

EDITORIAL.

THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY IN THE POST AGREEMENT OR POST CONFLICT IN COLOMBIA.

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Abstract.

To Colombia, a historical stage opens up, the construction of peace after signing the agreements, which aim to close a long and bloody armed confrontation between the FARC-EP guerrillas and the Government of Colombia.

Key words.

Peace, Armed Conflict, Territorial Conflicts, Universities.

However, beyond the historical agreements reached to date and those, which are approaching between the FARC-EP insurgency and the Government, challenges for the whole society are posed, especially, for Higher Education centers.

To start off, it is important to locate the context within which, in Colombia, people have been talking about Peace:

We are living in an era marked by a violent global reordering of power in pursuit of the capture of regions rich in energetic and natural resources. This is in addition to a logical distribution of poverty versus an anti-ethical hyper of richness globally. Oxfam predicts that the 1% richness will exceed the rest of the population in 2016 (Informe Oxfam, 2016). Twenty years ago, the 1% super rich used to possess the equivalent to the goods of the 62% of the world population. Something very critical must be happening in society for this to be possible. It is worth noting that Colombia. It is worth noting that worldwide Colombia occupies the seventh place in inequity and inequality, and a worst second place, in Latin America, which is a painful situation, and per se, a violent one (Justo, 2016).

Latin America is a continent rich in natural resources of all kind, available resources (Insuasty Rodriguez, Grisales Gonsales , & Gutierrez Leon , 2013). Likewise, this continent has shifted from a hoping boom of socialist regime countries, which promoted redistributive reforms to a moment of retaking the State power by powerful and exclusive business sectors, a machinery, which reproduces that hyper-concentrating scheme of richness, with all the social and environmental injustice that this entails (Insuasty Rodriguez & Villa Holguin, Conflictos sociales y coyuntura de paz en Colombia. Decadencia occidental y potencialidad del latinoamericanismo, 2014).

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It is within this complex global context in which Colombia experiences an important negotiation process with the FARC-EP insurgent group, with which it has been fought militarily for more than 60 years (Roncancio Jimenez, 2014).

In this historical and important moment to the country, it is important to highlight that:

- **This negotiation is, no doubt, the most important historical moment in the continent.** This negotiation, its agreements, scopes, and the final signature of the agreement, is per se, a historical fact, which marks both the country and the continent.

- **While this negotiation is important, does not mark the end of the conflict.** The negotiations in Havana, which are being held in full swing, in very good health, do not represent “the end of the conflict.” On the other hand, our societies require major and better conflicts, in that the nature of the human being is per se troubled, The challenge now is to try to negotiate those conflicts without having to get rid of “the other.” Even, this is a great challenge, since the history of the country shows us a long list of breaches of the government and the elites when it comes to implementing agreements from the past, as it can be noted: *“The agreement, which is signed today (23rd June, 2016) in Havana, makes me remind of other campaigns launched on the fly, which later on ended up with nothing good for the people, but for the great “cacaos,” who hold the power in Washington, who have been swallowing the lands of peasants by thousands of hectares and now threat even the paramo and zones of biosphere reserve: the worst of the matter is that it is not just here, but in the neighborhood as in Brazil, where the new method of parliamentary coup with the tacit support of the military forces, has meant an onslaught against the Landless Movement, who started being assassinated with the silent blessing of CNN, Red O Globo, or BBC from London”* (Contreras Hernandez, 2016).

- **In this process, the total Peace will not either be signed or achieved.** It will be signed, and there is no reason to believe otherwise, an agreement, which terminates with a long-standing, painful, and bloody armed confrontation, between a small economic, political, and social elite in Colombia, which took control of the State, almost by family lineage, molding it in its own image, against a small group of peasants, Afro-descendants, natives, who armed themselves to defend themselves and to demand changes, as a result of exclusion, persecution, and pressure, a group of men and women, who did not find any other option than to take up arms. This long-standing confrontation, slowly declined, until it became untenable and ethically impractical.

While, it is clear that, without this war, a better space opens up to recognize without distractors, the deep and real conflicts, which have been aggravated, deepened, and encysted, even in the culture of the country.

Walls of this advanced stage of negotiation and transit towards a post scenario...

There are some walls, which are considered important and necessary to be taken into account in this post negotiation scenario:

- The existence of a society, which DOES NOT vibrate at the same rhythm, which supposedly would generate a historical event similar to the one we are experiencing.
- Media to the service of the economic powers and, which make use of a language of confrontation and hatred.

- A growing paramilitarization under the logic of the total control.
- Universities, which are not in line with the current reality. More worried about their administrative operation, a sort of commodification of education.

Today, as a POST task for Universities and society, it is urgently necessary to:

- **Open permanent spaces for a great social debate:** What role do we play as a society in keeping conditions of violence and exclusion? What is our degree of responsibility? How does our silence and postures feed an unreflective and violent society? It is clear that none is neutral, when they say, “I do not take sides,” in fact, they have already taken part in an unfair system of affairs.

- **Let Universities retake their role:** Universities are called upon essentially to contribute to the recovery of life, dignity, the overcoming of commodification of every single aspect of life, the recovery of the individual (Insuasty Rodriguez, Ante la actual crisis de sentido, es necesario “rescatar al sujeto”., 2013). To that end, it is necessary to open scenarios to dream, to debate, to build pathways. Nothing is finished. We should find ourselves in a diverse society, construct, overcome the loss of the collective aspect, retake the sense of the public spheres, of the essential for good life, and if institutions and their bureaucratic apparatus do not do it, then to set up Counter-Universities in and out of universities to do, what in fact, they should do.

- **Contribute to the construction of an urgent Ecology of Knowledge:** Not only the scientific knowledge and legacy of modernity, but the knowledge of peasant, native communities should continue being rescued (Gutierrez Leon, 2015), Afro-descendants, native islanders, going to the communities, to the territories, learning, intertwining, complementing, validating, from that which is personal, from diverse and concrete realities, going beyond the hegemonic look of knowledge, which higher education institutions inject.

- **Contribute to the defense of territory, values, and recourses:** Perhaps, the most important and convincing task is how to construct or to reconstruct universities, where it is constructed from the grassroots upwards, to foster critical thinking, production methods, technologies for living well and good living, alternative markets, to recover and to articulate the own knowledge, to give content and meaning to that, which has been called territories and pedagogy for peace (Olaya Rodriguez, 2015).

- **Carry out pertinent research useful to the regions and life of populations:** To design and to commit oneself to improve, to increase, to foster localized research, in context, from concrete realities, with our own standards, to avoid cooption and colonization. Research reporting on the current reality of the country, interpreting, analyzing, generating inputs in order to strengthen social agendas, governmental agendas, which can have an impact on decision-making of the populations, which enable them to be more efficient in the transformation processes.

There are many challenges, which as a society, and above all, as an academic community we have. There are no excuses. We are urged to commit ourselves seriously, and to recover the Universities, for a real country, which advances towards the conditions of social and environmental justice.

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