

## EDITORIAL

### **XV National and V International Sasju Conference Opening Speech “Unrest in Latin America, New Legal and Social Challenges for the Region” Universidad Nacional del Rosario, October 2014**

Sociology of Law, I consider, could not detach from the political and economic contexts by which the Law runs through, and neither from the impact that its hesitancy has in social life and its cultural web.

Latin America is a territory of changes, conquests, and transitions.

Latin America speaks with institutional expectations steeped in European and American communities, but explained in words of idiosyncrasies of its own.

Latin America explores alternatives and finds ebbing antagonisms.

Latin America is metaphor and reality at the same time. As it happens in literature, it sometimes is magic realism; sometimes Costumbrismo, and other times under-represented due to lack of imagination.

As Law operators and social scientists, we cannot be oblivious to the diatribes the region is exposed to every time a counter-hegemonic discourse is implied. And this is what precisely brings us together: thinking, reflecting, and providing, if that

were the case, new understanding goals on the approaches that such an experience represents.

The term “conflictivity” is deliberately proposed to hold in its laxity, from the analysis of all expressions of violence, to the contradictions inherent in national agendas. Conflictivity in the irresolute promises of equity and social justice; conflictivity in the confrontation between common interest and individual privileges; conflictivity between institutional models and social demands and challenges.

Challenges that demand solid strategies, so legal discourse would not be used around interests of exclusion, and at the same time, it could consolidate as alternative legal process of citizenship affirmation that eludes the fictional status content that still lies within the Law.

Challenges that provide the experience of living in a rich continent, with unequal distribution of wealth that every time becomes more evident and it drifts away from the promises in which 80's post-dictatorial democracies were born.

Challenges of volatile international scenarios with agendas that call together but exclude at the same time.

I invite you out to something else: to think altogether, beyond dissent, the ideas I have posited.

Please note, for example, that today globalization presents new scenarios to be considered, in which for the first time questions on the power of international speculative capitals start to arise and the glocalization of conflicts is not circumscribed to the affectation of a few people.

As to social protest, it flows through new channels, it assumes new identities, and it breaks out in demands that go beyond class affiliation.

Let us also see that life in our societies is shaken up by the increase of ordinary crimes and the sophistication of criminal processes organized through cartels.

In regard to security management, it is not a strategy anymore, but a daily alert; and the forms achieved by the manifestations of violence have reached an irritating point.

Kids and adolescents are facing a more complex world that comprises constant demands and new risks.

On the other hand, the place of the judiciary has changed its traditional symbolic framework and assumes today a main role, an unusual aspect when seen through the perspective given by the French Revolution institutionality.

Furthermore, the human rights discourse has had an admirable expansion; however, it continuously faces obstacles and paradoxes that, in the praxis, ends up opposing the legal order itself with the nuisance that represents the collision of fundamental rights.

We find ourselves with the fact that the State's symbolic extremes have mutated and that public policies are angled toward processes of trial and error with the consequential difficulties to achieve the political commitments proposed.

Even so, a great field of reforms regarding gender and sexualities has opened; however, a ray of prejudices, fossilized, reappear now and then to arouse controversy over the prized conquests.

The model of legal education also demands us a new treatment: international standards and the implementation of changing curricula and didactics, new contexts adaptation, and more competitive grades. At the same time, it confronts us to the continuing depreciation of legal professions, insofar as the aptitude of the rule of law is at risk of satisfying social concerns.

Ultimately, what to say about social theory, that still awaits an expression of its own, that could show itself in distinct, distant, and consistent ways in the face of categories reiteration shaped in other latitudes or based on foreign experiences.

Thus, with the tight synthesis I have made through this passage made of different core issues of our discipline, I grant myself the chance to suggest you, dear colleagues, to gather together around a work full of commitment and creativity at the same time; to think and think ourselves and imagine alternatives.

Today, Sasju (Argentinean Society for the Sociology of Law by its initials in Spanish) guides its members to circulate beyond the cleavage of their universities and invites them, based on the fraternity proposed by the Sociology of Law, to invite

each other in order to spread their contribution to the discipline, each one in the house of the other.

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