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BOOK REVIEWS

Chernick, Marc (2008), *Acuerdo posible: solución negociada al conflicto armado colombiano*, Bogotá: Ediciones Aurora. ISBN 978-958-9136-3-86, PP. 284

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In the realization of my doctoral research about the role of victims in the peace process in Santander, Colombia, I had the opportunity to attend, for the first time, at the 14th edition of Bucaramanga Book Fair of the Autonomous University of Bucaramanga UNAB, held in 2016, which had the motto: "Leer en Paz" – Read in Peace – I was able to know about the work of the Professor Marc Chernick, and one year later I had the honor of talking with him by phone. An investigation that allows to understand multiple aspects of the national and international scenario that revolves around the degradation of the internal armed conflict in Colombia (one of the world's longest), the construction of peace and the relation with the model of democracy, framed by a brutal political violence.

This book is the result of his research begun little earlier of his arrival in Colombia in 1980, the original text for this book was written in English language for Aurora Editions – Ediciones Aurora –, and has been translated and published into Spanish language. So far there is not the printed in English language. Three editions have been produced: first edition in 2008, second edition in 2009, and the third edition in 2012; this last edition is written in a historical momentum, it enables us to observe at the past experiences of peace in the last three decades of *peacebuilding* and *peacemaking*, such as the pro-

cess of demobilization of the United Self-Defenders of Colombia – Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia AUC - (2002 – 2006) in the government of Álvaro Uribe Vélez and the peace talks at the Caguán (January 7 1999 – February 21 2002), between the government of Colombia of Andrés Pastrana Arango and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army - Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia—Ejército del Pueblo, FARC–EP -. Among other experiences of peace.

Chernick's book is divided into an introduction to the third edition, a preface for the first edition, and six chapters: chap. 1. *EL PROCESO DE PAZ COLOMBIANO DESDE UNA PERSPECTIVA COMPARATIVA*, chap. 2 *LOS PROCESOS DE PAZ: DE LA URIBE (1984) A URIBE (2002)*, chap. 3 *LA COMUNIDAD INTERNACIONAL Y LA PAZ*, chap. 4 *INJUSTICIA, VIOLENCIA, AMNISTÍA Y PAZ*, chap. 5 *LA INDUSTRIA Y EL DESARROLLO DE LA DROGA EN LA REGIÓN ANDINA Y EL CONFLICTO ARMADO EN COLOMBIA*, chap. 6 *CONCLUSIONES: MÁS ALLÁ DE LA GUERRA, EL RETORNO A LA MESA DE NEGOCIACIONES*. The introduction to the third edition was written in Bogotá and Washington between July and September 2012, that is, in the very beginning of the Dialogue Table in Havana. In fact, one more after the introduction indicated above, the Colombian government and the FARC-EP, through a joint statement (October 18, 2012) from Norway, agreed to the public installation of the conversation table. This investigation helps us to understand better all the facts developed in the armed conflict and the construction of peace, before, during and after, this research and the death of Professor Chernick on April 18 2018, in the city of Cali, Colombia, where he was attending precisely a peace event.

Author's work addresses in the colombian scenario in six decades of violence and three decades of peace processes, the understanding of the local dynamics of the internal armed conflict and how was the internationalization of this conflict.

The war and peace facts (2009 – 2012) are taken by the author for his valuable reflections; the main arguments raised in his first two editions (2008 and 2009) are the following: There is no military solution to the internal armed conflict of Colombia, peace is negotiated with enemies, peace must be inclusive, positive peace with respect to negative peace, the peace processes must be seen as special forums to achieve much needed and long-delayed political and social reforms, the correlation of forces in the battlefield will not determine the outcome of the negotiation table, cease-fire and enemies of peace, or spoilers.

In addition to this, author presented concepts that were not addressed in the two previous editions: The introduction of the concept of terrorism has been discredited and subverted the initiatives to end protracted colombian conflict, truth and reconciliation, justice and construction of peace, a peace process must incorporate diverse voices.

es and representative of the civil society, and clarify the lines between conflict and post conflict.

In the first chapter author analyzes the dynamics of armed conflict and the peace processes from a comparative perspective with other international experiences: El Salvador and Guatemala. Despite this vast international perspective, he does not ignore the internal gaze, analyzing the development of the political violence around the territorial control. Similarly, in chap. 4 that explains the dramatic consequences of the colombian legal system, the dynamics of violence in Colombia, and the regional sources of violence, consigned:

The scope of colombian violence is intensely regional, which reflects the limited scope of the legal State and its replacement by a mosaic of local and regional networks of private power. These networks are constituted by gamonales (politicians) that belong to one of the two traditional parties that maintain strong ties with the armed forces, the landlords, the merchants, the local businessmen and the paramilitary groups. These networks also include those that operate in dominated areas by the guerrillas, as well as those controlled by narcotraffickers and more autonomous paramilitary groups.. (Chernick, 2012, p. 191). (Own Translation).

Chernick's approach: "Enemies of peace, or spoilers", is an important reflection that has emerged of the present Book Review, based on his broad knowledge and experience in Colombia. In the chap. 1, defines the *spoilers* and directly criticizes the fact this concept has not been developed and not has it understood adequately; Author identifies, describes, and analyzes about their ends and means, their *modus operandi*. And warn on the danger: "Beware of spoileres".

According to Chernick the notion of *spoiler* has two meaning: "factions within one of the armed actors –parts of the process- who opposes the agreements and, therefore, do everything they can to ruin the posible agreements"; and also means: "third parties, out of the negotiation table, which have interests in obstructing the agreements".

Related to the identification and description indicates that in all peace processes enemies will emerge who will do everything posible to derail and discredit negotiations. In the colombian context he recognizes with examples, which had come from guerrilla: Negotiations in Tlaxcala (1992), and in the Caguán (1998-2002); and from the State. Indicating that the spoilers more significant have been the paramilitaries. Author had written about it in the first part of the book (Introduction of the third edtion), he considered:

The enemies can come from the same State, from the guerrilla forces or from outside. In Colombia, the paramilitary forces and their social and state allies have repeatedly tried to spoil the peace processes, generating an escalation of the dirty war against civilians, reinserted and leaders of social movements.. (Ibid., p.20). (Own Translation).

Related to the arguments of the author we can indicate the situation during and after the signature of the *Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace*. According to Instituto de Estudios para el Desarrollo y la Paz INDEPAZ - The Institute for Development and Peace Studies INDEPAZ - between January 1 2016 and May 20 2019, 837 people have been murdered (702 are social leaders and people human right defenderes, and 135 former FARC combatant). (INDEPAZ, May 23 2019). There are a high levels of impunity in these assassinations.

To conclude this book is an interesting work to undertand the national and international scenario, especially the role of the United States of America and European Union in the search of peace in Colombia, giving us a deep reflection about how all actors involved wasted huge opportunities to obtain peace.

Related to spoileres, the author explains several aspects, the conditions and the risks, but in the same time raises that for a successful peace process: "The only way of ensuring that these spoileres –internal o external- do not succeed is that all participants convene to stay at the negotiatiion table in spite of everything."

The reflections over time have been confirmed, during current Peace Process between Colombian government and FARC-EP, after the signing of the Final Agreement and its effective implementation.

In the challenge of democracy and peace, one of the most valuable reflection of Professor Chernick could be: "In Colombia the peace consists, fundamentally, in the construction of an inclusive and participatory regime and of a legitimate, legal, respectful and provider presence of the State throughout the national territory."