

Violence in Colombia: between historiography and genealogy. The construction of an object of study

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Abstract

This article explores the relationship between historiography and genealogy on the phenomenon of "The Violence" in Colombia, which came to pass between the years 1946 and 1966. The field of interest is focused on the discursive productions that allow the configuration of violence as a subject of study, under an evaluative orientation of economic, political and cultural processes that are inscribed in forms of symbolic violence. Based on analysis of historiographical and genealogical processes are reconstructed and however the motivations of the use of violence and its practice concluding that there are various continuities and discontinuities between the violent action and narrative of political and partisan institutions that regulate the production of sense in the society.

Violence, Historiography, Genealogy, Politics, Nadaism, Novel

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Introduction

I – A Problem of Historiographical nature

What is “Violence”¹?, How the term "Violence" can do is part of the speech of everyday life?, The word "The Violence" can be getting to represent a historical period? We evoked the questions and the cases of a problem to face, and that " The Violence" for the history of Colombia means a daily life, a word that extends from half of century to our days as a shadow that darkens slowly with coming of age, dividing and founding the country in stories of horrors linked to political hegemonies, left and right pamphlets, economic interests of local allies strategically with foreign investors and multinational companies, and to collisions of ethical and moral values that in different ways they are recorded in the Scriptural memories of history, the novel and poetry. The question of " The Violence" can lead us to the “*history of the Violence*” or the story of "the violent" already that it extends beyond the period called “*the Violence*”, on the other hand the multiplicity of social actors who engage in “*the violent*” has led to social researchers to speak not radically about of “*The Violence*”, but of “*many violence*” that intersect in different directions, meaning “*The Violence*” as a phenomenon of “*causal multiplicity*”, in the same way as us warns *Carlos Miguel Ortiz Sarmiento* in the (*Ortiz Sarmiento, 1994*).

“Historiografía de la Violencia”[Historiography of violence]. "It is not convenient to extend the scope of the term" violence ", to the point that we cannot demarcate the field of study with a certain property". And at least in the "Violencia Política" of “los años de la Violencia” (*Ortiz Sarmiento, 1994* , p.372).

It is worth “point out (as indicated by *Ortiz Sarmiento*) that we understand the nature of "the violent" as the managed mode to solve the conflict through the total elimination of the other, the sea in the political exercise or in another social practice or the interaction in general” (*Ortiz Sarmiento, 1994*).

The difficulty that opens here step as a “*historiographical nature*” issue is the demarcation of borders and disciplinary approaches with their *methods and strategies* individuals from “*conceptualization of the violence*”, in this sense has prevailed in the Colombian language “*the speech*” of the “*Violence policy*” of “*the years of violence*” is determined by the tendency to the *systematic* and effective *elimination* of the “*other-individual*” and the “*other-collective*”, the limits of the fields of study allow to differentiate the *Historiography of the Violence*, with respect to the *Political Historiography* in general and the *Social Historiography*, which it deals with the social movements and struggles in which social conflict, and not the elimination of the other, is the central thematic core.

The theme of “*The Violence*” would be divided into different chapters of the *Colombian historiography*, but the phenomenon *overflows* in its *multiplicity of dimensions of violence* all intentions of representation; in Colombian history, since the 40s of the twentieth century has been drawn an axis of “*political nature*” to explain “*The Violence*” from the *friend-enemy* partisan logic, represented in *binary oppositions*:

¹ “The Violence” is like, it is called the historical period of Colombia in the XX century of confrontation between the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party, which without having declared a civil war was characterized by being extremely violent, including murders, aggressions, persecutions, destruction of private property and terrorism due to political alignment. During this period several characters and groups of both sides faced each other. The conflict caused 200,000 to 300,000 deaths and the forced migration of more than 2 million people equivalent to almost a fifth of the total population of Colombia, which at that time reached 11 million populations.

Liberals - Conservatives, The violent - The pacifists, Left - Right, Good Violence - Bad Violence, Modernization - Tradition, "Primitive Rebels" - Regulatory State.

However, although to a lesser extent, contributions have been made to the narrative of "*The Violence*" from different disciplines enriching conceptually and making it possible to delimit the *frontiers of discourse, its methods and strategies*, presupposing or not underlying principles underlying the construction of discourse about of "*The Violence*" in the historical, the economic, the cultural, the psychological, the poetic, etc.

For this reason, the genealogy² as proposed by Foucault (1994), "*gray, meticulously and patiently documentalist*".

² "(Généalogie)." It speaks of a Foucault genealogical period is used to refer to those works dedicated to the analysis of the forms of exercise of power, unlike what happens with archeology and with the notion of episteme, Foucault has not written a work methodological, as happened with L "Archéologie du savoir. It is necessary to specify that we should not understand Foucault's genealogy as a rupture, and even less as an opposition to archeology. Archeology and genealogy are supported by a common budget: writing the history without referring the analysis to the founding instance of the subject (DE3, 147)

On the other hand, the passage of the archaeology to the genealogy is an extension of the field of the research for to include in a more precise way the study of non-discursive practices and, above all, the non-discursivity/discursivity relation; in other words: to analyze knowledge in terms of strategy and power tactics. In this sense, it is about situate knowledge in the ambit of struggles. A correct appreciation of Foucault's genealogical work requires following in detail his conception of power relations (we have dealt with it in the articles Power and Government). The struggles aren't conceived, finally, as a opposition term to term that blocks them, as a essential antagonism, but as an agonism: a relationship of reciprocal incitement and at the same time reversible (DE4, 238). In the prepective we could speak about genealogy of knowledge in the field of what Foucault calls governability. "(Castro, 2004)

Would allow us to work "*on the muddled, scrawled, often rewritten paths*" of "*The Violence*", and ask ourselves, *What is "The Violence"?*, and with this question "*to perceive the singularity of the events, beyond any monotonous purpose*"¹; *How the term "The Violence" can be part of the everyday talk*?, and "*find ourselves where you least expect and what goes unnoticed for having no history - feelings, love, conscience, instincts-*"; *How can the word "The Violence" come to represent a historical period?*, and "*capture its return, but not at all to trace the slow curve of an evolution, but to rediscover the different scenes in which they have played different roles; define even the point of their absence* Foucault, 1994).

II - The Bibliographic Production

The *bibliographical* production of "*The Violence*", posted during the nefarious "*years of Violence*", called "*partisan*" court, consists of books that are written from the links with the sides in public, are liberal, Conservative or in the "*new language*" Communist. Many of these books are written by the leaders of parties, staff of the State (Government officials, judges, or trial lawyers or trial lawyers), journalists attached to the parties and by combatants of regular and irregular forces.

Among the different modalities of the *political speeches* of court "*partisan*" that make allusions to "*Political Violence*" we find "*compilations of pronouncements* (speeches by the presidents of the time and national leaders of the parties), *declarations, conferences, public missives and exhortative speeches*" generated at crucial moments of the confrontation; among these publications stand out the anthology of speeches and interventions by the liberal Carlos Lleras Restrepo between 1941 and 1954, which is entitled: *From the Republic to the Dictatorship (testimony on Colombian politics)*.

On the opposite side, Rafael Azula Barrera and Joaquín Estrada Monsalve conservatives write books: *De la revolución al orden nuevo: proceso y drama de un pueblo* (Azula Barrera, 1998).

And *Así fue la revolución* (Estrada Monsalve, 1950), both with political office during the Government of President Mariano Ospina Pérez between 1946 to 1950; Likewise, the official publication of the Communist Party stands out, *Treinta años de lucha del Partido Comunista en Colombia* (1960).

In the various denunciation publications, characterized by their pamphletear court can be found *Historia de una monstruosa farsa* (1964). By Felipe Echavarría; *Lo que el cielo no perdona* (1974), of the parish priest Fidel Blandón (book written under the pseudonym of "Ernesto León Herrera"), and *El basilisco en acción o los crímenes del bandolerismo*, by Alfonso Hilarión under the pseudonym "Testis fidelis" (1953).

The writings that point to the historical clarification "in terms of responsibilities of authorships -material- and -intelligent-" focus mainly on the events that occurred on April 9, 1948, the date of the assassination of the liberal leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitán known as the "Bogotazo"; on June 13, 1953, the date of the coup d'état sponsored by Conservative and Liberal leaders to install in the government the military Gustavo Rojas Pinilla; and on May 10, 1957, date of the overthrow of said president under the shelter, once again, of the two parties. Among the books made on these dates are the works of the journalist Gonzalo Canal Ramírez *El 9 de abril de 1948*, (1948) y, *Estampas y testimonio de la Violencia* (1966).

Likewise, testimonial chronicles can also be found on the side of armed rebels like *Las guerrillas del Llano* by Eduardo Franco Isaza (1959). and from the perspective of the Army³ in the book written by Coronel Gustavo Sierra Ochoa *Las Guerrillas en los Llanos Orientales* (1954).

III - Historiography of violence

Following the line drawn up by the *Historiografía de la Violencia*, we find ourselves in the framework of major stages traversed by Colombian society, particularly since the 1930s as a result of economic, social, cultural and political changes⁴.

³ "The testimonial bibliography of the counterpart, that of the regular forces ascribed to the institutions of the State, is much more unknown by the academic media and by the reading public in general. In the case of historians and social scientists, this lack of knowledge has been a lack that has impeded the development of a critical history of institutions and that, in the issue of Violence, has allowed to say very little about the internal logic of the institutions. military, of their transactions with "paramilitaries", during the long years of confrontations." (Ortiz Sarmiento, 1994)

⁴ "From the political point of view, the three great periods of institutional changes would be successively: the Liberal Republic from 1930 to 1945; the Conservative rescue from 1946 to 1957, and the bipartisan National Front, beginning in 1958." Ibid.

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During these periods the “social”⁵ disciplines were making their way through processes not necessarily rectilinear, but zigzagging and even contradictory and ambivalent, until the middle of the 60s, where these processes have been partially consolidated by imbricating themselves with itineraries that converge in historiography.

So that, it is not strange to find in the discourse of the intellectuals of these times, explanations based on economics as the ultimate principle of historical phenomena, under the influence of Marx and the Marxist classics in the understanding of the economic *as relations of production and struggle of classes*.

The decade of the 60s offers Colombian historiography *discontinuities* and part *continuities* in a diversified panorama of professions in the field of *economic-social sciences*, highlighting mainly the “*relative*”⁶ *secularization* of the university environment and its *politicization* outside traditional⁷ partisanship.

This discontinuity also means a break with the Catholic confessionism that prevailed in the universities; the social disciplines added new secular and “*moderns*” contents, modifying the old structures of mental(s) representation (s), collective and individual character and religious sense.

⁵ “Before the Department of Sociology, the National University had been the scene of the dismemberment of other branches of social disciplines: in 1952 it was transformed into the Faculty of Economics what was the Institute of Economics, existing since 1945 as a dependency of the Faculty of Law. In 1957 the Faculty of Psychology was established, from the Institute of the same name that, given its clinical orientation, was part of the Faculty of Medicine; precisely for “ideological” reasons one of its first directors was separated from the position. Simultaneously or after the National University, other centers of higher education, many of them private, opened these same careers; for example, the Sociology offered, with the same symbiotic profile between the technical and the confessionist, in two universities run by ecclesiastics: the Pontificia Universities Javeriana de Bogotá and Bolivariana de Medellín; and a little later it was founded, also by the Jesuits, the Center for Research and Social Action CINEP, that would take a different course from the two universities, from the point of view of its social projection. This is how we came to the 60s, with a diversified panorama of professions in the field of economic and social sciences. Other phenomena will occur in this decade, which in our opinion also affect the field of historiographical production, phenomena that partly mean discontinuity and part continuity with respect to the 50s. We emphasize mainly the “relative” secularization of the university environment and its politicization outside of traditional partisanship.” Ibid .

⁶ When we say “relative secularization” we refer to the process experienced by the university students during the 60s, especially in the second quinquennium

⁷ “Linked to these phenomena (secularizations-politicization) it is possible to register others in turn significant for the social sciences and historiography: a) the attempts to establish a scientific-technical rationality on the part of the regime, which leads to the beginnings of the Institutional recognition of investigative work (under the government of Carlos Lleras Restrepo in 1968, the Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología y el Fondo Francisco José de Caldas Colciencias although only until 1987 Colciencias considered among its important lines of research an aspect of social sciences, that of violence); b) the formation of the first, incipient and fragile nuclei of researchers; c) the unionization of professionals in these areas (which, incidentally, did not include historians until seven years ago, and very weakly); d) the takeoff of the publishing industry, especially in social sciences and history, demanded by the university students; e) the publication of journals in social disciplines, standing out, for the case of history, the Colombian Yearbook of Social History and Culture, founded by Jaime Jaramillo Uribe”. (Cf. Carlos M. Ortiz, “La producción colombiana de ciencias sociales y las nuevas exigencias de la transferencia de información”, Paper presented to the Seminar on Libraries organized by Icfes, Cartagena, September 1980).

As Ortiz Sarmiento tells us: “It is not by chance that Sociology is the university career in which the conflict with the establishment acquires a greater adversative burden, (already) that in the different universities it was founded for conservative confessional purposes and that is why lives this ambivalence more intensely”⁸

Ortiz Sarmiento also points out that it is this politicization of the religious that lends new secular contents along with the new language -*revolutionary*- to the old mental structures of representation. This double of the 60s phenomenon of the “*secularization-politicization*” is what the studies point out as fundamental to understand, among others, the four important factors that characterize the historiographic production in its “know-how” and, above all, the existing consensus on the “Nature of history”, as something invented⁹ - or revived¹⁰ - by historians.

⁸ “Several of the professors, leaders of great student audience and credibility, were pastors or priests who not abdicate his religious commitment, had undergone a process of transformation through contact with sociological theories (which they studied at universities such as the Catholic University of Leuven). and, of course, with recent political events such as the Cuban Revolution; Camilo Torres was the most prominent of them, but not the only one”. Ortiz Sarmiento, op. cit.

⁹ “Nietzsche says that, at a given point of the time and in a particular place in the universe, intelligent animals invented knowledge. The word he uses, invention - the German term is *Erfindung* - reappears frequently in his writings, and always with polemical intent and meaning. When he speaks of “invention” he has in mind a word that opposes invention, the word “origin”. When he says “invention” is to not say “origin”, when he says *Erfindung*, it is to say not *Ursprung*.” Foucault, op. cit.

¹⁰ “The story makes talking to the body that is silent. It supposes a lag between the silent opacity of reality that it wishes to express and the place where it produces its discourse, protected by the distance that separates it from its object (*Gegen-stand*). The violence of the body reaches the page written by means of the absence, through the documents that the historian could see on a beach where the presence that left them there is no longer there, and through a murmur that allows us to hear, as come from far away, the sound of the unknown vastness that seduces and threatens to know”. “La escritura de la

According to Ortiz Sarmiento (1994). These factors are:

- a) The decline of tone in the re-catholization crusade of conservative governments, as a consequence of the bipartisan pact of the National Front, which released the links that prevented the secularization of education (this was even officially promoted during governments like the one of Carlos Lleras).
- b) The wear of traditional partisanship, particularly the weakening of its proselytizing ideological force, which created a great void capable of being filled by new types of political adhesions independent of the long-standing networks of the liberal and conservative parties.
- c) The opening of the university to new social sectors, no longer coming from the traditional elites.
- d) Political events of continental impact, such as the Cuban Revolution

In this sense “*the genealogy requires, therefore, thorough knowledge, large amount of stacked materials, patience*”; since historiography cannot be reduced to political history or more precisely to political and military history with its “*cyclopean monuments*” in *different dimensions of events* (government event, diplomatic event, war event) as immovable foundations, therefore we should not knock them down with “*great beneficial errors*”, but of “*small truths without appearance, established by a severe method*” as Nietzsche would tell us in *Humano, demasiado humano* (2005)

historia”, Universidad Iberoamericana, México, 2nd reprint, 2006. Foucault, op. cit.

We must not understand genealogy and historiography here as “*the eagle's deep vision of the philosopher in relation to the scrutinizing gaze of the wise*” but, on the contrary, as “*something opposed to the metahistorical display of ideal meanings and the indefinite teleological*” which presupposes the “*Political Violence*” and its narrative, what we propose to see here is the construction of the discursive events “*opposing the search for (their) «origin»*” (Foucault, 1994)

Conclusions

To ask about the phenomenon of “*The Violence*” in Colombia from the Historiographical perspective, we find different discursive practices of naturalization from the use of symbolic violence, that is, discourses that enunciate an affective-descriptive knowledge of the phenomenon, but that they allow us to approach since the symbolic plane opening the way to problematic questions and reflection on violence from the human sciences.

The bibliographical production of violence that was characterized by its marked partisan cut opens up problematic elements from the genealogical perspective, as proposed by Foucault, since it makes us visible the discursive production of the speech of violence from the different interests and partisan politics, subjective and affective, putting in evidence the power relations and interests that these discursive productions enunciate.

The Historiography of violence from the genealogical perspective, shows us the economic-social, cultural and political changes that frame the phenomenon of violence, making evident the need to create approaches from the practices of the different studies and social disciplines, since that the phenomenon of violence appears in its “nature” as a contradictory and ambivalent phenomenon, of a multicausal and multifactorial character.

Since the genealogical perspective the question about the violence in its dimension of social process, it loses its character of absolute origin in its expression of “Political Violence” and is evident in its structure, piece by piece, in its discord, in its contrasts, in its contrast, in discursive boundaries, as a blur that allow problematizing the violence since the multiplicity and the difference.

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