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Colombia, the country where anything is possible

Such achievements would allow the country not to be more bifronte, leaving behind what is stated in the epigraph of this editorial by García Márquez, product of which democracy will be, beyond formally liberal, in effect, participatory, direct, integral, radical and plebiscitary. In short, a democracy for life and not to cover up the enrichment and power of a few



We are two countries at once:

one on paper and one on reality.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez

In a country in which democracy does not overcome the formality of the vote, with fundamental rights pending full realization, after governments that for two centuries were at the service of landowners, oligarchs, bourgeois and all their networks of power and control, product of which social injustice is the norm, there is a turn product of which the

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millions who inhabit it enter a new period of their republican life in which anything can happen, both a transformative advance and the predominance and prolongation of political inertia.



Una doble posibilidad que no debe quedar al margen del análisis: Por un lado realizaciones, cambios, superaciones, transformaciones que de concretarse desatarán energías multiplicadas de creatividad y confianza en un futuro de justicia, equidad, convivencia y paz. Otra democracia, que haga honor a su palabra, podrá encarnarse en la vida cotidiana de quienes padecen los efectos de su negación. Por el otro, la prolongación de lo hasta ahora conocido, fruto del privilegio de los acuerdos por arriba, y una atención menor a contar con la disposición de los de abajo, método hasta ahora priorizado en la estructuración del equipo de gobierno y perfilamiento de las reformas por liderar que puede no solo cosechar la desilusión social sino también su ira.

Dos caras de una realidad en la que sobresale la disposición del país nacional para el cambio, como fue evidente en la segunda vuelta en la disputa entre dos campañas que

animaban a lo mismo y conectaban con conglomerados sociales dispuestos a concretarlo; campañas diferenciadas, entre otras cosas, en el ritmo y el método para hacer realidad lo prometido. Bien, para hacer efectiva la transformación anunciada y por concretar en el periodo 2022-2026, es indispensable que quienes asumen las riendas del gobierno el 7 de agosto, como lo han defendido, estén comprometidos hasta la médula con el programa de cambio ofertado. Y parte de ese compromiso debe materializarse en el estímulo a la conformación/consolidación de un sujeto social activo de gobierno.



No es un reto menor, ya que el camino para concretar tal giro no está libre de bloques de clase dispuestas a obstaculizar y, si es necesario, impedir un reformismo efectivo; pero también si la voluntad de revolver el país no está soportada en la participación directa y permanente de las fuerzas sociales que votaron por el cambio. Las circunstancias que sobrelleva el sistema mundo capitalista no pueden perderse de vista, toda vez que la crisis

larvada que lo arrincona puede constituirse en una rémora que carcoma y hunda el cuerpo en el que se abraza.

Es aquella una disputa en la que hay que superar a las fuerzas de contención, tensión y confrontación apropiadas a lo largo de su dominio del gobierno y del poder de la riqueza y la renta nacional, de lo cual las astronómicas cifras públicas privatizadas vía corrupción no quedan por fuera, lo que arroja como resultado uno de los países con mayor desigualdad en el mundo y uno de los dos más desiguales en América Latina, sino el primero, si se detallaran más allá del coeficiente Gini las brechas reinantes producto de la distribución de ingresos, los niveles de desigualdad imperantes entre sus regiones, incluso al interior de aquellas con mayor pobreza relativa –evidencia del desigual acceso a medios de producción y lo generado con ellos–, pero también la baja calidad del trabajo al que se accede, remunerado, además, de manera totalmente insuficiente (1).

Las fuerzas ahora en oposición, apropiando en su beneficio lo público, potencian, protegen y animan a lo largo de las décadas el rentismo como mecanismo de dominio político, y no solo como expresión de poder señorial, como sucedía en la Colonia, prolongando así la vigencia de una deformada estructura económica y política que en todo momento estimula el individualismo y la competencia, y que justifica la desigualdad social sin darle paso a la necesaria acción colectiva como opción indispensable para dejar atrás el desinterés por lo público y romper los reinantes indicadores de injusticia social que polarizan el cuerpo de la sociedad que somos.

El predominio del rentismo abre y prolonga el camino a una estructura socioeconómica en la que la minería, la especulación y la trampa encuentran todos los espacios para existir y prolongarse en el tiempo, hallando también en la connivencia social un aire propicio para ello. “Cómo voy yo ahí” (el célebre CVY), es un decir por doquier. De allí el terreno abonado, encontrado por el narcotráfico, el paramilitarismo y el neoliberalismo mismo para determinar el rumbo del país a lo largo de por lo menos las últimas cuatro décadas.



This rentierism has another of its manifestations in the control of the land, as a factor of political power and territorial domination, rather than as a support for production and generation of national wealth. Thus, as in the Colony and two centuries later, the amassing of this appreciated resource guarantees prestige, opens space for social control, and facilitates all kinds of illegal maneuvers, or that swim between the legal and the illegal.

This is how the land, in large areas, is dedicated to the grazing of the few semovientes, unproductive, blocking the vital realization of hundreds of thousands of peasants and indigenous people who require it to, with their own effort, live in dignity. A reality that in the urban cornered in the overcrowding to thousands of families, while subjecting many others to live in ranches built on the verge of death.

Savannahs, valleys, highlands, mountains, monopolized by a minority, are a formidable fuel for the armed confrontation that the country has registered since at least sixty years ago, enhanced since the 80s of the twentieth century by drug trafficking and paramilitarism, factors preceded in their illegality by extensive smuggling networks that the country knew throughout its national history.



As for the illegality served by the State at the service of a few, it should be noted that it remains essentially concerned with carrying out the armed control of a territory in whose extensions live millions of people who, since time immemorial, have been waiting for the realization of what the Constitution says, or what was promised by politicians in the campaign, and in what, in the face of the dead letter of rights and the muffled voice of promises, everyone makes use of what they can, without hesitating to exploit in an unauthorized manner or with care for the environment the veins of various minerals, gold on a larger scale, or in dry land; either in rivers, razing forests, marketing with animal species in danger of extinction or any other search capable of guaranteeing what is necessary not to die of hopelessness.

The land, for whose dominion in large areas landowners-gamonales and oligarchs fought throughout the nineteenth century in successive civil wars, in which they compromised the life of the peasantry that inhabited the territories under their stately control, is a clear expression of the manifest servile domination, only evidently broken in the second half of the twentieth century, when indigenous people achieve real recognition of a part of their rights. At this same time the armed insurgency also takes shape, first as self-defense against the violence unleashed from the highest spheres of power against the liberal peasantry, and then as a revolutionary manifestation for another possible society.

In spite of everything, to the attempts of agrarian reform sought by the bourgeoisie, which sought to open space to the capitalist modernization of the country (1934-1962/70), what Colombia knew and suffered was a broad process of agrarian counter-reform, first via the Chicoral Pact (1972) and then by the hand of paramilitarism, whose members – in the wake of death and intimidation with which they sowed the country – appropriated more

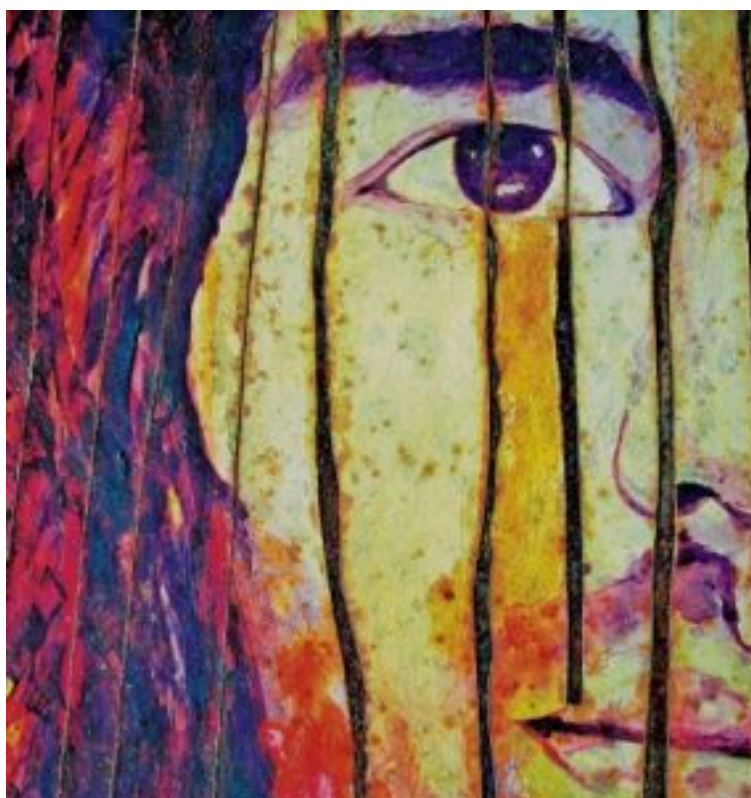
than seven million hectares, also displacing no less than eight million peasants who lived in the territories object of that desire for power and political, economic and military control.



This is how, "[...] According to the 2014 Agricultural Census of the Dane, of 2 million 370 thousand Existing Production Units in the country, 70 percent have less than 5 hectares and their accumulated extension amounts to only 2 million 160 thousand hectares, that is, 1.98 percent of the total area of the national territory. The percentage of Producing Units with an area of more than 1,000 hectares amounts to 5,842 (0.25% of the total number) and their accumulated area amounts to about 80.4 million hectares (74% of the total area). In congruence, the distribution of land tenure is such that the resulting Gini coefficient at the national level would be greater than 0.83" (2).

Thus, we have, the result of the appropriation of the State for its service and benefit, of the concentration of national wealth by a minority, of the denial not only of land for those who work it or consider it part of their being and worldview, but also of the enjoyment of efficient public services and at affordable rates, decent housing, full education, stable and well-paid work, as another accumulation of denials, a clearly unequal social structure, product of which a scarce "[...] 2.7 percent of households or 1.6 percent of people could be classified as upper class, with a share of 15.0 percent in the total income of households or individuals in the country. (As middle class it classifies) 27.2 percent or 34.6 percent of households, which participate with 52.0 percent of the total income of individuals and households. (In the broad spectrum of popular classes they register) 33.9 percent of households or 35.4 percent of people living in vulnerable situations, with 23.2 percent of total income. (Likewise), 28.7 percent of households or 35.8 percent of people living

below the monetary poverty line, with a share of only 9.8 percent of the country's total income. (Those who live like this), about 4 million 286 thousand, correspond to 17 million 462 thousand people, that is, 35.8 percent of the population. Among them there are 2 million 57 thousand households in extreme poverty or 13.8 percent of the total households, with 8 million 473 thousand people. (This broad spectrum of the popular therefore records that) the percentage of vulnerable and poor households in monetary terms corresponds to 63 percent of the total households and 71 percent of the population" (3).



Edwing Pinzón, untitled detail (Courtesy of the author)

Well, breaking the constants that have led Colombia to this extreme of things is what the new government promises to do. It is no small thing: redistributing the land by concretizing an effective and real agrarian reform in the face of an environmental model of life and coexistence with nature; break rentierism and from its hand clientelism and drug trafficking, overcome paramilitarism and seal peace with all the factors of violence that subject very large regions of the country to anxiety, operate a tax reform that guarantees, in effect, that whoever has more pays, at the same time as implementing an authentic state intervention in the productive, in the countryside as in the city, to open space for a real national sovereignty at all levels, including food, production and military, and with all this to bend the backbone to neoliberalism, while overcoming the submission maintained

throughout republican national history to the interests and agenda of the United States, in order to facilitate regional leadership in favor of integration, the design and realization of a model of coexistence beyond national borders, are some of the challenges that await the government of the Historical Pact, more than reformism from above, which can trap it between agreements and concessions for governability, an action for change from below.

Such achievements would allow the country not to be more bifronte, leaving behind what is stated in the epigraph of this editorial by García Márquez, product of which democracy will be, beyond formally liberal, in effect, participatory, direct, integral, radical and plebiscitary. In short, a democracy for life and not to cover up the enrichment and power of a few (4).

Notes

1. Garay, Luis Jorge, Colombia. Inequality and social exclusion, illegality and conflictivity, p. 80 (In editorial preparation)
2. 2. Ibid., p. 63
3. 3. Ibid., p. 76

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