

Historical narratives and civic subjectification in post-conflict times

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Abstract

This literature review seeks to answer the question: What is the role of historical narratives in constructing the post-conflict citizen? The author explores some of the sociopolitical implications of telling a particular narrative as a tool for making sense of the past, the present, and the future, as well as a key element in the subjectification of the post-conflict citizenry. This is, the creation of new subjectivities, roles, expectations, and codes of conduct consistent with the goal of national reconstruction. The author delves into three main areas: 1) the normative post-conflict citizen 2) the different types of historical narratives and their deployment for citizenship formation 3) youth's engagement and responses to historical narratives and civic subjectification. Conclusions point to some of the challenges and opportunities that Colombia – as one of the most recent cases of political transition– might face in relation to historical narratives, post-conflict citizenship, and peacebuilding efforts.

Key Words: Historical narratives, post-conflict, youth, citizenship, subjectification

Resumen

Esta revisión bibliográfica busca responder a la pregunta: Cuál es el rol de las narrativas históricas en la construcción del ciudadano post-conflicto? La autora explora algunas de las implicaciones sociopolíticas al contar una narrativa particular para darle sentido al pasado, presente, y futuro, y como herramienta crucial en la subjetivación de la ciudadanía del post-conflicto. Esto es, la creación de nuevas subjetividades, roles, expectativas, y códigos de conducta consistentes con la aspiración de una reconstrucción nacional. La autora profundiza en tres áreas: 1) el ciudadano post-conflicto normativo 2) los diferentes tipos de narrativas históricas y su uso para la formación ciudadana 3) la participación y respuesta de los jóvenes frente a las narrativas históricas y la subjetivación cívica. Las conclusiones señalan algunos de los desafíos y oportunidades que Colombia –como uno de los casos más recientes de transición política– puede afrontar con relación a las narrativas históricas, la ciudadanía post-conflicto, y los esfuerzos de construcción de paz.

Palabras clave: Narrativas históricas, post-conflicto, jóvenes, ciudadanía, subjetivación

Introduction

Scholars and practitioners largely agree that confronting the past is one of the most demanding, disputed, yet required tasks for societies that have experienced an armed conflict or an authoritarian regime (Ahonen, 2014; Barsalou, 2007; Bellino, 2017; Bellino, Paulson & Anderson Worden, 2017; Bentrovato, 2017; Bentrovato, Korostelina, & Schulze, 2016; Buckland, 2004; Cohen, 2001; Cole, 2007; Cole & Murphy, 2009; Correa, 2017; Freedman et al., 2008; Jelin, 2003; Minow, 1998; Murphy and Gallagher, 2009; Paulson, 2006, 2011; Raggio, 2017; Ramírez-Barat & Duthie, 2017; Rodino, 2017; Sánchez Meertens, 2017; Weldon, 2010a). Political transitions demand state transformations that bring about institutional adjustments, new actors,

different relations, and changes and revisions in the readings and meanings given to the past (Friedrich, 2014; Jelin, 2003; Davies, 2017). The significance that is –or is not– granted to past events is essential for the development of a less violent society. Particularly, if these events are rooted in memories of violence, repression, death, suffering, and trauma (Cole, 2007; Cole & Barsalou, 2006).

In the wake of social and political violence, it has become common for countries to adopt a full range of judicial and non-judicial processes and mechanisms of Transitional Justice (TJ) to “ensure accountability, serve justice, and achieve reconciliation” (UN, 2004, p.2). Memories of the difficult past are at the core of Transitional Justice projects (Bird & Ottanelli, 2015; Clark & Palmer, 2012), because as Julia Paulson (2012) argues:

“transitional justice itself is a memory-making process, intending to right the wrongs of the past as well as to define the ways in which the past is remembered. Transitional justice endeavors seek to mobilise memories in various ways –by coming to terms with them, by acknowledging them, by neutralizing their potency through holding the culpable accountable – so that they become useful tools in a present and future characterized by peace, rule of law, and democracy” (p. 393)

However, in trying to accomplish sociopolitical reconstruction, the act of remembering does not unequivocally promote mutual understanding nor to achieve justice (Bird & Ottanelli, 2015). Rather, authors argue that reconstruction and the consolidation of more socially just arrangements unfold complex processes of collective memory and identity-making, competing re-narrativization of the past, the development of a different social imagination, the establishment and promotion of a new social contract, and a shift in people’s everyday social practices (Christie, 2016; Davies, 2017; Jelin, 2003; Lederach, 2005). Scholarship demonstrates that within deeply divided societies, the past may take the form of what Wertsch (2002) has called an ‘usable past’ (Bellino, 2014b; Cole, 2007; Davies, 2017). This means that past events are provided with meanings that are functional for supporting current and future concerns, interests, and identities (Jelin, 2003, 2017). As Andreas Huyssen (2012) claims, “the past is not simply there in memory but it must be articulated to become memory” (p.3). This articulation happens, precisely, through narratives. Similarly, Raggio (2017) argues that the past in itself does not ‘teach’, and simply conveying events and facts does not produce significant transformations, if the past and its narration are not linked to people’s experiences in the present.

It is by narration that time and its passage gain sense for individuals. Because the social world does not come to humans “already narrativized, already speaking itself” (White in Ewick & Silbey, 1995), narratives are constructed to provide accounts of the world and to help subjects position themselves in that world. Rüsen (2005) asserts that since narratives combine experience and expectation, they assist people in understanding who they are, as well as orienting their actions in the present and future. In the act of narrating, a story is constituted with aspects of continuity and stability, as well as with features of fissures and silences. It is the combination of heterogeneous elements –including characters, interactions, and temporalities– what gives the story ‘a body’ that articulates memories into narratives (Cornejo et al., 2013). Therefore, ‘narrative memories’ (Jelin, 2003) are relevant to analyze post-conflict settings because they communicate the meanings granted to the conflict, and they also serve people to elaborate relations with present conditions. Moreover, the specific ways of narrating events also set up the moral compass to judge wrongdoings of the past and the renewed behaviors expected for individuals in the present (Christie, 2016; López, 2015).

Within Transitional Justice, the debate is not whether to remember, but how to remember, what to remember, by whom, and for what purpose (Barsalou, 2007). These questions constitute what Ewick & Silbey (1995) outline as the rules of performance (*how, by whom, to whom, why*) and norms of content (*what*) that constrain narrativity. These are important elements to move from the traditional dichotomy of remembering and forgetting, to questioning how historical narratives of the past affect the daily lives of those expected to engage with them, and how subjects employ them for authoring their post-conflict identities and roles (Paulson, 2012).

Following this reasoning, the stories of the violent past are fundamentally ‘transactional’ (Davies, 2002; Ewick & Silbey, 1995), as they create experiences for the postwar citizenry, while demanding certain responses and conducts from them. The past and its narration becomes a harbor for competing interpretations over the roles and responsibilities of citizens (Bellino, 2014a; Friedrich, 2014). Jelin (2003) emphasizes that the way individuals, communities, and institutions construct and deploy historical narratives is crucial in shaping people’s identities and roles in the transitional times. Historical narratives, then, are “a critical site of collective identity formation through which both shared national identities and individual civic competencies are realized” (Bellino, 2014b, p.131).

Scholars claim that narrating the past is a central way to contribute or hinder peacebuilding (Bekerman and Zembylas, 2012; Bentrivato, Korostelina & Schulze, 2016; Cole, 2007). Far from being a straightforward process, it involves a variety of narrative transactions and tensions among multiple actors who contest, re-signify, or underpin interpretations of events. Various researchers evidence that the production and circulation of narratives of the past are highly contested and politicized activities, in which diverse stakeholders come to participate in different modes, moments, and settings (Bentrivato, Korostelina, & Schulze, 2016; Barsalou, 2007; Bird & Ottanelli, 2015; Clark & Palmer, 2012; Cole, 2007; Cole & Barsalou, 2006; Jelin, 2003, 2017; Raggio, 2017). The ways in which their agendas are arranged and reinforced, shed light on the (conflicting) ways in which temporal configurations of the past-present-future take place for the sake of national rebuilding and civic transformation (Bellino, 2017; Oglesby, 2007b; Friedrich, 2014; Staeheli & Hammett, 2013). For this reason, it is important to acknowledge that historical narratives are not neutral discursive forms that simply convey an impartial account of the past (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Rather, they are constructions charged with social and political meanings and effects (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2012). As Davies (2002) claims, the selection and evaluation of the events for the telling are intentionally portrayed as relevant for awakening the response of the interpretative audience. Hence, narratives are not only told *within* contexts, but *constitutive* of their own contexts (Ewick & Silbey, 1995). In addition to reflecting the situated meanings and power relations from where they emerge, narratives are implicated in the very creation and support of those meanings and power relations.

The power of communicating and to ignite responses that historical narratives carry does not reside in words themselves, “but in the authority they represent and in the power-related processes connected to the institutions that legitimate them” (Bourdieu in Jelin, 2003). Hence, in addition to examining the context, it is substantial to further explore the process of making a narrative of legitimate recognition, and the reception of such narrative in its intergenerational transmission (Jelin, 2003; Kaiser, 2005; Sánchez Meertens, 2017). The social norms and interactions, as well as the contexts of elicitation, are vital considerations to understand when a story is demanded, expected, or prohibited (Ewick & Silbey, 1995). Tensions for power, legitimacy, and recognition of historical narratives are present during and after conflict. The

ways in which these struggles unfold in times of transition are valuable to estimate a country's likelihood to surmount or relapse into conflict.

Following these ideas, this literature review seeks to answer the question: What is the role of historical narratives in constructing the post-conflict¹ citizen? To address this inquiry, I have explored scholarship related to societies that have transitioned from a violent or authoritarian past to a less violent and more democratic stage. Attention is focused on examining the sociopolitical implications of telling a particular historical narrative as a tool for making sense of the past and the present (Barton & Levstik, 2004), and as a key element in the subjectification of a post-authoritarian or post-conflict citizenry (Raggio, 2017; Friedrich, 2014). This is, the creation of new subjectivities, roles, expectations, and codes of conduct consistent with the goal of national reconstruction (Oglesby, 2007b). These narratives are “the grid through which the telling of a sequence of events becomes intelligible” (Friedrich, 2014, p. 13) as what occurred and what is important to remember from what occurred. For the purposes of this literature review, I have focused on three main areas: 1) the normative post-conflict citizen 2) the different types of historical narratives and their deployment for citizenship formation 3) youth's engagement and responses to historical narratives and civic subjectification.

The examination of different country cases, and cases within countries, sheds light on tensions and negotiations that emerge in building the ‘new normality’ (Davies, 2004) in the aftermath of turmoil. Particular intentions and commitments surface, as well as different ways of understanding what reconstruction, or even more, what reconciliation means and how to pursue it in practice (Cole, 2007; Clark & Palmer, 2012; Barsalou, 2007; Davies, 2017; Paulson, 2011). In the political scene of transitioning, the citizen enters as an actor and as a project (Friedrich, 2014). And in the aimed postwar nation, narratives, memories, subjectivities, become deeply intertwined with one another.

Review Method

Gough et al., (2012) argue that there is a difference between systematic reviews that aim to aggregate evidence in order to test predefined concepts and methods (aggregative reviews), and those that are more exploratory and seek to configure understandings and/or develop concepts (configuring reviews). In the former case, reviews tend to focus on more homogeneous studies, whereas in the latter case, reviews are more likely to be attentive to identify patterns and establish understandings drawn from heterogeneity. In this sense, the present literature is configurative. By consulting different sources related to various contexts and cases, I have not aspired to make any generalizations or to standardize the post-conflict experiences. Rather, I am interested in offering some insights by drawing connections and differences among the various cases to suggest more comprehensive and nuanced accounts. With this I seek to explore how historical narratives have taken place in the aftermath of violence, but perhaps more importantly,

¹The term ‘post-conflict’ is commonly used in different fields to indicate the subsequent stage of a society that has recently experienced a violent conflict. Although the use of the term might be practical for categorization purposes, a loose use of it as an umbrella term is of profound simplification (Davies, 2004) because it overshadows the complexity entailed in the social and political transition from a stage of systematic violence, to an allegedly less violent and democratic one. The term can be somewhat inadequate to describe the nature of conflict, which happens on a continuum, rather than compartmentalized and well-defined phases (Quaynor, 2012). While bearing these complexities in mind, I opt to use the term ‘post-conflict’ for practical reasons in this literature review. But I do acknowledge the risks of oversimplification it is use.

to indicate some sociopolitical implications of these narratives for the peacebuilding process, including post-conflict subjectification. This review does not attempt by any means to offer a definitive picture or absolute claim in relation to historical narratives, citizenship formation, or post-conflict settings. Instead, I have conceived it as a rigorous, yet limited review, that synthesizes and signals some compelling findings and concerns found in researches regarding conflict-affected societies.

To answer the question “What is the role of historical narratives in constructing the post-conflict citizen?” I reviewed the literature I have read in the different courses that I took during graduate school and that is relevant to these topics. This literature included academic articles and books concerning Education in Emergencies, Memory Studies, History Education, Civic Education, Peace Education, and Transitional Justice and Education. Upon this revision, I conducted searches in English and Spanish in EBSCO Host, SciELO, and Google Scholar databases, using combinations of key words like “conflict”, “post-conflict”, “narratives”, “history”, “education”, “citizenship”, “memory”, “history”, “historical memory”, and country cases that have gone through conflict and/or Transitional Justices processes like “Argentina”, “Chile”, “Peru”, “Guatemala”, “Rwanda”, “South Africa”, “Ex-Yugoslavia”, etc. I also consulted a range of academic journals including Journal of Education in Emergencies, Comparative Education, Comparative Education Review, Globalisation, Societies, and Education, and The International Journal of Transitional Justice, using the same keywords. Further, I consulted the publications of the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), including reports, articles, and their most recent published book. For this review, it was also valuable to examine the references cited in the articles, books, and books chapters that I read.

After reviewing the literature, I identified three main areas in which scholarship focuses debates regarding post-conflict citizenry and historical narratives: 1) the normative post-conflict citizen; 2) the different types of historical narratives and their deployment for citizenship formation; 3) youth’s engagement and responses to historical narratives and civic subjectification. I also identified three main types of historical narratives that are predominant across contexts and that are further discussed in section two: narratives of nationhood, narratives of silence, and narratives of resistance. While analyzing the literature, I found that historical narratives and citizenship formation are deeply related to another, so I decided not to separate them into different sections, but to couple the narrative with the definitions, expectations and understandings of citizenship that draw from it. I finish this review with some concluding thoughts about the importance of this body of literature, and with some reflections on the possible implications that the use of these historical and civic narratives might entail for peacebuilding efforts. Particularly, reflecting on the possibilities and challenges that Colombia, the most recent country starting a sociopolitical transition to peace, might be facing today and in the upcoming years.

The normative post-conflict citizen

Over the last decades, different authors have identified education as a pillar in the process of national reconstruction and recovery after a sociopolitical upheaval (Buckland, 2004; Burde et al., 2017; Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Davies, 2004a, 2004b, 2010; Gallagher, 2004; O’Malley, 2007; Paulson, & Rappleye, 2007; Smith, 2005; Smith & Vaux, 2003; Tawil & Harley, 2004; UNESCO, 2010). The nation-state is rebuilt as the post-conflict citizenry is educated and constructed as such. Post-conflict citizenship, therefore, becomes a process of subjectification

(Hale, 2002). This means that younger generations are shaped or ‘being-made’ (Ong, 1996; Pykett, Saward & Schaefer, 2010) in definitive and particular ways by instilling normative attitudes, behaviors, skills, and identities that come to form the new polity. Davies (2004b) claims that in order to achieve and endure democracy and peace – two of the main aims when transitioning to a less violent stage – a ‘new nature’ of civil society is crucial. For this, the emergent polity is expected to be aligned with matters that transcend simple electoral choices or citizenship status, to more complex and nuanced processes of accountability, trust, transparency, human rights, multiculturalism, inequality, and open rejection to armed aggressions (Bellino, 2017; Davies, 2004b; Hale, 2002; Oglesby, 2007b; Quaynor, 2015).

Levinson (2011) argues that the rise of liberal democracies over the last centuries has contributed to a discourse of citizenship that implicitly invokes democracy. In recent years, he asserts, academics have been taking democracy as the implicit horizon when discussing about citizenship, and the construction or maintenance of democratic publics and identities as the main goal of citizenship education. Further, Lynn Davies (2008) asserts that ‘western versions’ of democracy are the predominant ones, and these are generally tied to neoliberal logics. Then, the prevalence in post-conflict societies is to educate and strengthen democratic skills and behaviors that allow the nation to have democratic post-conflict citizens who are hard workers and competitive. For the consolidation of democracy, Schmitter (1995) and Davies (2004b) argue that a strong civil society is needed. However, scholars state that in countries during or emerging from conflict, civil society is commonly fragile, with exclusionary tendencies, and weak in terms of the rule of law, governance, accountability and justice (Bellino, 2017; Burde et al., 2017; Davies, 2004a, 2004b, 2011; Crocker, 1999; Novelli, 2010). Therefore, institutional and constitutional engineering labors are indispensable (Crocker, 1999; Davies, 2017), as well as efforts in legal and Human Rights education (Bajaj, 2011; Barton, 2015; Davies, 2004b, 2017). Additionally, authors have also emphasized the importance of reinforcing a sense of ‘shared fate’ or destiny (Zembylas, 2012) that helps post-conflict citizens to recognize and reckon with the wrongs of the past and to see themselves as the ‘architects’ of a better future (Bellino, Paulson & Anderson Worden, 2017; Bentrovato, 2017; Murphy & Gallagher, 2009; Quaynor, 2015). This is related to what Lederach (2005) calls the ‘moral imagination’, in which members of dividing societies boost their creative capacity to imagine themselves beyond dualisms and to liberate themselves from the very familiar ‘landscape’ of violence.

Hence, education in the aftermath of conflict turns into a tool for social production rather than reproduction; it becomes education *for* citizenship (Staeheli and Hammett, 2013). This in the efforts to create political subjects with the skills required for an effective citizenry after turmoil. At the praxis level, education for citizenship relies on the strengthening of democratic principles and behaviors that are modelled and reinforced through more participatory and inclusive pedagogies, which are concomitant with the values and attitudes needed to participate in a democracy (Bajaj, 2011; Davies 2004b, 2008, 2017; Lanahan, 2017; Russell & Quaynor, 2017; Tibbitts & Weldon, 2017; Weldon, 2010a; Worden and Smith, 2017). Simultaneously, schools play a key role in maintaining democratic communities and in creating a normative subjectivity that shapes the political community into one that can be governed (Friedrich, 2014; Staeheli & Hammett, 2010). Different authors have identified values and conduct such as tolerance, respect for human rights and difference, multilingualism and multiculturalism, dialogue, mutual understanding and coexistence, equality, non-racism, solidarity, empathy, compassion, and nonviolence, as the core values that international organizations and governments

seek to install in younger citizens in the form of content and in action-oriented components (Bajaj, 2011; Barton, 2015; Bellino, 2017; Chaux, 2009; Davies, 2017; Hale, 2002; Levine & Bishai, 2010; Rubin, 2016; Sánchez Meertens, 2017; Weldon, 2010a, Worden and Smith, 2017). One of the most pressing tasks in transitioning times is the development of a collective identity that unites the previously divided citizenry. Osler and Starkey (2005) claim that to bolster a sense of belonging to the community is also significant for making individuals more prone to become participant citizens, rather than mere observers of citizenship. For this, national imaginations and political subjectivities are vital to promote social cohesion (Bellino, 2017; Davies, 2004b; Rubin, 2016). A novel collective identity as democratic citizens, thus, becomes a discursive practice that introduces principles that order the subjects in-the-making and their conducts (Friedrich, 2014; Ong, 1996). Post-conflict generations become the ‘architects’ of a presumed better present and future when they *act* as such. Chaux (2009) precisely discusses a Colombian citizenship program, and claims that for underpinning a peaceful and democratic citizenship simulating real-life situations are more effective to prompt students’ actions, rather than transmitting abstract civic notions and values. This is what some authors have identified as performing an ‘active citizenship’ (Pykett, Saward & Schaefer, 2009), which comprises actions such as challenging social injustice, corruption, and aggressions (Bellino, 2017; Chaux, 2007, 2009; Davies, 2004b, 2017; Rubin, 2007); knowing about the violent or authoritarian past (Barsalou, 2007; Bellino, 2017; Friedrich, 2014; Rubin, 2016); drawing connections between the past and the present and making value-laden decisions (Bellino, 2015; Minow, 1998; RAggio, 2017; Rubin, 2007; Tibbits and Weldon, 2017); positive participation or upstander behavior (Murphy & Gallagher, 2009); being informed voters and being educated about the structure of the government (Quaynor, 2015; Russell and Quaynor, 2017); and standing up for issues relevant to human rights and democracy (Chaux, 2007, 2009; Tibbits and Weldon, 2017; Rubin, 2007).

Staheli & Hammett (2013) affirm that the basis for a national renewal is the establishment and promotion of a new ‘we’ that minimizes distrust and fear for the ‘other’. The renewed social body is constituted as citizens come to understand and recognize their identity and belonging in relation to the (new) nation (Friedrich, 2014). Bekerman & Zembylas (2012) and Weldon (2010a) claim that the construction of the ‘other’ comes as a result of identity-based conflicts. Thus, works to challenge stereotyping and prejudices are imperative for reconciliation and sustainable peace (Paulson, 2011). Likewise, Davies (2004a) argues for identity labors ‘across the divide’ that promote a ‘linking’ social capital rather than a ‘bonding’ social capital. This is to generate ties across groups and not within groups. Davies refers to the consolidation of a ‘hybridity’ or an inclusionary collective identity, so post-conflict citizens come to recognize that no one is ‘pure’ and that unique combinations constitute the renewed national identity. This is what Mouffe (2013) recognizes as the ‘we’ of radical democratic citizens—the construction of a collective across differences. However, there is literature that demonstrates that ethnic and nationalistic divisions are so essentialist and profound that coming to constitute such ‘collective across differences’ seems to be one of the biggest challenges and dilemmas (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2012; Freedman et al., 2008; Hale, 2002; Jelacic, 2017; Papadakis, 2008).

Scholars have also focused on analyzing some of the limitations of neo-liberal versions of democracy and citizenship formation in transitioning and post-conflict societies. For instance, Lynn Davies (2008) claims that particular and narrowed versions of neoliberal democracies may reproduce inequality, further increase exclusion and poverty, evade respect for Human Rights, and reduce public accountability, thus increasing the possibilities to relapse into conflict. Under

neoliberal agendas, individual citizens are the ones responsible of the national reconstruction, rather than the State's duty. In their study on citizenship education in South Africa, Staeheli and Hammett's (2011, 2013) point to the production of post-apartheid citizens who hold values of self-sufficiency, responsibility, and cosmopolitanism. They argue that the 'two universals' of democratization—human rights and responsible citizens—are mirrored in curricula and school practices that encourage youth to take responsibility of their own lives, well-being, and of the prosperity of the nation. In this perspective, the responsible post-conflict citizen is conceived as one that makes moderate or few demands to the state, and who takes ownership of the future.

The shifting of responsibility from the state to the post-conflict citizen evidences what Mitchell (2003) identifies as educating the national citizen in neoliberal times. This is also aligned with conceptions regarding citizens of the 21st Century who are members of a 'deterritorializing state', not only by effects of globalization, as Mitchell identifies, but also by effects of increased forced migration (Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al., 2014). Under neoliberal logics, citizenry is oriented to individual survival and competition in the local and global market. Youth are commanded to develop job skills to become self-reliant and to engage with others to solve problems by themselves (Savard, 2016; Staeheli & Hammett, 2013). Sarah Dryden-Peterson's (2011) article reveals that refugee children are socialized to believe that they can construct a better future and livelihood through their pursuit of education, and that they are the only ones accountable for and "in control of their own futures, even in a situation of exile that is indeterminate" (p.97). This kind of post-conflict subjectivity is related to what Ball (2012) refers as neo-liberalising subjects; making individuals enterprising, responsible, and guilty if they do not succeed in taking advantage of the opportunities that are out there. Russell and Quaynor's (2017) comparative study of citizenship construction in Liberia and Rwanda report that it is the citizens' responsibility to contribute to peace, economic prosperity, and stability. This is constantly mirrored in Liberian media through inquiries to citizens like: 'What are you doing for Mama Liberia?'. While the Rwandan government has focused on stressing values of unity, patriotism, and hard work.

Ball (2012) argues that performativity is the quintessential form of neo-liberal governmentality. Hence, the 'practice of a [post-conflict] citizenship' (Pykett, Savard & Schaefer, 2009) encompasses the demand for more productive and effective beings, who also work on improving themselves. Savard (2016) reports in her findings that there is a widespread perception in Northern Uganda on how to 'fix' former combatants, this is by transforming them into productive individuals. The belief is that if ex-soldiers join vocational training programs, "they are fine now" (p. 171) because they have acquired the job skills to make them hireable and to economically contribute to the community.

Neoliberal modes of governance across contexts have also been charged with discourses of Human Rights (HR) and constructions of post-conflict citizens that endorse them. Further, HR education for global citizenship aims to provide young people with the membership to a global community—transnational citizenship narratives within a global capitalism framework (Mitchell, 2003)—that promotes knowledge and skills relevant to universal values, standards, and rights (Bajaj, 2011). In this vein, cosmopolitanism, as one manifestation of post-conflict citizenship, inscribes young people's civic actions and identities into a global commitment to HR, particularly through the work of Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANS) (Ball, 2012). Staeheli and Hammett (2013) assert that a collective identity affiliated to HR can operate as an "objects' brand" for which one can identify the product "but not the means by which it is

produced” (p.34). In other words, post-conflict citizens may come to advocate for HR, while overlooking the politics of the past that prompts them in the present to support HR. Likewise, Oglesby (2007b) argues that in Guatemala HR discourses converge with the instrumentalization of the national historical memory within a post-war neoliberal governance. A depoliticized (Frazer, 2007) and ahistorical culture of peace has turned into the predominant citizenship narrative that the government and international aid organizations have sought to import and install for the post-war citizenry. Although TANS may provide the network for diffusing HR knowledge and practices (Ball, 2012), Barton’s (2015), Bellino’s (2015), and Schartz’s (2009) findings demonstrate that contextual factors including youth’s personal experiences, play a key role in influencing their understandings and actions related to rights, morality, justice, and hence, their post-conflict subjectivity.

Further, rhetorical framings of good citizenship (Pykett et al., 2010) influence youth’s civic understandings and practices. Russell and Quaynor (2017) state that in Liberia and Rwanda a significant proportion of students reported that a good citizen is one that loves the country, respects the constitution and the government, votes in elections, and is good in the community. Similarly, Bentrovato (2016) also found that institutional views of cultivating a good citizenship in post-genocide Rwanda means cultivating a patriotic one. This relates to a ‘belligerent citizenship’ (Ben-Porath, 2006), for which citizenship turns into an intense form of patriotism, civic participation is directed to war efforts, and public deliberation and disagreement are stifled because they represent a menace to the nation.

Literature also refers that learning about diversity and multiculturalism is another major trend in post-conflict citizenship formation. However, authors have argued that this approach lacks sustainable impact because they fail in addressing issues of structural inequality and power relations in the society (Hale, 2002; Oglesby, 2007b; Smith and Vaux, 2003; Staeheli & Hammett, 2013). Mitchell (2003) claims that under neoliberalism, the subject shifts from the multicultural self that tolerates and celebrates difference, to a strategic cosmopolitan who uses diversity for competitive efforts. For his part, Hale (2002) stresses the limitations of ‘neoliberal multiculturalism’ by arguing that it embraces the rights of ‘recognition’ traditionally denied to certain marginalized groups, but not the rights of full participation. Looking at the case of indigenous Mayas in Central America, he points that *mestizaje* and multiculturalism appear in educational policies and antidiscrimination legislation, but since they are also regarded as peril, Maya political subjectivities are restricted to a narrowed multiculturalism: “so long as it does not go too far” (p. 490). In the next section, I will present how scholarship discusses about different types of historical narratives and the ways in which these are reinforced formally and informally, thus, shaping differently the post-conflict citizenry.

Historical Narratives and post-conflict subjectification

Literature on post-conflict and peacebuilding reveals that schools play a key role in nation- and polity- building (Bellino, Paulson & Anderson Worden, 2017; Buckland, 2004; Burde et al., 2017; Davies, 2004a, 2004b, 2011, 2017; Friedrich, 2014; Paulson, 2011; Raggio, 2017; Tawil & Harley, 2004; Vélez, 2017). Through the construction and reinforcement of historical narratives, educational spaces turn into strategic sites for political subjectification. Authors argue that historical narratives are not only stories, but memory frameworks connecting the past, the present and the future, to sustain political agendas (Alphen & Carretero, 2015; Carretero, Asensio, and Rodríguez-Moneo, 2012; Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi & Levi, 2011). Alphen and

Carretero (2015) affirm that to forge the nation-state, ‘master narratives’ become crucial tools to elaborate versions of the past. These, hand in hand with symbols, monuments, heroes, dates, and commemorations, assist citizens in anchoring their collective identities (Jelin, 2003), as well as situating them as members of the national polity (Barton & Levstik, 2004). After hostilities have ceased, institutions and transitioning mechanisms are important to establish and mobilize deliberate efforts to promote social cohesion, feelings of identity and belonging, and to assist people in drawing the distinctions between the horrors of the past and the allegedly better present and future (Davies, 2017).

In times of sociopolitical transition, schools shape young people’s identities and roles for the imagined community that is under construction. Del Moral (2013) and Caruso (2010) assert that during the processes of state formation in Latin America, schooling was essential to re-shape and build *specific* individuals: from colonial subjects to national citizens. In analyzing the Argentinian democratic transitioning, Friedrich (2014) highlights the importance of understanding citizens as a ‘kind’ of person that is made up by real effects of discourse and classification. In his study, he demonstrates that historical narratives and memory works are relevant strategies to construct the citizen as a technology of governance. Literature demonstrates that the ways in which the events of the past are (not) narrated influence the definitions of the self, the group, the ones who do not belong to that group, as well as the roles and responsibilities of individuals within the nation (Bellino, 2017; Bentrovato, Korostelina & Schulze, 2016, Cole, 2007; Freedman et al., 2008; Friedrich, 2014; Jelin, 2003; Oglesby, 2007a, 2007b; Rubin, 2016; Staeheli & Hammett, 2013). In this order of ideas, the past turns into a ‘usable past’ (Wertsch, 2002) to sustain the emerging nation and to endure peace. For this literature review, I have identified three major types of historical narratives that contribute to the post-conflict subjectification: narratives of nationhood, narratives of silence, and narratives of resistance.

Narratives of nationhood

Literature on identity-based conflicts evidences that sociopolitical reconstruction often entails a strong official narrative of nationhood and ‘unity among diversity’. Bentrovato’s (2017) study reveals that the Rwandan government has employed ‘pedagogies of truth’ to recast students’ identities and ethnic-group relations in order to build a cohesive and ‘ethnicity-free new Rwanda’. In the same vein, other authors assert that the slogan “We are all one Rwanda” (Freedman et al., 2008, p. 674) has become the official narrative pursuing to remove ethnic distinctions and installing a unified national identity. Diverse studies highlight that the government’s version of history condemns ethnicity and reinforces patriotism, while penalizing any alternative account or perspective (Freedman et al., 2008; King, 2013; Sommers, 2002). Similar to this case, Weldon (2010a) demonstrates that to re-imagine an (ostensibly) non-racial post-apartheid nation, the South African government has aimed to erase racial distinctions among citizens, while emphasizing the respect for democracy, equality, human dignity, and social justice. The narration of the past in textbooks has been relegated to historical records and facts, with little reference to today’s legacies of violence and racism (Staeheli & Hammett, 2013). To promote reconciliatory relationships among the post-apartheid citizenry, different scholars claim that schools have implemented a human rights-driven curricula (Rodríguez-Gómez, Foulds & Sayed, 2016; Staeheli & Hammett, 2013; Weldon, 2010a) that lines up with the non-discriminatory character of the new constitution in which the ‘Rainbow Nation’ has settled its bases for reconstruction (Christie, 2016).

Researchers have demonstrated that another strategy for social cohesion among the citizenry has been the promotion of ethno-nationalistic narratives, in which ‘nation-ness’ appears as a natural and inherent quality of people that conform an ethnic ‘all’ that is oppressed by others. Literature indicates that to reproduce and sustain ethno-nationalistic narratives, education has played a major role. This is prevalent in Croatia (Marić, 2016; Freedman et al., 2004), Macedonia (Todorov, 2016), Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) (Ahonen, 2014; Freedman et al., 2004), and Cyprus (Papadakis, 2008). In BiH, for instance, three parallel education systems and curricula based on ethnicity exist until today (Paulson, 2015). Similarly, in Macedonia, the use of different history textbooks in ethnically segregated classrooms further challenges any reconciliatory effort because each group learns a historical narrative of victimization (Cole and Barsalou, 2006). In these ethno-national narratives, the politics of storytelling of the nation are inscribed in the ‘grammar’ of victimhood and self-suffering (Bar Tal et al., in Bentrovato, 2017). This is what Bentrovato (2017) identifies as the “nationalisation of suffering” (p.407), for which ethnic distinctions are distorted, and lines between victimhood and responsibility are blurred.

Literature points out that official narratives rooted in a national unity trope tend to be oversimplified version of events that distort youth’s understandings of the past, thus, narrowing their perception and comprehension of the present and their positioning within it (Barton & Levistik, 2004). As authors claim, the use of this kind of historical narratives actually precludes open discussions about race, ethnicity, or inter-group relations, thus, perpetuating group tensions in the present (Bentrovato, 2016; Hale, 2002; Freedman et al., 2008; Sommers, 2002; Staeheli & Hammett, 2013). As researchers indicate, master narratives of nationhood have effects on strengthening a collective identity, as well as effects on people’s social relations (Davies, 2002). Through the institutionalized telling of these master narratives, stories “come to constitute the hegemony that in turn shapes social lives and conducts” (Ewick & Silbey, 1995, p. 212) among the citizens (self-censorship), and arrange political relations between the state and the citizens (censorship and repression) (King, 2013).

Literature on the ways in which historical narratives of nationhood have been promoted and sustained, sheds light on the ways that governments have sought to control not only the resources involved in collectively remembering the past (textbooks, curricula, school calendars and commemorations), but also in the shaping of new citizens. This is, the regulation of narratives for the production of a post-conflict citizenry –a ‘technology to govern’ (Friedrich, 2014) the transitioning nation, for which the members are expected to civically perform under normative accounts of identity and memorialization.

Narratives of silence

Another way in which the narratives of the past contribute to the post-conflict subjectification is through silence. Scholars claim that silence circulates in different spheres and with different purposes. It might come as a top-down measure, a group strategy, or an individual decision. When transitioning to a less violent stage and trying “to reinsert oneself in the world of ‘normal’ life” (Jelin, 2003, p. 142) or the “new normality” (Davies, 2004), silence is a cope mechanism for individuals and communities in which trauma endures (Jelin, 2003; Ktshanyan, 2016). However, for this literature review I am not focusing on the silence that derives from trauma, but rather, on the silence that operates as a deliberate action. As literature shows, silence is not necessarily equated with amnesia, but conceived as an altered form of narration of memories. Following Susana Kaiser’s (2005) idea that the past is present in the silences, and those silences actually speak quite loud, in the following paragraphs I present the ways and instances in which

authors have identified that the untold indeed speaks. Through historical silences, citizenship is also built, understood and negotiated. Historical accounts –in their presence, absence, or transformed version– forge people’s individual and collective memories and identities. And since memories are not things people think *about*, but think *with* (Gillis in Jelin, 2003), they influence postwar citizens’ beliefs and choices in the present (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2012; Jelin, 2003; Korostelina, 2016).

Research reveals that at the micro-level, motives for silencing the past might variate from fear of speaking up after years of imposed silence in authoritative regimes (Jelin, 2003; Kaiser, 2005; Martínez Cabrera, 2012); trepidation of re-igniting violence by transmitting historical traumas, wounds, and resentment to younger generations (Bentrovato, 2016, 2017; Bellino, 2014b, 2016b; Cornejo, et al., 2013; Freedman et al., 2008; Jelin, 2003; Kaiser, 2005; Mayorga, 2017a; Reyes, 2013; Sánchez Meertens, 2013; Toledo & Gazmuri, 2009); contentious ownership and authority to narrate the war story (Bellino, 2014b); and the absence of favorable and safe conditions to voice people’s stories, experiences, and memories (Bellino, 2017a; Lizarralde, 2003; Rodríguez-Gómez, 2017; Sánchez Meertens, 2013, 2017; Trinidad, 2004). At the macro level, it has functioned as a nation-building strategy that operates through formal education and takes the form of omission of a period of time (Barton and McCully, 2010; Ktshanyan, 2016; Savard, 2016; Todorov, 2016; Young, 2010); a moratorium (Bentrovato, 2016; King, 2013); a pact of silence and amnesty (Fernández & Martín-Ortega, 2017); no compulsory national curriculum or pedagogical resources (Barton and McCully, 2005; 2010; Bellino, 2014b, 2017; Bentrovato, 2016; Gellman, 2016; King, 2013; Kitson, 2007; Oglesby, 2007a, 2007b; Paulson, 2010a; Sánchez Meertens, 2017; Weldon, 2010b); and legal ban to openly recognize past events (Freedman et al., 2004; Ktshanyan, 2016).

Scholars argue that although outrages might cease, the narrativization and the calls for accountability linked to that narrative remain deeply fraught for decades (Bellino, 2017; Paulson, 2010a, 2010b, Raggio, 2017). Narrating the past, therefore, turns into another type of struggle. Policies of silence, such as ‘the Pact of Silence’ in Spain (Fernández & Martín-Ortega, 2017), have been promoted across contexts as a recovery strategy linked to a progress-driven approach (Gellman, 2015, 2016). This under the presumption that remaining silent about the past – particularly in schools– would avoid furthering divisions in the present (Bentrovato, 2016, 2017; Freedman et al., 2008; King, 2013; Tibbits & Weldon, 2017).

Academics also underline the significant role that teachers play in mediating the silence. As ‘gatekeepers’ of educational practice (Bellino, 2016a; Bentrovato & Schulze, 2016), and as the most immediate and frequent referent of the State that children and youth have (Sánchez Meertens, 2017), educators make pedagogical that contribute to civically shape the post-conflict citizen through narratives of silence. These include complete reliance on the passive voice of textbooks (Bellino, 2014b, 2016), the use of old materials that omit the conflict (Bentrovato, 2016), and the justification of not teaching it due to curricular exclusion (Barton & McCully, 2005; Bellino, 2014b; Bentrovato, 2016, Sánchez Meertens, 2013). These findings are noteworthy because they point to some of the ways in which teachers ‘safely’ put the violent past into frames of silence or non-agency (passive voice), as mechanisms of self-protection and de-politization, particularly if violence and rivalry are enduring in their contexts.

Other authors also assert that some teachers seem to assume the responsibility of avoiding ‘wounds’ to be re-opened (Bellino, 2014b, 2016b; Rubin, 2016). Therefore, their pedagogical choices reflect the idea that leaving the violent past unaddressed and circumventing controversy

could prevent conflict and enmity to re-emerge (Bellino, 2014b; Bentreovato, 2016; Cole & Murphy, 2009; Cornejo, et al., 2013; Freedman et al., 2008; Mayorga, 2017a; Quaynor 2012; Reyes, 2013). Rocío Trinidad (2004) studies these 'mute' transmissions of memories and narratives of the conflict in Ayacucho, and finds that teachers developed strategies to silently communicate to students about the conflict by using 'odd' voices ("a duck voice" p. 36). Pupils would be perplexed by the teacher's strange voice, so they would seek a meaning for it, and eventually they would unearth war stories. Sánchez Meertens (2017) calls the attention to look closer to teachers' apparent inaction and forced muteness, and describes these 'communicative silences' as teachers' 'repertoires' admits conflict.

Bellino (2016a) argues that historical silence does not necessarily refer to the eradication of a school subject or content, but also "to the selective erasure of agency, power, and accountability" (p. 186). Researches that explore forward-looking civic projects reveal an increasing de-historicized post-war citizenship education, that while stressing ideas of 'progress' and 'advancement', itsilences the history of the violent past (Bentreovato & Schulze, 2016; Savard, 2016). Literature demonstrates that Ministries of Education and international organizations tend to implement civic education programs as means to enforce a 'culture of peace' (Bellino, 2016b; DeLugan, 2012; Lindo-Fuentes, 1999; Oglesby, 2007b; Paulson, 2006; Sánchez Meertens, 2017) and to re-build the nation by endorsing human rights and democratic citizenship (Davies, 2004b, 2017; Quaynor, 2012; Staeheli & Hammett, 2013; Weldon, 2010a). This policy tendency is also linked to the aspiration of mobilizing postwar societies towards a shared promising future, rather than dealing with the past (Gellman, 2016; Savard, 2016). Under neoliberal logics, educational policies have shifted towards preparing young citizens for the country's participation in the global economy, at the expense of coming to terms with the past (Christie, 2016; Mayorga, 2017a; Reyes, 2013; Weldon, 2010a). Productivity, success, economic growth, and skills for employment, are at the core of educational projects aiming to construct productive and competitive post-war citizens (Paulson, 2010b; Reyes, 2013; Savard, 2016; Staeheli & Hammett, 2013; Weldon, 2010a).

Furthermore, textbook analyzes demonstrate the past is presented in a 'matter-of-fact' fashion with apolitical tones (Ktshaanyan, 2016; Staeheli & Hammett, 2013; Reyes, 2013; Toledo and Gazmuri, 2009). Thus, failing to delve into the historical injustices and its legacies. Moreover, researchers have demonstrated that content is disproportionately focused on the latter stages of the conflict, rather than the conflict itself, and that the focus is mainly on matters related to conflict resolution, tolerance, cooperation, culture of peace, multiculturalism, while overlooking any historical content. This kind of silence produces in younger generations multiple historical disconnections between the past and the present. Staeheli and Hammett's (2013) study indicates that the emphasis on producing post-apartheid 'national cosmopolitans' in South Africa (citizens situated in the world, not only in their country), has turned racial divisions irrelevant to come to understand people's civic life after 1994. This is also supported by Swartz's (2009) findings in a township, where black youth largely did not see any connections between their hardship conditions in the present and the history of apartheid.

Rights discourses also open up the space for another kind of silence: decontextualization of historical memory through narratives that, while using human rights discourses and framework, narrow the account of the past to terms of polarity (victims vs perpetrators) and leave unaddressed asymmetric power relations within conflict (Oglesby, 2007b). This is what Jelin (2003) has coined as the 'two-devils' narrative, and which scholars have demonstrated to exist in

Guatemala (Bellino, 2017), Peru (Paulson, 2010a), and Argentina (Jelin, 2003). In the ‘two-devils’ trope, conflict is portrayed between two distinct yet power-homogenized parties, and civilians trapped without any agency between the ‘two fires’ (Paulson, 2010a). Scholarship outlines various problems that this narrative entails: first, it equates the power that each armed group held while fighting against each other (Jelin, 2003); second, it diffuses or nullifies accountability across the rival parties, because “the message that *everyone* is accountable becomes mistaken for the notion that *no one* can be held accountable” (Bellino, 2016a, p. 183); three, it strips civilians from their agency as political and historical actors while excusing their inaction amidst war (Bellino, 2016a; Jelin, 2003); and four, it casts and limits actors’ roles and identities as either victims or perpetrators, thus, impeding their recognition as active agents or historical protagonists beyond identities acquired due to the harm inflicted or suffered (Oglesby, 2007a, 2007b). The literature reviewed evidences that this trope functions as a type of silence, and therefore, as a pitfall in the aftermath of violence because: 1) no historical motivation or complexity is portrayed, 2) subjects who directly or indirectly participated in the conflict are depoliticized and often limited to essentializing identities ‘poor passive victims’ vs. ‘horrific wrongdoers’; and 3) particular and proportional responsibility is not held for state actors, thus supporting impunity (Kaiser, 2005) or extending the oppression of certain groups in the aftermath of violence (Hale, 2002).

Narratives of resistance

This last type of narrative corresponds to accounts of the past that resist to hegemonic and totalizing versions of the past. Different scholars demonstrate that, albeit governments might seek to establish an official ‘truth’ by means of institutionalized silence or a unique account of the past, its power gets unsettled when citizens evoke different memories, or when they recall the history of the conflict in ways that reject the master narrative. Jackson (2006) says that storytelling can be conceived as “a vital human strategy of sustaining a sense of agency in the face of disempowering circumstances. To reconstitute events in a story is no longer to live those events in passivity, but to actively rework them, both in dialogue with others and with one’s own imagination” (p. 31). Along these lines, Bekerman and Zembylas (2012) propose to strengthen ‘dangerous memories’ in schools, in order to contribute to peacebuilding. According to them, the power of these memories lie on their disruptive character. In their words: “any memory can become dangerous when it resists hegemonic historical narratives. Consequently, dangerous memories are neither simply individual nor collective, but political in the sense that they invoke power relations, revealing the patterns of violence and suffering at work” (p. 197). Their considerations align with Sandra Raggio’s (2017) points regarding a youth’s memory-making program in Argentina, in which students are encouraged to incorporate themselves into a mnemonic project to unearth traditionally silenced stories about the dictatorship. Memory struggles, she claims, are inscribed into a larger struggle for democratizing the post-dictatorship society, so more voices are disclosed and civil society participates in discovering and exposing them.

Barsalou (2007) agrees with Dwyer and Alderman (2008) in asserting that for the last decades, there has been an increasing proliferation of ‘memorial landscapes’, where the past is evoked under non-traditional narrative templates. These authors argue that memorials, as an arena of contestation, have the capacity to serve “as sites for social groups to actively debate the meaning of history and compete for control over the commemorative process as part of larger struggles over identity” (Dwyer & Alderman, 2008, p.166). In his study of the memoryscape in Buenos

Aires, Friedrich (2011) claims that cities become “a participatory agent in the construction of collective memories and counter-memories” (p. 171). Geographers have also concluded that in recent years, the establishment of places of memory has been valuable for social actors and groups that seek to legitimize their identities and histories (Rose-Redwood, Alderman & Azaryahu, 2008). Different studies demonstrate that communities have turned public spaces into ‘palimpsests’ (Huysen, 2003), where new meanings of the past are re-inscribed to sites (Goulding, Walter & Friedrich, 2013; Hite, 2013; Hite & Sturken, in press; Young, 2003). Literature regarding practices of memorialization explain that memorials, museums, public demonstrations, and artistic works have turned into essential spaces and practices to challenge hegemonic narratives.

In their study, Bird and Otanelli (2015) illustrate how the Asaba Memorial project in Nigeria has been erected as a ‘spatial narrative’ (Azaryahu & Foote, 2008) in contestation to the State silencing regarding the civil war. These authors evidence that by incorporating witnesses accounts in this memorial, civil society is reclaiming the silenced history and advocating against impunity. Friederich’s (2011) article reveals that in the *Parque de la Memoria* and the monument to the Victims, citizens do not receive a fix narrative from the park but visual cues that prompt them to construct their own narratives and memories of the Argentinian dictatorship. He declares that the spectator is the one who comes to participate in the elaboration of the narratives by actively engaging with the art pieces of the park.

Other authors have studied urban artistic interventions that also come to disrupt the master account of the past. Lauzon (2015) concludes that Doris Salcedo’s sculptures and installations disclose the capacity of art to unsettle traditional collective ways to access the past, as well as prompting the public to bear witness to the suffering of others. This is what Simon (2014) identifies as a ‘pedagogy of witness’, in which curatorial works are designed to access the difficult past in ways that the public critically engages with the artistic work and it is driven to draw connections to present conditions of social injustice. In analyzing photographic street intervention in Guatemala, Hoelscher (2008) concludes that, photography as a tool of memory and the streetscape a ‘narrative medium’ (Azaryahu & Foote, 2008), open up the possibilities for citizens to contest the State silencing regarding the conflict, and to produce their own memories as means to recalibrate the national collective memory.

Gutman (2017) focuses on ‘memory activism’ as a strategy for peacebuilding. This author identifies that by using counter-memory as an oppositional knowledge, memory activists are able to propose new understandings of the past that hold the potential to project alternative solutions in the present and the future. Similarly, Fridman (2006) studies the case of The Women in Black in Israel and Serbia, and proves that civil society can consolidate alternative mnemonic communities that challenge, enrich, and expand dominant nationalistic narratives. Through the examination of diverse cases, scholars have evidenced that counter-memories challenge the hegemony by setting a divergent narrative representing the views of marginalized groups (Zerubavel, 1995). Jelacic (2017) explores the work of the Outreach Program of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and demonstrates that they work prioritizes individual accounts and first-hand experiences over official narratives. Similarly, Bellino (2014b) identifies that rural and indigenous educators opt to discuss about the armed conflict by using lived experiences and testimonies as pedagogical resources, rather than relying on the omnipresent narrator and a passive voice of textbooks.

Literature indicates that the use of marginal sources to elaborate historical narratives opens up multiple venues to subvert hegemonic narratives. First, it humanizes the conflict, so the past is no longer a succession of events and dates, but historical actors with agency over time (Jelin, 2003). Hence, the narration shifts because pronouns emerge as a substitution for historical agents, rather than mere factual data (Bellino, 2017; Minow, 1998). Second, it assists to hold perpetrators accountable for their crimes, as actors become identifiable in the story (Paulson, 2006). Third, it supports the legitimization of voices of people who were directly involved and who are not traditionally heard (Jelin, 2017; Sierra Becerra, 2016). Fourth, it contributes to challenge the notion of a univocal and essential ‘truth’ (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2012). And fifth, it makes the history of the conflict more relevant and meaningful to younger generations (Sierra Becerra, 2016).

Sánchez Meertens (2017) also advocates for the potential of schools in subverting the ‘dehumanizing’ order amidst war. Although through schooling governments seek to strengthen an official national narrative, schools can also be scenarios of struggle where alternative local voices are cherished. In their analysis of the Colombian case, Sánchez Moncada and Rodríguez Ávila (2009) found that until 2008, the armed conflict did not appear in the national curricula. Although war had existed for decades, it was not until that year that the government promulgated an educational policy to incorporate it in schools. However, the government’s curricular silence and the threatening conditions of living amidst hostilities do not necessarily imply that conflict was not taught or discussed in classrooms. Lizarralde’s (2003) research proves that some teachers defied silence and fear because they were committed to their sociopolitical role as educators. As one teacher conveyed:

“There is trepidation, indeed. There is tension. One is reticent to say certain things or to teach them, but I believe one has to continue with the struggle, so one has to endure, to jump over the dead body, over the person who is laying on the floor. It is jumping that one carries on. I told many of my colleagues that I don’t know how much of our blood has to be spilled as to continue holding this. Because it has happened already. Fifteen days ago a teacher was killed, a colleague. [It happened] because he did not yield, he continued with his work. It hurts, right? But this is what we have to face here. We have to continue doing things and teaching” (p. 20)

Youth’s engagement and responses to historical narratives and civic subjectification

Scholars have demonstrated that youth engage and respond to the historical narratives they encounter in daily life. The ways they do it influence their own processes of citizen-making. As Bellino (2014a) argues, “youth do not simply inherit memories of violence; they actively interpret reconstruct, and place themselves within these narratives” (p. 8). Likewise, authors have contested the idea that children and youth are simply ‘consumers’ of citizenship education (Gordon, 2009; Raggio, 2017). Scholars have called the attention on exploring the ways in which youth understand and develop their civic identities and roles from their own perspectives and experiences, rather than focusing exclusively on adult pre-conceived ideas of civic engagement and participation (Bellino, 2017; Gordon, 2009; Osler & Starkey, 2005; Rubin, 2007; Swartz, 2009; Taft, 2011). The literature reviewed evidences that youth engage with historical narratives and participate in their political subjectification in two main ways: reproducing master narratives and resisting them. Within this last category, I have identified four subcategories of strategic resistance: by deciphering and confronting the silence; publically mastering the official narrative; advocating for alternative narratives; and managing their lives under constraining conditions.

Reproduction

Citizen-making, as a dual process of ‘being made’ and ‘self-making’ (Ong, 1996) demands performative tasks from those who are envisioned as the recipients of the citizenship project. Pykett, Saward and Schaefer (2010) claim that ordinary citizenship acts are preceded by an elite rhetorical framing that sets the normativity to perform citizenship and to assess it. These normative conditions in the construction of the subject facilitate individuals’ recognition (Butler, 2016) as a (good or bad) post-conflict citizen. In this vein, ‘good’ citizenship operates as a framework of performativity that serves to regulate subjects’ civic lives and decision. What is more, the framing of the good citizenship requires a recognition of authority (Pykett, Saward and Schaefer, 2010). When engaging in the reproduction of hegemonic historical narratives, youth are seeking to position themselves in alignment with the master account of the violent past and the expectations for the emerging nation. This organization of experience, therefore, is instructive. It does not focus on establishing who *is* a good citizen, but how to *act* as a good citizen (Goofman in Pykett, Saward and Schaefer, 2010).

Literature evidences that subjects grapple with the performativity of post-conflict citizenship by acting out the ‘good’ citizenship that the government has framed and invoked. Some authors have identified that youth reproduce the master narrative when the State’s efforts for reconciliation are rooted in coercive forces to create a collective identity and sense of belonging (Buckley-Zistel, 2006) that suppress and condemns any alternative vision to it (King, 2013; Freedman et al., 2008; Sommers, 2002). This is the case, for instance, of Rwanda and Yemen, where scholars have recognized that the unity trope goes hand in hand with an increasing authoritarianism (King, 2013; Russell and Quaynor, 2017; Young, 2010). In her research, Bentrovato (2016, 2017) found that young people’s accounts of the past oscillated between different narratives but they all had in common features of simplism and evasion. For instance, some students reproduced a ‘Rwandanised’ account of 1994 by saying: “Rwandans have killed the other Rwandans, and a little bit later the other Rwandans stopped the killings” (Bentrovato, 2016, p. 234). Others replicated behaviors that the government has sought to install, such as the externalization of blame, nationalization of suffering, and the erasure of ethnic labels when talking about the past and the present.

Similarly, Buckley-Zistel (2006) found that genocide survivors’ decisions, such as forgiving perpetrators, are highly determined by people’s fear for the consequences of not conforming with the government. Obedience, in this case, is what the performativity of a ‘good’ post-conflict citizenship encompasses by means of coercion. When youth disclose discomfort and caution on matters related to the past, and when they actively evade and reject conversations –and even more confrontations– that delve into ethnicity and accountability, they do so because they have adopted the historical ‘truth’ transmitted as ‘mass (re)education’ (Bentrovato, 2017) and coercively reinforced through penalization. Youth’s mastery of the official discourse evidences that they have learned that the ‘good’ citizen behaves under the civic dispositions of ethnic silencing. Similar findings are reported in Russell and Quaynor’s (2017) exploration of students’ conceptions of good citizenship. Many of the students’ responses aligned with textbooks and curricula content that stress obedience, patriotism, and loyal citizenship, as mirrored in a student’s words: “as a good patriot you have to obey the law of the country to be respectful” (p. 259).

In context of identity-based conflicts, studies report that historical narratives tied to essentialized identities continue to be reproduced by children and youth, who are continually encouraged at

home, in their communities, and at school to maintaining them. Jelacic (2017) illustrates a generalized and multi-level (from Ministries of Education to teachers in classrooms) aversion to narratives of the conflict that are not along the lines of ethnic hatred. Within an institutionalized ethno-nationalism, youth continue nurturing undisputable competing memories and nationalistic narratives that perpetuate their identities as ‘a nation of perpetrators’ vs. ‘a nation of victims’ (Freedman et al., 2004; Papadakis, 2008). Students incorporate master narratives into their lives and demonstrate them by wearing nationalistic t-shirts (Jelacic, 2017), expressing their fears of losing their national identity if there is an integration educational approach (Freedman et al., 2004), or threatening, insulting and shouting nationalistic chants in public spaces (Fridman, 2006). As ethno-identities are conceived as monolithic units, generations are socialized to cultivate and reproduce the “ineffable bonds of blood and history” (Gagnon in Nagle, 2016). In fact, Fridman (2006) states that those who do not align themselves to the ‘appropriate’ nationalist narrative, nor they replicate it, are regarded and condemned as ‘traitors’ of the nation.

Barton and McCully (2010) explore the case of Northern Ireland and find that youth experience complex processes of meaning-making of the conflict by facing openly opposing historical accounts in memorials, marches, demonstrations, public art, and graffiti. Moreover, their school experience rooted in an evidenced-based history education contributes to enlarge their perspectives about the past. Their findings demonstrate that even though students report to examine competing accounts in their families, communities, and the public sphere, they are unwilling to abandon the political commitments of their families and communities. Youth believe that a multi-perspective historical approach helps them to be more ‘informed’, but they rarely move away from their entrenched identity-based perspectives of the conflict. As one student said: “it might not have changed our view, but we know a lot more information about it” (p.169).

Another way of reproduction identified in the literature is when subjects engage with deliberate silencing and omissions regarding the past. This action is related to two different but related logics: the first one is associated with the fear of reigniting conflict or ‘re-opening wounds’, while the second one has to do with discourses of progress. In either cases, forgetting or pretending to forget is not accidental, but an active desire to ignore difficult knowledges of the past that shape people’s subjectivity through pedagogies that encourage them to know something while to not know other things (Segall, 2014). In the first case, Buckley-Zistel (2006) claims that ‘chosen amnesia’ occurs as a deliberate coping mechanism of people in regards to difficult pasts, so they opt to omit or (pretend to) forget in order to continue with their lives. As a man expressed: “people never talk about the past because it brings back bad memories and problems. We pretend it does not exist” (p. 141). The conflict turns into an ‘open secret’ (Cohen, 2001) uncomfortably known by all. During her field work, people usually conveyed to Michelle Bellino (2014b) “we don’t talk about that [the conflict] here” (p. 177). Their rationale was linked to the aspiration of avoiding the conflict to re-emerge, so adults aimed for students to perpetuate the omission. Scholars have also asserted that after authoritarian regimes, silence stills being reproduced because people have internalized the devices of terror (Kaiser, 2005; Martinez Cabrera, 2102), and the dread of speaking up is transmitted to younger generations as ‘learned silences’ (Trinidad, 2004).

In the second case, literature illustrates that engaging with deliberate silencing is related to forward-looking approaches that are coupled with state-supported lack of accountability and/or neoliberal governance. Rubin (2016) reported that some mestizo students in Guatemala believe

that in order to collectively ‘move on’ as a post-conflict society, the conflict should be relegated to the remote past, and not to talk about it anymore. Swartz (2009) found that the majority of township young men shared a student’s perspective regarding the Apartheid: “I don’t want to live my life in the past” (p.130). So they opt to work hard –or engage in crime–to achieve socioeconomic mobility. Similarly, Savard (2016) and Gellman (2015) found prevailing master narratives of progression in Northern Uganda and Sierra Leone that demands two things from the citizenry: on the one hand, citizens need “to put the past behind” (p. 169) as to evolve, and on the other hand, national development equates economic development, thus, productive citizens cannot be ‘stuck in the past’. Youth reproduce historical silencing and engage with this citizenship framing by turning into productive workers. In these cases, younger generations are constantly reminded to omit delving into the past for the sake of a prosperous future that will be achieved if they are hard workers (Russell and Quaynor, 2017; Sommers, 2011; Staeheli & Hammett, 2013). One of the effects of this kind of historical engagement on the post-conflict subjectivity, is that youth indeed is not ‘stuck in the past’ but ‘stuck in the present’. And this means, being stuck in hampering socioeconomic conditions that condemn them to a state of wretchedness (Honwana, 2012), poverty, crime, unemployment, and a feeling of being trapped in a life of looming failure (Sommers, 2002). By overlooking or silencing the past, structural injustice is decontextualized. While their current economic situation has been shaped by the structural inequalities that lead to war, and by the damaging consequences of the conflict itself, youth come to understand that conditions of impoverishment are just simply the way they are, and that is their responsibility to learn to navigate through them or to overcome them.

Swartz’s (2009) findings point that the majority of the black youth that she interviewed in a township thought they were the only ones responsible of achieving work and socioeconomic goals. If they ‘fail’, they blame no one by themselves: “No one I can blame. Maybe being poor I can blame being poor... but *I will try my best*” (p.99, my emphasis). For them, apartheid and its legacies are not necessarily connected to their present conditions, nor to their socioeconomic ‘failure’ or ‘success’. As one student mentioned: “Apartheid hasn’t affected my life. I live on a freedom world now. I will have a house like yours *if I work hard*” (p. 129, my emphasis). These findings are related to what Raggio (2017) outlines as an ‘ideological effect’ of historical narratives that disconnect the past from the present. She argues that by encouraging youth people to think that the worst is ‘behind’ or over, and that the present is separate from such awful past, the current social order and conditions of inequality and injustice are legitimized.

Strategic Resistance

In his study of the Argentinean historical consciousness after the dictatorship, Friedrich (2014) takes historical narratives as forms of ‘discursive practices’ related to the nation, that in their establishment and deployment unfold dynamics of power. Since “there are no relations of power without resistance” (Foucault, 1980, p. 142), the narration of the past implies explicit principles of ordering and tacit regulations that produce tensions in the post-conflict subjectification. As Friedrich (2014), Raggio (2017) and Bellino (2017) argue, post- conflict citizens are both actors and projects concerning the nation. Literature evidences that as active participants of their subjectification, youth maneuver their civic roles, identities, and expectations, as they face different situations, institutions, and actors that demand or prompt them to civically think and behave in various ways (Barton, 2010, 2015; Barton and McCully, 2005; Bellino, 2014b, 2015; Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Gordon, 2009; ; Honwana, 2011, 2012; Jelacic, 2017; Mayorga, 2017b, 2018; Raggio, 2017; Rubin, 2007, 2016; Russell & Quaynor, 2017; Sommers, 2002; Swartz,

2009; Taft, 2006, 2011). From this body of literature, I have identified four possible ways in which youth strategically resist to master narratives: by deciphering and confronting silence, publically mastering the official narrative, advocating for alternative narratives, and managing their lives under constraining conditions.

As silence speaks very loud, omissions also ignites youth's perplexity, interest, and curiosity to know more about the untold and to draw explanations for the silencing. Scholars have demonstrated that young people actively seek for ways to unearth stories, to contrast them, and to construct their own meanings and interpretations out of them (Bellino, 2016a; Bentrovato, 2016; Kaiser, 2005; Rubin, 2016; Taylor, 2003). Barton and McCully (2010) indicate that even when curricular silence is prevalent, young people encounter historical narratives in informal settings that assist them in seeking out the information that is not presented in schools. Likewise, when silence happens at the family level, youth also search for versions and interpretations of the past in schools by asking teachers questions that their parents avoided (Bellino, 2014b). Moreover, when the historical silencing is so predominant and uncomfortable, students envision themselves possibilities to address it. For instance, Rwandan students proposed to hire foreigner teachers to talk about the genocide because they are less emotionally involved than the locals (Bentrovato, 2016). What is worth remarking from this example is that youth challenge the institutional silence by recognizing the importance of dismantling it and discussing about the past.

But a silenced past is not always easy to decipher or to interpret by younger generations. The fact that the conflict veiled or presented in oversimplified versions, obscures young people's understandings of what happened and the relations of it with their current lives (Bellino, 2015; Rubin, 2016; Sommers, 2002; Staeheli & Hammett, 2013; Swartz, 2009). In her exploration in Burundi, Bentrovato (2016) found that in the absence of an official narrative or curricular reforms to address the conflict, and within competing mnemonic communities that openly support their own vision of the past, young people lack clarity on past atrocities and uncertainty in terms of accountability: "there were wars and some called ethnic war and others genocide, but to this day we don't know what it really was", "everyone in this country has his own version that defends his side (...) [but] which one is the true one?" (pp. 235-236). Students' reported confusion illustrates the puzzling situation in which post-generations are immersed when deliberate and state-supported omissions take place. The status of 'knowledge' and 'truth' about events are not wholly clear, so young people know and do not know at the same time (Cohen, 2001). As Bentrovato (2016) claims in her article, young generations are left by their own navigating and selecting from the biased accounts that circulate in their homes and their communities. This at the same time has negative repercussions on truth-seeking efforts and in holding perpetrators accountable, while sending the message to youth that the 'culture of impunity' (Kaiser, 2005) is the norm. Later, I will present how literature explains the ways in which the pervasiveness of impunity and social injustice leads youth to build their own moral codes (Swartz, 2009), civic understandings and practices, and their own system of justice (Bellino, 2015, 2017; Swartz, 2009).

In rural indigenous communities in Guatemala, Michelle Bellino (2016a, 2016b) found that younger generations challenge the State's silence by engaging in informal activities at school, where they discuss the conflict, its legacies, and the power relations within it. Similarly, Sierra Becerra's (2016) article reveals that the MUPI museum's commitment to use *testimonios* and Freire's popular pedagogy, has contributed to engage marginalized Salvadorian rural and

indigenous populations in historical memory works regarding the Civil War. Ewick and Silbey (1995) claim that social marginality of the narrator is considered as one of the conditions that may generate counterhegemonic narratives. Indeed, this is the case of indigenous populations that have survived state repression, and for whom learning about the conflict through oral history and family narratives is the struggle itself. Bellino (2016b) identifies that indigenous students use these counternarratives to position themselves as agents of the postwar, advocating for the government's responsibility in protecting indigenous citizens from the recurrence of another genocide: "we can see that all of this could happen again with a military government ... we need to look for what the [Peace] Accords mean and to put them into practice, and to demand from our government that we don't fall again" (p. 173).

Authors also claim the existence of unofficial histories that privately challenge the hegemonic one (Bentrovato, 2017; Freedman et al., 2008; Jelin, 2003). Bentrovato (2017) found that not all Rwandan students are compliant of the government's narrative. Rather, young people circumvent discussions about ethnicity and the genocide and publically reproduce the State 'Rwandanised' version of the conflict, but hold 'clandestine' and 'illicit' counternarratives. This demonstrates that youth simultaneously learn to master the government's tale, to assess the risks of voicing out alternative stories (what to share, where to share it, and with whom), and to maintain in the private sphere family testimonies and accounts of the tragedy.

Fridman (2006, 2015) illustrates how civil society has consolidated alternative mnemonic communities in Israel and Serbia, that challenge, enrich, and expand the dominant nationalistic collective memory. In using the slogans 'not in my name' and 'too young to remember, determined not to forget', first and second generation of Serbian activists have resisted to narratives of ethnic-victimhood. Her study also proves that youth actively participate in countermemory practices such as the commemoration of Srebrenica genocide at the very heart of Belgrade, or the development of alternative calendars for counterhegemonic commemorations. Zerubavel (1995) precisely argues that by setting a divergent narrative representing the views of marginalized groups, countermemories challenges hegemony.

Gutman's (2015) article also demonstrates that Jewish-Israeli youth participating in the *Zochrot* movement challenges the Zionist master narrative by promoting an 'oppositional knowledge' (Coy et al., in Gutman, 2015). These activists produce 'new' information on the war and offer alternative shared narratives for envisioning reconciliation. Their 'transformative claims' happen during an active conflict, for which they aim to raise awareness, disseminate an alternative –thus, subversive– narrative of the past, and to kindle sociopolitical change. Awareness raising and counternarrative diffusion are also two findings of Diana Taylor's (2003) exploration on youth activism in Argentina. Through public demonstrations (*escraches*) youth enact a political struggle against State violence; they make visible the committed crimes, the perpetrators, and the lasting collective trauma. Taylor claims that by marking the space " 'you are here' –five hundred meters from a concertation camp" (p.165), young adults are civic agents advocating for institutional justice and providing an alternative map of Argentina's sociohistorical space.

Restrepo Parra (2007) analysis of an antimilitary youth network in Medellín, Colombia, sheds light on the importance of conscientious objectors as political actors promoting anti-violence perspectives among the citizenry. He finds that their civil disobedience not only prompts an alternative non-belligerent civic engagement, but also it contests the perception of young males as 'dangerous' and challenges the taken-for-granted identity of them as criminals and gang members. Differently, Bellino (2015) reports that postwar Guatemalan youth opt to abstain from

activism and social movements because these have been openly criminalized. Her research shows that this kind of civic engagement has been discredited through discourses that negatively frame activism and associate it with delinquency, subversion, and terrorism. Therefore, 'strategic withdrawal', as she coins it, is not a manifestation of apathy, but youth's mechanism to cope with historical injustice, criminalization of civic participation, and current increased violence and instability. Young people conceive 'doing nothing' as an active choice and legitimate response to the adverse situations in which they live.

John Nagle (2016) has also studied the potential of social movements in building peace through counterhegemonic narratives. His explorations in Belfast and Beirut shed light on the multiple venues in which activists contribute to peacebuilding. First, he demonstrates how non-sectarian movements have 'de-alienated' both the urban space and people's historical memory. They actively resist to the government's 'urban regeneration', which wipes cities clean from any traces of the past. Second, he reveals how LGBT movements are exemplar in upholding diversity, equality, and minorities' rights, including ethno-national minorities. Further, these movements dismantle the hegemonic masculinity (homophobic and misogynist) that is regulated by the nationalist imaginary and institutions through an advocacy work for demilitarized and nonviolent identities for young men. Third, he also identifies feminist movements as key agents for peacebuilding. Indeed, the equality agenda goes hand in hand with ensuring the provision of ethnic minority rights. Additionally, their work also contributes to undue nationalist discourses and practices on gender essentialism – men as warlords and women as natural peacemakers.

The last body of literature references to youth managing their lives under constraining conditions. Researchers have demonstrated that young adults while encountering historical narratives, actively shape themselves as civic actors immersed in circumstances of poverty, violence, and injustice. In this process they not only resist to master narratives of the past, but also to the master narrative of post-conflict citizenship. Rubin (2016) shows how Guatemalan young adults come to form themselves "bit by bit" (p.655), as they maneuver their lives within historical silence and postconflict promises and inconsistencies. Along these lines, Bellino (2015, 2017) also found that the civic development of the postwar generation is at the crossroads of institutionalized silencing and scenarios of growing violence. Both authors agree that youth's civic roles and orientations are directly related to both the social and political congruities and inconsistencies they encounter in every-day life experiences. Bellino (2015) reveals that youth believe that Human Rights are 'death' in Guatemala, precisely because such emblem of the post-conflict never became real in their marginalized communities. Living under these unfulfilled promises, young adults have learned to develop their own understandings of past and present injustice, and to build their own civic contract, regardless the master guidelines from the government and NGOs.

Frames of meaning come to constitute the 'figured worlds' (Holland and Lave in Mayorga, 2018) in which youth actively participate. Mayorga (2018) explored Chilean youth activism and found that students come to build a 'Student Democracy' as they engage in contentious local practices of democratic participation. Their activism became meaningful as they navigate the figured world that was constantly shaping and being shaped. Similarly, Taft and Gordon (2013) found that young activists in the United States hold their own understandings of democracy that oppose the one presented in youth councils. The authors argue that this 'dissident knowledge' assist them in elaborating their own definition of democracy that is not restricted to having a voice, but also to authority, impact, and collective concerns.

Swartz's (2009) work explores the morality of South African Township youth. Her findings illustrate that young adults elaborate their own understandings of right and wrong related to money, sex, drugs, crime, while living under a context of hardship that drives them not to follow a conventional morality, nor to align with government's post-apartheid civic expectations, but to build their own moral codes and behaviors. The *ikasi* way corresponds to a local moral order that emerge as youth face circumstances of increasing violence and socioeconomic adversity on a daily base. Young adults come to delineate a hierarchy regarding types of crime and wrongness, and they position themselves and others within it – what types of crime are acceptable, when are these acceptable, and which ones are 'worse' than others. Swartz argues that "township youth self-authored morality is focused on immediate, personal, and local concerns rather than future-oriented, social, or global issues" (p. 60). These findings contrast the government's post-apartheid civic vision, for which youth should be cosmopolitan citizens aligned with human rights respect (Staeheli & Hammett, 2013). In this township, youth enact citizenship in ways that diverge from the heralded values of democracy and post-conflict.

This is also supported in Hammett and Staeheli's (2011) examination of respect as a moral value, a communal value, and a daily practice. Their findings demonstrate that although respect is recognized as a key feature of good citizenship and responsible citizenship, contradictions remain between how it is mobilized in post-apartheid discourses and how it is actually set in practice. Literature illustrates that respect, obedience, and justice are framed and enacted differently in post-conflict marginalized context than what governments have outlined. Both Swartz (2009) and Bellino (2017) found that street justice or vigilantism is a common and acceptable practice. To fill the gap between the weak State, the failing promises of postwar, and the increasing crime, young citizens reconstitute the 'common good' and remake justice by crafting their *own* justice, which usually requires the use of more violence to enforce it. In these instances, post-conflict youth have to operate outside the law to take care of themselves in the absence of the state security that guarantees them the fulfillment of basic rights (Bellino, 2015). Gellman (2015) also found that post-war Salvadorian youth operate 'in a currency of fear', so young adults opt to make a new kind of social contract and to join gangs in seeking for their own economic and physical survival. This can be considered as youth's 'choiceless decision' (Begoña Aretxaga in Sommers, 2002) under extreme times in the post-conflict. These findings are related to youth's perceptions regarding the constraining settings in which they are immersed. Studies report that in Central America, a region where the conflicting past has not been fully addressed and the effects of authoritarianism still remain, the most remarkable features of these post-war countries are high levels of organized crime, homicides, drug trafficking, public lynching, youth gangs, and systematic violence against street children and youth by state-sponsored death squads (Cruz, 2011).

In a large scale study (Ramos, 2012), young Salvadorians reported that the three main social issues for them were poverty, insecurity and violence, and lack of job opportunities. In regards to security matters, 91.7% of them agreed that establishing 'stronger laws and punishments' or 'repression acts' were the solution to reduce crime, since impunity and injustice were prevailing in their communities. However, the adverse effects of these *mano dura* (tough hand) policies have been prison overcrowding, a significant rise in homicides, and the expansion of police power at the expense of civil rights (Cruz, 2011). It is in those hostile contexts where youth transgress the categories of civic and criminal actions (Bellino, 2015), since differentiating

them turns slippery as the traditional judicial system fails them, as well as the optimistic promises of the post-war.

The aforementioned studies demonstrate that youth's own sense of civic efficacy and security, their interpretations of historical injustice and human rights, and the civic messages they receive from the government, the school, their families and communities, shape their positioning and conducts as civic actors. These findings are also related to Taft's (2011) and Gordon's (2009) claims of youth as present political actors, rather than subjects 'in the training' for later civic participation as adults. As Mayorga (2017b) points out, the temporal dimension of citizenship urges us not only to consider the question 'what kind of citizen?' but also, 'when kind of citizen?'. This is, to contemplate the temporal displacements of citizenship to which youth are subjected and how they respond and interact with such temporal displacements that projects them only as active members in future times. With their respective researches on female young activist across the Americas (Taft, 2011) and young activists in the United States (Gordon, 2009), these authors demonstrate that to fight inequality and to combat injustice, youth draw on their contexts and their personal experiences to elaborate a deliberate political action with real effects on reconfiguring present conditions.

Literature illustrates that post-conflict youth, as subjects under the government's authority and as authors of their own actions (Cruikshank in Friedrich, 2014), pilot their lives between 'tactical' and 'strategic' agency (Honwana, 2011). Honwana proposes that in the first case, agency is a coping strategy for those who 'have no power base' and who have very constrained available choices, but still make the effort to look for strategies that help them to carve out opportunities for improvement or survival. In the second case, strategic agency lies on subject's basis of power or mastery of the larger picture. They also assess short and long term consequences of their actions, and balance the risks and benefits of engaging in certain groups or activities.

Sommers (2002) argues that most Rwandan youth living in poverty enact a form of combination of both. Although many have to live within narrow socioeconomic parameters that force them to migrate or to face adulthood demands (such as building a house and getting married), they also resist to government expectations and directives to join associations, avoid working in the informal sector, build houses exclusively in allowed sectors, and so on. Under scarce living conditions, and at the heart of neoliberal governances that urge young people for social mobility and strategies for survival, post-war youth in Burundi (Sommers, 2011), refugee youth in Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan (Winthrop & Kirk, 2008) and Uganda (Dryden-Peterson, 2011) perceive education as the way they can make it in life. For their part, indigenous Guatemalans believe that education might not change their socioeconomic conditions, but history education is the way to prevent them from 'falling' again (Bellino, 2016b). These positive outlooks on education and the future differ from the ones of their counterparts in Rwanda (Sommers, 2011), who largely considered that one has to "accept one's fate" (p.5) and education is not going to improve it. Or a sense of marginalization and un-entitlement to access quality education among black South African youth (Hammet, 2008). Hopeless feelings emerge as youth experience hardship and face social prospects that seem foreign and inapplicable to their contexts. As one student noted in Guatemala, "What options do *people like us* have? (Bellino, 2017, p. 118, my emphasis). This question does not only reveal citizens' resignation amidst adversity, but citizens' understandings of themselves as a 'kind' of subject in the margins – a kind of post-conflict citizen for whom the promises of post-conflict still remain very remote.

Conclusions

The literature reviewed identifies a normative post-conflict citizen that is envisioned and shaped as a subject that integrates attitudes, behaviors, skills and identities that constitute the 'new normality'. Authors have claimed that in the aftermath of violence and authoritarianism, it is expected that the citizenry aligns with democratic values, Human Rights respect, the rule of law, matters of multiculturalism, diversity and tolerance, and an open rejection to armed aggressions. Different studies evidence that governments and international organizations frame the post-conflict generations as the architects of the presumed better future. Under neoliberal logics, it is expected that youth take responsibility of their own lives, well-being, and of the prosperity of the nation. Post-conflict generations become promising future citizens and subjects 'at-risk' that need to be rescued and re-oriented civically and morally. In the process of post-conflict subjectification, researchers have identified the key role of historical narratives in providing understandings for the present and to draw expectations for the future.

Scholars argue that these historical narratives are not mere stories, but memory frameworks that sustain political agendas in the construction of the post-conflict citizenry. The literature review evidences different types of historical narratives that circulate in post-conflict societies, including narratives of nationhood, narratives of silence, and narratives of resistance. Each of them represent a way of conceiving the recovery and reconstruction, as well as the roles of citizenry in these processes. Authors have also identified the key role of education in establishing master narratives about the violent past and in fostering a normative post-conflict citizenship. Different studies reveal that younger generations also encounter counterhegemonic narratives in their daily lives. Youth engage with these different accounts in diverse ways that assist them in building their own versions of the past and to shape themselves in transitional times. They are, indeed, actors and projects of the post-conflict.

Literature focusing on youth during and after crisis shows that young citizens pilot their lives within the possibilities and inconsistencies of a difficult past, a forward-looking postwar discourse, and a fragile and an increasingly violent reality. They construct and negotiate their own identities and roles in relation to the non-violent and democratic citizenship endeavor that is projected to them. This literature review brings forth the need to further explore how young people develop as civic actors in constant dialogue or in struggle with the historical and civic narratives they encounter. As some authors have pointed out, youth's civic decisions draw from different sources including, their own sense of civic efficacy, interpretations of historical injustice, morality, and the civic messages they receive from teachers, families, and communities. They adopt, adapt, or content the multiple narratives they face as to make meaning of what the post-era demands from them.

There are some gaps in the literature, particularly in regards to the Colombian context. First, although there are researches related to peace education efforts developed in Colombia (Chaux, 2007, 2009; Gomez-Suarez, 2017; Vega & Bajaj, 2016) there is little to no research regarding the 'post-conflict' citizenship formation in the political or educational discourses. Even though Transitional Justice mechanisms and programs have already started to be developed and implemented in Colombia, there is virtually no literature discussing the overlap of TJ measures with education. As Bellino, Paulson & Anderson Worden (2017) have called the attention, scholarship in Colombia and other countries still continue analyzing these two areas in isolation, rather than taking educations as a mechanism for advancing in TJ goals.

Second, although it can be argued that Colombia is not a post-conflict country yet, the government has introduced two major educational initiatives in seeking to promote peacebuilding: *Competencias Ciudadanas* (Citizenship Competencies) in 2004, and *Cátedra de Paz* (Peace Lecture) in 2015. However, there is scarce literature on students' perspectives regarding these programs, nor their understandings or viewpoints about the Peace Process. The one that I found (Vélez, 2017) is limited to Bogotá and it seeks to assess psychological processes, rather than civic subjectification. While scholars have delved into the possibilities and challenges of Peace Education programs in Colombia to strengthen non-violent behaviors, mutual coexistence, and critical perspectives regarding peace, youths' perceptions and civic participation have been largely overlooked.

Third, there is few research exploring how Colombian youth engage with narratives about the conflict and how they actively partake in producing them. Although memory work has remarkably enhanced over the last years, there is a deficit in scholarship analyzing the encounters that younger generations have with narratives of the conflict, and their participation not only as recipients of memories but as co-constructors of them. Ariel Sánchez Merteens' (2017) recent publication "Knowledges about war" is a first approximation to analyze Colombian youth's understandings about the armed conflict by drawing connections between mnemonics and epistemology. His findings are significant for future research because they point to a multiplicity of definitions and conceptions that are mediated by different factors including localized experiences and mass media. Very importantly, he demonstrates that there is no hegemonic, monolithic, or static discourse about the armed conflict among students, teachers, and principals. If that is the case, then what are the possibilities that this distinction might offer for civic engagement and peacebuilding?

Finally, given the liminal sociopolitical stage of Colombia –not in war yet in peace– manifestations of violence still active across the country (and even growing in some cases, such as systematic violence against social leaders). Nonetheless, there is little to none studies examining how Colombian youth come to understand past and the present conditions, and how they develop as civic actors within these adverse environments of increasing crime and insecurity. Moreover, comparative analyses are pressing, given the fact that exposure to (types of) violence has been remarkably diverse across regions and socioeconomic groups (Chaux, 2009; Gómez-Suárez, 2017; Sánchez Merteens, 2017; Vélez, 2017). These features related to the development of the Colombian armed conflict have an important impact on the 'post-conflict' because remembering the past seems to be inscribed in 'regional hegemonic memory frames', rather than a national one (Sánchez Merteens, 2017). Hence, exploring memories and historical narratives in their complexity and diversity –particularly, across social classes and geographies– can contribute to support the idea that a *single* peace cannot and will not address *multiple* conflicts that have crystalized over the decades in Colombia. Furthermore, these explorations could take us to evidence, what has been already identified in other countries, a disconnection between what young people are experiencing in their contextual daily lives, and what the government and multiple local and international organizations are expecting from and envisioning for them in the very heralded 'post-conflict' times.

Learning about these under-researched areas can better inform educators, policy makers, scholars, and organizations about more comprehensive and critical perspectives on citizenship formation and civic participation during and after mass violence. This, at the same time, can lead to reformulate educational programs that are limited to strengthening present peace skills at the

expense of facing the conflicting past. Moreover, paying attention to what youth's encounters and experiences with history and civics, as well as the ways in which they develop as active civic actors, open up the possibilities for more effective approaches to make peacebuilding efforts relevant for younger generations and responsive to their needs, interests, and challenges. Lastly, looking at the relations between historical narratives and post-conflict citizenship subjectification in Colombia can assist us in identifying the possible opportunities and obstacles in making peace sustainable and enduring. More than the mere transmission of narratives about the conflict, what is at stake is the consolidation of moral and civic lessons that prevent or doom Colombia to relapsing to war or to altered versions of the conflict.

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