



7th International Conference on Intercultural Education “Education, Health and ICT for a Transcultural World”, EDUHEM 2016, 15-17 June 2016, Almeria, Spain

Education and Sensitization on Violence: Seeking to Understand the Victims of the Colombian Armed Conflict

Yuber Hernando Rojas Ariza^{a*} & Sandro Alberto Díaz Boada^b

^aUniversidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Bucaramanga, Colombia

^bUniversidad Industrial de Santander, Bucaramanga, Colombia

Abstract

We present a case study about how to bring university students closer to the problems of the *social and armed conflict* in Colombia. This study was carried out at the *Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana* (Seccional Bucaramanga) in Colombia. We show the importance of “*Thinking*” about violence and its multiplicity. Moreover, the interviews of social and armed violence victims by students are presented as a valuable sensitization strategy. A deeper understanding about the violence caused by the armed conflict, along with the personal contact with victims, allowed students to become more aware of the concrete world and the life stories surrounding us.

© 2017 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Peer-review under responsibility of the organizing committee of EDUHEM 2016.

Keywords: Victims; Violence; Colombia; Sensitization; Education; University Students.

1. Introduction

The internal war in Colombia is Latin America's oldest armed conflict. Currently in Havana-Cuba, peace talks between the FARC guerrilla and the Colombian Government –two of the main actors in the conflict- are taking place. This negotiation framework originated the *Historic Commission of the Conflict and their Victims* (CHCV). From this commission emerged one of the most significant documents about violence in the country: *Contribution to the understanding of the armed conflict in Colombia*. Published in 2015, the book contains 12 essays written by 12 experts

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +57-76-329615; fax: +57-76-796221.
E-mail address: yuber.rojas@upb.edu.co

in the subject. According to this compilation the decade of the 1950s was the time of violence ‘*época de la violencia*’. The conflict between liberals and conservatives around this time gave birth to different guerrilla groups: *National Liberation Army* (ELN), *Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces* (FARC), *April 19th Movement* (M-19), and *Popular Liberation Army* (EPL). Those years brought too the embryos of radical right-wing groups: the *Chulavitas and Pájaros* (Birds), who later evolved into groups like *Death to Kidnappers* (MAS), *United Self-defense Groups of Colombia* (AUC), and actually after the 2006 demobilization, the remaining groups are called *Criminal Bands* (BACRIM).

However, besides of the several paramilitary and guerrilla groups exists another performer that has been a major part in the armed violence: the national armed forces of Colombia, Army and Police. We couldn’t apprehend the conflict without the protagonist role of the public forces. Why is it important to understand the part of this actor? Because the Colombian government has perpetrated systematical killings, like the infamous ‘false positives’, where innocent civilians were killed and then dressed up and showed as guerrilla fighters. This abominable military tactic was nothing else but government crimes: a deadly practice against civilians that revealed the complexity of war and the fragility of life in the oldest democracy in Latin America.

In such a complex context, a series of meaningful questions arise. Why the war is happening? How to understand the complexity of the Colombian armed conflict? And even more pressing: Does exist an alternative to this deadly dynamic? Without doubts the perspectives are desolating, however the work done by the CHCV is a great contribution. We need to understand the conflict from the civilian’s perspective also, and one way to do it is from the academic and research exercise. Even more, the sense of college study and specially the sense of human sciences acquire their more meaningful work when they deal with the problem of armed violence in the classroom.

That’s why amid this situation, several alternatives that led to overcome armed violence can be developed. Hence, the objective of the current text is to socialize a classroom experience designed to think about violence in Colombia. It is an appropriation exercise about violence that relays in the awareness process. In that perspective, from the learning process of the students of the course *General History of Philosophy* (2015-2016) from the *Pontifical Bolivarian University* (UPB-Bucaramanga campus), we want to expose how the students understand the dimension of the conflict and assume a pro-active role wanting to create *Historic Memory*. To accomplish this, we are going to present the highlights points of the experience: i) the theoretical or interpretive review of violence studied in the course; ii) The relationship among the Violence, Victims, and memory triad; iii) How the students seize the process; and iv) the main conclusions from the experience.

2. Interpretations about the violence: some theoretical approaches.

The fundamental question of the course is: what sense has to think violence? Regarding this question exist several perspectives that allow possible interpretations. An important thing to say: much of the course has its basis in the Frankfurt school, in the *Critical Social Theory*. In that way, the studied authors provide us with multiple lectures about violence from the context in which they lived. Mainly it takes the symbol of the twentieth century: the Second World War, particularly Auschwitz. Here are some interpretations that arose from these authors and their contribution to think violence.

The first contribution comes from the German thinker Walter Benjamin and his essay *For a Critique of Violence*. The notion of justice, and his direct criticism of the *natural* and *positive law* (200, p. 38), clearly explains how they generate violence. This is key to understand the role of modern state and its direct link with violence: “The violence as a medium is always for create or preserve the law” (p. 32). Benjamin offers us a regard that discovers the dangerous positivist role of law when, for example, he mentions the “mythic violence” (p. 39). In its obstinate search for truth, the law criminalizes the lie, the human capacity for imagination, for fiction. With this, the answer is none other than violence. And most revealing: a violence sponsored by the modern state.

The second regard relates with another influential thinker of the social critical theory: Max Horkheimer. In particular we study the text *Critic of the Instrumental Reason*. From this work, the relationship mediums-endings is analyzed with the intention to understand the transformation process of the reason –both objective and subjective-. (1973, pp. 22-23) and how it has transformed the world into an instrument that also converts men in instruments of other men. “The reduction of reason to a mere instrument ultimately hurts even its own instrumental nature” (p. 64). With the criticism of Horkheimer of reason, is understood that the violence has its own means to materialize in the modern world.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/5125780>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/5125780>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)