

Discernments about the tragic memories of the armed conflict in Colombia: Fernando Botero's painting and the depiction of violence

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Abstract

The present text aims to generate reflections on the role played by the visual arts, with special emphasis on the painting of Fernando Botero, which shows in one of his collections donated by the painter to Colombia, great interest in retaking violent events in the country which currently they continue to be remembered sporadically. To sustain this issue, the thinking of authors such as Michael Pollak, Gaborit Pascaline, among others, is taken up in terms of an interdisciplinary dialogue between art and memories of tragic events in post-conflict times. Finally, a little is inquired into the role of heritage, assigned by Colombian governmental entities to the canvases of the painter, a role in which his memorial intention is ignored but his tendency to show folklore and customs. This topic opens the doors for further investigative analyzes related to the "underground memories" of the conflict of the late twentieth century and early 2000s in Colombia.

Key Words: Memory; Painting; Armed Conflict; Minorities.

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1. Introduction

Each society has instituted its own assimilation of the past using the context and time where it is located, therefore, the various official histories, surrounding in the world once go through moments of breaks, they reach to be rewritten, because their actors understand well that the past is not synonymous with events that have already occurred, but the analysis applied to them, depend on the present. In that sense, the processes crossed by the memory, specifically the collective memory, of which we have extensive studies from the theoretical observations of Maurice Halbwachs in 1930 (1990), by the way, of the immense value for the Humanities and Social sciences, have allowed understand the relativity of its conceptual construction, arising according to the group and context in which it is circumscribed, hence its dissimilar character, its temporal variations and even its private and public side. The latter, it seems to us, alludes to the memories contained in the different collectivities, modeled according to the experiences of its members in concomitance with their conscious ways of facing time, among which forgetting is included, that is, those current aspects of the past, separated because of political, cultural, axiological changes.

Undoubtedly, for the sake of fleeing from any great loss of memory, the art of Latin America has permeated its essence of narrative, in order to confer meanings to the latent past of the territories conforming its extension. Given this purpose, painting has directly contributed to the visualization of memories that largely involve the recognition of groups, because through language, sometimes figurative, sometimes abstract, there is a question to the official memory. Perspective that, agreeing with Pollak (2006), would correspond to the national memory. Likewise, the thinker makes self-criticisms derived from the social development of the artist who in turn is a member of several collectivities, in the same way, parallel to the other artistic activities, he has tried to reinterpret facts and consequently, offers us new suggestions of memory that are not concordant with memory national collective (Pollak, 2006, p. 18).

Based on the above-mentioned lines, it is expected here to encourage an art-memory dialogue based on an analytical and practical methodology that includes visits to museums, assistance to Memory and Identity classes, and reading of relevant academic texts, coming from the painting of our continent, since within characteristics that compose it at a thematic level we frequently locate: "The priority obligation of linking art and society, especially when it suffers from serious cultural deficiencies and does not have the capacity or means to access information that places it as the protagonist of the story" (Traba, 1994, p. 14). Therefore, it is possible to find works alluding to war, tragedies, syncretism, conflicts, hybridization, miscegenation, among many other topics linked to cultural pluralism. Thus, it is completely coherent to see how the image and, occasionally, the pictorial activity becomes a space of resistance when presenting questions, sometimes incompatible with the prevailing history, given the need of it to homogenize the discourses. In effect, imbalances of all kinds that are natural when talking about pluralism. However, for artists their activity is the propitious tool to fight against the amnesia of their lands.

2. Some conceptual reflections

Based on the statement, we began deliberating a bit about the visual elements revived by the painter Fernando Botero in his canvases dedicated to Colombia, in favor of the memory recovery of some of the tragedies that occurred during the years of armed conflict, dominant for more than half a century in the country. Such recovery seeks to exalt those directly affected, the victims, who without hesitation, we know, are the protagonists hardly understood in history; as Traba claimed in preliminary lines, this despite containing a strong identity, achieved thanks to the existing affinity with the group with which it shares memories of tragic events. In fact, it is feasible to bring up ideas about the memory of tragedies, postulated in principle by the French anthropologist Joël Candau, who states: “They contribute to define the field of the memorable” (2001, p. 147) as “[...] leaves marks shared for a long time by those who suffered them or whose loved ones suffered them, profoundly modifying their personalities” (Candau, 2001, pp. 147-148). These brands are often silenced or transmitted with difficulty to conform the identity of a minority maintained outside the legitimated historical accounts, usually in favor of cultural values promoted by the encompassing societies, governments or policies of the day.

In the case of Colombia, a country that since the Spanish conquest has not stopped experiencing internal violence of all kinds, the 20th century hand in hand with the beginnings of the two thousand years, brought with it many infractions, such as: terrorism, forced disappearance, emergence of other rebel armed movements, increase in poverty, environmental disasters, among others. The victims of these and numerous other barbarities committed, both by the illegal groups (guerrillas and drug traffickers have been the most common) and by the State, began to build, within the framework of the peace dialogues promoted by the government of President Juan Manuel Santos and the guerrillas of the FARC, underground memories (Pollak, 2006, p. 18)² opposing the truths promoted by the leaders of the State in the periods indicated above, which (like all officers) had to show and argue the soundness of their acts of war, of course, without delving into the damage, much less its humanitarian impact. It should be noted, these memories have gradually occupied a prominent place in the social discourse, led by the phase of transition between conflict and peace, in conjunction with the expected claim of the owners of those memories, convening in an unprecedented way the first approaches between victims and the national government.

Often this type of change is due to the interaction offered by the triad reconciliation-end of the conflict-peace. Gaborit Pascaline, from his analyzes of the societies framed in post-conflict, complements us by saying: “Dans aucun des conflits, in effet, the populations n’ont oublié la guerre. Elles in gardent des souvenirs atténués, sélectifs; mais ce sont

2 Today, after the arrival of the current government mandate together with its interest in establishing the peace process finalized two years ago and the post-conflict lived now, the nation as well as several academic, university and research centers (some for quite some time) have chosen to give life to bodies and bodies dedicated to understand, study, collect and disseminate all kinds of information or stories that emerged from the victims of the armed conflict, to nourish that part of the history of the country where only war predominated. The National Center of Historical Memory (CNMH) is one of them.

parfois des années plus tard; et in temps de crise, which tensions réapparaissent” (2006, p. 6). Appreciation at the same time similar to the position of Pollak, after discerning about the predisposition of the academics to study the birth, stability and fall of conflicts, one of them consists of the processes of “de-Stalinization” aimed at the extraction of the memories of the thousands of citizens who suffered state crimes between 1924 and 1953. The author declares:

Este exemplo mostra a necessidade, para os dirigentes, de associar uma profunda mudança política a uma revisão (auto) crítica do passado. Ele remete igualmente aos riscos inerentes a essa revisão (da memória), na medida em que os dominantes não podem jamais controlar perfeitamente até onde levarão as reivindicações que se formam ao mesmo tempo em que caem os tabus conservados pela memória oficial anterior. Este exemplo mostra também a sobrevivência durante dezenas de anos, de lembranças traumatizantes, lembranças que esperam o momento propício para serem expressas (Pollak, 1989, p. 3).

Review the memory, it becomes one of the main links to build the new official history that coincides with the denunciations to the inequalities of power, coming from the voices and memories of marginalized and/or dominated actors, voices of the public discourse and the state policies affiliated with the violent past. However, it is clear that the effects were immediate in certain regions and certain groups³, thanks to multiple factors that include their geographical location and the influence of local rulers. Based on this, it is the experiences of those directly impacted (paradoxically the least listened to) the way to reach the underground memories of the Colombian internal conflict, insofar as their minority situation usually makes them elusive to official accounts, not always find, receptors willing to digest them, it is more, they are usually elusive even for media instruments and publishing systems, sometimes ignorant of “The durability of the social fabric and the institutional structures of a society” (Pollak, 2006, p. 28), in their eagerness to achieve credibility in their communications.

Taking up the issue, the memories of minorities have been occupying a vital place in the field of art, in the first instance because they confront, paraphrasing Pierre Nora, the historical tendency to unitarily represent the past (1993, p. 9) and, in the second instance, because they give reason for the subjectivity of the tragic events, inasmuch as they go unnoticed through the daily life of the citizens who do not know them. Following these considerations, it is possible to read the work of Fernando Botero from his inclination to go beyond what was formulated by history (lends to look for signs of the future, without understanding the past), to the point of gathering those who they are marginalized, by provoking the stories that can link them together.

3 This does not indicate that they were not affected, because the consequences of the war can also be seen in hundreds of phenomena in which they find themselves: the social order, economic complications, public safety, the irregularity of education, violations of rights humans, among others.

Clearly, such an initiative is even more perceptible in many of its voluminous figures when the viewer remembers knowledge of violent events in the country, and increases when they (these) know or experience specifically the social story suggested in the piece, as it can easily to feel identified with the observed and in the same way moved by feeling a testimonial member of the visual story. On the ignorant of the referred violent panorama, they will go through strong interpretation processes, which lead to think that the color, the showiness and the rounded ambience of the canvas exhibit little funny scenarios (being the jocosity, habitual attribute of the characters Boteristas), the curiosity it comes into play; the proposition *La mémoire* will be in effet différente selon that l'on soit de Pascaline (Pollak, 2006, p. 6), we see, collects very well the reflection formulated.

3. The memory in the “Boteristas” canvases

In the context of the previous reflection, it is observed that the Colombian artist elaborated his pictorial version of strong catastrophes, such as the *Massacre in Colombia* (2000) [Fig. 01] and *Death in the Cathedral* (2002) [Fig. 02]. Allegory of the killing of Bojayá, currently scarcely remembered by the non-inhabitants of the lands where they occurred, the media and the state. Despite not having witnessed any of the said massacres; the visits to Colombia and the attention given to the press of all kinds have allowed him until now, to keep abreast of what happened every day there.



*Fig. 1. Massacre in Ciénaga Grande. Fernando Botero. 2001
 Oil on canvas (147 x 210 cm).
 Bogotá National Museum of Colombia.
 Source: Photograph by the author*



Fig. 2. *Death in the cathedral.*
Fernando Botero. 2002
Oil on canvas (196x131 cm.).
Bogotá National Museum of Colombia.
Source: Photograph by the author

In view of these circumstances, the artist has communicated in several interviews the essential intentions of his paintings: “Violence began to be in my head and I felt a day that I had to paint, to make a statement of the horror I felt at this panorama of the country” (Cited in *El País*, 2005). He also stated on one occasion some of the founding principles of the subject of Colombian violence, existing in twenty-five of his works composed of specific references and references⁴:

The artistic reconstruction of the conflict, which is finally reduced to a few images or symbols, is a need that one feels not to live with his back to this situation. My country has two faces. Colombia is that kind world that I always paint, but it also has that terrible face of violence. Then at a certain moment I have to show the other side of Colombia (cited in *El País*, 2005).

In this order of ideas, we note the willingness to complain latent in the work of Botero as soon as he resorts to painful events, sometimes treated locally as ephemeral news. The apparent transience and normality with which the majority of acts of war were being confronted, can then be one of the founders of the one named by the painter: *Reconstruction of the conflict*; therefore, I dare to say that we are dealing with “An interpretation, a reading of the history of tragedies” (Candau, 2001, p. 147), containing huge meanings for a group of Colombians

⁴ The works of this collection are in the National Museum of Colombia, are part of a series of donations given by the artist in 2004.

aware that their memories could be put crisis to the nation and, consequently, they would question the degree of culpability of the leaders of the time (not only that of criminal men and women), many so far without being legally examined, many others, little by little beginning judicial follow-ups to caused by the recently initiated peace process.

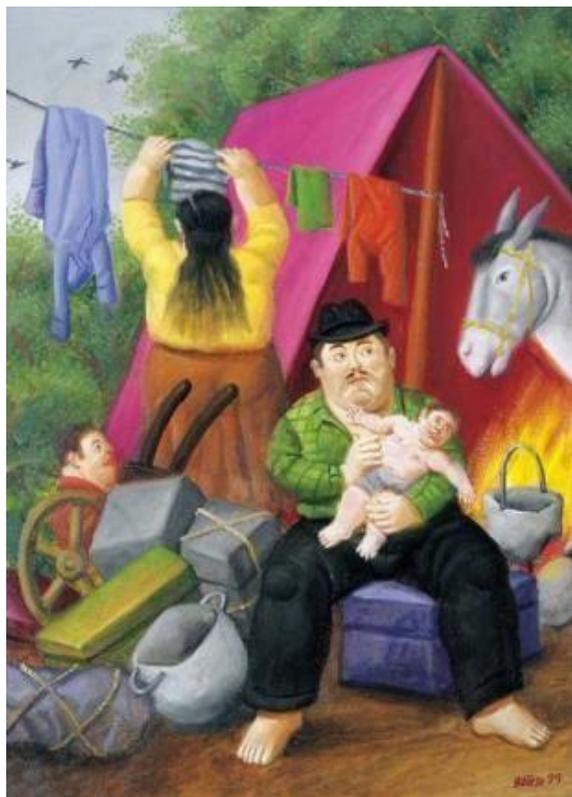
In addition, it should be noted the scarce historiographical content related to the period of conflict welcomed by the artist given the immediate nature of its composition, in other words, the fabrics in question, began immediately to be internalized acts; the reliability of its premise did not reach the filters of the historians. Regarding that, Botero asserted in 2001: "But in view of the magnitude of the drama Colombia is going through, the moment came when I felt the moral obligation to leave a testimony about such an irrational moment in our history. Therefore, and up to the present, paintings born [...] simultaneously from the painter's experience with the present, as if he had experienced the desire to make the present, the horizon of it [...]" (Hartog, 1996, p. 135), make up the desire to artistically reflect the reality of the subaltern memories, supported by the interest to ensure the transmission of a few.

Based on these lines we can say that *Massacre in Colombia* (2000) [Fig. 01] and *Displaced* (1999) [Fig. 03] parallel to the two announced canvases, tell us about real events, the first, as if it were a photographic capture of the opening of the massacre, tries to reveal the exact moment in which paramilitaries interrupt the integration carried out by a group of laborers in the region of *Mejor esquina*, in the department of Córdoba; the third figure, although not specifically evoking an event, focuses on forced displacement, one of the most negative and preponderant resulting phenomena of war, The cloth puts a peasant family in sight trying to accommodate themselves with few of their belongings in the countryside.

By virtue of the above, *Displaced* can symbolize the uncertainty produced by forcibly leaving the home and surely the origins, their title is very dissenting, certainly, groups segregated as indigenous, African descendants, villagers, women and men alike could add even more meaning to the attacks of war and state segregation.

Another element that stands out in the *Boterista* memorial universe lies in making public part of the unofficial versions of the adjacent memoirs, because as it was said, the compendium of pieces was created almost immediately after the events, facts of which little or nothing is spoken of now, even though their records are occasionally shared (almost never) by the Colombian press. Today, the post-conflict environment has lent itself to inquiring into voices veiled by violence, causing artistic manifestations to self-gest the willingness to share memories of such an act, at least some fragment, with the purpose of contributing to the survival of the (the) group(s) thus implied, to superimpose the collective memory by the individual or personal, showing communities that it is better to remember fractions of the painful event than to forget it altogether, because in the end, it conforms the cultural nature of a set of individuals.

Dans les sociétés post conflictuelles, entendues au sens large, tout un pan de l'histoire peut être 'oublié' et 'refoulé' dans la précipitation, et l'urgence de reconstruire, au détriment d'un véritable travail d'analyse sur les évènements, et



*Fig. 3. Displaced.
Fernando Botero. 1999.
Oil on canvas (Measures unknown).
Bogotá. National Museum of Colombia.
Source: Photography of the author*

dans la plupart des cas au détriment des victimes qui devront sacrifier leurs souvenirs individuels pour la garantie de la survie du groupe (Pascaline, 2006, p. 3).

Thus, in the present, the emotional charge contained in the paintings, subjects the victim's ways of thinking and the prolonged hegemonic versions of the facts to judgment, in accordance with the current social configurations of the search for silent memories, and already founded by them in the segregated communities. If we stop to analyze the intensity with which the memories are scrutinized today in Colombia in order that the entire citizenship, or at least a fragment of the living one besides the atrocities, recognize what happened, we perceive vehemently the memories of experiences unknown by the majority, but something different happens with the symbols, or better, with specific characters, converted into mnemonic insignias of the armed conflict because of their determining acts justified by some, rejected by others. The guerrilla commander of the FARC, Pedro Antonio Marín Marín alias Manuel Marulanda Vélez or *Tirofijo* and Pablo Escobar Gaviria, appropriately exemplify this last part of the article.

In this regard, the eighties and nineties were quite critical in the southern cone. Colombia, on the other hand, was the largest producer of drugs, which generated close relations with the United States, because it became an international threat. Pablo Escobar was the leader

of the *Cartel de Medellín*, a monopolizing organization for the production and consumption of narcotics, which greatly benefited the Antioquia department, allowing him, among other things, to carry out charitable works, sports facilities in marginal neighborhoods, give away markets, provide indeterminate sums of money to the humble inhabitants. However, good deeds had a drastic counterpart composed of extortion, thousands of murders of people of all social classes, manipulation of the public force, kidnappings, terrorism, among others, was a difficult situation for the nation to handle if we keep in mind that guerrillas and paramilitaries, maintained relations with Escobar due to the interests of each one to sustain their businesses and clandestine operations.

As indicated, the existence of insurgent groups in Colombia includes the FARC guerrillas; an organization defined by leftist ideologies, focused on achieving political power in order to govern the people without sociopolitical and economic inequalities, but, that popular pillar with which it was born, lasted a short time once the armed confrontation between paramilitaries intensified, guerrillas, army, drug traffickers. The sharpening led the commander and ringleader (since 1964) *Tirofijo* to schedule attacks in which civil society was the victim (explosions, rapes, disappearances, among others) even, knowing how costly it is to finance a war, actions such as kidnappings and the collection of taxes from peasants, occupied a great importance in their criminal activities.

Why do we refer to these characters briefly displaying acts that are attributed to them? Because while they were executed, those, along with many other events, were supported by both men, destabilizing the societies and passing the government, being that by not being prepared to assume the human and economic costs incurred by corruption in correlation with vandalism, it was similarly contaminated by acting similarly to enemies. Undoubtedly, Fernando Botero knew what was like living under the environment of *Tirofijo* [Fig. 04] and Escobar [Fig. 05], firstly due to the already initiated bipartisan violence at the beginning of his adolescence, successive to the founding of the FARC during his adulthood as an artist, secondly, because he was a compatriot, almost contemporary with Pablo Escobar. That is, feeling so close to the emergence and action of those leaders, choose to make them the subject of his paintings (Pablo Escobar painted two), contributing to what was at the time, the recent history of the country.

Since 1999, the artist has the will to recreate in paintings the dramatic situation of the country. He makes paintings as vestiges of a historical moment, in which he gathers the 'dark folklore' through the representation of the death of Pablo Escobar or the portrait of Manuel Marulanda Vélez '*Tirofijo*'. With these paintings Botero has the will to recreate in paintings the dramatic situation of the country (Londoño, 2004, p.1, cited in Villegas Editores).

The painter insists on visualizing and retaining elements of the collective memory, not leaving everything in the hands of the dispensable because in the endless representations of the past there are only remains to scrutinize and try to preserve the silenced imaginaries, promoters of the non-loss of memory, or be, to preserve as much as possible of us. He anticipated what until now is achieving the post conflict with its effort to investigate the veiled



Fig. 4. Fixed Shooting.
Fernando Botero. 1999.
Oil on canvas (45,72 33,02 cm.).
Bogota. Botero Museum (Banco de la República).
Source: Photography of the author.



Fig. 5. The death of Pablo Escobar.
Fernando Botero. 1999.
Oil on canvas (58x38 cm.).
Bogota. Botero Museum (Banco de la República).
Source: Photography of the author.

voices. Unquestionably, the pieces do not fully encompass the collective memory, much less the underground memories, rather they want, in Hartog's words, "Preservar, reconstituir, um passado já desaparecido ou em vias de se apagar irremediavelmente" (1996, p. 138).

This last pair of canvases, appeal to endless dramas, hence the complementary memories, pass through the medium of misunderstanding, rejoicing and sorrow, all depending on the observer, to the extent that, according to the perspective of their social group, *Tirofijo* or Escobar can be seen from the reader's; a revolutionary in favor of the good of the people, or a criminal, a benevolent mafioso or an ambitious and rogue drug trafficker.

Finally, we would like to add a question linked to Hartog's thought; the issues of memory occupying public places. Previous lines, I had commented on the recent reappearance of minority or underground memories of the peace process and the questions raised by it to the official histories of the conflict, in which the victims were excluded for years. The questions have generated then crisis in the relative to the insufficient reasons given by the previous governments to the attacked civil society. However, being a subject of great magnitude, I want to concentrate only on how the painter has been for a long time at the service of alternative memorial versions in search of a place in the present, emphasized in situations of suffering

unknown by the immense majority. Revealing, the need to retain the past now that Colombia is preparing for a peaceful future, while historians also cooperate with the re-accommodation history-memory.

Such motives lead us to associate the themes of the painter with places of memory, seen by Hartog as “heuristic instrument” (Hartog, 1996, p. 140) that put into crisis the regimes of historicity and reflect on the differences inherent in the multiple present. Once again, the Frenchman Pierre Nora supports the proposal, ratifying:

A curiosidade pelos lugares onde a memória se cristaliza e se refugia está ligada a este momento particular de nossa história. Momento de articulação onde a consciência onde a consciência da ruptura com o passado se confunde com o sentimento de uma memória esfacelada, mas onde o esfacelamento desperta ainda memória suficiente para que se possa colocar o problema de sua encarnação (Nora, 1993, p. 7).

The painting opens the channel to explore the memories that were “crystallized” intrinsically as synonymous with historiographical nonconformity, these “[...] sinais de um reconecimento de grupo numa sociedade that tends to reconcile iguais and idênticos individuals” (Nora, 1993, p. 13), supported by this tendency to materialize scattered memories, I think it is viable to contemplate it as a place of memory, when trying to reveal the memories to be preserved, because the collective memory is essential to us as social beings so it has repercussions, as it was said, in the individual memories. Likewise, the collection alluding to Colombian violence knows how to activate the memories among the individuals who witnessed them and the option of giving them to the following generations who, through different references, concretely, the symbolic materiality of the work of art, receive them. Donating these pieces to the competent country is the way taken to leave in free circulation the recorded tragedies, necessary to understand that the presence of homogeneous memories is impossible and that the particularities of the groups are not usually spontaneous trying to explain this process of creation and its critical attitude against barbarism, Botero said:

I must say that the feeling I experienced when painting these paintings is not the same pleasure I feel when I paint the world I paint. It is another sensation. The very fact of proposing, as an artist, to find a symbolic image that reflects the great drama of Colombia, means a state of mind that is not pleasant but painful. The artistic reconstruction of the conflict, which is finally reduced to a few images or symbols, is a need that one feels not to live with his back to this situation. My country has two faces. Colombia is that kind world that I always paint, but it also has that terrible face of violence. Then at a certain moment I have to show the other side of Colombia⁵.

And since it is possible to locate memorial factors based on the brushstrokes of boterist art, whose meanings have not been altered by the passage of time or by the beliefs of the

5 Words of Fernando Botero during the delivery of one of his donations to the National Museum of Bogotá (April 24, 2004).

people identified with their remembrance and denunciation, I add to the idea of seeing them as a place of memory, its character of cultural patrimony, is declared in 2012 by the Ministry of Culture of Colombia granted, according to the Minister of Culture of the time, by:

[...] his admirable insistence and dedication to creative work, has managed to create an unmistakable cultural reference in his way of approaching the world, which is the pride of Colombians. In his work we have been able to see everyday scenes -both in our cities and in our domestic environments-, we have seen parading the most emblematic figures of public life, and we have recognized vivid scenes of cultural traditions.

Logically, they were granted spaces in the most important museums of the territory, especially in the National Museum of Colombia, although the resolution does not speak of their particular appreciation of the armed conflict, there are if allusions to the survival of traditions and *costumbristas* scenes, omitting:

As memórias geralmente qualificadas de dolorosas pelo que elas portam, integram acontecimentos trágicos que colocados em relevo, eventualmente patrimonializados em museus, lugares ou monumentos, não confortam o sentimento de pertencimento, manipulado por vezes com a memória histórica desses acontecimentos quando as circunstâncias se impõem (Candau, 2010, pp. 44-45).

The so-called by Candau as painful memories, notoriously, are linked to the notion of memories of victims and collective memories, developed in this work, also, if in the first instance there have been no official communications pointing to the presence of these in the Art of Botero, the then director of the National Museum of Colombia, María Victoria de Robayo, if she began to size them affirming:

Between the years 2004 and 2005 Maestro Fernando Botero, with his proverbial generosity towards the country, gave in donation to the Colombians, through the National Museum of Colombia, a set of works in which he expresses his commitment working as a theme the drama of violence, which has caused so much pain. This set is integrated into the program of traveling exhibitions of the National Museum of Colombia, so that other museums and other audiences can understand the Colombian drama of recent years, and perhaps, from a call to conscience, avoid the horrors of the war is repeated (Robayo, 2012).

Afterwards he end expressing:

In this way, the objectives of our cultural and educational entities are combined, in the quest to take cultural heritage as a starting point for research and proposals that advocate understanding and interpreting the images produced by maestro Botero as a record of a blunt reality and painful.

In contrast, it should be noted that although the 479 works submitted by Fernando Botero to Colombia and distributed among the most important museums in the country, are legitimately considered as assets of cultural interest and national heritage, the justification issued by

the entities when it comes to declaring such merit, the government generalizes the symbolic material of his composition, if we take into account that internally coexist sets of themes, including clear, violence (as it was said, twenty-five correspond to this topic). We attribute the detail to the presence of what is called, by Pollak, as “Framing of memory”, which, in broad strokes, feeds on the material provided by history as it is interpreted and combined with a number of references concerned with maintaining social borders (Pollak, 2006, p. 25). It is the result of the eagerness of the discourse of the powerful to establish a memory common to the collective and consistent with its intrinsic congruence.

4. Final considerations

In the context of the issues dealt with in the text, we note the complexity of their meanings but also the relevance of them in our Latin American land. It is to understand that both history and the memory (or memories) of the internal war lived by Colombia, are aspects of broad magnitude not only social, but also academically, to the point of allowing studies by appealing to several fields and/or points of view, so what has been developed here have been issues covered in a shallow way, always waiting for their eventual complementation.

The intention to approach memory and art, demonstrates that interdisciplinary observations require a work of dialogue, since they should include as much as possible different interpretations given to the theme of the conflict, to the relations of both with subjectivity and the way of recognizing experiences in the individuals, based on their specificities. Although, it was tried to establish a link between some underground memories and the works of the painter Fernando Botero allusive to the Colombian conflict of the end of the century and the beginning of the two thousand, both issues handle dissimilar riches concerning the individual theoretical content, as well as, in the congruent to access the memories.

Sustained in this, we have on the one hand the tendency to make visible the memory of events that seemed, led to momentary scandals despite the deaths, internal displacement or pain caused, but as if it were a premonitory act, the tendency to paint almost in synchrony, such events, has made the works of Botero, reflections of unofficial memories taken up today in favor of the solidification of a general peace, hence when it comes to investigating in the sense assigned by the victims or by the indirect witnesses to certain moments of the armed violence in Colombia, the pieces named here along with other nineteen (belonging to the same collection) give us a first sketch. Visual art then becomes the means to graphically reconstruct what government discourses, with their speeches and their inclination to standardize the national collective memory, seek to promote through a history that favors only non-minority cultures.

Although the intention of the artist has not been to directly contribute to the memories of the victims, but rather to establish complaints of facts unattended by the majorities from their execution to the present, the appreciations of Pascaline and Pollak helped to understand that the memories are conserved depending on certain factors, one of the most

important are the tragedies and their traumas, for that reason, they have the possibility of reappearing subsequently generating the possibility of reviewing the preserved memories, being something that no official mandate has managed to subordinate or control. In this order, Candau addresses the memories of tragedies following the concept of memories of tragedies, helping us to distinguish the substantiality of the story of suffering and how they account for the directions taken by the damaged societies, which cause divergences between groups, same that share the national territory.

The identities originating from this system, usually maintain the need to remember and/or know the past, depending on their place of belonging, in addition to what is established by them as a reminder, because they provide lights of values based on collective memory; being so, it is reasonable that icons, objects, sites, in our text punctually, pictorial works, from their desire to make present the absent, experience the sensitivity of memory in order to reconstruct realities experienced before the obscuration brought by oblivion. This situation leads us to think that although the artistic activity of Fernando Botero was declared a material patrimony of the Colombians, their non-verbal images of violence can still contribute with the evocations of memories of the victims of said event, people in turn, members of subjugated groups, since as it was seen, their official declaration as patrimony, this generalizes the relationship of the Colombians with the canvases of the painter and the *costumbrista* (Traditional style) reflection for them staged, since it is notorious that they hardly indicated the same for the communities highlighted. We hope, the revisions carried out by the post conflict over the voices of the little or nothing heard until now, will be fixed in the narratives immersed in mnemonic processes of the different artistic manifestations, because by being separated from the masses, from the trade or the legitimated discourse continue to wait to share their stories in the form of symbolism and figuration.

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