

THE ARMED CONFLICT AND THE NEUROSCIENCE IN COLOMBIA

Cesareo Rocha Ochoa, Ph.D., Vice president of the Colombian Academy of Jurisprudence, has an interesting approach in his latest book, *Law and Neuroscience*, about the great contribution made by law as an instrument for regulating human behavior. This time, his investigation strengthened through neuroscience, because all the actions of man affect the area of responsibility, and through neuroscience, people are believe to be incapable of crime, damage and faults caused by mental and neurological disorders.

Rocha, in his work, again emphasizes that scientific research has joined the law and morality through neuroscience activity. It has regained full weight to penetrate the mystery of the relationship between the mind, behavior and activity nervous tissue itself, unraveling the brain's activity and its relationship to the psyche and human behavior, the natural scenery of the legal rule.

In addition, his investigation has focus on one of the most important issues affecting Colombia for more than 60 years ago, the armed conflict. He analyzes the reasons for Colombian people's actions and behavior through their story. He states, "Unfortunately, Colombia is a violent country" and that, undoubtedly requires hard work. It is necessary a multidisciplinary team that can study this topic, such as sociologists and psychologists, in general, scientific specialists that analyses from the so-called discovery of America, intolerance, disrespect for aborigines, the imposition by force of invaders early, going through all this discrimination and abuse in the colony that led to independence in a romantic dream seeking human dignity. Dream yet again become a frustration that there was not even a change in policy or autonomy; in other words, neuroscience has the task of approaching to the analysis of the behavior of the Colombian people. It deepens to understand why many human reactions to law and reason precede human behavior by the alleged psychic disorders, fundamental or structure of the brain.

Passionately reading his work, the reader is trapped in the masterful way the author addresses the issue of victims and neuroscience, and contributes his study (as a fundamental contribution) to the analysis made in the essay entitled "Victims Project". This begins with the following expression: "the armed conflict in Colombia has left a terrifying and unique balance in the world. Repair victims is the great challenge for the country. A challenge not only of government but of all Colombians".

This study, also, presents some frightening figures. Over 5.405.629 victims left in the Colombian conflict only from 1985 to 2013. Over 2.683.335 were women. Over 122.354 were indigenous. Over 4797.95 were afro-Colombians. Over 1.163.218 children under 12 years. Over 17.771 were victims of forced disappearance. Antipersonnel mines have affected over 10,272 people. Over 100,000 murders linked to the armed conflict. The figures are 15.395 acts of terrorism. Over 16.123 kidnappings, 2.985.798 is the number of abandoned or stripped hectares that have been disputed, 4.586 attacks were committed against the infrastructure in the last decade and 395.577 Colombians were outside the country as refugees by the end of 2011.

As it can be seen, the impact it has had on the behavior of the Colombian conflict is of unprecedented dimensions, to the point that the National government has developed through Congress, Victims Act to restore the violated rights, compensate the victims return their plots do justice with equity, repairs and application of truth.

However, although the cost to start the repair process of victims is around 55 billion pesos, unfortunately, this is not enough. Victims are not just a number. The problem deepens on the impact on the development of the Colombian community is huge. There must be a social commitment reengineering the judiciary, training of judges, investigators, prosecutors and other related interdisciplinary groups with this activity. In this scenario, there is a lot to do specialized professionals, because we must find psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, psychiatrists, physiologists, and scientists; not only limited to political, but linking all its wealth to the work of neuroscience, as social laboratories of post conflict require the best minds, all united in the common purpose redo Colombian national life.

For this reason, the analysis of the conflict, and post conflict victims, is not simply a sociological or political action. It is necessary to analyze the behavior, altering the behavior of victims and victimizers, do a clinical diagnosis of Colombian society. The psychiatrist should analyze the behavior and physiological part and neurology of Colombians to make a good diagnosis, and expose the solution to these forms of trauma that has caused the civil war in Colombia.

In short, Colombia has to make a catharsis to deal with the entire problem that presents scientifically neuroscience, not simply political, ideological, and economic aspects coldly calculated. It also has to recognize that future generations would present problems and changes in behavior and conduct as such. Therefore, quoting the wise words of Rocha, that says thus take refuge "that allows us to draw conclusions about the role they have been performing neuroscience content on physical, chemical, biological, the brain, their different integrative parties, functions and mechanisms for man to fulfill his place in the social biology, in the external world, that their behavior transcends the objective act, to express their thoughts or emotions impulse".

At last, the Colombian government and Colombian society need to recognize that this society is sick and requires treatment with moral and ethical responsibility not only political and economic. Moreover, they need to begin to recognize that only through neuroscience can strengthen the field of science, morality, bioethics, philosophy and law, this is a Herculean task and a challenge to the future of Colombian society, so your solution is not simply transitory and demagogic but final.

ARTURO GÁLVEZ VALEGA, PHD.

Guest columnist

Doctor in International Law. University of Navarra, Spain.

Director of Political Science. Universidad Autónoma del Caribe. Barranquilla, Colombia.

Corresponding Member of the Colombian Academy of Jurisprudence