

Contracts and Mistreatments

By Mañanita Ochoa

Marriage has to be one of the oldest contracts in the world. And one wonders: Why sign a paper if we love each other so much and plan to be together for the rest of our lives? In France, nowadays, where life is so long and temptations widespread, there are five different types of marital contracts. We don't know which one Sarkozy signed. People buy and sell, fall in love and fall out of love by signing contracts. Children sign contracts at school where they promise to do their homework or else. Contracts prevent and correct mistreatments. If a wife beats her husband, kicks him and humiliates him in public, the husband, scared by all of this unexpected anger, can revise the wording on his marriage contract and ask our civilized society to protect him against this undeserved rage.

Companies and governments sign contracts all the time, in an effort to civilize their interactions. They exchange just and clear promises in exchange for investments, work, and a dedication to productivity. The contract protects both parties from arrogant abuse, adversaries and all those other stupid things humans come up with when they wake up angry, conceited, or feeling alienated. Rulers that let power go to their heads or lose their soul, have to be reminded that there are contracts, that are nothing more than coherent promises that there are not going to be any injustices. Governments have guns, rifles, machineguns and even atomic bombs, so these important papers we call contracts are the only thing unarmed people have to avoid or reduce the abuse. Behind modern companies there are thousands and millions of poor people, rich people, wise people and ignorant people, that trusted contracts to put a little or a lot of money away and save to be able to buy medicines, food, cars, and even be able to pay for the other contracts they sign during their lives. Even the poor woman, who couldn't contain her anger, has to withdraw part of her savings or those of her husband to pay for the divorce that will end the damaged marriage. You can imagine where we're going. We will see what happens with the lawsuit put forth by an oil company that feels it has been mistreated by Venezuelans after it signed a bunch of contracts. The cost for everyone will be high. Mistreatments always cost a lot and leave wounds that take a long time to heal. As a good dog that licks its wounds with a long face, we will have to lick the wound left behind by an abuse and indifference towards contracts. If a contract prevents mistreatment then mistreatment breaks contracts.