also a type of education oriented towards commitment and action. Under the general rubric of Peace Education, various different dimensions can be identified:

- Education for international understanding
- Education in human rights
- Global and multicultural education
- Education for disarmament
- Education for development
- Education for conflict

The development of these different dimensions contributes to creating a **Culture of Peace**. The challenge of promoting this culture is:

*...achieving those dynamic balances which imply the maximum possible wellbeing for the actors in every situation and at each time, and trying to make this balance equally sustainable on all sides. This means that we have to manage the uncertainty of the environment we live in, the new or emerging forms of conflict in contemporary society, and the resulting conflicts (climate change, globalization, discrimination in access to resources, migration, sustainable development, etc.)* (Muñoz y Molina, 2009: 54)

The movement for a culture of peace is steeped in a variety of traditions, cultures, languages, religions and political views, and its objective is a world in which the diversity of cultures can live together in intercultural dialogue, tolerance and solidarity (Álzate, Fernández and Merino, 2013). Intercultural dialogue is, as noted by UNESCO<sup>10</sup>: “equitable exchange, in addition to dialogue between civilizations, cultures and peoples, based on mutual understanding and respect and on the equal worth of all cultures.” Intercultural dialogue is the basic premise of social cohesion and peace between nations since it allows us to go forward together and recognize different identities in a constructive and democratic way, in accordance with common universal values. Intercultural dialogue can only prosper if certain prior conditions are fulfilled, and requires the strengthening of the autonomy of all parties through the fostering of skills and projects allowing interaction without harming personal or collective identity. Thus, to boost intercultural dialogue, we need to adapt many features of the democratic management of cultural diversity and, more specifically,

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<sup>10</sup> Disponible en: <http://www.unesco.org/new/es/unesco/> (Consulta: Noviembre 2014)

strengthen democratic citizenship and participation and embrace intercultural skills, creating room for intercultural dialogue<sup>11</sup>. This means basing ourselves on the following fundamental principles:

- Human affairs should be treated humanely, not through violence.
- Ideological opposition should be approached in a climate of dialogue.
- Human rights should be safeguarded in all circumstances.

The concepts of peace and violence which we have been discussing throughout this chapter grant civil society the status of participating actor, inasmuch as “peace is [also] conceived not from the point of view of the state and its bodies, but from the perspective of how civil society can influence the social fabric itself” (Jarés, 2003: 50). From this participatory perspective, our approach to social praxis involves the view of social conflict and peace as active processes where the main actors are people and their social relations. The model of “fighting partners” is substituted by “synergic partners” in order to fulfil the needs of each (Montañés y Ramos, 2012).

*Peace and conflict are constructed socio-cultural situations, and therefore we must foster people’s participation in conflict management and peace building (Montañés y Ramos, 2012; 242).*

The same authors refer to this as “transformational peace”. This idea transcends the limits of positive and negative peace and embraces coexistence and participation on the micro, meso and macros levels of society.

Participation becomes a means of promoting and working with and for peace education and nonkilling society (Paige, 2001). Participation of all concerned in processes of problem-solving to seek peace and nonkilling society (Paige, 2001).

In the following section we look more closely at this issue.

### **Participation as meeting ground**

If participation is an essential part of peace education and nonkilling (Dator, 2012) in the actual society, we need to create meeting points which can (a) generate forms of collective coexistence and at the same time be used to manage conflicts (Camps, 2000), and (b) fight against discrimination and racism. Building a multicultural society requires us to create the feeling of community, of responsibility to issues collectively affecting us. Dator (2012) introduces the “effective participation”, he defined it like democracy: “I defined “democracy” as a form and process of governance that gives every person and entity influenced by another person and entity an equal and continual opportunity to influence the actions of that person and/or entity. That is also my definition of “effective participation.” (Dator, 2012: 22). This kind of participation

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<sup>11</sup> This idea comes from the *White Book on Intercultural Dialogue*. Available online at: <http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/> (Consulted in November 2014)

is achieved when until we learn how to have “leadership” without “leaders” (Dator, 2012).

We need to learn to live together and to acknowledge people’s common interests, whatever their original cultural patterns. This means admitting and overcoming our own stereotypes, prejudices, and ethnocentrism, and accepting that we can and should learn from other cultures (Cabrera, 2002). This involves recognising that no one culture is *a priori* better than another, but that the most valuable situation is when cultures feel obliged to take on elements of another in order to respond to their own challenges. Panikkar (2000) uses the concept of *cultural interfecundation*, mentioned above, to refer to these symmetrical relationships between cultures.

This approach requires us to strengthen participatory meeting grounds and to understand participation as an educational process, a process of learning which influences both the individual and the whole society.

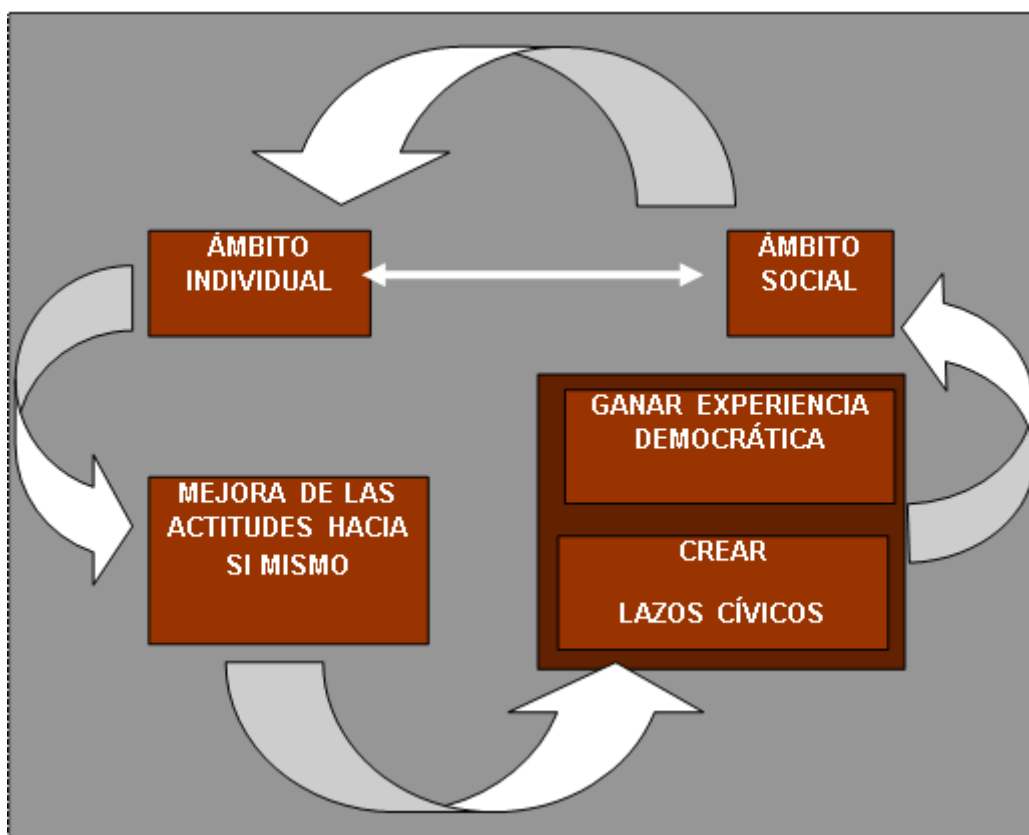


Figure 2. Functions of participation (Folgueiras, 2009)

INDIVIDUAL FIELD / SOCIAL FIELD / IMPROVING ATTITUDES TO ONESELF /  
GAINING EXPERIENCE IN DEMOCRACY / CREATING CIVIC TIES

Whether it is to create meeting points or to struggle against discrimination and racism, in every educational initiative that we make we will need to consider how to include participation, at the same time as analysing how feasible this is in any given context.

Here we understand participation as:

*...a right of citizenship, a form of collective action which creates a commitment and thereby a shared responsibility allowing us to make decisions, create opportunities to develop skills – especially for those traditionally excluded – and foster or express a feeling of identity with a community, while achieving this from a standpoint of equality. For this purpose it is indispensable to start from the experiences and interests of participants. This means that they are the people who must define the subjects to be treated, and that relationships within the process are horizontal and driven by a dialogue between equals. All of this turns active participation into a social and educational process seeking change, transformation, and development, both social and individual, of society. (Folgueiras, 2009).*

Exercising the right and duty of participation is, in turn, conditioned by (1) how far it is really possible, and (2) the level of commitment.

On the basis of this second condition, Trilla and Novella (2001), have broken down participation into four modes: *simple participation* (taking part in a process as spectator with no active involvement), *consultative participation* (having your voice heard on matters which concern you), *projective participation* (taking on the project as your own and participating in it throughout), and *metaparticipation* (creating new areas and means of participation based on participants' demands, and claiming the right to take part in decisions). In our view, within this classification, *taking part* could come under the heading of *simple participation*, while *forming part* would be *projective* or *metaparticipation*.

Within each type Trilla and Novella (2001) also remark a greater or lesser degree of participation, depending on four factors: *engagement*, or the degree of people's identification with the "object" of participation; *information/awareness*, the degree of knowledge people have about the "object" of participation; *decision-making power*, the amount of involvement people can have in decisions taken about the "object" of participation; and *commitment/responsibility*, the degree of responsibility for the consequences of participative action that people take on. The level of each of these four factors will vary according to the type of participation created. The relationship between types of participation and the factors influencing it is illustrated in the following chart:

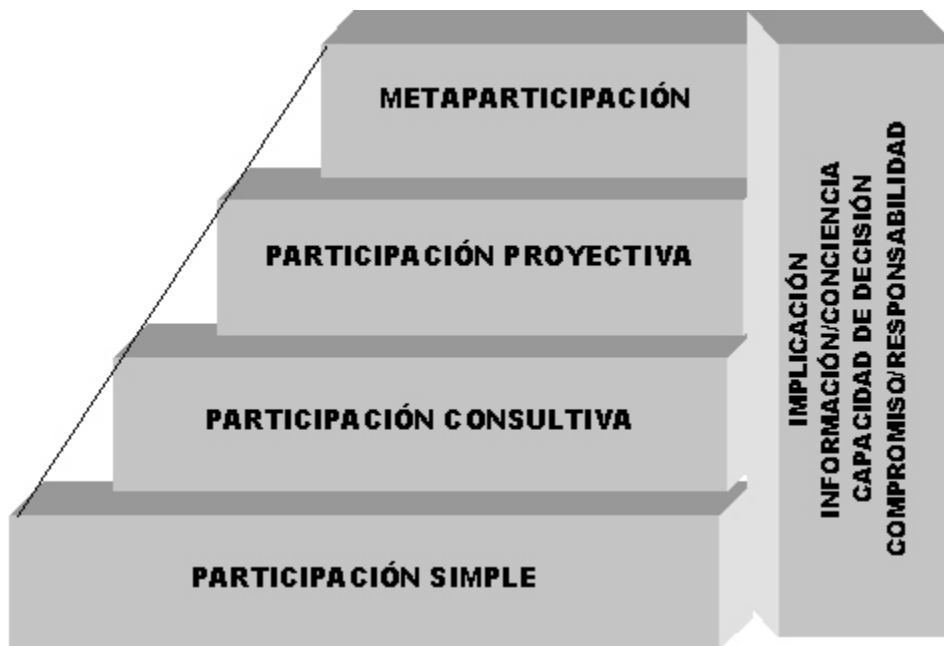


Figure 3. Types of participation and factors influencing each mode (Trilla & Novella, 2001: 154, quoted in Folgueiras 2009)

METAPARTICIPATION / PROJECTIVE PARTICIPATION / CONSULTATIVE PARTICIPATION / SIMPLE PARTICIPATION

ENGAGEMENT / INFORMATION/AWARENESS / DECISION-MAKING POWER / COMMITMENT/RESPONSIBILITY

Susskind and Elliot (1983)<sup>12</sup> define three models of participation: *paternalism*, *conflict* and *coproduction*. In *paternalism*, most decision-making power resides in the local authorities. In *conflict*, decisions are still centralized, but residents organize and struggle to gain greater control. In *coproduction*, decisions are shared between residents and local authorities.

Pateman's 1970 classification is also highly relevant here, as this author has undertaken many studies on participation and participatory democracy. Starting from the degree and level of intervention, she splits participation into three types: *pseudo-participation*, *partial participation* and *full participation*. Under *pseudo-participation*, hierarchies are set up and participants cannot either take decisions or influence those taken, but are only informed of them; here participation is reduced to mere information. With *partial participation*, hierarchies are also present, and participants do not have equal access to decision-making, but can influence decisions taken. In *full participation* there are no set hierarchies and decision-making is in the hands of all participants.

Basing ourselves on the various classifications outlined here, we consider that participation will be more authentic and beneficial when those involved have the opportunity to take part and take decisions at all stages of the process (*being part of the process*: Folgueiras, 2009).

<sup>12</sup> Susskind and Elliot (1983) extrapolated these three patterns of participation from research into a range of different experiences involving local authorities and residents in decision-making, based on specific cases in Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Holland, England and Switzerland.

This revitalization of participatory processes requires “taking on board differing ways and paces of participation which take diversity into account; and thereby conceiving participation as a process, tool or reason for collective learning. In short, a process of learning to live and work together rather than in competition with each other, so that collective action can not only enhance coexistence, but also offer us personal satisfaction through this very activity.” (Camps, 2000; 235). The capability of intervention is both an act of will and self-discovery as participation with other intersubjective beings (Dator, 2012).

## Conclusions

As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, the economic crisis has been accompanied by the growth of extreme right-wing parties with discrimination against immigrants at the core of their electoral programmes.

In this scenario, we advocate participation as an especially favourable arena for preventing conflicts which stem from conditions of violence (classical or structural) and which hurt all parties. Although in the resolution of these clashes fully inclusive participation should be a cornerstone, we should also acknowledge that it is virtually impossible to create a meeting-ground when a conflict has already broken out. What we can and should do is boost participation before difficult-to-resolve situations emerge.

Achieving this objective calls for arenas of participation where people can encounter and understand each other so that emerging conflicts can be solved. These areas would also enable us to identify from within our own communities the paths to take for resolving conflicts, at the same time as they would help us to see that our neighbour’s cause is also our own cause, although s/he may have different features or a different religion than us, and to find common values beyond our differences and signs of cultural identity.

Apart from these meeting-points we also need to promote participation of foreign-born residents in a wide range of government organs, for example, at the local level, in social advisory bodies, district councils, municipal councils, etc., and in education, in school councils, parents’ associations, etc., given the key place the education system holds in fostering peaceful coexistence between cultures (Salazar, 2010).

This is because the great challenge to contemporary society is to foment cultural coexistence within framework of peace. Our society is mature enough to take on this challenge and to build a world of which all groups, however different, feel themselves to be part. Creating this common feeling and achieving a state of peace and harmony is the responsibility of all parties (if we can meaningfully speak of parties!). As Freire states:

*Peace is created and built by overcoming perverse social situations.  
Peace is created and built with the untiring construction of social justice.* (Freire, 1986).

But a world of peace, coexistence and social justice, where racial, gender-based, religious, cultural, or any other type of discrimination has no place, has

yet to be built. This is the task of our time: to take part in the real building of alternatives so that another world is possible.

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