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"The Plant Growing Through a Crack in the Asphalt" The Problem of History and Subject in Citizenship Discourses: Dialogues with the Comprehension of Emerging Citizenships in the Narratives of University Students in Bogota

Ana Catalina Rodríguez Moreno, CED[1]
Israel Arturo Orrego Echeverría, CED[2]

Abstract: *This paper[3] aims to account for some of the tensions and challenges emerging from the comprehension of the notion of citizenship when put into dialogue with the conceptions held by different actors and discursive sources from the Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios (UNIMINUTO, S.P.), a university in the city of Bogota. In this general context, the article identifies some criticisms and discussions regarding the role of history and the place of subjectivity in the traditional discourses of citizenship that emerge from the narratives of a group of students from this university.*

Keywords: *Citizenship, Narratives, Emerging Citizenship, History, Subject.*

1. Introduction

An investigation of the comprehension of a category such as "citizenship" will always run the risk of finding itself overwhelmed by the great amount of bibliographic, theoretical and historical material available, as well as by the specific contexts in which the experience of citizenship takes place. Therefore, such a task involves a delimitation of the theoretical and philosophical fields from which the problem of citizenship will be approached, just as any other research work would do, but this delimitation also responds to the need to analyze the ways in which subjects from particular backgrounds and vital experiences enunciate, transform, and transgress traditional comprehensions of "citizenship".

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[1] MA in Cultural Studies from Pontificia Universidad Javeriana; Professional degree in Political Sciences and Government from Universidad del Rosario. Belongs to the research group "Centro de Educación para el Desarrollo" (COL0069859), at CED, UNIMINUTO, S.P. email: ana.rodriguez@uniminuto.edu

[2] PhD in Philosophy, MA in Latin American Philosophy, BA in Education and Political Culture, philosopher with a Licentiate in Theological Sciences; also studied Instrumental Music (Opera) at the National Conservatory of Colombia. Belongs to the research group "Centro de Educación para el Desarrollo" (COL0069859), at CED, UNIMINUTO, S.P. email: iorrego@uniminuto.edu

[3] This paper is the part of the results of the first phase of the investigation entitled *Citizenship, Democracy and Development: Critical Contributions of Education for Development in a Latin American Perspective (EpDL, initials in Spanish), for the Construction of Critical-Transformational Citizenships*. The project has been financed by the UNIMINUTO S.P. Research Department (No. CSP3-15-031).

In this sense, the objective of this paper is to reveal the problems, lack of information and absences of the traditional discourses on citizenship, using the narratives of university students as a source. To do so, we will first present the wide range of political and theoretical meanings and comprehensions present in some of the Western paradigms in relation to the idea of citizenship. Their shared narrative concerning Greek and Latin historical origins will be emphasized, as well as their tendency towards abstract and judicial comprehensions of the citizen. In the next section, we will explain the methodology of the research conducted with university students in the city of Bogota. In the third part, in which we discuss the results of the research, we will present two metaphors from the students' photo-narratives to pose some questions about the ways citizenship has been thought of in historical terms, as a civilizational discourse, and in subjective terms, as an abstraction of the real-corporal subject.

2. State of the Art

2.1. Theoretical approaches to the problems of citizenship

According to some perspectives, the idea of citizenship seems to make reference to a certain political and emancipatory potential that represents an advance in human development (Marshall, 1998; Dierckxsens, 1998; Ovejero, 2006). From another perspective, it is simply an unfinished notion, an ongoing process of construction of meaning depending on contexts, time, and subjects (Horrach, 2009; Cortina, 2000). From a critical perspective, it is a Eurocentric, Enlightenment construction of politics within the framework of a civilizational discourse (Dussel, 2007; Castro-Gómez, 2011) that assumes the abstraction of the concrete-corporal, real-living political subject (Hinkelammert, 1977, 2000; Fernández, 2005; Gallegos, 2011).

In any case, there seems to be a more or less explicit agreement in academic literature about the linear historical development of this category, whose origin is usually situated in the Greek political ontology, the experience of the Roman Republic, Venetian Republicanism, monarchical absolutisms, territorial states, liberal republicanism and the subsequent development of citizenship rights within the framework of European revolutions, and the current discussion of differentiated, multicultural and pluricultural citizenship rights since the emergence of the postcolonial states (Marshall, 1998; Heater, 2004; Andrenacci, 2003; Kymlicka, 2003; Young, 1996).

In theoretical terms, this historical development is represented within a framework of problems in which traditional comprehensions of citizenship seem to be related or articulated in some manner. They are usually conceived of in binary terms and in many cases, if not in direct contradiction, they present tensions with concrete political practice, for example: tensions between the notions of equality-liberty, autonomy-law, institution-chaos, state-subject, rights-duties, democracy-tyranny, and justice-chaos. This tense binarism and its possible reconciliations could be seen in the theoretical efforts within liberal republican comprehensions, or in what it has been referred to as "Kantian republicanism" (Habermas y Rawls, 1998). These theoretical comprehensions draw attention to the active and rational participation of the individual in the process of the constitution of citizenship rights and virtues, as well as in the abstract values of "equality" and "justice". They seek to articulate Aristotle's republican tradition and Kant´s liberal social contract into a "new" framework of rational discursive construction (Habermas, 1998). Also, the proposals regarding cosmopolitanism and universal citizenship, inspired by Stoicism and Kant's universal ethical principles, are part of the inferred academic rhetoric wherein citizenship is thought of in relation to a nostalgic past, be it Greek, Stoic, Roman, European, Kant´s Enlightenment ideas, etc. (Nussbaum, 1997, 1999; Cortina, 2000).

2.1.1. Paradigms of Citizenship

All these different perspectives could be grouped into a number of *paradigms* of citizenship, each of which features a central element such as a theoretical approach or an emphasis on a political, ethical or moral value, as well as articulations of power relations between subjects and institutions (the state). In every case, each paradigm shares the same discursive framework in relation to the historical origin of citizenship and the comprehension of the citizen as an abstract individual. Such a set of articulations constitutes the ontological node, in which political rationality joins with the discourse of citizenship and around which the classical problems of the ideas of justice, identity, acknowledgement, participation, differentiation, equality and liberty seem to gravitate.

First paradigm: this is represented by republican ideals, whose foundational myths lie in Greek political ontology, particularly in the comprehension of Aristotle's *Politics* and the Roman politics praxis of *res publica* (public affairs). In republicanism, *res publica* (the "state", the apparatus of power) is the essential political agent from which the parts that compose society (artisans, military, governors), as collectivized individuals, derive their functions according to their "natural" abilities. On the other hand, through institutions and the compliance of the law, the republic must guarantee liberties, social order and the stability of the legitimated political apparatus by means of a social contract as an act of individual and rational participation that constitutes the political dynamic. The modern republicanism of the 20th century is an attempt to mediate the tensions between liberal and republican ideals, and therefore understands liberty as the non-interference of the state in private affairs (negative liberty) and as the ability of the individual to act collectively with others. Therefore, this paradigm of citizenship draws attention to civic virtues and active participation as the idealization of the citizen, as long as she is attentive to the *res publica* (public affairs) and her emotional bonds with political institutions and the common historical project (Habermas y Rawls, 1998).

Second Paradigm: the liberal paradigm has its origin in the various resistance processes against absolutisms and European monarchies. The idea of liberty as the non-interference of the State in the private lives of the individuals is thought of in negative terms. Therefore, the political institution has the instrumental function of guaranteeing the rights and liberties assumed as the non-interference in the individual projects of "citizens". In this sense, the relationship between the State and the individual takes on a representational character, which in many cases could promote political indifference or a fragmented political agency depending on the interests and rights in question. Liberal comprehensions are based on a strategic rationality that conceives of political reality in relation to two differentiated categories, the private and the public, which implies a field with individual morality on one side and in public morality on the other. The latter would be the place for rational and formal legality (Horrach, 2009; Dussel, 2007).

Third Paradigm: this relates to communitarian perspectives that, in contrast to republicanism and liberalism, place "community" interests over individual liberties. This paradigm usually functions through the essentialization of a particular *ethos* that defines the characteristics of the community, typifying an "us" in tension to an "others". It is legitimated by consensus, usually through the assertion of the dominant majority, and ends up functioning under the concept of "inclusion-exclusion" (Rubio, 2007). Given the tendency to understand political reality in these terms, political institutions are not neutral, but they must fulfil the role of being guardians of identity and promote a set of values and morals, as well as encouraging and maintaining a set of political sentiments in relation to the idea of the nation. Therefore, communitarian comprehensions could well represent nationalism, left and right wing patriotism, populism, creole republicanism, and indigenous expressions. In general, this includes all kinds of citizenship expression that assume a certain social coercion established under the notion of an "us", in exclusion of an "other", and supported by a comprehension of an "identity" based on affective, telluric and national bonds instead of the social contract rationale (Castro-Gómez, 2011; Ovejero, 2006; Horrach, 2009).

Fourth Paradigm: under this framework, we find those perspectives that propose the idea of nation and national *identity* as the bonding core of citizenship. It is generally thought of in relation to a specific territory and narratives of shared origins such as tongue, religion or race, which guarantee a certain loyalty to the nation. A primary expression of such paradigms is represented in constitutional patriotism, which bases loyalty on a constitutional pact that results from a rational agreement and not from an identity linked to the nation.

Another expression of these paradigms is represented in critical stances such as feminism and comprehensions of differentiated citizenship in which the articulation of particular collective interests, generally at the margins of the nation-state system, takes place. Differentiated citizenship is based on the premise that the members of a group are integrated to the political system not only as individuals, but also as collectives with concrete political needs (Young, 1996; Butler y Spivak, 2009; Pateman, 1960). In terms of cultural plurality, as a possibility of differentiated citizenship, Kymlicka's multicultural approach (2003; 1996) is the most suitable example for understanding the principles of these paradigms.

Such comprehensions of citizenship are based on the need to bring to the center of consideration the role of minority groups, whose diversity has been historically denied within the framework of power of the modern nation-state. Therefore, the search for equality is not to be confused with subjective homogenization. The particularities and diversity of excluded minorities must be taken seriously, to the point that, if necessary, differentiated policies that cross over the framework of formal equality given by the premise of "universal rights", need to be developed.

2.2. On Methodology, Tools, and the Process and Subjects of Research

2.2.1. Method

This is research with a qualitative perspective, for it aims to inquire into the construction of meaning in relation to the comprehension of citizenship in the experiences and interactions of human individuals and collectives (Taylor y Bodgdan, 1980; Serrano, 1994). Within this general qualitative research framework, grounded theory gives direction to the methodological process. Grounded theory assumes that theories should emerge from the analysis of the collected "data" and "information" in contrast to existent theories (Glaser y Strauss, 1967). Since grounded theory does not require a hypothesis or previous theory to observe a phenomenon, but arrives to them through its methodology, it enables the discovery of social phenomena explanation models by means of a systematic and hermeneutic analysis of the collected data (Strauss y Corbin, 2012). This implies that existent theories and paradigms of citizenship are not models or measures with which to analyze data, but are tools that enable contrasts and discussions with the emerging discourses and practices about citizenship held by a specific community of meaning; in this case, university students at Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios, Bogotá, Colombia.

2.2.2. Techniques and Instruments

For the inquiry on representations of citizenship within the university, we initiated two levels of study: *Institutional:* a review of institutional and research documents; four semi-structured interviews and dialogues with some of the directors and researchers. *Student narratives*: we conducted two focus groups; three pedagogical workshops; and one open survey of eight hundred students from different programs.

The pedagogical workshops and focus groups with students enabled a discussion about the implicit and explicit meanings of citizenship through the production and expression of *photo-narratives*. These spaces enabled us to examine: a) pre-comprehension of citizenship and its possible relations with notions of democracy and development; b) problematics of citizenship that students identify within their context; c) ideal comprehensions of citizenship. The information has been categorized in three analytical levels (macro-meso -micro), which helps us to classify comprehensions of citizenship in each of the following: a) institutional, power relations towards institutionality and political structure (macro); b) the level of immediate and everyday social relations, that is, in relation to the concrete experience of citizenship (meso); a personal-subjective level that refers to the place of the individual, her emotions, and rationality in her comprehension of citizenship (micro). Within these three levels, we made sub-categories of citizenship comprehensions: traditional, critical, and emerging.

With this last category of *emerging citizenships* in student's narratives of *ideal citizenship*, we aim to intervene in the framework of theoretical and ontological assumptions in which absences have been identified in the traditional discourses on citizenship (republican, liberal, multicultural, and differentiated).

2.2.3. On the University Students that Took Part in the Study

The students were selected in an intentional manner. They were all involved in the cross-curricular courses called *Desarrollo Social Contemporáneo* (Contemporary Social Development) and *Práctica en Responsabilidad Social* (Practicum in Social Responsibility)[4] in the half-year period of 2016. The groups

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[4] The courses called Contemporary Social Development (CSD) and Practice in Social Responsibility (PSR), are two cross-curricular courses (mandatory for every program) in the Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios, and are part of the university's Direction of Social Projection. PSR is a theoretical-practical course, where students spend academic hours in both classes and at social organizations or communities; on the other hand, CSD has a more theoretical aspect, although it also has some practical actions (socially responsible actions and social and communitarian impact). Through the courses, the students expose and seek to find alternatives to the social problems that they have been studying throughout the course (Orrego, 2014b).

were heterogeneous: there were two focus groups of 50 students made of 48 women and 52 men; including 3 LGBTIQ students; students were in the programs of business administration, social work, accounting, engineering, social communication and journalism, psychology, and the licentiate programs in physical education, foreign language, and pedagogy of early childhood education.

2.2.4. Procedure

First phase: the first phase consisted of two parallel courses of action. The first was a literature review of Western discourses of citizenship, and the other was the selection of students, methodology and instruments for research. *Second phase*: the second phase consisted of discussion and interaction within the focus groups and pedagogical workshops about students' pre-comprehensions of citizenship, citizenship problems, and photo-narratives on ideal citizenship; all of which was recorded on digital audio and then transcribed. *Third phase*: we collected the transcriptions of the discussions, citizenship narratives, institutional discourse, and then categorized them according to the criteria and levels earlier mentioned in the methodology section. *Fourth phase*: analysis of the categorized information was conducted using Teun VanDijk's critical discourse analysis (2000). We identified the different levels within the discursive process: *Traditional Citizenship* refers to republican discourses. It generally uses arguments in terms of rights-duties and the welfare relations of state power; *Critical Citizenship* is related to structural criticism of the state's political system, the economic model of capitalism, and the establishment in general; *Emerging Citizenships* are related to the articulation of other ways of establishing and comprehending citizenship dynamics, not limited to the structure of the state or structural criticism, but towards the integration of other dimensions of power and citizenship praxis.

In this case, and in relation to the *fourth phase*, we aim to identify some of the critical discussions of citizenship resulting from the analysis and classification of the information obtained in two of the pedagogical workshops that used the photo-narrative methodology as an aesthetic-discursive tool. The emerging meanings narrated by the students enable us to enunciate some of the existing limits of the comprehensions and political ontologies from which the discourse of citizenship has developed.

2.3. Results and Interventions Regarding Citizenship from the Narratives and Visual Metaphors of University Students

In order to initiate dialogue with the students, we asked them to take a photograph that captured the meanings, ideas, and comprehensions of what they could call "ideal citizenship". They were also asked to include a title and a brief text of the representation.

The importance of the use of images and narrative in the photo-narrative technique lies in the fact that it brings up metaphors, symbols, meanings, and comprehensions that academic, theoretical and categorical language cannot. That is, while the descriptive use of categories need certain norms and domains of knowledge that restrict contradiction; visual and narrative experiences require vital and everyday life experiences, as well as relations of meaning that achieve validity in their symbolic and relational framework, but not necessarily within the "authorized" use of categories.

Although these metaphors and images about citizenship from the experience of university students in Bogota are not new ideas about the subject, they end up provoking reflection and discussion. Thus, images of a door, a wire fence, a square, or public transportation are expressions of the reality of everyday life that are full of meaning, of political desires, and of contextual needs that enable us to locate some questions, absences, and silences around the ideals of Western citizenship paradigms.

2.3.1. The Organization of the Photo-narratives

In total, the students created 93 photo-narratives: 17% (16) were classified as *traditional citizenship*; 16% (15) as *critical citizenship*; 67% (62) as *emerging citizenship*. The tendency towards emerging citizenship descriptions seems to arise from the possibility given by tools such as photo-narrative, where not only conceptual discussion –written or verbal- takes place, but also relations of meaning, emotions and comprehensions that heterodoxically converge in the production of photographic discourse. From this universe of images and senses, we will be able to evoke just some of them, in order to problematize discourses on citizenship.

3. A Critical Approach to the Narrative of Official History

First, one of the findings is that it is important for students to think about the role of history, not from an "official history" perspective, but from that of memory and the historic place of subjects. In a photo-narrative called "Plant Growing Through a Crack in the Asphalt", and subtitled "Our Memory's Canvas: Memory Surviving History", the notion of citizenship behind the metaphor of the plant growing through the cracks in the asphalt allows us to group together a number of citizenship expressions within the narratives of the students that refer to a critical dimension of history and the idea of citizenship as a civilizational project (*Emerging citizenship: macro level*).

In the photo, we can see a plant emerging in the middle of the cement to survive, behind the infrastructure that interrupts the natural processes of all other living beings, the manifestation of the existence of something that people ignore[5].

In our opinion, the student not only reveals one of the main problems found in citizenship discourses in relation to the reproduction of history from a Eurocentric perspective, but also presents an interesting metaphor to conceptualize the emerging "other" citizenships, as "*plant(s) growing through the cracks in the asphalt*".

a) *From Official History to Memory*: this narrative points to a critical comprehension of citizenship history in which there is an interruption and denial of "natural processes" or vital experiences in the formation of particular human collectives. This results in the imposition of normative models from other rationalities and forms of social organization. In this sense, history as official narrative, with all its

[5] Photo-narrative from a student at UNIMINUTO, S.P., July 2016, Bogota.

architecture and "infrastructure", is the metaphor of the asphalt covering up material and concrete life; although its cracks end up hosting the life that survives in the form of memory: "*I always asked myself whether the things that adults were saying about history was real […] I never really had an answer […] That was when I heard that official history was just a simple excuse to cover up memory.*"[6]

Indeed, the vast majority of academic discourses on citizenship seem to show Western political development, European and North American, as a process of a linear historical development of monolithic universal history. It is born with the Greek *polis* and it rises until reaching its splendor in modernity; it also takes us to the development of democratic citizenship and the reminiscences and updates of Aristotelian mixed republicanism in all its versions (Marshall, 1998; Horrach, 2009; Heater, 2004; Pocock, 1998; Castoriadis, 2012). Literature on citizenship seems to confirm the Eurocentric discourse of Hegelian universal history, in which: "universal history goes from East to West. Europe is absolutely the end of universal history" (Hegel, 1830/1974, p. 43).

Within this landscape, the questioning of official history doesn't "simply" lie in the fact that it is a narrative centered in the epistemic, racial, and material privilege of those who write it and then establish it as a human and universal *telos* (Mignolo, 2007; Dussel, 2007), but it also points to the masking character of this form of enunciation. In fact, it covers up the reality of other political rationalities and completely omits the ways that such a denial of them ends up being the condition of possibility for what has been established as universal. Indeed, Eurocentric citizenship literature does not seem to notice the role of American colonization in the rise of capitalism and modernity (Wallerstein, 2006), and how the other side of modernity, coloniality, gives shape to the state and to European citizenships (Mignolo, 2007; Dussel, 2007).

Memory would then be the possibility of seeing history from the colonial wound, a wound that does not assume historical resentment. Even better, in terms of the student, memory would be the plant emerging from the cracks of the asphalt of history that allows us to mobilize, exist, and resist the ways to read the present and to imagine and create possible future worlds (Pedreño, 2004).

[…] the constitution of historical memory contains within it the utopian projection of a future as open as the existence of the subject – in the sense of Heidegger's *Dasein*—. From this perspective, historical memory appears before us as an indispensable element to think over the present and the existence itself of the subjects thinking it. It supposes a tension, a certain time dialectic, towards the openings of a future that needs to be assumed by the protagonist subjects of history (Orrego, 2014, p. 196).

b) *Citizenship History as Civilizational Discourse*: in relation to the previous statement, citizenship discourses seem to be woven into a grid of civilizational discourse. The student mentions:

I understood that today's social structure is limited by [the] imposition of a Western consciousness; the so-called Spanish colonization was only about civilizing, culturing 'underdeveloped soulless Indians' to

[6] Photo-narrative from a student at UNIMINUTO, S.P., July 2016, Bogota.

enslave and loot our mining wealth; that mineral wealth was an offering to mother earth and not [...] economic value for territorial domination.[7]

Since universal history, Latin America, starting with its name, is indeed part of the civilizational project, an appendix of the unfolding of "Western consciousness", its sub-product, a colonial invention (Mignolo, 2007). First, America is named in honour of Amerigo Vespucci; then came "Latin" as representation of the colonial and imperial rivalry between the British and the French, between Protestants and Catholics. A number of civilizational projects have been imposed upon Latin America and its inhabitants: soulless Indians, barbarians, homunculus, *tercermundistas* ("third world" residents), *sudacas* (a derogatory term for people from the South), and the underdeveloped. All of which are kinds of ideological, epistemic, and political "infrastructure" – as the student has referred it to— in which *we are* insofar as we imitate the ontological model of Western political rationality.

c) *The Earth and the Territory:* the link is clear between the civilizational project and a particular comprehension of the earth and the territory. Citizenship discourses seem to define earth as territory, and the latter as a geographical space where the regime of political power practices domination by means of the state system. Earth's administration is viewed from a means-end rationality that functions as the only form of economic and political rationality (Harvey, 2014; Duchrow y Hinkelammert, 2003). While in the perspective of the colonizer and civilizer, earth is just an "economic value", the student states that: *"[...] the Earth is not an economic resource on which official history depends, but the means of our own existence and the canvas of our memory".*[8]

The citizenship emerging through the cracks of the asphalt of imposed normative and legal structures indeed has a different rationality and relationality that does not allow abstract individualism or citizenship's fragmented relation nature. Underneath it lies another political ontology, one that has close relations to the proposals of many of the indigenous, African-Andean, and Caribbean movements. Colombian scholar Arturo Escobar synthesizes it well in the following:

Ontologies or relational worlds are based on the notion that every living being is an expression of the creative force of the earth, of its self-organization and constant emergence. Nothing else exists without the rest […] For us urban-moderns, who live in spaces more influenced by the liberal model of life (the ontology of the individual, private property, instrumental rationality, and the market), relationality constitutes a great challenge, due to the need of a deep inner work, personally and collectively, in order to detach civilization from disconnection, economism, science, and the individual (Escobar, 2016, p. 128 y 131).

Against the same background of ontological and political meaning, the student states:

I understood that those who jump on the train of progress and convince themselves of a linear vision would become citizens. One who contributes to infrastructure, technology, and the alleged development they taught us about in school. I knew then that the indigenous vision [...] had a more logical purpose, not

[7] Photo-narrative from a student at UNIMINUTO, S.P., July 2016, Bogota.
[8] Photo-narrative from a student at UNIMINUTO, S.P., July 2016, Bogota.

in support of "Development", but in support of preserving the subject we depend on but at the same time we ignore and destroy, called "Earth".[9]

We found that the comprehension of "earth" as meaning of existence and as mother is not exactly a discourse from which nationalisms could work by appealing to certain telluric bonds, as they always err on the side of generalizations and abstractions under the same comprehension of an instrumental rationality, that is, from the same ontological framework. On the contrary, this comprehension operates from another rational set of ideas, from the "epistemic" cracks, where relationships and bonds are not accidental, but nodes that make existence possible. This calls our attention, and it is especially relevant in Latin America, because colonial imposition and domination over the territory, as well as relations of domination towards the earth, have been and still are part of the civilizational dynamics and condition of hegemonic citizenships. Even supposedly indigenous and socialist left-wing governments in many cases still work under the paradigm of extractivism (Svampa, 2010; Gudynas, 2011; Zibechi, 2006; Escobar, 2016).

4. Citizenship as a Door: The Emergence of the Citizen as a Corporal-Emotional Subject

Regarding a different photo-narrative called "Red Door", the student states: "[…] *I found inspiration in this door […] there are many stories that construct idealized images of happiness. However, for me, finding the ideal citizenship means starting within ourselves; therefore, I took this photograph of my bedroom door*."[10] Citizenship behind the metaphor of the door enables us to group together a number of the citizenship expressions found in the students' narratives. They refer to an intimate, subjective-corporal, and emotional dimension of citizenship, but it is not necessarily reduced to the citizen as individual (*Emerging Citizenships: micro and meso levels*).

a*) Subject as Body and the Overcoming of the Individual*: The idea of the door, and of using a bedroom door to think about citizenship, places us in the intimate domain, which is different from the citizen as individual. The bedroom door is interpreted as the space of intimate experience, of self-discovery. Behind the door, the student states: *"When one is a child, one discovers her own self and her own body."*[11] In intimacy, mediated by the metaphor of the door, what emerges is not an idealization and abstraction of a faceless and bodiless subject within a structural framework that determines it, and nothing more; it is the possibility of agency and the emergence of corporal, emotional, and erotic subjects that modern citizenship subjectivity seems to necessarily hide:

In this sense, the human being as subject deals with calculated material interests. However, this subject has a real role in learning that respect within the collective whole is a condition for her own life. She makes no "sacrifices" for others, but discovers that she can only live collectively with others. It is precisely the calculating individual who sacrifices herself and others when totalizing the calculation of interests. Therefore, the human being as subject is not an individual entity (Hinkelammert, 2002, p. 348).

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[9] Photo-narrative from a student at UNIMINUTO, S.P., July 2016, Bogota.
[10] Photo-narrative from a student at UNIMINUTO, S.P., July 2016, Bogota.
[11] Photo-narrative from a student at UNIMINUTO, S.P., July 2016, Bogota.

The living, corporal, and emotional human subject appears in the citizenship literature of Greek ontology and the Roman experience, but particularly in modern political philosophy. In some cases, it appears as an individual who *is* in relation to the legal and institutional system as a whole; and in many other cases it appears as a threat that could bring chaos to the political institutions that should function within rational and individual relationships (Habermas, 1998). Under these premises, a number of liberal citizenship comprehensions, trapped in a comprehension of the abstract individual, establish a strategic instrumental rationality. The corporal intimacy occurring "behind doors" does not mean the private domain in tension with the public, or an extension of individuality versus collectivity, it means the starting point, the place of enunciation from which social transformations of citizenship could come into being: *"First I change [...] and I see change depending on the context I find myself in."*[12]

Finally, it is worth mentioning that while students allude to a personal and subjective dimension of citizenship, they generally refer to an "ourselves" that emerges from an intersubjective and communitarian comprehension of the citizenship relation.

b) A Critical Approach to the Idealization of Citizenship and the Citizen as a Corporal Subject in Need: In relation to the latter idea, a key element in the student's narrative states: *"There are many stories that construct idealized images of happiness. However, for me, finding the ideal citizenship means starting within ourselves."*[13] Citizenship has to do with idealization and abstraction processes that are based on assumptions of happiness, the individual, nature, and power; they are not processes dreamt by "ourselves" and are not based on real, material, and corporal conditions (Harvey, 2014). The "ourselves" concept, the concrete reality, emerges as a questioning of citizenship abstraction mechanisms, especially within the framework of commercial relations and the citizenship of individuals who are owners of modernity, who find in models of contract rationality its legal foundations.

Contract (and abstract) legal relations mirror commercial and economic relations. However, the image is revealed to be inverted: although it shows us "what it is" –men are simple private owners of exchangeable merchandise— this "what it is" is not reality as a whole. It is just a part of reality, hiding another part, an absent part: that which is not, but could be. In other words, the contract is the visible way in which men recognize themselves with each other in a commercial society; this is, as simple private owners. Nonetheless, this form of recognition leaves another dimension out: that of people who relate with each other as subjects with needs, as directly social subjects [...] At the heart of the contractual relation, an inversion has occurred, one that has placed the human-concrete (the living, corporal, and needy subject) underneath the empire of the abstract (the market institution) (Fernández, 2005, p. 11).

The "ourselves" is not the contractual relation that predominates in traditional citizenships, but the recovery of the corporal and concrete dimension of the human being. This subject is not *a priori*, nor a transcendental subject, nor a simple positive presence, but someone who "reveals" as human potentiality; that is, in the denied human absence. The subject as citizen is the positive answer to the absence of humanity legitimated in the individual relations based on a contract between owners. Therefore, it does not start from

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[12] Photo-narrative from a student at UNIMINUTO, S.P., July 2016, Bogota.
[13] Photo-narrative from a student at UNIMINUTO, S.P., July 2016, Bogota.

an *a priori* content or value that could abstractly determine what the common good demands: "the only thing to be stated is that the common good and what it demands reveals itself from the self-destructive tendencies of the system and its inertia" (Hinkelammert, 2002, p. 349). In other words, the common good framework could only be positively formulated from the request of absent subjects, of absent citizenships.

c) *The Condition of Happiness and Citizenship*: against such a background, emerging citizenships are not based in an absolute truth or idealization. They always depend on the context and the denied subjects of this context, who emerge precisely from the interpretation of reality "in light of a request from the absent subject" (Hinkelammert, 2002, p. 349). Within this context, and paraphrasing Hinkelammert, we could state that while the citizen is part of the system as a calculating actor and individual, she is a political subject while confronting the system, a subject that manages to move beyond it.

In the perspective of Hinkelammert, a Costa Rican–Swiss scholar, the subject is not an *a priori* or transcendental substance or subjectivity that serves as a support for the abstract comprehensions of citizenship in modernity. Instead, the subject is an *a posteriori,* emerging as an answer to inertia of the self-destructive system and its self-legitimization and naturalization by means of the totalitarian economic rationality: "It is then revealed that the subject is a human potentiality and not a positive presence. It is revealed as an absence that shouts and is present, but as an absence" (p. 349).

This supposes that the citizen as subject does not have her own explicit values. It is herself, not as individual, but as a subject who becomes one as an answer to the denied humanity in citizenship. It is the guideline of all values that could become part of citizenship imaginaries. This provides a framework of understanding of the common good as a criterion of rationality that cannot function in communitarisms and nationalisms.

This idea, as the student aptly states, determines the framework of happiness that supports citizenship projects. As the student states: "*There are many stories that construct idealized images of happiness. However, for me, finding an ideal citizenship means starting within ourselves."*[14] Hinkelammert (2002), affirms this analysis: "*Happiness is not possible unless others –including nature— have theirs as well. Happiness is not possible by means of one living and destroying the other*" (p. 350).

5. Conclusions

The citizenship metaphors by way of photo-narratives have provided us with a broader set of senses, meanings, and relations than theoretical and categorical descriptions. In this sense, we have inverted the traditional tendency to interpret local and particular practices and discourses of citizenship with canonical theoretical models, in order to actually question them by using local narratives that emerge like bushes through fissures in the cement. Using the idea of the "plant growing through a crack in the asphalt" as a metaphor for emerging citizenships, we questioned the civilizational and Eurocentric tendency on which

[14] Photo-narrative from a student at UNIMINUTO, S.P., July 2016, Bogota.

discourses of citizenship are built. We have also exposed the masking role of official history and the need for historical memory to consider the present and future of politics and citizenship within the local Colombian context. Emerging citizenships are not safe ponds and constructions, but moving spaces and times intervened by the concrete experiences of subjects who have been many times denied or abstracted to a formless, incorporeal, and legal mass upon which citizenship and official history is conceived.

From the image of the "Door" as a citizenship metaphor emerges an interrogation of the abstract, judicial, and formal role of the citizen in academic discourse. If in the first metaphor we were able to present a critical comprehension of history as the totalization of a particular cultural experience, with this second metaphor the need for a rationality that overcomes the comprehension of the political subject as individual was made evident. This leads to a citizenship where a real corporal subject is the guideline for rationality, serving as the foundation for common good and opening up the way to a joyful citizenship, which supposes a framework of intersubjective relations including humans and non-humans.

Against this comprehensive background, at least under what we have called emerging citizenships, we have shown the importance of other artistic, linguistic, and narrative mechanisms to reflect on citizenship representations and comprehensions within local contexts. These vital experiences, performed outside of academic, formal, or legal narratives, have managed to articulate political and citizenship desires and wishes, but also criticisms and resistances within everyday life towards "traditional" citizenship narratives.

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