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Rebel Group Life Cycles

The Formation, Maintenance, and Legacies of Rebel Organizations in Colombia

Par

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Rebel Group Life Cycles
The Formation, Maintenance, and Legacies of Rebel Organizations in Colombia

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Résumé

Les politologues ont récemment commencé à analyser les processus organisationnels et sociaux des guerres civiles. Malgré certains progrès, nous en savons peu sur les trajectoires des insurgés et les processus transperçant le cycle de vie des groupes rebelles. En effet, la plupart des théories négligent la dimension de longue durée des rébellions. Comblant cette lacune, la thèse construit une approche longitudinale des cycles de vie des groupes rebelles.

Comment les différentes étapes du cycle de vie d'une organisation rebelle sont-elles liées les unes aux autres? Comment les individus façonnent-ils les organisations rebelles? Comment les individus sont-ils transformés par leur passage au sein de groupes rebelles? Inspiré par la sociologie politique, la thèse soutient que la formation, le maintien et l'héritage des groupes rebelles sont conditionnés par les expériences, mentalités, liens sociaux et compétences des individus composant ces organisations. En retour, la participation au sein des organisations, de sous-unités et à divers rôles transforme les individus, façonnant les dynamiques de guerre et d'après-guerre. La thèse étudie des mécanismes et processus liant les étapes de vie des groupes rebelles, incluant le courtage, le bricolage institutionnel, la légitimation, la trajectoire de vie et la socialisation à vie.

L'article I construit une théorie du bricolage dans la formation des groupes rebelles. Dans les milieux hétérogènes, les organisateurs emploient le courtage et le bricolage institutionnel pour renforcer leur capacité opérationnelle. À l’aide de l'analyse des réseaux sociaux et répertoires organisationnels, l’article retrace la formation de la guérilla urbaine du M-19 en Colombie. Les organisateurs de cette guérilla ont recruté des spécialistes de la violence par le courtage et ont réorganisé diverses formes organisationnelles à travers le bricolage institutionnel pour faciliter la coordination interne de l’organisation naissante.

L’article II adopte l'approche relationnelle à la légitimité des groupes armés pour étudier la production culturelle et musicale des FARC en Colombie. L'article analyse 258 chansons, des documents internes de la guérilla et des prestations artistiques. L’article démontre que les FARC employaient la production culturelle pour légitimer la hiérarchie interne du groupe et leurs objectifs face aux élites établies et à la population civile.

L'article III développe une typologie des trajectoires et des incidences biographiques des ancien.e.s combattant.e.s. L'outil conceptuel permet d’évaluer la position des individus par rapport à la politique, la violence et l'État ainsi que de retracer des dynamiques complexes au sein des trajectoires de vie. Une fois agrégées, les incidences biographiques contribuent à d'importantes dynamiques d'après-guerre. L'article élabore un nouveau programme de recherche portant sur les vies de l’après-guerre civile.

L’article IV étudie les processus de socialisation à vie et l’engagement social des ancien.e.s combattant.e.s. L'article emploi une approche biographique pour retracer les trajectoires de 32 ancien.e.s combattant.e.s du M-19. La socialisation au sein des institutions de travail social et d'enseignement, avant le recrutement et pendant la guerre, a conféré aux ancien.e.s combattant.e.s du M-19 des dispositions et des ressources qui, en interaction avec les opportunités post-démobilisation, a façonné leur engagement social.

La dissertation offre une vision holistique des cycles de vie des groupes rebelles et étudie des dynamiques liant l’avant, pendant et après guerre. La thèse contribue à notre compréhension des guerres civiles en analysant des processus longitudinaux façonnant les vies des individus, le contenu et la structure des groupes rebelles et les sociétés.

Mots clés: guerres civiles, groupes rebelles, processus sociaux, courtage, bricolage institutionnel, trajectoire de vie, socialisation, violence politique, Colombie.

Abstract

Political scientists recently started to analyse the organizational and social processes of civil wars. Despite progress, we know little about the trajectories of insurgents and the processes that span through the life cycle of rebel groups. In fact, most theories neglect the *longue durée* dimension of rebellions. Filling this gap, this thesis constructs a longitudinal approach to the life cycle of rebel groups.

How are different stages in the life cycle of a rebel organization linked to one another? How do individuals shape rebel organizations? How are individuals transformed by their passage through rebel groups? Inspired by political sociology, the thesis argues that the formation, maintenance and legacy of rebel groups are conditioned by the experiences, mindsets, social ties and skills of individuals composing those organizations. In turn, participation in organizations, subunits and roles transform individuals, shaping wartime and post-war dynamics. The thesis studies mechanisms and processes linking insurgent group life stages, including brokerage, institutional bricolage, legitimation, life trajectory, and lifelong socialization.

Article I constructs a theory of bricolage in rebel group formation. In heterogeneous environments, rebel organizers employ brokerage and institutional bricolage to build operational capacity. The article employs social network analysis and the analysis of organizational repertoires to retrace the formation of the M-19 urban guerrilla in Colombia. M-19 organizers recruited violent specialists through brokerage, and reorganized various organizational forms through institutional bricolage to facilitate internal coordination in the nascent organization.

Article II employs the relational approach to armed group legitimacy to study cultural and music production within the FARC guerrilla in Colombia. The article analyses 258 songs, guerrilla internal documents, and artistic performances. It shows that FARC's cultural production was employed to legitimize the group's internal hierarchy and its goals in relation to established elites and the civilian population.

Article III develops a typology of ex-combatant trajectories and biographical outcomes. The conceptual tool can be used to assess the position of individuals in relation to politics, violence and the state and track complex dynamics in life trajectories. When aggregated, biographical outcomes contribute to important post-war dynamics. The article elaborates a new research agenda on civil war afterlives.

Article IV investigates lifelong socialization processes and social engagement amongst ex-combatants. The article employs a biographical approach to study the trajectories of 32 M-19 ex-combatants. Socialization in social work and education institutions in pre-recruitment and wartime life stages provided M-19 ex-combatants with dispositions and resources that, in interaction with post-demobilization opportunities, shaped their social engagement.

The dissertation provides a holistic view of rebel group life cycles and studies dynamics linking prewar, wartime and post-war stages. The thesis contributes to our understanding of civil wars by analysing longitudinal processes shaping individual lives, the content and structure of rebel groups and societies.

Keywords: civil wars, rebel groups, social processes, brokerage, institutional bricolage, life trajectory, socialization, political violence, Colombia.

Resumen

Recientemente politólog@s han empezado a analizar los diferentes procesos organizativos y sociales de las guerras civiles. A pesar de los avances, sabemos poco sobre las trayectorias de los insurgentes y los procesos que comprenden el ciclo de vida de grupos rebeldes. De hecho, la mayoría de las teorías omiten la dimensión a largo plazo. Llenando este vacío, esta tesis desarrolla una teoría longitudinal de ciclos de vida de grupos rebeldes.

¿Cómo se conectan las diferentes etapas del ciclo de vida de una organización rebelde? ¿Cómo los individuos dan forma a las organizaciones rebeldes? ¿Cómo se transforman los individuos durante su participación en grupos rebeldes? Inspirándose en la sociología política, la tesis argumenta que la formación, el mantenimiento y el legado de los grupos rebeldes están condicionados por las experiencias, mentalidades, vínculos sociales y habilidades individuales de sus participantes. Asimismo, su involucramiento en organizaciones, subunidades y roles también transforma los individuos, moldeando así las dinámicas de guerra y posguerra. Esta tesis estudia mecanismos y procesos que relacionan las etapas de vida de los grupos rebeldes, incluyendo la intermediación, el bricolaje institucional, la legitimación, la trayectoria de vida y la socialización vitalicia.

El artículo I construye una teoría de bricolaje en la formación de grupos rebeldes. En entornos heterogéneos, los organizadores recurren a la intermediación y el bricolaje institucional para fortalecer su capacidad operativa. Utilizando el análisis de redes sociales y repertorios organizativos, el artículo rastrea la formación de la guerrilla urbana del M-19 en Colombia. Los organizadores del M-19 reclutaron especialistas en violencia a través de la intermediación y reorganizaron varias formas organizativas con el bricolaje institucional para facilitar la coordinación interna de la organización emergente.

El artículo II emplea el enfoque relacional de la legitimidad de los grupos armados para estudiar la producción cultural y musical de las FARC en Colombia. El artículo analiza 258 canciones, documentos internos de la guerrilla y actuaciones artísticas. El trabajo demuestra que las FARC empleaban la producción cultural para legitimar la jerarquía interna del grupo y sus objetivos frente a las élites establecidas y la población civil.

El artículo III desarrolla una tipología de las trayectorias e implicaciones biográficas de los excombatientes. La herramienta conceptual permite evaluar la posición de los individuos en relación con la política, la violencia y el estado, así como rastrear dinámicas complejas dentro de las trayectorias de vida. Una vez agregadas, las implicaciones biográficas contribuyen a importantes dinámicas posguerra. El artículo establece una nueva agenda de investigación sobre las vidas posguerra civil.

El artículo IV estudia los procesos de socialización de por vida y el compromiso social de los excombatientes. El artículo emplea un enfoque biográfico para rastrear las trayectorias de 32 excombatientes del M-19. Socialización en instituciones de trabajo social y educativas, antes del reclutamiento y durante la guerra, proporcionó a los excombatientes del M-19 disposiciones y recursos que, en interacción con las oportunidades posteriores a la desmovilización, influye en su compromiso social.

La disertación ofrece una visión holística de los ciclos de vida de grupos rebeldes y explora las dinámicas que atraviesan el pre, durante y posguerra. La tesis contribuye a la comprensión de las guerras civiles analizando los procesos longitudinales que influyen vidas individuales, el contenido y la estructura de grupos rebeldes y sociedades.

Palabras clave: guerras civiles, grupos rebeldes, procesos sociales, intermediación, bricolaje institucional, trayectoria de vida, socialización, violencia política, Colombia.

List of Articles

This composite dissertation is based on the following articles referred in roman numerals.

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List of Acronyms

ACCU *Autodefensas Campesinas de Córdoba y Urabá*

Peasant Self-Defense of Códoba and Urabá

AD/M-19 *Alianza Democrática/ Movimiento 19 de Abril*

Democratic Alliance/ Movement of the 19th of April

ALN *Ação Libertadora Nacional*, National Liberation Action

ANAPO *Alianza Nacional Popular*, National Popular Alliance

AUC *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia*

United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia

CRB *Cadena Radial Bolivariana,* Bolivarian Radio Network

DDR Demobilization, disarmament and reintegration

ELN *Ejército de Liberación Nacional*, National Liberation Army

EOKA National Organization of Cypriot Fighters

EPL *Ejército Popular de Liberación*, Popular Liberation Army

ETCR *Espacio Territorial de Capacitación y Reincorporación*

FAL-FUL *Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación – Frente Unido de Liberación*

Liberation Armed Forces – Liberation United Front

FARC *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*

Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia

FARC-EP	*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo*
	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army
FLQ	*Front de Libération du Québec*, Québec Liberation Front
FMLN	*Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional*
	Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front
FRELIMO	*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*
	Liberation Front of Mozambique
FSA	Free Syrian Army
FSLN	*Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional*
	Sandinista National Liberation Front
FUAR	*Frente Unido de Acción Revolucionaria*
	United Front of Revolutionary Action
GAM	Free Aceh Movement
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
IRA	Irish Republican Army
JUCO	*Juventud Comunista Colombiana*, Colombian Communist Youth
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

MOEC	*Movimiento Obrero Estudiantil Campesino*
	Peasant Student Workers Movement
M-19	*Movimiento 19 de Abril*, Movement of the 19th of April
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
ODDR	*Observatorio de Procesos de Desarme, Desmovilización y Reintegración*
	Observatory for Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration Processes
PAIGC	*Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde*
	African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde
PCC	*Partido Comunista Colombiano*, Colombian Communist Party
PIRA	Provisional Irish Republican Army
RAF	*Rote Armee Fraktion*, Red Army Faction
Renamo	R*esistência Nacional Moçambicana*, Mozambican National Resistance
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SPLM–IO	Sudan People's Liberation Movement "In Opposition"
UP	*Unión Patriótica*, Patriotic Union
ZANU–PF	Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front
ZNLWVA	Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association

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Chapter 1

Introduction to the Dissertation

Introduction

Since the end of World War II, civil wars have been the main type of armed conflicts taking place around the globe. In 2019 only, out of 54 active armed conflicts worldwide, 52 were intrastate while only two involved organized armed violence between sovereign states (Pettersson and Öberg 2020, 598–99). Recent civil wars in Syria, Yemen, Libya, South Sudan and the Central African Republic, as well as renewed cycles of violence in Colombia, Myanmar and Mozambique highlight the disastrous toll such events can have on human lives. Despite progress in our understanding of civil wars, scholars have only recently begun to chart the dynamics that connect pre-war, wartime and post-war stages (Shesterinina 2022). Indeed, we still know little about the processes that span throughout the life cycle of rebel organizations[1] – central actors in the production of violence in civil wars. In a similar vein, recent attention on the organizational dynamics of armed groups produced a wealth of knowledge on subsets of individuals such as leaders, women, children, civilian collaborators and rank-and-file combatants at particular points in time. However, little is known about the life trajectories of individuals who make up and go through these organizations. Addressing this research gap, the dissertation asks the questions: How are different stages in the life cycle of a rebel organization linked to one

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[1] In this thesis, I employ the terms rebel group, insurgent group, rebel organization and insurgent organization interchangeably. According to Kasfir (2015, 24), rebel groups are 'consciously coordinated groups whose members engage in protracted violence with the intention of gaining undisputed political control over all or a portion of a pre-existing state's territory'.

another? How do individuals shape rebel organizations? How are individuals transformed by their passage through rebel groups?

Following the recent turn to organizational dynamics in the study of civil wars, I conceptualize rebel groups as organizations[2]. Insurgent groups, like any organization, are characterized by a life cycle made up of different stages spanning from birth to death (see e.g. Lester, Parnell, and Carraher 2003; Miller and Friesen 1984; O'Rand and Krecker 1990, 254–58). Drawing on the literature on organizational sociology, social movements, and civil wars, I differentiate between three organizational life stages: *formation*, *maintenance*, and *legacy*. Those different stages are part of what I here coin the *rebel group life cycle*. The concept of organizational life cycle has previously been employed to describe how insurgent and terrorist groups emerge and eventually disappear (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni and Jones 2008; Gupta 2021). In contrast, I contend that the rebel group life cycle does not stop when it is militarily defeated or disbanded. This is because rebel organizations may transition into political parties, social movements, religious groups or criminal networks that manifest their enduring legacies. The rebel group life cycle is also embedded in and interacts with wider civil war social processes that '[transform] social actors, structures, norms, and practices at the local level – [sometimes leaving] profound social changes in their wake' (E. J. Wood 2008, 540). Such processes may include political polarization, escalation, diffusion, wartime patterns of violence, social order as well as war-to-peace transitions. Drawing on the social movement literature on political violence

[2] Organizations are defined as 'collections of roles, linked by relations, which produce behaviors, to work toward goals within a given context' (Parkinson and Zaks 2018, 272).

(Della Porta 1995; 2018; 2013; Demetriou, Malthaner and Bosi 2014; Tilly 2003; Tilly and Tarrow 2015), as well as Elisabeth Wood's (2008) and Anastasia Shesterinina's (2021; 2022) work in armed conflicts, I contend that civil wars, as broad processes, are composed of various concomitant lower order social processes and mechanisms that shape and create linkages between insurgent organizational life stages. Following Tilly and Tarrow (2015, 29), I understand processes as the 'regular combinations and sequences of mechanisms that produce similar (generally more complex and contingent) transformations of those elements'. Conversely, mechanisms are defined as a 'delimited class of changes that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations' (Tilly and Tarrow 2015, 29; see also Hedström and Swedberg 1996). From this perspective, the rebel group life cycle melds together concomitant micro- (individual) and meso-level (organizational) processes and mechanisms that can take root before a rebel group emerges (formation), through various phases of conflict (maintenance), to the disbanding or transformation of its structures (legacy).

Inspired by political sociology, the thesis develops a longitudinal and process-oriented approach[3] to the rebel group life cycle that tracks how processes unfold over time and across contexts. I argue that the pre-war formation, wartime maintenance and post-war legacies of rebel groups are heavily conditioned by the individuals that comprise those organizations – their biographical backgrounds, social ties, skills, experiences, and mindsets. In turn, these individuals are transformed by the particular organization, subunits

[3] As Bosi et al. (2014, 4–5) put it, a processual approach entails 'that processes and mechanisms (or sub-processes) possess causal efficacy, which renders these categories crucial at forming causal analogies'.

and roles in which they participate, with important implications for wartime and post-war dynamics. To make sense of the life cycle of rebel organizations, we therefore ought to understand the individuals that compose those groups but also their relations to one another and pre-existing social structures. The main contribution of the thesis is thus to uncover meso- and micro-level social processes and mechanisms that shape how rebel groups form, maintain themselves and impact individual biographies and societies more broadly. The thesis provides in-depth analyses on five mechanisms and processes that span the rebel group life cycle: *brokerage* and *institutional bricolage*, *legitimation*, *life trajectory*, and *lifelong socialization*. In doing so, the thesis unpacks different discrete stages of conflict that are often studied separately. Article I develops a theory of rebel group formation and operational capacity inspired by Lévi-Strauss's ([1966] 2020, 21) concept of *bricolage* – a way of doing things with 'whatever is at hand'. It draws on the case of the Movement of the 19th of April (M-19) in Colombia to show how rebel organizers make use of brokerage and institutional bricolage in the formation of an insurgent group. Article II, addresses the question of rebel group maintenance, focussing on how the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) legitimated itself internally and in relation to established elites and the civilian population through cultural and music production. Article III develops a typology of ex-combatant biographical outcomes. The framework can be employed to track individual and aggregate-level life trajectories linking the three stages of insurgent organizational life cycle. In the same vein, Article IV adopts a biographical approach to study the social engagement of M-19 ex-combatants in social work and education institutions. The article sheds light on the influence of complex lifelong socialization processes on ex-combatant lives.

Taken separately the four articles make contributions to research on rebel group formation (Article I), legitimacy and rebel governance (Article II), and demobilization, disarmament and reintegration processes (DDR) (Article III, IV). As a whole, the dissertation speaks to the scholarship on the organizational dimensions of rebel groups (J. I. Lewis 2020; Mampilly 2011; Parkinson and Zaks 2018; Pearlman 2011; Staniland 2014; Weinstein 2007), the microdynamics of violence (Bosi and Della Porta 2012; Cederman and Gleditsch 2009; Della Porta 2013; Kalyvas 2006; 2008) and the political sociology of civil wars (Baczko, Dorronsoro, and Quesnay 2016; Hensell and Gerdes 2017; Malejacq 2019; Shesterinina 2021; Schlichte 2009a; Viterna 2013). The articles are also part of a wider turn to social processes (e.g. Checkel 2017; Parkinson 2013; Shesterinina 2022; E. J. Wood 2008) and long-term dynamics of armed conflicts (Daly 2012; Osorio, Schubiger, and Weintraub 2021; Shesterinina 2021; Villamil 2021). The thesis also fits squarely within the armed politics paradigm. Such paradigm underlines that insurgents create different types of political orders in relation to the state (Staniland 2012b; 2017; 2021) and employ various strategies to participate in elections (Matanock and Staniland 2018). This approach, as Staniland (2021, 35–37) puts it,

> helps us overcome the problem of intellectual 'siloes' that can limit our understanding of how politics and violence can be connected [and] helps us identify the numerous roles that armed actors can carve out for themselves in politics. We can move beyond thinking of armed groups primarily as anti-state insurgents or pro-state militias to see them instead as semiautonomous local governors, collusive partners with regimes, electoral strategists, criminal enterprises, cross-border proxy fighters, local armies of powerful strongmen—or some combination of these different roles.

A focus on such dynamics invites scholars to further move beyond the false conceptual dichotomies between peace and war (and conflict) (Cockburn 2004; Mac Ginty 2022b;

Richards 2005) but also tap into the different ways through which organizations and individuals oscillate between violent and non-violent repertoires of action over time (see also Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Debos 2011; Pearlman 2011). In contrast to Staniland's organizational, meso-level approach, however, I emphasize how individuals – founding members, rebel leaders and rank-and-file combatants – generate, reproduce and internalize social orders that emerge in conflict.

The dissertation has theoretical, methodological and empirical implications for the study of civil wars. Theoretically, the thesis sheds light on processes that create linkages and discontinuities between different stages of war on the organizational and individual level. Methodologically, the dissertation incorporates a meso-level focus on organizations and networks to a sociologically informed micro-level emphasis on individual biographies and life trajectories. Empirically, the thesis sheds new light on the inner workings of two Colombian left-wing rebel groups and the life trajectories of individuals that make up those guerrillas and other groups. I notably uncover the biographical and network characteristics of the M-19 foundational network (Article I). The dissertation also provides novel insights on the wide musical repertoire of the FARC and the cultural practices the group employed to legitimize its armed struggle (Article II). The last two articles of the dissertation draw on the life trajectories of M-19 ex-combatants (Article IV) and a variety of former rebel groups (Article III), to draw attention to dynamics of persistence and change in individual life courses. I show that individuals' trajectories can have important implications for war-to-peace transitions. Taken together, those contributions enhance our understanding of the complex ways through which political violence emerges and reproduces itself in Colombia

and beyond. The dissertation also uncovers general processes that can help us better understand the life cycle of rebel groups across a variety of contexts.

This introductory chapter is divided into five parts. The first section introduces the rebel group life cycle concept. The second part situates the thesis within the broader literature on social revolutions and civil wars. Third, I present the four articles of the thesis. Fourth, I shortly introduce the Colombian armed conflict as the empirical context of research. Fifth, I discuss some of the methodological concerns underdeveloped in the articles. Following this introduction, Chapters 2-5 bring together the four articles. Finally, Chapter 6, sums up the contributions and indicates avenues for future research.

The Rebel Group Life Cycle

The concept of *rebel group life cycle* is the main thread linking the four articles of the dissertation. In this section, I introduce the concept and the main processes and mechanisms it encapsulates. Those processes – and their relationships to one another – matter for our overall understanding of civil wars. They shed light on the ways through which rebel groups form, maintain themselves and produce effects on post-war societies that go well beyond the period of armed confrontation.

The concept of organizational life cycle takes its roots in human and plant ecology and has been employed to explain processes spanning over the lifetime of an organization (see O'Rand and Krecker 1990, 254–58 for a discussion). Most frameworks on organizational life cycles are overtly deterministic, underlining how organizations follow a pre-determined number of stages from birth to death (Lester, Parnell, and Carraher 2003, 340; Miller and Friesen 1984). Overcoming deterministic tendencies, a life cycle

perspective can, however, help us categorize and make sense of *processes* and *mechanisms* occurring at different points in time and cutting across different stages and levels of analysis. I therefore define the *rebel group life cycle* as the succession of different interrelated stages over time including *organizational formation*, *maintenance*, and *legacy*. Drawing on the social movement literature (see Bencherif and Campana 2017; Campana and Ratelle 2014; Demetriou, Malthaner, and Bosi 2014; Della Porta 2018; Tilly and Tarrow 2015), I consider that each stage is linked with one another through micro- (individual) and meso-level (organizational) processes and mechanisms[4].

Formation is the initial stage in the life cycle of an insurgent organization. Rebel group formation notably involves various processes such as the creation of a clandestine nucleus incorporating committed individuals (J. I. Lewis 2020), the militarization and activation of politicized networks and organizations into an insurgent organizational structure (Braithwaite and Cunningham 2020; Della Porta 2013; Parkinson and Zaks 2018; Staniland 2014; Reno 2011), the mobilization of pre-war quotidian ties and insurgent identities (Gould 1995; Parkinson 2013; Shesterinina 2016; 2021; Viterna 2013), as well as the accumulation of material and human resources for war (Finkel 2015; Weinstein 2007). Armed groups may also emerge as governmental spin-offs to delegate violence (Eck 2015; Schlichte 2009b) or splinters from the army (McLauchlin 2010; Forthcoming). Patterns of inclusion and exclusion from state structures and power (Goodwin 2001), as

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[4] The concept of rebel group life cycle is akin to the notion of cycles of contention. This concept emphasizes that social movements employ different performances for claim making that unfold over various episodes of protests (Tilly and Tarrow 2015).

well as state-based patronage networks (Reno 2011; Roessler 2016) may also facilitate the emergence of insurgent groups. Roessler (2016) for instance highlights the logic of rebel group formation in African patrimonialist regimes based on ethnic kinship. Rulers in such contexts face the choice to either accommodate rivals in their ruling coalition, increasing the risk for a *coup d'état*, or exclude them from state-based patronage therefore increasing the risk for civil war.

Meso- and micro-level processes during the formation stage create linkages between the pre-war environment in which rebel leaders are embedded and organizational building. For instance, at the meso-level, Lewis (2020) shows that rebel groups become viable when they emerge in ethnically homogeneous districts where the founding nucleus can spread rumours about the capacity of their nascent organization. Conversely, on the micro-, individual-level, Petersen (2001) demonstrates how strong communities in Lithuania as expressed in membership across various subgroups (family, party, economic organizations, etc.) reduced the threshold for collective action by providing status rewards, norms of reciprocity and 'safety by numbers' for rebels. A shared history between members of a given community and rebels reduces uncertainty by providing knowledge about who can be considered potentially committed recruits and those that are likely to collaborate with the enemy (Petersen 2001, 24–25). Meso- and micro-level dynamics are also expressed by research on patrimonial politics. This field of research demonstrates how powerful actors use their material resources, social networks and symbolic power in order to attract supporters and organize armed violence (Christensen and Utas 2008; De Waal 2009; Reno 1999; Seymour 2014; Utas 2012).

Maintenance is the second stage of insurgent organizational life cycle. This stage takes as a premise that a rebel organization already exists (see e.g. Gates 2002). The literature on recruitment and participation underlines for instance that rebel organizations face important challenges in attracting and retaining their fighters. Insurgents can employ different strategies to mobilize militants including appealing to ideological and normative motivations, ethnic and religious identities, forced recruitment, threats or social ties (Arjona and Kalyvas 2012; Beber and Blattman 2013; Eck 2010; Gates 2002; Humphreys and Weinstein 2008; Shesterinina 2016; Ugarriza and Craig 2013; Weinstein 2007; E. J. Wood 2003). Recruitment processes are often dynamic endogenous processes. Reed Wood (2010) notably highlights that in civil wars, insurgents with low capacity are more likely to employ violence against civilians as a way to foster support for their group given their inability to provide benefits for loyalty. Furthermore, recent attention on the cultural aspects of rebel organizations (Hegghammer 2017; Parkinson 2016; 2020) and socialization (Checkel 2017; Cohen 2013; Hoover Green 2016; 2017) points out that rebel groups harness different practices, norms, rules and institutions shaping their internal cohesion and repertoires of action. In fact, rebel groups do not only rely on formal structures of leadership and command-and-control. They expand deep into society through networks of friends and family that often reveal a gendered division of labour and organizational roles. Parkinson (2013) for instance demonstrates how the Palestinian militants' quotidian networks such as marriage and friendship relations overlap with formal armed group structure. The overlap between quotidian and formal structures explains the trajectory of militants but also the ability of Palestinian organizations to survive amid repression.

Armed group structures often take their roots in pre-war networks, organizations, symbols, identities and practices, thus linking rebel group formation and maintenance (see e.g. Gould 1995; 1999). As Staniland (2014, 9), rightly points out, the 'initial organization of an insurgent group reflects the networks and institutions in which its leaders were embedded prior to violent mobilization'. Such initial conditions influence group cohesion and propensity to fragment. Furthermore, the literature on rebel governance points out that insurgent groups develop different institutions to regulate their relations with civilians and position their group as a legitimate order in relation to the state (Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015; Arjona 2016b; Mampilly 2011; M. A. Stewart 2018). Rebel groups may draw on different forms of organization that are embedded in pre-war social structures. Reno (2015) argues for instance that Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) developed governance structures that were oriented toward the fulfilment of leaders' interests. The clientelistic and predatory practices of the NPFL notably reflected the embeddedness of Taylor in prewar state-base patronage networks. Such structures provided a set of rules to regulate relations between combatants and non-combatants. Prewar structures may, however, change over the course of war. In Syria, insurgents in the Free Syrian Army (FSA) improvised military units based on the model of the Syrian army in which many had previously served. Such units nonetheless had rather flexible hierarchies and blurred distinctions between civilian and military life making the turnover of commanders quite common (Baczko, Dorronsoro, and Quesnay 2016, 128–30).

The maintenance of rebel organizations also implies micro-level processes. This is apparent in the ways through which personal backgrounds and social relations shape participation patterns. Recent studies on the Colombian civil war notably show that

individual ideological motivations affect the decision to join, desert or switch sides in civil wars (Oppenheim et al. 2015; Ugarriza and Craig 2013). Fujii (2008) also demonstrates how personal ties and social context influence individual decision to join or resist mass killings during the Rwandan genocide. Challenges to the survival and cohesion of rebel groups, in that regard, often come from within the organization. Regarding side-switching in the Sudanese civil war, Seymour (2014) underlines that in weak and collapsing states where ideological and ethnic identities are fluid, local political rivalries and state patronage are more significant to explain alignment choices amongst armed actors. Focussing on the state military, McLauchlin (2010, 333) also points out that when regimes rely on individualized incentive system to guarantee the loyalty of their troops, soldiers 'will support the regime if they believe it will survive, and will defect if they do not; but the only way of making this judgment is based on others' behavior'. Such logic underlines how the different incentives rebels provide to their potential followers may help us understand their ability to recruit and retain fighters as well as their behaviour during war (see Gates 2002; Weinstein 2007). Individual-, micro-level processes can also create linkages between organizational formation and maintenance. A growing body of literature has notably identified the characteristics of leaders as important determinants of rebel group fragmentation (Doctor 2020), external support (Huang, Silverman, and Acosta 2022), civil war duration (Prorok 2018) and the organization of violent resistance (Finkel 2015).

Organizational legacy is the third stage of the rebel group life cycle. Legacies may take root at different points in time and manifest themselves at various levels of analysis. Insurgent groups may produce effects that go well beyond their context of operation. This is apparent in the way influential writings and models of guerrilla warfare (Guevara 1985;

Marighella 2002; Zedong 2009) inspired several revolutionary organizations worldwide (Gillespie 1980; Reno 2011, 109; 174–75; Sprenkels 2018 Chapter 2; M. A. Stewart 2021; Wickham-Crowley 1992, 32–33). Prior rebel group life cycles may also provide the basis for the reproduction of armed violence over time. This is because, when one organization disbands or renounces violence, former leaders and rank-and-file may reactivate command structures under a new organization. As Daly (2012, 486) points out in the Colombian context, insurgencies emerge 'in municipalities affording receptacles of collective action – organizational and social capital that can be appropriated for future mobilization'. Insurgent organizations may also foster the transformations of political systems. The end of war can lead to the demilitarization of politics and the transformation of rebel groups into durable opposition parties (Manning and Smith 2019; Söderberg Kovacs and Hatz 2016) or the establishment of authoritarian post-rebel ruling parties (Lyons 2016). Wartime practices can also bleed into the post-war context, notably by influencing how former insurgents govern and adapt their ideology to party politics (Curtis and Sindre 2019; Sindre 2019; Themnér 2017). Yet, not all rebel organizations transform into political parties. Former combatants may coalesce around different interest groups, non-governmental organizations or veteran associations (Ortega 2015; McCandless 2011; Sindre 2016; Söderström 2020), but also criminal enterprises (Villarraga Sarmiento 2015).

Rebel group maintenance also feeds into organizational legacy. Participation in insurgent organizations may carry important individual and group-level legacies, in sometimes unexpected ways. Rebel groups notably transmit identities, skills and potentially durable dispositions for political engagement and violence (Bosi and Giugni 2012; Duclos 2010; Neveu and Fillieule 2019; Tanner 2010; Viterna 2013). Such

organizational legacies are apparent in how former fighters repurpose their violent skills for other insurgent groups or crime syndicates (Debos 2011; O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018a; Jütersonke, Muggah, and Rodgers 2009; Themnér 2011), but also how wartime political engagement and (traumatic) experiences shape post-demobilization civic life (Blattman 2009; McEvoy and Shirlow 2009; Söderström 2020). Former fighters may also adapt their behaviour and rhetoric to the post-war context in ways that shape both their life trajectories and society more broadly. For instance, Zahar (2012) shows that local actors resisting democracy-building interventions in the wake of war, divert financial resources for international initiatives and recuperate the democratic language to suit their own ends. In a similar vein, Themnér and colleagues (2017) demonstrate how in post-war African contexts, warlords turned democrats socialize into the electoral rules of the game but also perpetuate the politics of threat that is common in semi-authoritarian regimes.

In sum, focussing on the linkages between the stages of the rebel group life cycle allows us to meld together organizational- and individual-level processes that are often studied in distinct research agendas. The concept of life cycle thus provides a powerful metaphor that captures processual and longitudinal dynamics that transcend different stages of war (see Shesterinina 2022) and makes sense of different interconnections between violence and politics (Staniland 2017; 2021), and various types of violence (Kalyvas 2019). The next section shows how different research traditions in civil war treat the rebel group life cycle.

Situating the Dissertation: The Rebel Group Life Cycle in the Literature on Civil Wars

Research progams on civil wars engage with the longitudinal study of rebel groups in different ways. Those traditions fall within five broad overlapping categories: the social revolutions, ethnic conflict, economic, organizational and social process "turns". For each strand, I assess whether the tradition allows us to addresses the linkages across rebel group life stages, and study the life cycle meso- and micro-level processes. The thesis draws inspiration mostly from the organizational and social process turns that, taken together, emphasize long-term processes, meso-level structures and individual trajectories. Table 1.1 summarizes the main points developed in this section.

Table 1.1 Research turns and their approach to the rebel group life cycle

Research turns	Linkages between life stages	Meso-level focus	Micro-level focus
Social revolutions	Partially	Yes	Yes
Ethnic conflict	Partially	Partially	No
Economic	No	No	No
Organizational	Partially	Yes	Yes
Social process	Yes	Yes	Yes

The Social Revolutions Turn

The literature on civil wars builds on the classical work on social revolutions. Rooted in Marxist political economy and carrying the imprints of the Cold War, this work adopts an historical approach and focusses on macro-level comparisons, but also micro-level dynamics of class-based coalitions. In relation to the life cycle of rebel organizations, this

strand of research is an important starting point to understand how rebel organizations form, yet it tells us little about their maintenance and legacy.

The scholarship on social revolutions highlights the importance of class-based coalitions to link rebel group emergence, maintenance and macro-level legacies. Classical work by Marx (2007 [1852]) already noted in this regard that the mode of production of peasant farmers based on family subsistence isolated them from one another and impeded mobilization along class lines. Class dynamics also link pre-war structure to post-revolutionary outcomes. Barrington Moore (1966) and Theda Skocpol (1979) show for instance how the alliances and conflicts between the peasantry, the landed upper-class and the bourgeoisie explain a variety of revolutionary outcomes. Moore's (1966) seminal study underlines that the class coalitions that headed modernization in England, France, Japan, China and elsewhere led to the establishment of different types of political regimes (democracy, fascism or communist dictatorships). Such comparative historical analyses focus on the onset and legacies of revolutions at the macro state level, but tells us little about personal motivations and the micro-processes of organizational formation, maintenance and legacy.

Turning to meso- and micro-level processes, scholars of social revolutions underline how class-based structures and institutions connect pre-war condition to rebel group formation. One important debate within this literature relates to the social factors that make peasants more prone to rebellion – contrary to Marx's theoretical expectations (Skocpol 1982). A possible answer is found in the structure of peasant society. Studying Southeast Asian conflicts, Scott (1976) argues that the ethics of subsistence enshrined in various peasant institutions such as traditional patron-client relationships and redistributive

mechanisms constitute the basis of the peasant moral economy. Forces that threaten this economy such as demographic changes, market production and state expansion provide the conditions for rebellion. Insurgent movements also often consist of a coalition of different actors with diverse social backgrounds. Hobsbawm (1981) shows for instance how a wide variety of rebel movements throughout history integrated social bandits within their ranks by politicizing their form of everyday resistance against the state. In the same vein, Wickham-Crowley (1992) convincingly argues that peasant rebellions in Latin America did not emerge from the spontaneous uprising of rural subordinates, but from rural elites and middle- and upper-class urbanites that recruited peasants (see also Scott 1979, 101). Linking wartime behaviour to rebel group formation, Mkandawire (2002) argues that most post-colonial rebel groups drifted toward the predatory roving rebel ideal type because of their social composition and the structures of economic production. He notes that we 'need to understand the explosive nature of the combination of the urban crisis, and the social composition of these movements and their essentially "urban" agenda, on the one hand, and, on the other, a rural social landscape that may be indifferent to these agendas, at best, and more often than not hostile to them' (Mkandawire 2002, 207). Work on the social compositions of rebel groups, nonetheless, tells us little about organizational legacy.

The social revolution literature on civil wars emphasizes class distinction over other logics of social division. Recently, Pinaud (2014) notably argued that the second Sudanese civil war (1983-2005) initiated a process of dominant class formation through wartime predation and resource capture. The military elite of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) maintained its positions as a new aristocracy by deploying nepotistic and clientelist networks that entrenched exploitative power relation between elites and

subordinates. Such structures shaped the nature of intra-group rivalries and conflict in the post-war period. Class division is from that standpoint more important than ethnic divisions. However, as Bourdieu (1985, 726) suggests, political entrepreneurs can also constitute groups based on other attributes than economic capital, such as cultural and social capital. Class struggle, in that sense, can be interpreted as a struggle over the classification principle that allows elites to construct mobilizable groups. Derluguian (2005) convincingly demonstrates, in that regard, how the Soviet state classification systems constituted a context in which ethnicity became an important mobilizing cleavage for the formation of rebel groups in the post-Soviet space. Focussing on one possible pathway of rebel group formation – based on economic capital – Marxist-inspired approaches tend to be ill-suited to analyse rebel groups organizing according to other principles.

The Ethnic Conflict Turn

At the end of the Cold War, civil wars in Rwanda, Sierra Leone, the Balkans and elsewhere were described as being fought along ethnic lines. In an influential article in *The Atlantic*, Robert Kaplan (1994) painted a bleak picture of what he sees as the coming anarchy in international affairs. Future conflicts would be characterized by state collapse, the predominance of criminal enterprises and wars based on "ancient ethnic hatreds". While this essentialist perspective was largely discredited, it shed light on potential changing dynamics of warfare. The proliferation of internal armed conflicts, according to Kaldor (2010), falls within a new paradigm. So-called new wars are fought between non-state actors and weak authoritarian regimes, involve identity-based cleavages rather than geopolitical interests or ideology, and are financed through the integration of armed groups

in the globalized economy. In this context, scholars became increasingly interested in the study of ethnic conflicts, a field of research that was until then ‘a backwater of the social sciences’ (D. L. Horowitz 1985, 13; see Varshney 2007 for an overview).

The ethnic conflict turn highlights that ethnic-based rebel groups may emerge out of strategic calculation but also by drawing on the institutional and symbolic dimensions of ethnic politics. A first perspective underscores that ethnic conflicts emerge out of strategic interactions. Lake and Rothchild (1996, 41) argue that war breaks out between ethnic groups out of a fear of the future as ‘Ethnic activists and political entrepreneurs, operating within groups, build upon these fears of insecurity and polarize society’. Likewise, scholars inspired by the realist school in international relations underline that state collapse – as experienced during the fall of the Soviet Bloc – plunges ethnic groups into an “emerging anarchy” and a security dilemma over their survival (Posen 1993; Rose 2000). In contrast to such perspectives, scholars have highlighted the importance of symbolic and institutional systems that allow ethnicity to become a war-making cleavage. Horowitz’s (1985) seminal study for instance stresses the importance of the hierarchy between ethnic groups and group competition across different institutions as determining factors for ethnic conflict. Conversely, Kaufman (2001) argues that ethnic conflicts take their roots in the symbolic politics of myths and symbols appealing to popular emotions of intergroup hostility.

The ethnic conflict turn conflates ethnic groups with rebel organizations thus providing little insights to the longitudinal dynamics of the rebel group life cycle. Chandra (2006, 399) has notably argued that ‘many of the properties commonly associated with ethnic identities in our explanatory theories do not characterize the identities that we

classify as ethnic in general, although they may apply to particular subsets of these identities'. This implies that ethnic identity, as an independent variable, has little explanatory merit when it comes to understanding the dynamic of collective violence. In that regard, Brubaker (2002) warns us about the fallacy of "groupism", the practice of treating ethnic groups and nations as homogeneous actors. Shared identification – whether it is Shia or Sunni, Nuer or Dinka – is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the formation and maintenance of rebel organizations. Ethnic groups are not the protagonists of armed violence, organizations are (Brubaker 2002, 171–2). The distinction between social identification, on the one hand, and organizations, on the other, 'challenges the salience of designations such as "ethnic group" as an explanatory variable, thereby forcing scholars to articulate and test whether it is the "ethnic" of the "group" that is doing the heavy lifting' (Parkinson and Zaks 2018, 272). Analysing civil wars at the ethnic group level may explain why certain ethnic-based organizations emerge, but it tells us little about meso- and micro-level dynamics of organizational maintenance and legacy.

The Economic Turn

A third strand of research focusses on the economic aspects of civil wars. This research agenda emphasizes the socio-economic conditions that allow large-scale intergroup violence. Much of this groundbreaking research on civil wars has focussed on cross-national determinants, but also on country-level studies. The economic literature focusses on either greed or grievance as the source of conflict onset. This research agenda is relevant to understand the conditions under which rebel groups emerge. It, however, conceptualizes organizations as like units thus bracketing organizational dynamics.

The greed perspective underlines that, like criminal enterprises, rebel groups tend to be motivated by material gains rather than deeply held grievances (P. Collier 2000b; Grossman 1991). Civil wars, thus occur in contexts where there are especially low costs for organizing rebellion and opportunities for enrichment (Azam 1995; P. Collier and Hoeffler 1998; Grossman 1991). Poverty, strong demographic concentrations of young men, unemployment, low education endowments, high dependence on natural resources exports, mountainous terrain as well as access to resources easy to loot provide important opportunities for the construction of rebel organizations (P. Collier 2000a; P. Collier and Hoeffler 1998; Fearon and Laitin 2003; P. Collier and Hoeffler 2004; see Blattman and Miguel 2010 for review). State weakness also notably facilitates the emergence of insurgent groups (P. Collier 2009; Fearon and Laitin 2003). The greed perspective thus implies that rebels build and maintain their organization by their ability to mobilize resources for war.

In contrast, the grievance perspective builds upon the relative deprivation scholarship (Davies 1962; Gurr 1970) that points out that the discrepancy between what people want and their expectations create frustration and increase the likelihood of armed violence. Statistical studies show an inverted U relationship between regime type and civil war outbreak. Such conflicts tend to occur in intermediate regimes (between democracy and autocracy) where political rights are not fully attained but where repression is not severe enough to curb dissent (Hegre 2014; Hegre et al. 2001). Applied to ethnic conflicts, studies show that different forms of socio-economic inequalities along ethnic lines, particularly in accessing state power, explain the outbreak of war (Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013; Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch 2011; F. Stewart 2008). Critics

highlight, however, that grievances themselves do not constitute a necessary condition for rebellion, and that both loot-seeking and grievance based rebels tend to exaggerate narratives of grievances and hide their economic agendas (P. Collier 2000a). The grievance perspective points out, however, that rebel organizations can form and maintain their organization by tapping into the grievances of local communities.

Applied to the life cycle of rebel organizations, the economic turn sheds light on some of the conditions that favour armed group formation (see Fearon and Laitin 2003) as well as post-war reintegration dynamics (see P. Collier 1994). However, as pointed out by Shesterinina (2022, 1–2), statistical studies have focussed on different phases of armed conflict including, civil war onset, escalation, termination and recurrence but, there is little attention on the intricate linkages between different phases. Furthermore, most statistical research does not '[get] inside the mechanisms or processes of civil war insurgencies' (Tarrow 2007, 598). Conceptualizing rebel groups as like units is also problematic, since variation in the institutions (Hoover Green 2017), ideologies (Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2014; Maynard 2019), types of resources (Weinstein 2007) and practices for rebel leader selection (Sawyer, Bond, and Cunningham 2021) influence whether a group will exercise restraint and build local legitimacy, or follow a "greed" path. When it comes to the micro-processes of participation, greed or grievance perspectives are further misleading since they do not differentiate between individuals that 'face the same external forces' (Ugarriza and Craig 2013, 448–49) and do not hold when investigating individual level motivations (Arjona and Kalyvas 2012). As a whole, the economic turn generates limited insights on the actual life cycle of rebel organizations and their implications for post-demobilization trajectories.

The Organizational Turn

Seeing discrepancies in the macroeconomic analyses of armed conflicts, scholars turned to the organizational dynamics of armed of rebellions. This field of inquiry aimed to open the "black box" of rebel groups. This shift to rebel organizations includes groundbreaking case studies looking at the inner workings of rebel groups (see Tarrow 2007 for a review) as well as survey research that underlines the micro dynamics of participation and recruitment (see Arjona and Kalyvas 2012; Humphreys and Weinstein 2008; Blattman 2009). Rebel groups are notably understood as having different organizational structures that shape their recruitment behaviour (Gates 2002; Weinstein 2007), effectiveness on the battlefield (Johnston 2008; Sinno 2008) and propensity to employ violent or non-violent tactics (Pearlman 2011). Rebel groups also harness and adapt different ideologies that shape what kinds of institutions and organizational structure they develop (Balcells and Kalyvas 2015; Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2014; M. A. Stewart 2021), their capacity to mobilize fighters (Costalli and Ruggeri 2015; Ugarriza and Craig 2013) and the type of violence they deploy (Maynard 2019; Thaler 2012). Due to its focus on organizational and micro-level dynamics, this field of research provides a solid basis to study rebel group life cycles. It, however, lacks a longitudinal perspective.

A first strand of research focusses on the strategic and rational foundation of rebel organizations. One tradition highlights that rebel organizations form and maintain themselves by providing selective incentives to participants. Such incentives are for instance material benefits including payments, looting opportunities, and security (Gates 2002; Popkin 1979; Weinstein 2007), negative incentives in the form of forced recruitment and threats (Beber and Blattman 2013; Gates 2002; 2017) or social incentives, such as

norms, networks and ideology (Gates 2002; Lichbach 1994; Weinstein 2007). This research is largely inspired by the model of the firm and the resource mobilization tradition in social movements research (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Olson 2003). Linking rebel group formation to maintenance, Weinstein (2007, 47–50) underlines that the initial resource base of rebel groups, whether it is economic (money, natural resources, etc.) or social endowments (identities, networks, shared values), affects the extent to which an organization will attract opportunist undisciplined fighters or committed combatants. Selective incentives can also shed light on the legacies of armed violence. The ability of an armed group to survive as a political party is notably contingent on the extent to which the types of strategies they use to provide incentives remain effective in the political arena (Söderberg Kovacs 2007, 21–22). Rationalist scholarship, however, conceptualizes individual interests as fixed and tends to take social endowments out of the context of production. This implies that such research cannot account for changing interests and preferences as individuals go through different stages of war.

Another strand of research focusses on the social and ideological orientations of rebel organizations. Studies on ideational dimensions of insurgencies underline that rebel groups are able to form and maintain themselves when they adopt ideologies that translate private emotions and grievances into public grievances (see Costalli and Ruggeri 2015; Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2014). Elisabeth Wood's (2003) seminal work notably demonstrates how campesinos in the Salvadoran civil war participated in the insurgency because of the "pleasure of agency" they experienced in taking part in the making of history. Linking organizational dynamics to micro-level trajectories, studies on the Colombian armed conflict demonstrate the continued relevance of ideological motivations

for the trajectories of individual fighters (Oppenheim et al. 2015; Ugarriza and Craig 2013). Ideologies can create linkages that transcend the formation, maintenance and legacy stages. On the organizational level, ideas and ideologies shape how insurgents govern and articulate their political platforms as post-war political parties (Curtis and Sindre 2019). On the individual level, rebel group practices can also have lasting legacies. Blattman (2009, 231) finds in Uganda that 'forced recruitment leads to greater postwar political participation—a 27% increase in the likelihood of voting and a doubling of the likelihood of being a community leader among former abductees'. Work on DDR also further underlines how wartime networks, often involving lingering command structures, affect the remobilization of former fighters for electoral politics, violence and crime (Christensen and Utas 2008; Daly, Paler, and Samii 2020; Themnér 2011; 2015).

The organizational turn provides valuable insights on processes occurring at different organizational life stages. It also encompasses the two levels of analysis necessary to study the rebel group life cycle. This field of research is, however, limited by the fact that it does not address longitudinal dynamics that cut across the different life stages of rebel groups. For Kalyvas (2006, 22), situations of war and peace are distinct and analysts should treat them separately, since '[conflating] violence in the context of contentious action with civil war violence suggests a failure to recognize that war and peace are radically different contexts that induce and constrain violence in very different ways'. This argument is convincing as there are good reasons to think that in some contexts, there are limited linkages across rebel organizational life stages. Focussing on endogenous dynamics allows us to grasp processes embedded in different rebel group life stages. Yet, relying on

a strict distinction between war and peace overshadows some of the mechanisms and processes that transcend insurgent organizational formation, maintenance and legacy.

The Social Process Turn

The most recent turn in the study of civil wars focusses on social processes. There are important overlaps between this research agenda and the organizational turn. Social processes, as Elisabeth Wood (2008, 540) points out, transform social actors, structures, norms and practices in ways that can have important implications for post-war legacies. Scholars have underlined how fragmentation (Seymour, Bakke, and Cunningham 2016), legitimation (Duyvesteyn 2017; Schlichte and Schneckener 2015; Seymour 2017), violent socialization (Checkel 2017; Cohen 2017), rebel group formation (Braithwaite and Cunningham 2020; J. I. Lewis 2020; Reno 2011; Schlichte 2009b), mobilization (Parkinson 2013; Shesterinina 2021; Viterna 2013), participation in mass atrocities (Fujii 2008) and radicalization (Alimi, Bosi, and Demetriou 2015; Della Porta 2018; Bosi, Demetriou, and Malthaner 2014) can be understood as processes. This turn is characterized by the study of different macro-, meso- and micro-level structures and processes that are linked to one another and bridge different stages of violence (see Della Porta 2013; 2018 for discussions on levels of analysis). As Brenner (2019, 16) puts it, 'conceptualizing of rebellion as a social process involves analysing it as a movement that is ontologically embedded in its social environment'.

Inspired by organizational approaches, a first strand highlights how the social embeddedness of rebel groups in networks and institutions shapes fragmentation and cohesion (Staniland 2014; Mosinger 2018), rebel governance practices (Arjona 2016a; 2016b; Mampilly 2011; 2015) and long-term organizational survival (Parkinson 2013).

Staniland (2012a; 2014) points out for instance that the characteristics of prewar networks shape how armed groups manage their resources and retain internal cohesion by generating processes of central and local control. Every armed group has a social base consisting of networks that link people horizontally and vertically. Those multiple ties provide the "social anchor" allowing armed group leaders to build rebel organizations. Network dynamics can also link different waves of rebellion to one another. Adopting a long-term perspective, Reno (2011, 4–12) shows that the rebel intelligentsia at the basis of different waves of insurgencies in Africa emerged from radical politics and activism in African, European, and American universities. The expansion of secondary and higher education within African states in the 1960s notably lead to the formation of several African leaders that would later lead struggles against colonialism and repressive regimes. This suggests that the formation of insurgent groups in given context can be linked to the legacies of other rebel organizations that preceded them (see also Daly 2012; 2014).

Another strand of scholarship underscores the role of micro-level processes that shape individual and group dynamics. This body of research notably looks at the role of in-group socialization to explain the repertoire of violence employed by insurgents (Cohen 2013; 2017; Hoover Green 2017), the importance of leadership and skills (Doctor 2020; 2021; Finkel 2015; Huang, Silverman, and Acosta 2022) as well as the micro-dynamics of mobilization (Parkinson 2013; Shesterinina 2016; 2021; Viterna 2013). Linking wartime and post-war processes, Bateson (2017, 635) underlines that during the Guatemalan civil war (1960-1996), 'the military targeted civilians with an intense, sophisticated campaign of psychological warfare which was largely successful' thus facilitating post-war civilian patrols. Research on mobilization and participation in violence also points out that the

various pre-existing ties and group memberships provide a base for identities to become salient and relevant for mobilization (Gould 1995, 200; McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Stryker 2000; Viterna 2006; 2013)[5]. Viterna notably (2006; 2013) explains women's participation, collaboration and non-participation in the civil war in El Salvador by the interaction of networks, identities and rebel narratives. In the same vein, Shesterinina (2016) demonstrates in her study of the 1992-1993 Georgian-Abkhaz war, that pre-war social networks provided information to potential participants and shaped their threat perception and decision to mobilize. Social networks also shape the long-term political participation of former combatants (see Bosi 2019; Söderström 2020) as well as their ability to "retire" without getting killed in the process (Sen 2021). This suggests that organizational, network and micro-level individual processes create linkages that transcend the formation, maintenance and legacy of rebel organizations.

The literature on the social processes and organizational dynamics of rebellions emphasizes meso- and micro-level processes that link different stages of war. This thesis is embedded within those two turns. It is, however, distinct from pre-existing work in a number of ways. Several studies focus on the organizational level of analysis, and the ways through which they evolve across different stages of war (e.g. Staniland 2014; 2021; Parkinson 2013; 2016). Yet, such works do not embed their approach in an explicit life cycle perspective. This is detrimental to our understanding of civil wars since this focus does not encompass the longitudinal dynamics of rebel group formation, maintenance and

[5] See also Tilly (1978), McAdam (1982) and Petersen (2001) on the role of networks in contentious politics.

post-war legacies. Some post-war dynamics may for instance take root during war but also in the prewar period (Shesterinina 2021). Furthermore, much of previous research highlights the linkages between rebel group life stages, but, little work incorporates a *longue durée* perspective (Reno 2011; Shesterinina 2021; Osorio, Schubiger, and Weintraub 2021). For instance, Staniland's (2014, 11) seminal research on rebel group networks and cohesion 'ends when insurgent groups sign a peace deal that demobilizes them as fighting forces; when they abandon violence in favour of party politics, crime, or collusive arrangements with the state; or when they are wiped out'. Similarly, in a recent contribution Staniland (2021) focusses on the trajectories of rebel organizations from their foundation to their post-war incorporation, transformation and disbandment. He focusses on state-insurgent relations, however, leaving out the micro-, individual-level processes investigated in this thesis. In the same vein, recent studies on socialization and violence (Bateson 2017; Checkel 2017; Hoover Green 2017; Vermeij 2011), focus on variation in the degree of internalization of group norms as well as cross-group and within-group comparisons. This research is limited by the fact that it does not address lifelong patterns of socialization spanning through the whole of the rebel group life cycle (see e.g. Duclos 2010; Neveu and Fillieule 2019). Long-term processes are important since they can shed light on the types of skills, dispositions, social relations and mindset individuals bring to their organizations as well as the different ways through which pre-recruitment, wartime and post-demobilization socialization dynamics interact. Building on this critique, the dissertation explores understudied processes that unfold across different rebel group life stages. The different articles of the thesis bridge meso-level perspectives on organizations and networks with a sociologically informed account on individual life trajectories.

The Political Sociology of Rebel Group Life Cycles

Drawing on political sociology, the articles of the thesis shed new light on the social origin of rebel groups, their inner workings and organizational legacy. As a whole, the four contributions of the dissertation make up various building blocks of a broader political sociological approach to study rebel group life cycles. This section first presents the ontological and epistemological basis of the thesis and then outlines how the four articles of the dissertation relate to different rebel group life stages.

Relations, Processes and Mechanisms

The thesis adopts a relational realist approach to the philosophy of science. Such perspective is understood as 'the doctrine that transactions, interactions, social ties and conversations constitute the central stuff of social life' (Tilly 2002, 72; see also Emirbayer 1997). Relational ontology contrasts with tenants of methodological individualism that contend that the aggregation of individual rational decisions make up social phenomena. It is also distinct from phenomenological approaches that put primacy on meaning making. Social processes are, from this perspective, relational, since they are produced through interactions between agents but also since they transform social relations. As Elisabeth Wood (2008, 540) puts it, '[social processes of civil war] reconfigure social networks in a variety of ways, creating new networks, dissolving some, and changing the structure of others, as when the local clients of a patron are mobilized into an armed network with a new central figure'. Following the realist program in social movement research, the thesis aims to uncover processes and mechanisms of violent political contention (Della Porta 1995; 2013; Demetriou, Malthaner, and Bosi 2014; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2004; Tilly and Tarrow 2015). Such focus is 'less interested in determining which variables

matter in a regression equation than in exploring how these constructive social processes operate'(Lichbach 2008, 345).

Epistemologically, realists underline that a real world exists independently of our own interpretations and experience (Moses and Knutsen 2012, 11). However, the fact that processes and mechanisms are unobservable makes them especially hard to measure. Researchers can, nonetheless, rely on direct measurements through systematic event analysis and ethnographic field work but also through indirect statistical analyses (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2008). A processual focus thus necessitates the mobilization of different research methods. Within this perspective, cases constitute the building blocks of knowledge as processes and mechanisms cannot be analysed in separation from the context in which they unfold. As Falleti and Lynch (2009, 1145) point out, 'causation resides in the interaction between the mechanism and the context within which it operates'. It is hence possible to make cross-case generalizations without loosing track of the constitutive context in which social processes unfold. As Mische (2003, 266) argues, the 'point of [a] focus on mechanisms [and processes] is to allow for mid-range generalizations about regularized patterns of interaction that allow for contingencies and contextual specificity at both local and larger-scale levels'. This approach contrasts to a variable-based approach that tends to downplay the importance of historical contingency. This is because, variable-based analysis 'detaches elements (substances with variable attributes) from their spatiotemporal contexts, analysing them apart from their relations with other elements within fields of mutual determination and flux' (Emirbayer 1997, 288). The relational perspective advocated in this thesis is also distinct from interpretivist scholarship, where every case is considered unique.

Processes and mechanisms constitute the main building blocks for explanation in social sciences. Processes involve the activation of different concomitant mechanisms (Tilly and Tarrow 2015, 29–31). Micro-level processes are embedded within higher order processes, and conversely, broader processes are composed of narrower processes and mechanisms. Civil war, for instance, can be understood as a social process that encapsulates other lower-order processes such as alliance formation (Christia 2012; Bencherif and Campana 2017; Kalyvas 2003), political mobilization (Shesterinina 2021; Viterna 2013; E. J. Wood 2008) and conflict diffusion (Campana and Ratelle 2014). In turn, those processes are composed of other micro-level processes and mechanisms. Campana and Ratel (2014) argue for instance that in the North Caucasus conflict diffusion was characterized by the activation of attribution of similarity, brokerage and outbidding mechanisms. In the same vein, Della Porta (2013) points out that clandestine political violence incorporates other mechanisms and processses such as the activation of activist networks, radicalization, organizational compartmentalization and action militarization. Following this logic, the life cycle of an insurgent organization can be conceptualized as a process composed of lower-order processes that interact with one another. Simultaneously, the rebel group life cycle, and its constituent parts, are embedded in the wider social process of civil war that spans from pre- to post-war periods (see Shesterinina 2022). Table 1.2 shows how the different processes studied in the thesis are related to one another in a macro-micro scale. This conceptualization begs the question of how macro-, meso- and micro-level processes interact with one another. This aspect, underdeveloped in the length of the individual articles, is further explored in the concluding chapter.

Table 1.2 Civil war, the rebel group life cycle and social processes

Macro	Civil War			
Meso	Rebel group life cycle			
Micro	Brokerage/Institutional bricolage (Article I)	Legitimation (Article II)	Life trajectory (Article III)	Lifelong socialization (Article IV)

Presenting the Articles of the Dissertation

Each article in the dissertation analyses distinct social processes and mechanisms enmeshed in the rebel group life cycle. Article I develops a theory of rebel bricolage. The case of M-19 in Colombia, an insurgent group that emerged as an urban-based clandestine organization in 1970-1976, acts as a probe to test the plausibility of the argument. The article argues that in heterogeneous and complex urban contexts, rebel founding members act in secrecy and build the operational capacity of their nascent organization through *brokerage* and *institutional bricolage*. The activation of those two mechanisms allow organizers to attract individuals with the skills to produce and organize violence and draw on organizational forms that facilitate internal coordination. To develop the framework, I employ social network analysis and organizational repertoire analysis. I draw from a database I compiled comprising biographical and network information on 39 M-19 founding members, semi-structured interviews with 32 M-19 ex-combatants, documents from the armed group's archives, biographies, memoirs and secondary literature. The article contributes to the literature on organizational dynamics of insurgent groups, the scholarship on urban conflict dynamics and the role of leaders in civil war processes. The

article also provides a novel framework to study rebel group formation in heterogeneous settings. The study highlights how the urban roots of a movement matter for organizational development. It also stresses the importance of understanding rebel group formation as part of broader civil society networks and institutions that give such organizations their structure and content.

Article II studies cultural and music production within the FARC to shed light on how the rebel group legitimated itself internally and externally. The article draws from 258 songs, FARC internal documents, informal encounters with FARC artists and observations in two cultural events in 2017. Cultural production in the FARC was institutionalized, drew on historical referents that transcended the existence of the group and was employed to expand the social base of the group by legitimizing its armed struggle and its transition to legality. Cultural production and legitimation are hence processes that take root and have implications for different rebel group life stages. The article contributes to the literature on cultural production of armed organizations, the politics of legitimacy of rebel groups as well as the internal characteristics of insurgent organizations. The relational approach to legitimacy employed to analyse cultural production can be applied to other hierarchically structured rebel groups with a centralized propaganda apparatus.

Article III develops a typology of ex-combatant trajectories and biographical outcomes. Drawing on Staniland (2012b) and Barne's (2017) approach to typology building and Goertz's (2006) work on concept formation, the article builds a framework to map the position of ex-combatants in relation to politics, violence and the state. To illustrate the validity of the framework, the article incorporates examples from a variety of contexts and organizations. The article encompasses the whole of the rebel group life cycle

underlining individual and group-level dynamics that span from before an insurgent organization is formed to its post-demobilization legacy. The article contributes to the study of DDR processes as well as the micro- and long-term turns in peace and conflict research by providing a novel framework to study and map ex-combatant life trajectories. The typology also sheds light on how individual and aggregate level biographical outcomes can contribute to various post-war dynamics such as civil war recurrence, postwar democratization, peacebuilding and violence. The article also bridges different research agendas in the study of civil wars and outlines a new research agenda on civil war afterlives.

Article IV investigates the social engagement of former members of the M-19 guerrilla in education and social work institutions. The article draws on the literature on militant careers and activist trajectories to develop a biographical approach to study ex-combatant social engagement. From this perspective, social engagement amongst former fighters can take root at different points in time including pre-recruitment, wartime and post-demobilization stages through complex lifelong socialization processes. The analysis draws on life history interviews with 32 M-19 former fighters, documents from the rebel group's archives and insights from 5 social leaders. The study relates to the whole of M-19's life cycle. It shows how the post-demobilization social engagement of former militants is shaped by the social origins of the organization and the institutions it developed through war. The article speaks to the literature on the long-term consequences of DDR processes, socialization and violence and the legacies of civil wars. It highlights how different aspects of insurgent mobilization shape life course patterns and societies more broadly. Table 1.3 summarizes the articles' focuses, main features and contributions.

Table 1.3 Summaries of the articles included in the dissertation

Articles	Focus	Process Mechanism	Cases	Methods	Main Contributions
I *Rebel Bricoleurs?* Brokerage, Institutional Bricolage and Operational Capacity in the Formation of M-19 in Colombia	Rebel group formation, operational capacity	Brokerage Institutional bricolage	M-19	Social network analysis, analysis of organizational repertoires	Develops a bricolage theory of rebel group formation. Demonstrates how M-19 founding members build operational capacity by making use of brokerage and institutional bricolage.
II Cultural Production, Music and the Politics of Legitimacy: The Case of the FARC in Colombia	Cultural production, music	Legitimation	FARC	Thematic analysis	Shows how cultural and music production is employed by rebels to legitimize their group's internal order and goals in relation to external actors. Develops a framework to study legitimation and cultural production in hierarchically organized rebel groups.
III Civil War Afterlives: A Typology of Ex-Combatant Biographical Outcomes and Research Agenda	Biographical outcomes	Life trajectory	Various	Typology building, concept formation	Develops a novel framework to study and map ex-combatant life trajectories. Bridges different research programs in the study of civil wars to provide the outline of a new research agenda on civil war afterlives.
IV *¡Zapatero, a tus zapatos!* Explaining the Social Engagement of M-19 Ex-Combatants in Education and Social Work Institutions in Colombia	Social engagement in social work and education institutions	Lifelong socialization	M-19	Analysis of individual and collective trajectories	Illustrates how different dimensions of insurgent mobilization have lasting effects on ex-combatant life courses and society. Develops a biographical approach to study the influence of lifelong socialization processes on ex-combatant biographical outcomes.

Context of Research, Methods and Research Material

The dissertation focusses on the Colombian armed conflict. Between 1958 and 2012, this still ongoing multi-party armed conflict caused 220 000 deaths and forcibly displaced more than 4,7 million people (Grupo de Memoria Histórica 2013, 32–33). The Colombian armed conflict started in the 1960s following a bloody civil war opposing the Liberal and Conservative parties (1945-1958) commonly known as *La Violencia*. Various left-wing insurgent groups emerged in rural peripheries, remobilizing communist peasant self-defence groups (FARC, 1964), launching a Cuban-inspired guerrilla *foco* (National Liberation Army, ELN, 1964) and initiating a Maoist people's war (Popular Liberation Army, EPL, 1967) (Pizarro Leongómez 1989; Villamizar 2017). A second wave of left-wing insurgent groups emerged in the 1970s, sometimes composed of dissidents from the main Marxist rural guerrillas. This includes M-19 that started operating in 1974 as a nationalist urban guerrilla to later expand in rural areas. The guerrillas did not pose a significant threat to the government until they gained strength in the end of the 1970s (Pécaut 2001, 65–66). In 1982, Conservative party President Belisario Betancur (1982-1986) initiated peace talks. In this context, the Colombian Communist Party (PCC) and the FARC formed the Patriotic Union (UP) party. The UP was subject to targeted killings by members of the security forces, drug cartels and paramilitary groups[6] (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica 2018, 135; 149–50). The peace talks failed. In the early 1990s, M-19, most of the EPL, and ELN dissidents demobilized and reintegrated mainstream politics.

[6] Between 1984 and 2002, 4153 UP militants were assassinated or forcibly disappeared (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica 2018, 135; 149–50).

Yet, despite the end of the Cold war, the armed conflict intensified. The FARC, the largest group, strengthened their influence drawing on increased revenues from extortions, kidnappings and the taxation of the illicit drug economy (Pécaut 2006, 26–28).

To protect their assets against the guerrillas, drug lords and economic elites created paramilitary organizations. Such groups, illegal since 1989, were not a coherent whole and included cattle ranchers, franchises of drug cartels, local self-defence militias and urban gangs (Daly 2016, 50–54; Gutiérrez-Sanín 2008, 14–15). The paramilitaries were responsible for 58,9% of the 1,982 massacres committed between 1980 and 2012 (Grupo de Memoria Histórica 2013, 36). In 1995, Fidel, Vicente and Carlos Castaño Gil formed the Peasant Self-Defense of Códoba and Urabá (ACCU). This organization incorporated other paramilitary groups to form the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) umbrella in 1997. The AUC had important links to the drug economy. In 2000, Carlos Castaño claimed that 70% of the AUC's revenues came from narcotrafficking (Casteel in United States Senate 2003, 51). In its last days, the leadership of the AUC was dominated by "pure narco-traffickers" bringing certain high-ranking members to critique the narcotization of the group (El Espectador 2021; Gutiérrez-Sanín and González-Peña 2016, 115). In 2002-2006, a peace process initiated by the Liberal government of Álvaro Uribe Veléz (2002-2010) led to the collective demobilization of 31,472 AUC troops and individual guerrilla fighters (Gutiérrez-Sanín and González-Peña 2016, 116). More recently, in 2016, the FARC signed a peace agreement with the government. While most of the FARC remains in the peace process, some former leaders regrouped under various dissident organizations. The ELN, FARC dissidents and remnants of the EPL and the AUC are still active in Colombia.

In Colombia, relatively stable democratic institutions coexist with a variety of illegal armed actors, a significant illicit drug economy, subsequent peace processes and recurring cycles of violence. Given such dynamics and the longevity of the conflict, Colombia is a somewhat particular case in comparison to other cases of civil war. Nonetheless, the case has an important comparative advantage, since extreme cases, 'can reveal more information because they activate more actors and more basic mechanisms in the situation studied' (Flyvbjerg 2001, 78). In this context, various rebel group life cycles feed into one another, generating new waves of violence through organizational- and micro-level processes. For instance, after *La Violencia*, former liberal guerrillas turned to "political banditry" in what is known as the *bandolero* phenomenon. Some of those "bandits" then nurtured the ranks of the nascent Communist guerrillas in the 1950s and 1960s (Pizarro Leongómez 1996, 111–14; Villamizar 2017, 186–87; Daly 2012; 2014). Furthermore, despite the fact that former AUC fighters only made up about 17% of membership of the major post-AUC illegal armed groups, the operational and military experience of former leaders provided the organizational backbone for the violent remobilization of such groups (Villarraga Sarmiento 2015, 222–24). Given that many rebel organizations demobilized in the 1990s also allows us to tap into the long-term consequences of peace processes and insurgent demobilization.

Field Work in Colombia

Most of the data for the dissertation was gathered during two fieldwork trips to Colombia in March-June 2017 (before starting the PhD) as well as in September-December 2019. Figure 1.1 shows the different sites of fieldwork in 2017 and 2019. For the study on the FARC (Article II), I benefited from the important juncture of the peace process. In 2017,

the FARC was demobilizing and transforming into a political party. During the San Pedro Festivities in Neiva, the FARC sent a cultural delegation. At that time, I had the chance to attend different cultural events and exchange with artists and commanders. In addition, I carried out a study visit to a FARC reintegration site[7] in the Tolima Department. Due to ethical concerns, I did not use all the material gathered at that time (see 'Ethics and Reflexivity' section below). This initial experience, nonetheless, allowed me to develop the longitudinal approach that was further refined during the doctoral research. For the studies on M-19 (Article I, IV), I conducted life history interviews in Bogotá, Cali and Neiva. The choice of these sites was motivated by the fact that the Bogotá and Cali metropolitan areas were important sites for the formation and wartime activities of M-19. I conducted 40 life history interviews in Spanish. The sample includes interviews with 32 ex-combatants from M-19, one ELN urban collaborator and 7 militants from the UP and PCC (see list of interviewees in Appendix I). I also draw on countless informal encounters with left-wing militants, researchers, social activists and former combatants.

[7] *Espacio Territorial de Capacitación y Reincorporación* (ETCR) Antonio Nariño

Figure 1.1 Research sites in Colombia

Throughout fieldwork, I sought to obtain a variety of perspectives on pre-recruitment, wartime and post-demobilization trajectories amongst former combatants. For Article I, I made use of the insights of founding members and militants who had been part of the movement from the onset. This approach allowed me to retrace the individual experiences and chain of events that led to the formation of M-19. Kapiszewski et al. (2015, 105) underline in that regard that data gathering should strive for the maximization of the likelihood of collecting information that is relevant for answering the research question.

Following an abductive approach, I aimed to maximize my degree of exposure to distinct perspectives relevant to the subject (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012, 86-87). As pointed out in Article IV, in my selection of 'participants, I sought variation in experiences across life stages to map possible paths', which allowed me to have insights from diverse groups within M-19 including, 'members of the central command, mid-level commanders, university organizers, urban militants, rural rank-and-files and cadres from the rebel group diplomatic and propaganda apparatus' (Boulanger Martel 2022, 765). In addition to this, I also aimed to obtain a representative view of the different social bases of the group. This prompted me to seek founding members and militants that had been in the organization from the onset, individuals that were embedded in radical student groups, former members with prior links to the National Popular Alliance (ANAPO) party and rank-and-file militants who joined in urban and rural milieus. My access to M-19 ex-combatant networks was facilitated by three contacts: Johanna Söderström who had been carrying research on M-19, a friend in Neiva as well as the daughter of a former commander with whom I came into contact through a colleague. Participants were reached via trusted contacts on What's App, an application commonly used in Colombia and elsewhere. In addition to these three points of entry, I was invited to different events organized by former M-19 combatants. Such events provided opportunities for recruitment on an *ad hoc* basis. This was especially important as this gave me access to people who had distanced themselves from the organization and sporadically joined in such type of events. The question of 'What had become of M-19 former combatants?' was also met with great interests within the M-19 community. This made the recruitment of participants easier than expected.

Life History Interviews

Articles I and IV employ life history interviews to inductively retrace the biographies of former M-19 militants. Life history interviews consider people's lives as the main source of research material (Bertaux and Kohli 1984, 217). One can therefore scrutinize a person's interaction with wider social processes from rebel group formation to war-to-peace transitions (Söderström 2016, 218). The interviews are semi-structured. The researcher first provides general questions aimed to obtain an extensive narration of the participant (Bertaux and Kohli 1984, 224). Then, the investigator engages in further questioning in order to obtain more details on certain events and introduces additional topics (ibid). This open approach allowed me to explore additional research questions and puzzles. For instance, the gist of Article I on rebel group formation was elaborated after speaking to M-19 founding members. I was amazed to hear about the processes through which rebel leaders brought together networks of activists with very diverse backgrounds. An interview guide was used in order to lead the discussion and adapt the questions in light of the insights of the participants (see interview guide in Appendix II). I employed the life history method to reconstruct the various steps that led people to join armed organizations and/or political activism, their wartime experiences and post-demobilization life trajectory. I did not ascribe a pre-established meaning to what I deemed political engagement but, instead investigated how the theoretical concepts were used and lived by the actors themselves (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012, 18). In doing so I aimed to obtain the 'insider meaning that agents attribute to their reality'(Pouliot 2013, 50). This approach was fruitful as it allowed me to identify types of political and social engagement that I had not expected in

the initial project proposal (e.g. engagement in education and social work institutions outlined in Article IV).

The life history method also allowed me to reconstruct the series of objective positions (former) M-19 militants occupied over time. To do so, I initially addressed themes considered central in the field of research on activist careers (see Fillieule 2010; Neveu and Fillieule 2019; Pagis 2014; Passy and Giugni 2000). As an example, the educational, family or work background of individuals underline how prior inculcation and capital accumulation provide a certain readiness for political engagement (Bourdieu 2000; Pagis 2014). I, however, eventually integrated other themes along the way as I gained more nuanced insights on M-19, its ways of acting, and organizational culture. For instance, former fighters often referred to the "chain of affect" (*Cadena de Afectos*), an ideological construct introduced by Jaime Bateman, the group's first leader, to reinforce the bonds between militants. The chain of affect was also mentioned by interviewees to explain the lasting legacy of the former rebel group. As fieldwork progressed, I asked additional questions on what the chain of affect meant to respondents. This generated surprising insights on how group cohesion is produced amid clandestinity as well as the extent to which certain former fighters still identified with the M-19 political community long after their formal demobilization.

The use of biographical data is, however, not unproblematic nor sufficient in itself. There is a tendency amongst respondents to rationalize past events in ways that make sense to them and their current position. Interviewers thus risk succumbing to the biographical illusion, a sense of obtaining a complete picture without inquiring into the wider social structures in which actors evolve (Bourdieu 1986a). Some ex-combatants idealized their

time within the rebel group, focussed on positive experiences or rationalized their actions *a posteriori*. Respondents provided a certain coherence in their individual trajectory that did not necessarily exist before the interview occurred. Such pitfalls underline that life histories should not be treated as irreproachable artefacts (Bourdieu 1986a), but as performances that are negotiated between the interviewer and the interviewee in a particular socio-historic context (Riessman 2002; 2008). To palliate this discrepancy, I contextualized individual narratives within wider historical processes by consulting various primary and secondary materials. I also gave attention to metadata (Fujii 2010) such as silences, lies, rumours, body gestures, laughs, etc. This type of information was especially useful to interpret unspoken aspects of individual experience; notably the feelings of being left behind or disappointed by their former commanders and comrades. While such information is not predominant in the body of the text of Article I and IV, it influenced how I analysed the interview data. As an example, Interviewee 34, moved her arms in an opening gesture in order to explain the various possible paths that opened up in front of her as she was demobilizing from the rebel group. This type of metadata prompted me to further explore why individuals take on specific paths over others and reflect on the universe of possible outcomes available to former fighters (see Article III). On other occasions, speaking with former fighters about their relation to former commanders and peers often triggered emotional response. Feelings of sadness and frustration revealed the continued emotional attachment former fighters felt about the political project of the former armed group. Such emotions also conveyed the persistence of symbolic struggles over the meaning of the legacy of M-19.

Additional Research Material

In addition to the field aspects of the dissertation, I draw on first-hand material gathered in archives, bookstores, and through desk research. Article I notably includes network and biographical data on M-19 founding members that were gathered by compiling scattered information from various sources (see Appendix III). I acquired memoirs (e.g. Grabe Loewenherz 2011; Vásquez Perdomo 2000) and letters (Pizarro 2015) written by former commanders, biographies (e.g. Villamizar 2019; Villanueva Martínez 2019) as well as books comprising wartime interviews (e.g. Behar 1985; Beccassino 1989). In addition, I draw on historical accounts on M-19 and Colombian guerrillas more broadly (e.g. Le Blanc 2012; Pizarro Leongómez 1996; Pécaut 2001; Villamizar 1995; 2017). Memoirs and letters are sources of data that are often underestimated in peace and conflict research (Mac Ginty 2022a). This type of data allowed me to triangulate some of the historical facts mentioned in interviews but also fill in some of the blanks in individual narratives. This was important as individuals may forget important facts in their narratives. I also acquired various documents produced by the armed group. The material comes from the rebel group "official" archive[8], the *Oiga Hermano, Hermana* blog[9], as well as a fund digitized by the

[8] Arjaid Artunduaga, a M-19 founding member, compiled and digitized many documents produced by the insurgent group.

[9] http://www.oigahermanohermana.org/

Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica[10]. The documents were crucial to get a sense of M-19's formal organizational structure, history and repertoire of action.

In addition to the material on M-19, the dissertation employs a variety of material from the FARC (Article II). To study FARC's cultural and music production, I compiled and analysed various documents accessible online. Article II draws on 258 songs produced by FARC artists and disseminated through various YouTube channels and websites. The material was analysed using thematic analysis. I notably uncovered how the Secretariat, the internal hierarchy, established elites, and the civilian population were portrayed in songs. An important challenge, however, was to contextualize the songs and establish how they fitted within the wider history of the rebel group. To do so, I spent a considerable amount of time studying the trajectories of individual FARC artists but also retrace the organizational dynamics that led to the institutionalization of cultural production within the rebel group. I consulted the rich literature on the FARC and the Colombian armed conflict in Spanish, English and French. I also analysed FARC internal documents and transcripts of interviews with guerrilla artists published online. This way, I could obtain a holistic view of the organizational, individual and cultural processes that shaped FARC music production.

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[10] Archivo Virtual de los Derechos humanos, Memoria Histórica y Conflicto Armado, Corporación para el Fomento de la Investigación y el Fomento Comunitario - Museo del Caquetá, http://www.archivodelosddhh.gov.co/

Ethics and Reflexivity

The field observations and informal interviews cited in Article II were gathered through field work in 2017, before the start of the PhD programme[11]. In the text, this includes the citation of an "artist manager" as well as observations during public cultural events. This activity was not subject to the scrutiny of an institutional review board at the *Université de Montréal*. However, I obtained the approval of my former employer to make use of material gathered during informal encounters and field observations, and only cite information that could also be found in publicly available sources. I, moreover, refrained from using material from formal interviews with former FARC fighters collected in 2017 for the thesis. Songs and other online materials constitute the main source of information for Article II. The doctoral project and fieldwork in 2019 were approved by the *Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités* of the *Université de Montréal* (see Appendix IV). I followed an interview protocol that was established before going to Colombia. While important, institutional review boards are not flawless as research in conflict-prone context poses important ethical dilemmas emerging during fieldwork (Shesterinina 2019, 191–92; E. J. Wood 2006). Below, I address some of those dilemmas.

The process of generating research data is hardly separable from the position the researcher occupies in social space. Interpretative scholars invite us, in this regard, to be reflexive and indicate how our ways of giving meaning to the social world and identity (gender, ethnicity, etc.) influence the data we generate (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012,

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[11] I gathered and analysed the songs and FARC internal documents during my PhD.

67; 90; 101–4). According to Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012, 102) 'reflexivity allows researchers to trace out the ways in which very specific instances of their positionality affect their research accounts and knowledge they claim on the basis of those accounts'. My privileged position as a male foreigner, my prior experience in Colombia and the fact that I speak Colombian Spanish influenced my ability to navigate M-19 ex-combatant networks. Several interviewees underlined that they were less inclined to speak to Colombian researchers given the sensitivity of the topic and that they cannot know if the researchers "come with other intentions". My position as a foreigner brought some important dilemmas. During a book launch, the presenter underlined my presence in his opening speech. He noted that despite 30 years of demobilization M-19 was still of interest to (foreign) academic researchers. In that context, my research was clearly employed to legitimize the legacy of the former rebel group. This made me uncomfortable. On several occasions, I made clear that my aim was not to support or legitimize the political project of the defunct M-19, but to understand the difficulties of reintegration of former fighters. Participants did not expect me to embrace their political project. Former commanders' – sometimes tacit – approval was nonetheless key to gain trust within the network.

In my interventions, I often told participants that my research was motivated by my commitment for peace in Colombia. This was indeed true and I could back this claim by underlining my prior work on the gender aspects of the 2016 peace agreement with a civil society organization in 2017. Mentioning prior work experiences in my first encounters with influential former M-19 militants was important to generate trust. On one occasion, for instance, a leader in a women ex-combatant non-governmental organization (NGO) told me that she trusted me because I had worked in Colombia before, had general

knowledge about the country and was aware of some projects she had been working with in the past. Mentioning the aims of the project, I was also careful not to create false expectations about the potential research outputs. In addition, I relied on close friends in Colombia that could vouch for my credibility as a researcher. This was important as, although M-19 was demobilized for 30 years, former fighters and left-wing politicians were still targeted by paramilitary groups and agents of the state. Many former fighters, in that regard, were distrustful of Colombian authorities.

From another perspective, my position might have influenced how participants responded to my questions but also the type of answers I obtained. Both men and women opened up in ways that were unexpected. Respondents spoke of experiences of trauma, their love relationships and how they lived their reintegration emotionally. While there were differences in life experiences and discourses conveyed by women and men, I cannot say with certainty that this variation is attributable to respondents' appraisal of my gender identity. This contrast with my prior experience with newly demobilized FARC combatants I interviewed in 2017. FARC women respondents were not at ease to speak about their personal life. This suggests that issues that might have been taboo in the context of an interview between a foreign male researcher and a women ex-combatant in the immediate aftermath of demobilization – personal relationships, love life, experience of violence, betrayal, etc. – were not especially sensitive for individuals that had been demobilized for over 30 years. It may therefore be the case that respondents felt at ease to speak of events that had occurred a long time ago and adopt a reflexive position in relation to their own past and personal trajectory. This suggests that adopting a long-term perspective in the study of ex-combatant trajectories can provide insights that are not readily available a short

time after former fighters demobilize. The interviews were also carried out in a context of mass protests in Colombia and many former fighters had remobilized peacefully against the government. This ongoing political mobilization might have made former M-19 fighters more prone to emphasize their political motivations. Yet, it is safe to say that an "activist bias" in interview narratives is unlikely. This is because respondents were already involved in politicized activities before joining the rebel group (see Article IV).

Some participants were sometimes uneasy emotionally while narrating experiences of combat, torture, the loss of family members and comrades as well as their personal and economic misfortunes after demobilization. The life history interview and ethnographic methods more generally imply important emotional commitments from participants and researchers. Interviewees may sometimes narrate traumatic experience, that have had lasting repercussions on their mental health. Re-traumatization is always possible. To minimize such risks, I took different measures. First of all, open-ended questions did not directly address traumatic events and allowed respondents to choose how to construct their own narrative. Respondents also had the option of ending the interview whenever they wanted without stating a reason. I also explained in detail the measures taken to keep the information confidential in order to minimize the risk of concerns that the participants' information may be leaked. However, the most important "tool" I mobilized during interviews was empathy. Empathy is 'to be sensitive to the feelings of someone, or to put oneself in someone else's shoes' (Brounéus 2011, 137). As Brounéus (2011, 137) puts it:

> Empathy does not mean to identify with the other or to become absorbed in the same feeling. It is to understand the other's perspective – even if we do not agree with what is being said, even if we are repelled by what is being said. It is also to understand some of what is being said between the lines.

During interviews, I did not only listen to participants but actively tried to comprehend their perspective on the armed conflict, motivations and transitions from war to peace.

Exercising empathy also relates to a broader ethical dilemma in research. Should researchers intervene in the field minimally by "doing no harm" or empower research participants? (see Shesterinina 2019). During fieldwork, I aimed to reduce psychological and reputational risks for participants. I notably kept the interview transcripts in an encrypted cloud. I also employed pseudonyms in research papers and removed details that would make it possible to identify research subjects (unless interviewees agreed to be identified). I did not provide any material compensation to respondents, except occasionally paying for coffee and pastries. However, I gave respondents the option of acquiring a copy of their interview transcript (anonymised or not) to thank them for their time. The transcripts were sent via a secured link. In certain instances, interviews had a positive "empowering" impact that I did not expect beforehand. As highlighted by Elisabeth Wood (2006, 377–78), interviewees may find relief in sharing their experience of violence and story to outsiders. Accordingly, participants felt empowered to give meaning to the events of their past and reflect on their ongoing social engagement. This was especially important for those who had been rank-and-file militants in the movement, for which reintegration was, in general, much harder. Overall, if the interviews had an impact in the way respondents see themselves in the world, it is by reinforcing their commitment to peace and social change through non-violent means of action.

Colombia is a country that is still at war. Despite the fact that I was studying armed groups that were demobilizing (FARC) or demobilized for more than 30 years (M-19), there were still important security risks for me, my family and my respondents. In the initial

project description, I was meant to compare the political trajectories of former M-19 combatants to militants of the Colombian Communist Party and the Patriotic Union. I had prior connections to the PCC, already carried out interviews with former militants abroad, and had visited the headquarters of the party on two occasions. Despite this, I did not manage to truly have access to PCC cadres in Bogotá. This was due to the fact that the party was campaigning for the upcoming elections but also because of other important conjunctures. On 11 October an incendiary bomb was launched on the headquarters. The attackers left a threat note. This was not an isolated event as there is a long history of targeted violence against left-wing politicians, especially the PCC and the UP (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica 2018; Grupo de Memoria Histórica 2013). My contacts did not reply to my messages and for my personal safety and that of my family I decided to concentrate solely on former M-19 combatants. In another incident, in Cali, an informant invited me to meet a former M-19 commander in a rural area. In the morning before our departure, he sent me a video of ongoing fighting in an area close to where the interview would have been carried out. We did not venture outside the city. The interviews were also carried out in sites that respondents found secure and adequate. Most of the time, this was the respondents' home, the house of a family member or friend, their workplace or a local café. Under no circumstance did I experience fear or note that respondents felt uneasy about the interview location. I obtained informed consent orally at the beginning of each interview. I also gave participants an information note, with my contact details, that did not mention the term "ex-combatant". This way, I did not leave a "paper trail" that might be employed to identify individuals as former fighters (see Appendix V).

Additional material for the doctoral research was gathered through desk research. Hoover Green and Cohen (2021) argue, in that regard, that researchers face important dilemmas between human subject protection and research integrity[12]. The research aimed to strike a balance between those two goals. For instance, for Article I, I compiled biographical and network information on all identifiable founding members of M-19. I drew on published and unpublished material on the rebel group, news sources as well as archival documents. Despite the fact that I have interview material that can provide additional biographical and network data on certain founding members, I excluded this information from the database. This makes the study more easily replicable but also ensures that confidential interview material is not employed by other researchers. To construct the database, I first identified the names of M-19 founding members by consulting the remarkable historical work carried out by Darío Villamizar (1995; 2017; 2019). I thereafter completed the biographical and network profiles of each founding member by drawing on additional academic articles, memoires, biographies, published interviews, archival documents, news articles, blog posts, etc. Given the wealth of knowledge produced on this armed group, it seems unlikely that an individual that is not publicly known as a founding member can be found in my data. Several founding members are public figures or deceased. Memoires and academic research also identify the same individuals. Another ethical issue emerged during the peer review process of Article II. While the manuscript

[12] Research integrity is 'the commitment to (1) transparency regarding data sources and research materials, processes, decisions, and uncertainties, and (2) avoiding academic malfeasance, including but not limited to plagiarism, data manipulation, or data fabrication' (Hoover Green and Cohen 2021, 4).

was under review, a compendium comprising various songs written by former FARC combatants was published. The lyrics were subject to copyright. This explains why I do not cite song lyrics in full within the text and instead rely on paraphrasing. The following chapters bring together the four articles that make up the core of the doctoral thesis.

Chapter 2

Rebel *Bricoleurs*? Brokerage, Institutional Bricolage and Operational Capacity in the Formation of M-19 in Colombia

Introduction

How do urban-based insurgent organizations emerge and build their operational capacity? Most theories of rebel group formation highlight that insurgents are more likely to emerge when they mobilize marginalized peasant communities in rural peripheries (Wickham-Crowley 1992; J. I. Lewis 2020). Indeed, rural-based rebel groups have been the primary actors in major civil wars in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Peru, Sudan, and Uganda amongst others. Conditions associated with successful rebel group formation like safe havens, rough terrain, state weakness and lootable natural resources are, however, unlikely to be found in cities (see Fearon and Laitin 2003; P. Collier and Hoeffler 2004). As Hobsbawn (1994, 169) puts it, 'However great the support of the movement in the cities, however urban the origin of its leaders, cities and especially capital cities are the last place a guerrilla army will capture, or unless very badly advised, tackle'. The presence of state authorities, the geographical accessibility of neighbourhoods, the heterogeneity of urban populations, and the increased vulnerability to infiltration and information leaks make it harder for insurgents to organize in cities in comparison to distant jungles and mountain ranges (Kalyvas 2006, 133; Staniland 2010; Le Blanc 2013). The emergence of urban-based insurgent groups does not rest on the establishment of liberated zones, the formation of remote guerrilla camps, nor the launch of mobile guerrilla forces but on the creation of clandestine cells (McCormick and Owen 2000; Della Porta 2013; Finkel 2015; Marighella 2002).

Despite important hurdles, robust urban social mobilization is common and can provide the basis for urban insurgencies (Staniland 2010). Some rebel groups such as the Tupamaros in Uruguay, the Montoneros in Argentina, the Mohajir Qaumi Movement in

Pakistan, and the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) sustained armed insurrections in the cities (Le Blanc 2012; Staniland 2010; Horgan and Taylor 1997). Others, such as the Red Army Faction (RAF) in Germany (Della Porta 1995), the Québec Liberation Front (FLQ) (Fournier 2020), or the National Liberation Action (ALN) in Brazil (Gillespie 1980) conformed autonomous cells engaged in low levels of violence. Those organizations emerged across contexts with very different levels of state capacity, democracy, and economic development. Despite their historical significance, little work theorizes urban insurgent group formation[13] (see Della Porta 1995; 2013; Staniland 2010 for exceptions).

Most studies on the onset of armed conflicts focus on a specific point in time where violence reaches a threshold of 25 or 1000 battle-related deaths (P. Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Hegre and Sambanis 2006; Pettersson and Öberg 2020). This emphasis leaves much of the processes occurring before rebel groups commit significant violence overwhelmingly under-researched (Daly 2012; J. I. Lewis 2017). In the same vein, Staniland (2010) has studied urban rebel groups that sustain armed campaigns at the threshold of civil war. Such a focus excludes several politically relevant organizations. This is important as urban insurgents often aim to generate a maximum of political impact while avoiding direct armed confrontation and, in fact, may thrive with lower levels of violence (see Brum 2014; Duyvesteyn 2021, 163–71). Accordingly, the present article focusses on how urban rebel groups *build operational capacity* over time irrespective of the number of casualties. Operational capacity is here defined as an

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[13] In this article, I employ rebel group formation, organizational formation and insurgent group formation interchangeably.

organization's ability to create and maintain internal coordination between different cells and constituent parts (McCormick and Owen 2000) and attract violent specialists with the capacity to produce and organize collective violence (Tilly 2003, 35–40).

The article develops a theory of rebel bricolage drawing from the literature on the organizational dynamics of rebel groups (Staniland 2010; 2014; Parkinson 2013; Parkinson and Zaks 2018) and organizational sociology (Powell and DiMaggio 1991; Clemens 1996; Perkmann and Spicer 2014). Following a process-oriented approach to political contention[14], I define organizational formation as a social process, composed of two concomitant mechanisms: *brokerage* and *institutional bricolage*. I claim that in heterogeneous and complex urban contexts, rebel founding members build operational capacity by making use of brokerage and bricolage, a way of doing things with 'whatever is at hand' (Lévi-Strauss [1966] 2020, 21). Since they act in secrecy, rebel organizers attract individuals with violent skills from their proximate social networks and reorganize the organizational forms they have at hand through institutional bricolage. Institutional bricolage is here understood as a 'process by which people counsciously or unconsciously draw on existing social and cultural arrangements to shape institutions in response to changing situations' (Cleaver 2001, 26). Despite its importance in organizational theory (Baker, Miner, and Eesley 2003; Perkmann and Spicer 2014), and social movement mobilization (Clemens 1996), bricolage has been given scant attention in the literature on

[14] According to Bosi et al. (2014, 4–5), a process-oriented approach to political contention entails 'that processes and mechanisms (or sub-processes) possess causal efficacy, which renders these categories crucial at forming causal analogies'.

militarized organizations (see Utas and Jörgel 2008, 498–99; Guichaoua 2012, 250; Hoffman 2015; Kindersley and Rolandsen 2017; Thill 2019). Inspired by Lévi-Strauss ([1966] 2020), the theory section contrasts the logic of the bricoleur with the logic of the engineer who acts based on institutional choice, planning and opening-up the set of materials available to him/her. This article thus aims to integrate insights from organizational sociology and bricolage to study armed group formation.

Bricolage occurs in context where resources are scarce and actors are compelled to improvise (Cleaver 2001; Elfversson and Höglund 2018; Kindersley and Rolandsen 2017; Langevang and Namatovu 2019). Accordingly, I focus on contexts of social heterogeneity, known for impeding collective action (see Habyarimana et al. 2007). As bricolage is a rather universal concept (Johnson 2012) and is observable in rural-based insurgent groups (Guichaoua 2012; Kindersley and Rolandsen 2017), the process is possibly generalizable. However, as a first step in the construction of a broader theory of rebel bricolage, this article primarily focusses on heterogeneous urban settings. Following George and Bennett's (2005, 76–78) building block case study, I argue that a focussing on such contexts fills a space in our overall understanding of the more general rebel group category – including rural-based revolutionary guerrillas, predatory rebel groups and liberation movements. Bricolage also enhances our understanding on how various building blocks at the backbone of insurgent organizations are brought together. This includes socializing institutions (Checkel 2017; Hoover Green 2017), cultural practices (Hegghammer 2017; Parkinson 2020), and organizational subunits (Parkinson and Zaks 2018). Such aspects of organizational life have important bearings on recruitment patterns, insurgent relations to civilians, internal cohesion, fragmentation and the post-war trajectories of rebel

organizations and their members (see Boulanger Martel 2022; Johnston 2008; Sinno 2008; Staniland 2014; J. I. Lewis 2017; Lyons 2016). Organizational formation is also an important social process of civil war (E. J. Wood 2008), which shapes patterns of community mobilization and participation. As Shesterinina (2021, 53) rightly points out, '[central] to our understanding of wartime mobilization, pre-war activities of the activist core, even if not directly related to future rebellion, establish the structure of leadership and membership on which armed groups are modelled at the war's onset' (see also Della Porta 2013; Gould 1991, 1999).

To develop the framework, I make use of social network analysis (Dörfler et al. 2019; Gould 1989; Wellman 1983; Zech and Gabbay 2016) and the analysis of organizational repertoires (Clemens 1993). I draw on the Movement of the 19th of April (M-19) in Colombia as a theory building case study. M-19 was a left-wing nationalist guerrilla group that first formed in the metropolitan areas of Bogotá and Cali. It waged war against the Colombian state between 1974 and 1990 until it signed a peace deal with the government. To retrace brokerage and institutional bricolage, I compare the social composition and organizational repertoires of M-19's foundational group across two periods. This includes, the FARC/PCC urban group that predated M-19 (1970-1972) and the formation of the initial M-19 foundational group (1973-1976). M-19's initial leadership was composed of individuals with very diverse social backgrounds and experiences in a variety of competing left-wing movements and guerrillas. This makes the group a most-likely case of bricolage and a least-likely case of rebel group formation. The empirical section includes a database compiling biographical and network information on 39 founding members, biographies, archival documents, insights from extensive fieldwork in

Colombia taking place in September-December 2019, 32 formal interviews and additional secondary sources. To probe the generalizability of the argument, I draw on additional evidence from cases of rebel group formation.

The article contributes to a growing body of research focussing on the organizational dynamics of insurgent groups (Braithwaite and Cunningham 2020; Parkinson and Zaks 2018; Sinno 2008; Staniland 2014) by shedding light on institutional bricolage in organizational formation. The research also speaks to the scholarship on urban conflict dynamics (Staniland 2010; Kilcullen 2013; Elfversson and Höglund 2021) by highlighting how the urban roots of a movement matters for organizational development. In the same vein, the study contributes to the renewed interest in the role of leaders in civil war processes (Doctor 2020; M. C. Horowitz and Fuhrmann 2018; Huang, Silverman, and Acosta 2022; Prorok 2018; Tamm 2016). The article also answers Finkel's (2015, 351) call to further investigate how the networks at the basis of insurgent groups and the skills leaders bring to the organization shape their emergence. Bricolage also has implications for our understanding of high-risk mobilization (e.g. McAdam 1986; Goodwin 1997; Parkinson 2013). The case of M-19 suggests that movement leaders' ability to reorganize social networks and pre-existing models of collective action weighs heavily on the initial operational capacity of their insurgent group.

The article is divided into six parts. The first section surveys the literature on rebel group formation and war onset. Second, I construct the theoretical framework. Third, I develop the research design and introduce the M-19 case. Fourth, I show how M-19 founding members built operational capacity over time through brokerage and institutional

bricolage. In conclusion, I outline how rebel bricolage can shed light on other cases and organizational dynamics, and highlight avenues for future research.

Urbanity, Rebel Group Formation, and Operational Capacity

Different perspectives on rebel group formation underscore that, to build operational capacity, rebel leaders must draw on prior identifications, resources and networks. Those three building blocks make up the basis of rebel organizations. While authors may incorporate elements from various approaches, in general, they tend to be anchored in one main perspective.

A first perspective underlines that insurgent groups emerge when organizers are able to construct a meaningful insurgent community from prior social identifications. Scholars have notably underlined the importance of class (Hobsbawn 1994; Scott 1979; Wickham-Crowley 1992, Hobsbawn), ethnicity (D. L. Horowitz 1985), ideology (Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2014; Costalli and Ruggeri 2015; Maynard 2019) and classification systems (Derluguian 2005) as factors that facilitate the emergence of rebel groups. Research on class dynamics shows, for instance, that revolutionary groups are often composed of a middle- and upper-class urban intelligentsia, and a peasant rank-and-file base that are linked through different belief systems (Scott 1979; Wickham-Crowley 1992). Scott (1979, 101) argues in this regard that 'any radical elite hoping to mobilize the peasantry confronts not a tabula rasa but a rich tradition of prior identifications, a history of organized struggle, and a set of politico-religious ideas all of which will affect whatever synthesis emerges'. A class perspective notably underlines the difficulty for rebel organizers to create links with an often-heterogeneous urban working class or

lumpenproletariat. Founding members thus face the challenge of articulating a variety of potentially contradictory symbols, beliefs and ideologies into a coherent collective belief system. As an example, Berezin (1999) argues that the Fascists in Italy drew on cultural repertoires from the family, region and religion in order to create an emotional attachment between the population and the fascist political project. By integrating fascist rituals into Catholic practices, Fascists were able to convey the belief that it was possible to identify oneself as both Catholic and Fascist (Berezin 1999, 367–68). In a similar vein, Kalyvas (2003, 486) argues that civil wars are based on a master cleavage that 'simplifies, streamlines, and incorporates a bewildering variety of local conflicts' linking supralocal and local actors in asymmetric power relations. This does not mean, however, that leaders embrace popular grievances based on deeply held beliefs. Drawing on the cases of the Renamo in Mozambique, the Fuerza Democrática Nicaragüense and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, Thaler (2022) argues that unpopular rebel organizations employ insincere narratives and pandering to mislead politically motivated constituents to join their movement in the areas they wish to operate (see also Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2014). Emphasizing dynamics of identification, however, tends to overlook many of the logistical hurdles that rebel organizers encounter to mobilize resources for collective violence.

A second perspective highlights that insurgents build their capacity by mobilizing resources (see McCarthy and Zald 1977; Weinstein 2007). Poverty, strong demographic concentrations of young men, unemployment, low education endowments, external support as well as access to easily lootable resources (P. Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Fearon and Laitin 2003) facilitate rebel group formation. Turning to urban dynamics, Nedal et al. (2019) point out that urban concentration is often associated with state weakness and

control in the peripheries, thus enabling the formation of strong rebels in the countryside. Urban centres also provide opportunities for rebel financing through robberies or extortions (see Le Blanc 2013) which can influence the type of insurgent groups that form in cities. Weinstein (2007) argues in this regard that the type of insurgent organization that emerges (whether opportunist or activist) depends on rebel organizers' access to economic (money, natural resources, etc.) or social endowments (networks, norms of reciprocity, shared values and beliefs). Such perspective, however, tends to disconnect rebel groups from the social fabric from which they emerge. Accordingly, Staniland (2012a, 148) argues that all rebel organizations 'have some social underpinning and some resource endowments: the crucial issue is how they interact'. The resource perspective also assumes that leaders have adequate knowledge about what it takes to act in their environment. For instance, in urban contexts, the accumulation of important masses of weapons may theoretically increase operational capacity but bring unwarranted attention from authorities. This suggests that, to mobilize resources, urban insurgents rely on experienced individuals that possess the practical know-how to carry out illicit financing activities, secure and hide weapons and organize people for violence.

A third approach focusses on network structures and concrete interpersonal and interorganizational ties. Horizontal and vertical ties (Staniland 2014), quotidian networks (Della Porta 2013; Parkinson 2013; Shesterinina 2021; Viterna 2013) and pre-war organizations (Braithwaite and Cunningham 2020; Daly 2012; Gould 1995; Petersen 2001) influence how rebel groups form and behave. In relation to urban rebellions, Staniland (2010) points out that urban insurgent groups take root when they are supported by robust networks and oppose states that are politically constrained in their use of violence. A focus

on robust networks may explain why urban insurgencies escalate to higher levels of violence (Staniland 2010) but does not constitute a sufficient condition to explain lower levels of operational capacity. While urban slums can provide important hiding places for clandestine groups, such organizations also tend to act in isolation to the masses they claim to represent (see Gillespie 1980; Della Porta 1995) and 'need massive active social support to overthrow the government [that] can only form relatively spontaneously' (Le Blanc 2013, 799). In clandestine milieus, social ties can provide trust-based relationships that allow rebels to build their capacity (see Della Porta 2013, Chapter 4). The social composition of networks also matters. Goodwin (1997) shows for instance that affective and sexual relationships in the predominantly male Huk rebel group in the Philippines (1946-1954) undermined the group's collective identity and discipline. Recently, Lewis (2020) has argued that rebel groups in Uganda are more likely to become viable when they emerged in tight-knit ethnically homogeneous districts where it is much easier for clandestine groups to spread rumours about their capacity. Lewis's argument is convincing and sheds light on the difficulties of organizing in urban contexts given state capacity, the heterogeneity of urban populations and the anonymity of urban life. Heterogeneity may, however, also be a source of strength as pointed out by Baser (2022). In the Kurdistan Workers' Party, gender heterogeneity contributed to organizational survival since '[women] helped sustain the rebellion through gendered mechanisms […] such as increasing the organization's capacity to adapt its tactics to changing circumstances, reinforcing the leadership's authority by leading the organizations' coup-proofing strategies, and building international coalitions' (Baser 2022, 3). Yet, attributing most of

the causal weight on network structure and social ties overshadows the agency of rebel leaders to repurpose social structures for rebellion.

In sum, prior identifications, resources and networks provide basic building blocks of insurgent operational capacity. Prior identifications explain how insurgents emerge from and connect to their constituency but tell us little about how rebels amass military know-how and equipement. The resource perspective provides valuable insights on how rebels accumulate the means to produce and organize violence but tells us little about how leaders identify the material and human capital appropriate for their environment of operation. Conversely, perspectives on social ties and network structure underline the importance of trust-based relationships but downplay rebel organizers' agency to reconfigure networks. Arguably, these different perspectives provide complementary insights on the building blocks of insurgent groups. In practice, all rebel groups rely on a more or less coherent collective identity, and some form of resource and social base. Yet, some building blocks may be more important than others at different points in time and in function of the environment in which rebels operate. In the next section, I argue that the embeddedness of rebel leaders in networks and institutions shapes how they articulate various organizational building blocks together.

A Theory of Rebel Bricolage

The embeddedness of organizers in webs of networks and institutions (Staniland 2014, 9) allows us to identify the social building blocks and human capital endowments that transform diverse individuals into a war-making organization. Social networks comprise the concrete ties that influence *who is organized* while institutions transmit specific sets of

skills and cognitive scripts that shape *how such actors organize*. In this section, I argue that rebel organizers build operational capacity through the combination of brokerage with institutional bricolage or institutional choice, underscoring two distinct logics of organizational formation (bricolage and engineering).

Brokerage is an important collective action mechanism allowing rebels to build operational capacity. Political entrepreneurs employ this mechanism to '[create] new connections between previously unconnected social sites' (Tilly 2003, 34; see also Diani 2003). According to Gould and Fernandez (1989, 91), a broker is 'an actor who facilitates transactions or resource flows […] whether or not the actor attempts to extract a direct reward'. Brokers are important actors within insurgent groups. Parkinson (2013) for instance convincingly demonstrates that organizational subdivisions within Palestinian militant organizations in Lebanon emerged from the overlap of quotidian relations such as marriage and friendship and formal armed group hierarchies. In this context, trust-based relationships and brokerage through marriage nurtured internal coordination and organizational survival when formal chains of command were severed. The concentration of strong ties into small cliques may, however, impede the emergence of a broad-based coalition. Granovetter (1973) famously argued in this regard that weak ties play an important role in linking members of various small groups together. Scholars studying mobilization and insurgencies in the post-Soviet space (Derluguian 2005, 162–65, 175–85; Shesterinina 2021, 102–6) and Africa (Reno 2011) notably demonstrate that rebel organizational formation was made possible by the presence of broad cultural, intellectual and political networks that linked rebel leaders to one another.

Brokerage is a necessary but not sufficient mechanism for operational capacity. This is because the mechanism 'does not in itself guarantee more effective coordination of action at the connected sites; that depends on initial conditions and combinations with other mechanisms' (Tilly 2003, 21). The mobilization of material resources through weapon seizures, bank robberies, kidnappings, or extortions notably requires the skills of violent specialists (Tilly 2003, 35–40). Those individuals are not distributed equally within the general population. The embeddedness of organizers in specific institutions specialized in the production violence – such as the military, criminal syndicates, martial arts sports clubs, veterans' associations, wildlife rangers or street gangs – can hence explain whether leaders are able to build operational capacity. Volkov (1999) demonstrates that organizations enforcing protection schemes in the emerging market economy in post-Soviet Russia drew from a plethora of violent specialists from the state coercive organs, private security organizations and criminal gangs. This suggests that operational capacity is produced through brokerage in interaction with institutional mechanisms.

Institutions[15] provide the cognitive scripts that facilitate internal coordination. In order to challenge established institutions, social movements and insurgents, often have to mimic and draw from symbolic repertoires embedded in distinct institutional orders (see Clemens 1993; Mampilly 2015). Institutions harness different organizational forms that

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[15] The concept is commonly defined as 'a relatively enduring collection of rules and organized practices, embedded in structures of meaning and resources that are relatively invariant in the face of turnover of individuals and relatively resilient to the idiosyncratic preferences and expectations of individuals and changing external circumstances' (March and Olsen 2006, 3).

define ‘groups as ‘people who act together in a particular way’ and portrays problems amenable to a particular type of action’ (Clemens 1996, 205–6). The models of organization conveyed by political parties, trade unions, student associations, branches of the state, churches and insurgent blueprints all constitute potential organizational forms from which rebels can build their organization. In Syria in 2011-2012 for instance, the Free Syrian Army (FSA) quickly emerged by replicating the mould of the Syrian army in which many of its members been enrolled (Baczko, Dorronsoro, and Quesnay 2016, 128–30). In heterogeneous urban contexts, rebel organizers are confronted with a diversity of institutions with potentially contradictory rules, norms, and organizational forms. This makes the task of building a new organization a complex endeavour. As Clemens (1996, 205–6) highlights regarding social movements ‘Tinkering in the face of ambiguity, competition or opposition, movement activists are viewed as bricoleurs who reassemble familiar forms of organization in order to mobilize challenges to existing institutions’. Networks and organizational forms – and how they are articulated with one another – notably allow face-to-face interactions that makes the construction of collective meanings and identities possible (Della Porta 1995, 13). This hence raises the question of how insurgents repurpose, make sense of, and reorganize networks and institutions to build operational capacity.

Rebel Bricoleurs or Engineers?

To form an organization, rebel founding members may act based on two distinct logics: *bricolage* or *engineering*. Each logic is associated with the activation of different mechanisms – institutional bricolage or institutitonal choice – and brokerage dynamics.

First introduced by Lévi-Strauss ([1966] 2020), the concept of *bricolage* describes how mythical thought is produced by the reorganization of the fragments of prior cultural systems. The activity is practised by agents, *bricoleurs,* who reorganize heterogeneous materials from limited repertoires, using the tools at their disposal, and articulate them into a new structure (Johnson 2012, 358; 362–63). From this perspective, the social embeddedness of rebel bricoleurs/organizers in networks and institutions matters as it constrains the stocks of materials available for organizational formation. The bricoleur's 'first practical move is retrospective; [he/she] must turn back to an already constituted set, consisting of tools and materials; inventory or reinventory it; finally, and above all, engage in a kind of dialogue with it, in order to identify the responses that the set can offer to [his/her] problem, before choosing among these possible solutions' (Lévi-Strauss [1966] 2020, 22). Bricoleurs thus employ their proximate social networks to identify individuals they see fit to organize violence and build an insurgent organization. As an example, Hackett Fischer (1995, 19–28; 51–52; 79–80; 301–7) demonstrates the important role of Paul Revere and Joseph Warren in bringing together individuals from various voluntary associations including secret societies, taverns, Masonic lodges and political committees. This clandestine group was pivotal in the Boston revolutionary movement that followed. The organizational repertoire available to founding members is constrained by their past experiences in specific institutions (Clemens 1993, 758–59; 772–75) including, for instance, political parties, businesses, unions, student groups, or the military. Bricolage follows a logic of *reorganization*. Bricoleurs meld together different organizational forms embedded in social structures through institutional bricolage (Cleaver 2001). During the formation process, brokerage and organizational structures shape one another in a complex

iterative process. This is because organizers engage in a dialogue with newly incorporated founding members over the adequate way of acting together. Empirically, this implies that the structure of the organization is renegotiated as new members enter. The various organizational forms melded together into an organizational structure should also leave a discernable mark on the inner functioning of the insurgent group. For instance, Della Porta (1995, 108–9) points out that despite their common origin in radical student movements, clandestine groups in Italy in the 1960-70s were more hierarchical and centralized than their German counterparts due to the distinctive influence of Italian organized labour.

The logic of bricolage contrasts with the logic of *engineering*. The engineer plans and opens up the set of tools and materials he/she can find. He/she 'cross-examines the universe, while the bricoleur, for [his/her] part, addresses [himself/herself] to a collection of residues of human works, that is, a subset of culture' (Lévi-Strauss [1966] 2020, 23). Bricoleurs and engineers are, however, not entirely different since they both act under certain structural constraints. Nonetheless, 'the engineer always seeks to open a way through and situates [himself/herself] beyond the constraints that make up a given state of civilization, while the bricoleur, willingly or by necessity, remains on this side of those constraints' (Lévi-Strauss [1966] 2020, 23). Mirroring an engineering logic, insurgents during the Cold War notably imported revolutionary blueprints that were proven to be effective by their predecessors (e.g. Mao, Che Guevara, Nguyen Giap). The engineer perspective resonates with the rationalist scholarship on civil wars highlighting that rebels choose organizational structures to maximize efficiency and optimally achieve their goals (Weinstein 2007, 27–28; 38–39). Gates (2002) argues for instance that the type of organizational structure by a rebel group (loot-seeking, ethnic or ideological) prescribes

the kinds of benefits it will use to attract and retain recruits. Engineering is thus based on the mechanism of *institutional choice*. Rebel engineers chose the most optimal organizational form in their context of operation and then open-up the set of human and material resources necessary to implement this plan. Brokerage dynamics are subordinated to rebel organizers' initial choice of institutions. The FARC in Colombia, for instance, emerged from the structure of peasant self-defense groups influenced by the Colombian Communist Party. Building on the structure of the PCC, the FARC recruited peasant cadres and JUCO political commissars to fill its ranks (Arenas 1972; Pécaut 2001, 82; Villamizar 1995, 30-33, 43; 2017, 350-354). However, insurgents put into practice those different blueprints with varying degrees of success across contexts (Weinstein 2007, 32–34). Initial conditions may hence affect institutional choice. Drawing on cases in Liberia and Sierra Leone, Johnston (2008) argues that territory and technology shape the organizational structure and military effectiveness of rebel groups. The National Patriotic Front of Liberia and the Revolutionary United Front emerged on rough terrains and had poor communications technology which compelled them to adopt a structure based on multiple relatively autonomous divisions. This allowed organizers to expand territorially, but made it harder for them to control local commanders. Applied to operational capacity, the engineer model suggests that organizers choose the most effective template in their environment of operation and open-up the resources available to implement it.

In sum, bricoleurs build operational capacity with 'whatever is at hand', engaging in a dialogue with individuals within their network and reorganizing the various organizational forms those individuals bring to the group. Conversely, engineers engage in planning, choosing the organizational template that is most effective to achieve their goals

and opening up the set of materials they find to implement this plan. Within each perspective, brokerage is employed differently. Bricoleurs employ brokerage to bring together individuals that might help them solve the problem of organizational building. In an iterative process, they meld together the various organizational forms new organizers bring to the group. This implies that the various organizational forms structuring the group reflect the diversity of the social backgrounds of organizers. The engineers chose the organizational form they aim to implement from the onset and employ brokerage to find individuals that can implement this plan. The social backgrounds of organizers thus reflect the set of skills necessary to implement pre-established tasks. In other words, bricolage is a horizontal process of dialogue and reorganization while engineering is a vertical process of planning and implementation. However, while both logics are distinct, in practice, their application is a matter of degree as rebel organizations are often composed of a variety of organizers. It is nonetheless possible to empirically retrace whether one logic predominates over the another at different points in time and across contexts.

Case Study, Research Design and Data

To develop the theory, I retrace the formation of M-19, an insurgent group that emerged in the vicinities of Colombian cities in the 1970s. M-19 forms as a response to an alleged electoral fraud in the 1970 presidential election. The Conservative party candidate Misael Pastrana Borrero took power to the demise of the National Popular Alliance (ANAPO) party candidate, Gustavo Rojas Pinilla. M-19 organizers' prior political experiences were diverse. The group included former militants from the Colombian Communist Party (PCC) and its youth wing (*Juventud Comunista Colombiana*, JUCO), the Revolutionary Armed

Forces of Colombia[16] (FARC) and other left-wing guerrillas[17]. M-19 also incorporated radicalized student activists and graduates, dissatisfied members of the ANAPO as well as urban popular classes (García Durán, Grabe Loewenherz, and Patiño Hormaza 2008, 10; Villamizar 1995, 25–47). Founding members came from various regions, but most of them were based in Bogotá or Cali (Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 265). M-19's ideology was an eclectic mélange of nationalism, left-wing revolutionary ideals and Bolivarianism (see García Durán, Grabe Loewenherz, and Patiño Hormaza 2008, 11; O'Connor and Meer 2021). Existing theories suggest that material resources (Weinstein 2007), robust networks (Gould 1991, 1995; Petersen 2001; Staniland 2010), territorial control (Kalyvas 2006) and, ideological and ethnic homophily (J. I. Lewis 2020) allow rebels to build operational capacity. Yet, M-19 was resource poor[18], started acting in isolation from the heterogeneous urban masses it claimed to represent, emerged in an environment characterized by rapid

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[16] The FARC was a Marxist-Leninist guerrilla that emerged in 1964. The guerrilla incorporated peasant self-defense groups oriented by the PCC during *La Violencia* a bloody civil war that opposed the Liberal and Conservative parties (1945-1958) (see Pécaut 2001; Pizarro Leongómez 1989).

[17] This includes the Peasant Student Workers Movement (MOEC), the Liberation Armed Forces – Liberation United Front (FAL-FUL), the United Front of Revolutionary Action (FUAR), the National Liberation Army (ELN) and the Popular Liberation Army (EPL).

[18] Interviewees often mentioned that the group was a "poor guerrilla" (Interview 6, 9). In 1974, a propaganda campaign in news papers was finances by Nelson Osorio, the only person in the group who had access to a credit card (Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 262).

urbanization[19] and competed for resources with several other revolutionary groups. Despite such hurdles, M-19 developed into a capable urban insurgent organization. Such initial conditions suggest that the organization is a most-likely case of rebel bricolage. Most-likely cases 'are those in which a theory is likely to provide a good explanation if it applies to any cases at all' (Bennett and Elman 2010, 505). Conversely, M-19 is also a least-likely case of rebel group formation given the difficult conditions in which it emerged. From this perspective, if the bricolage argument holds, it should at least be able to explain M-19's formation.

The analysis concentrates on M-19's formation and consolidation between 1970 and 1976. Under this period, the urban guerrilla grew from a small group of committed individuals to a clandestine urban guerrilla. I retrace M-19's organizational formation in a two-pronged approach that integrates network analysis (Dörfler et al. 2019; Gould 1989; Wellman 1983; Zech and Gabbay 2016) and the analysis of organizational repertoires (Clemens 1993). I compare the social composition and organizational repertoires of the FARC/PCC urban group that predated M-19 (1970-1972) to the activist network that would create M-19 (1973-1976). The expulsion of Jaime Bateman, the first leader of M-19, and his initial clandestine group from the PCC and the FARC in 1972 act as a separation mark distinguishing the two periods analysed. The clandestine group formed an alternative

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[19] In 1960-70s, Colombia was urbanizing rapidly. The proportion of the urban population passed from 38,69% in 1951, to 52,01% in 1964, and 59,12% in 1973 (Murad Rivera 2003, 18). The rural exodus to urban areas was accentuated by the displacement of population during *La Violence*, an armed conflict between the Liberal and Conservative parties taking place in 1945-1958.

organization called *Comuneros* and would act as M-19 after a reunion in January 1974 (Villamizar 1995, 47; 2019, 355–56). The *Comuneros* reunion of 1974 included 22 members (Villamizar 1995, 47). In early 1975, the group incorporated about 60 individuals (Villamizar 2017, 373), but there is also evidence that it grew thereafter[20]. This approach allows me to assess whether the group built operational capacity through bricolage or engineering. For each period, I analyse how rebel organizers (1) employ the strong and weak ties in their proximate social network to incorporate new members, (2) attract individuals with the skills for the production and organization of violence and (3) articulate different organizational forms into an organizational structure. If bricolage is the main logic underpinning rebel group formation, the overall structure of the organization should resemble a patchwork of multiple organizational forms that predate the insurgency. The heterogeneous organizational forms employed to form the rebel group should also leave a discernable mark on its inner workings. Likewise, one should be able to observe variation in organizational structure over time as new founding members are incorporated and engage in a dialogue over the appropriate organizational structure with other members. Conversely, if engineering is the main logic in organizational formation, one organizational form should prevail as founding members choose the most effective way to organize at the beginning. The recruitment of new members should also be based on their capacity to

[20] The group counted between 791 and 2000 members throughout its history (Guáqueta 2007; Söderström 2016, 217). Most of its leadership and some 312 militants were imprisoned as of November 1979 (Villamizar 1995, 156), underlining that the guerrilla had expanded from its original network.

deliver on certain predetermined organizational roles and expand well beyond the initial network as organizers open-up the set of material available to them.

To map the social composition of the M-19 foundational network, I compiled network and biographical data of all identifiable founding members (39 in total). Each member was coded as a node linked by edges. Edges are coded as strong ties, including family, friendship, and love relations, as well as militancy in a common unit. Data on weak ties was scarce, so I draw on specific examples to demonstrate how founding members made use of acquaintances and intermediate relations to incorporate members into the core group. I also retrace prior affiliations of founding members to political parties, student unions and social movements. To measure skills for violence, the database includes information on founding members' military training and combat experiences, as well as prior membership in guerrilla groups (see also Doctor 2020 for a similar approach). While I acknowledge that violent skills can be acquired through other means, I focus on those two organizational types due to data limitations and the particularity of the Colombian context. The information for the database comes from a variety of sources including memoires and historical accounts by former rebel group members and scholars, biographies, M-19 documents retrieved from three archives[21] and news articles. For ethical reasons, the information for the database only comes from openly available sources and not from

[21] This includes documents compiled by Arjaid Artunduag, a M-19 founding member, the *Oiga Hermano, Hermana* blog (http://www.oigahermanohermana.org/), as well as a fund digitized by the *Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica* (Corporación para el Fomento de la Investigación y el Fomento Comunitario - Museo del Caquetá, http://www.archivodelosddhh.gov.co/).

interviews I carried out with founding members (see Appendix III). In addition to the biographical data, I include insights from fieldwork in Colombia taking place in September-December 2019. I carried out 32 semi-structured interviews in Spanish with former M-19 militants of whom 5 were founding members. I also draw on dozens of informal encounters with former combatants and their family members in different contexts including in a former M-19 safe house. Those varied sources allow me to track the organizational repertoire available to founding members and reconstruct the series of organizational forms they chose to incorporate to their group (see Clemens 1993, 761). Finally, I employ secondary literature on other rebel groups to assess whether the framework can be generalized to other cases.

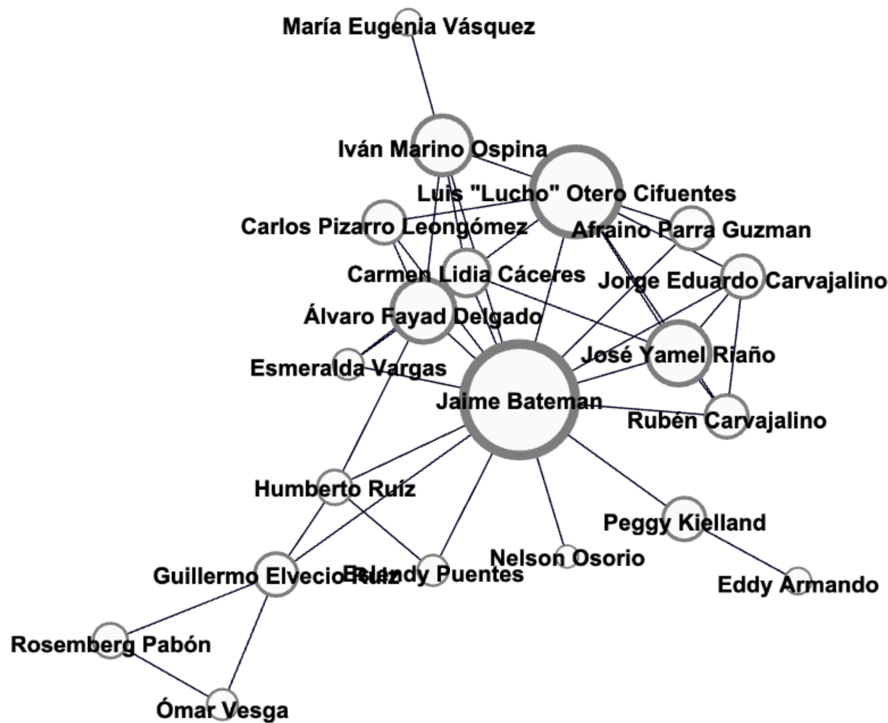
Bricolage and Engineering in the Formation of M-19

1970-1972: Assembling the Initial Insurgent Nucleus

The initial core group that would later become M-19 emerges from an urban cell created by Jaime Bateman Cayón and Luís Otero (Villamizar 1995, 33). In 1966-1970, Bateman had been deployed with the FARC guerrilla in the Colombian countryside to work as a political commissar on behalf of the PCC. During the fifth conference of the FARC in 1970, members of the leadership agreed to create an urban military apparatus that would support the PCC and the guerrilla's political work (Villamizar 2019, 313). Bateman and Otero were ordered by Manuel Marulanda and Jacobo Arenas, the FARC's main leaders, to put together a group of urban clandestine activists (Bateman in Lara Salive 2002, 116; Villamizar 1995, 33). To form the group, the two organizers brought together trustworthy groups of friends, flatmates, lovers, and militants from their time in student activist groups,

the JUCO and the FARC. This group formed the backbone of the emerging organization. Figure 2.1 shows the original network that composed the FARC/PCC urban group. The nodes represent individual founding members while the edges represent the presence of at least one strong tie whether it is a family, friendship, or love relationship or common militancy. The size of a node is proportional to the number of ties that connects the individual to other members of the network. This implies that the bigger the node, the more central the founding member is to the network.

Figure 2.1 Structure of the FARC/PCC urban clandestine group in 1972



In Figure 2.1, one can clearly observe the centrality of Bateman as a broker who connects almost all the nodes in the network. The most central actors, Luís Otero, Álvaro Fayad, Iván Marino, and José Yamel Riaño, expressed by the size of their nodes, also occupied important positions in the rebel group leadership. This suggests that social capital can be an important asset influencing one's position in a nascent organization and one's ability to shape its content. Not all actors within this initial network were, however, strongly linked to one another. The group of Cali-based JUCO cadres comprising Rosemberg Pabón, Guillermo Elvecio Ruiz, and Ómar Vesga, (bottom left), for instance, did not seem to have links to the Bogotá cultural group with strong links to Bateman including Peggy Kielland and Eddy Armando (bottom right). This may be due to the fact that Bateman practised

compartmentalization[22], involving some in certain activities and not in others (Villamizar 2019, 82). According to the engineer logic, the centrality of PCC and JUCO militants within the group underscore that party structures could have provided the initial blueprint for the formation of M-19.

The initial group incorporated individuals with military capabilities but also other organizers who had not been involved in the production and organization of violence. Key figures such as Iván Marino Ospina, Luís Otero, Álvaro Fayad, Carlos Pizarro Leongómez, and Afraino Parra brought military skills they had learned or perfected within the FARC and other guerrillas. Luís Otero for instance, had obtained military training and fought in Cuba in 1964 (Villamizar 1995, 32). Military experience was, however, not predominant. Only 7 out of 20 founding members had prior military training. The Cali-based group of JUCO cadres, Esmeralda Vargas, Nelson Osorio, María Eugenia Vásquez and the Carvajalino brothers did not seem to have violent skills. The recruitment of organizers followed a particular pattern as most recruits had been members of the PCC or the JUCO. Organizers were also part of a common student activist network. This pattern suggests the predominance of engineering. PCC organizers occupied cadres' roles that fit neatly within a pre-established party-based organizational blueprint. However, one can alternatively explain this pattern by the overlap of friendship and political ties. In fact, Bateman largely omitted the rules of his parent organization by recruiting Iván Marino Ospina. Ospina had been expelled from the FARC in 1968 accused of being a 'CIA agent'. Despite this, he was

[22] Della Porta (1995, 94) describes compartmentalization as 'the organizational separation into units independent from each other'.

integrated into the initial urban militant group, after a short stint with a Venezuelan guerrilla (Villamizar 2019, 132, 178, 288). Organizers also renegotiated the structure of the organization as new members joined, suggesting the logic of bricolage prevailed.

The FARC/PCC group was organized as an urban clandestine group. Militants were meant to strengthen the FARC's urban support network, carry out some urban guerrilla tasks and produce two publications for the rebel group called *Resistencia* [Resistence] and *Estrella Dorada* [Golden Star] (Villamizar 1995, 33). Founding members were formed in Marxism-Leninism and their prior organizational experience weighed heavily on their conception of leadership structure. As JUCO cadres, Bateman and Marino Ospina had travelled to the Soviet Union to obtain political training (Marino Ospina in Lara Salive 2002, 97–101; Villamizar 2019, 132, 178, 288). Arjaid Artunduaga (in Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 266) expresses that M-19's subsequent formation incorporated those experiences but was not limited to the original leaders' institutional choice :

> Being a project in gestation, [the organization] did not have a hierarchical and defined structure. The [core group] met to discuss politics and make decisions. [They] took from the known schemes of Marxist and Leninist organizations the idea of a kind of Central Commission, made up of four or five people, which above all fulfilled an administrative role and maintained group communication. It was not a political decision-making body. [Policies] were defined in meetings with everyone.

The initial FARC/PCC clandestine group's structure could have acted as a blueprint for engineering M-19. However, at its inception, founding members wanted to disassociate themselves from a perceived overreliance on party "apparatus" of pre-existing communist organizations. Founding members were also convinced that in order to justify the armed

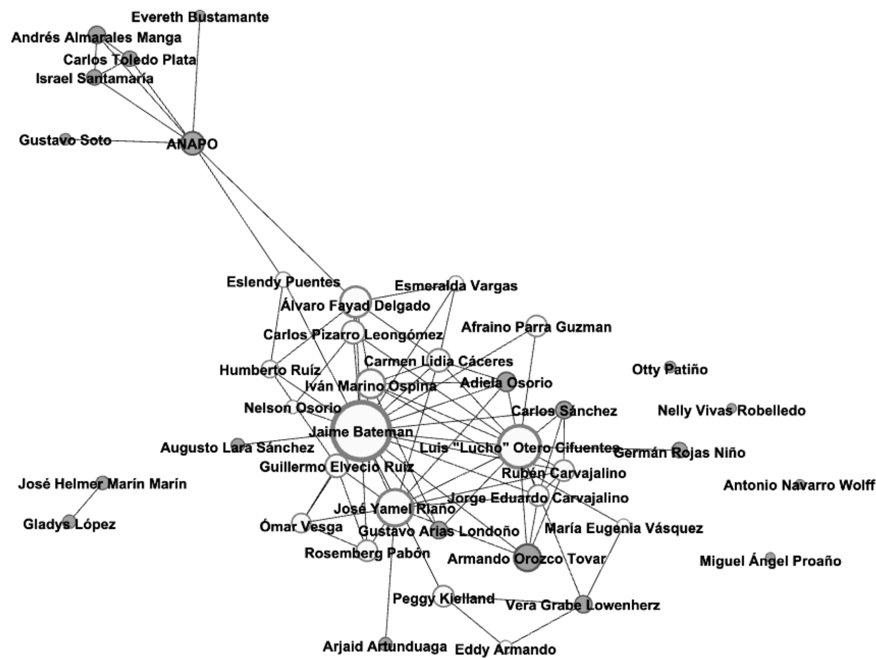
struggle in Colombia, one ought to have a good understanding of the country's history instead of mechanically importing external revolutionary templates (García Durán, Grabe Loewenherz, and Patiño Hormaza 2008, 11). Bricolage thus seems more adequate to describe how founding members articulated their insurgent organization.

1973-1976: The *Comuneros* and Expansion of M-19's Network

In 1972, the core network was transformed as the PCC expelled Bateman and several militants in his urban clandestine group[23]. This led to the consolidation of an alternative insurgent project called *Comuneros* and the expansion of the proto-M-19 nucleus. Figure 2.2 highlights the social ties that existed between M-19 founding members before January 1973. In 1973, founding members connected additional organizers to form M-19. The white nodes represent the initial members that were included in the FARC/PCC urban group while the grey nodes include individuals that were incorporated in the nascent organization after January 1973.

[23] Rosemberg Pabón, Ómar Vesga, Guillermo Elvecio Ruíz were notably expulsed from the JUCO leadership in the Valle del Cauca department.

Figure 2.2 Structure of the proto-M-19 militant network before January 1973



Most new founding members had prior ties to the core group. Like the FARC/PCC urban activist network that preceded it, the *Comuneros* emerged as a tight-knit collective. The foundational group was mainly composed of couples[24] (Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 265). The importance of such affective relations seem to contradict Goodwin's (1997) observation that intimate relations undermine cohesion and discipline in predominantly male organizations. Including women and men in the initial group[25], however, might have decreases the risk for "libidinal" or "family" withdrawal because individuals were linked

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[24] For instance, in 1972, Jaime Bateman was in a relationship with Esmeralda Vargas, Álvaro Fayad with Carmen Lidia Cáceres and Helmer Marin with Gladys López (Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 269; Villamizar 2019, 314; 321–22).

[25] 9 out of 39 founding members were women.

to the group through overlapping political and affective ties (see also Baser 2022; Parkinson 2013).

Strong and weak ties mattered in the brokerage of the initial foundational group. Vera Grabe, an important figure in M-19, was active in cultural groups through university and the *La Mama* Theatre with Peggy Kielland[26] and Eddy Armando (Palacios 2009). She was also friends with Maria Eugenia Vásquez, a member of the FARC/PCC urban cell. Otty Patiño, an architect, joined in a *Comuneros* reunion with a friend of Bateman (Villamizar 2019, 363). Antonio Navarro Wolff, an engineering professor at the *Universidad del Valle* in Cali, entered the movement through his prior links with the student movement (Canal Red Más 2017). The initial group was also weakly connected to the ANAPO party. Álvaro Fayad had been a party member before 1970 (Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 268). Eslendy Puentes was connected to the party since her father was an ANAPO senator. She had also been a member of the FARC/PCC urban cell (Villamizar 2019, 355–56)[27]. M-19 organizers also integrated an ANAPO dissident group called the Socialist ANAPO (top left in Figure 2.2). Jaime Bateman and Carlos Pizarro brokered the alliance through a series of conversations with Carlos Toledo Plata in 1973. Toledo Plata had been assigned by the ANAPO to create armed cells in case another electoral fraud

[26] Bateman's partner after he was separated from Esmeralda Vargas.

[27] The *Comuneros* reunions in January 1974 took place at the Puentes' estate (Villamizar 1995, 47).

would occur. He was convinced by Bateman's insurgent project[28] (Toledo in Lara Salive 2002, 41–42; Villamizar 2019, 367–68). This suggests that Toledo Plata wanted to bolster the military capacity of the ANAPO by attracting violent specialists such as Bateman, but also that Bateman's group sought to broaden its base by integrating ANAPO leaders.

The expansion of the M-19 foundational nucleus introduced additional members with skills for the production and organization of violence. 13 out of 39 members within the network had military experience. German Rojas Niño, who encountered Lucho Otero in the end of the 1960s, was a bomb maker with experience in other guerrilla groups[29] (Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 269). Gustavo Arias Londoño, a law student at the *Universidad Nacional* in Bogotá had organized a group called *Pijao Rebelde* comprised of students and workers (Villamizar 2019, 355). Otty Patiño had been involved in the organization of an indigenous uprising in the Vichada department (Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 268–69; Villamizar 2019, 363). Similarly, Gladys López and José Helmer Marín Marín were active in left-wing Catholic groups and the National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrilla. The network had incorporated professional revolutionaries contributing to its overall operational capacity. As the core group distanced itself from the PCC and the FARC, it

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[28] In the beginning, M-19 had an ambivalent relation with the political party, first claiming that it was 'the ANAPO people in arms' [*pueblo anapista en armas*] but then distinguishing its narrative and structure from the party as the ANAPO Socialist caucus was expelled in 1976 (Palacios 2012).

[29] German Rojas Niño had been a member of the MOEC and FAL-FUL, two failed attempts to implement a Cuban-like *foco* in Colombia (see Villamizar 2017, 189–211).

broadened its base to encompass individuals that did not have prior links to either organization. Only 17 out of 39 founding members[30] had been enrolled in the PCC.

The initial organizational structure of M-19 reflects the different social backgrounds of organizers rather than a predetermined institutional choice. Organizers drew from their experiences in Marxist-Leninist and clandestine organizations but also progressively incorporated the practices of activist study groups and ANAPO commandos. M-19 organizers also obtained advice from the Uruguayan Tupamaros and Argentinian Montoneros to build a cell-based structure (Villamizar 1995, 29; 68–71). Those different organizational forms left a discernable mark on the inner workings of the organization. M-19 cells were notably implanted in a variety of sites including universities, trade unions, factories, local governing bodies, prisons and even kindergartens (Villamizar 1995, 158-159; Interview 5, 7, 13, 24, 26, 34). Yesenia (pseudonym, interview 34), a base militant active from the onset, provides a compelling story of how activist study groups were grafted to M-19. Prior to the foundation of M-19, Yesenia and a group of friends created a club where they read literature, practised sports, played and taught music, discussed politics and debated. They also provided informal education to workers in collaboration with trade unions. This *club of friends* started small but eventually involved 30 people and had its own facility and a small factory. The group became compartmentalized and incorporated in M-19 as they faced state repression in 1974. Yesenia's group is, however, not an exception but part of a wider network of activists that would compose the insurgent

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[30] I did not automatically assign PCC membership to individuals that were part of the FARC/PCC urban group as it was not always clear whether they had been formally incorporated in party structures.

organization (see Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 254–55; Vásquez Perdomo 2000, 57; 63–64). M-19 militants continued to carry out different forms of revolutionary social work and maintained reading groups. ANAPO party structures were also grafted to the nascent insurgent organization. Throughout the 1960s, the ANAPO had developed so-called commandos in poor neighbourhoods to mobilize its voters and infiltrate trade unions. Commandos were usually headed by a family that would organize the activity of the party in their neighbourhood. There are striking similarities between the ANAPO commando structure and subsequent M-19 cells. Medellín Pérez (2018, 83–89; 105–6) convincingly demonstrates in this regard that Socialist ANAPO commandos in Bogotá were progressively transformed into sites for hosting clandestine meetings, stockpiling weapons and safeguarding sensitive propaganda material for M-19. ANAPO commandos provided a web of safe houses and political influence in various parts of the city (Interview 9) thus contributing to internal coordination and operational capacity. Those structures did not become subordinated to a predominant organizational form but seem to have been organically integrated to the organization.

Discussion

This study speaks to the scholarship on rebel group formation (e.g. J. I. Lewis 2020; Schlichte 2009b), the organizational dynamics of political violence (e.g. Della Porta 2013; Parkinson and Zaks 2018; Weinstein 2007), urban conflicts (Staniland 2010; Kilcullen 2013; Elfversson and Höglund 2021) and the role of leadership in civil war processes (e.g. Doctor 2020; Prorok 2018; Tamm 2016). The analysis has shown that M-19 was formed through brokerage and the reorganization of diverse organizational forms. The leadership was composed of a central committee that drew on the schemes of Marxist-Leninist

revolutionary organizations and a cell-based structure inspired by other urban guerrillas. The nascent organization also incorporated organizational forms reminiscent of activist study groups and ANAPO commandos. Such structures were not only captured by the leadership. They left a discernable mark on the inner workings of the rebel group. More generally, the analysis has implications for the scholarship on high-risk mobilization (e.g. McAdam 1986; Goodwin 1997; Parkinson 2013). Bricolage highlights the importance of understanding organizational formation as part of broader civil society networks and institutions that give insurgent organizations their structure and content. Such processes underline that insurgent organizers can innovate (Moghadam 2013) despite important structural constraints. The study also reiterates findings from previous research on insurgent groups in Corsica and Paris (Gould 1991, 1995 1999), Abkhazia (Shesterinina 2021), as well as on Islamist, left-wing and right-wing clandestine groups in Europe and elsewhere (Della Porta 1995, 2013) that show that prior collective contention weighs heavily on the character and dynamics of political violence.

The bricolage framework generally applies to groups that emerge in contexts where rebel leaders improvise due to resource competition and scarcity. This may indeed take place in both urban and rural contexts. Elfversson and Höglund (2018) point out in the case of the Nubian struggle for land rights in the Kibera slum in Nairobi that institutional bricolage on the local level shaped dynamics of intergroup cooperation and conflict. Although not applied to rebel group formation, their argument highlights the importance of understanding local leaders as embedded in multiple institutions. In another study, Kindersley and Rolandsen (2017) argue that bricolage can describe the foundation and governance practices of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement 'In Opposition' in

Central Equatoria. They note that to 'justify and explain their actions, military and political leaders as well as organizers at the grassroots level may draw upon a plethora of practical norms and political interpretations laid down by generations of rebel, self-defence and local governance institutions' (Kindersley and Rolandsen 2017, 319). Those studies hence suggest that institutional bricolage is a generalizable mechanism beyond Colombian cities. The mechanism also suggests that local institutions in which insurgent organizers are embedded and their pre-war practices shape the type of wartime services they provide to the civilian population. Bricolage is, however, unlikely to apply to armed groups that emerge from a predominant organizational form such as breakaway from the state military (McLauchlin Forthcoming), or political parties, religious groups or trade unions that undergo militarization. In such contexts, one may expect that rebels practise *engineering*, employing brokerage to implement established organizational templates.

The research suggests that certain social networks are more likely to generate operational capacity than others. M-19 founding members were embedded in a network that comprised individuals with the skills to produce and organize violence. In the same vein, Finkel (2015) points out that Jewish resistance groups that incorporated individuals within the necessary skills part of a "resister's toolkit" were more successful in mounting clandestine organizations during the Holocaust than those that did not. Although the author makes an argument about operational security, it may very well also apply to operational capacity. In contrast, other urban insurgent groups in the Western Hemisphere were mainly composed of amateurs. The FLQ, for instance, never developed into a centralized structure and was characterized by the succession of poorly coordinated cells (Fournier 2020, 16–17; 22; 175; Vallière in Fournier 2020 2020, 96–97). This observation reiterates early

proposition from students of revolutions that 'even if the professional revolutionaries cannot simply *make* revolutions where they will, they have obviously played an important role in organizing, arming and leading many revolutionary movements. This role, moreover, is often a necessary one' (Goodwin and Skocpol 1989, 492).

The case of M-19 also underlines that some pre-war organizational forms may be better suited to urban warfare than others. The ANAPO commandos integrated in M-19 were already structured on a cell-based model. In contrast, Marighella's short-lived ALN in Brazil relied on small spontaneous "fighting groups" which jeopardized the security of its leadership and ability to coordinate actions (Gillespie 1980). Future research could apply the bricolage framework to explain organizational change and adaptation over time. How do rebel groups with a primarily urban background set up a rural front? How do primarily rural guerrillas penetrate the cities? M-19 was able to move its activities in the countryside in the end of the 1970s (Pécaut 2001, 86–88; Villamizar 1995, 112–14). Conversely, the Tupamaros in Uruguay emerged in the cities but failed to open rural fronts (Brum 2014, 395). In contrast, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua started out as a classical rural insurrection but their urban presence was key in its revolutionary take over in the end of the 1970s (Le Blanc 2012). This urban-rural symbiosis (Marighella 2002) has been given little attention in the study of armed conflicts. Institutional bricolage might explain how insurgents change operational environments by integrating local actors' ways of acting collectively. Hopefully, by studying how rebel groups emerge and develop, we can have a better understanding of the processes that make civil wars possible and preventable.

Chapter 3

Cultural Production, Music and the Politics of Legitimacy: The Case of the FARC in Colombia

Introduction

The Colombian conflict between left-wing guerrillas, paramilitary groups, drug cartels and the government has caused the death of at least 220 000 people and forced the displacement of millions of people over the past 60 years (Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación 2013). The 2016 Havana agreement signed between the Government and the largest guerrilla group, the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia] (FARC) aimed to tackle issues at the core of the conflict such as endemic rural poverty, the unequal distribution of land and the illicit drug industry that fuelled the war. In 2017, the FARC disarmed but the peace process experienced significant setbacks. An early version of the agreement was rejected in a popular referendum in October 2016 and a minority of FARC fighters refused to disarm.

It is in the context of a contested peace process that in June 2017, an artistic delegation of the FARC named the Manuel Marulanda Art School took part in the annual *San Pedro* festivities in Neiva, Colombia. The delegation included a dance troupe as well as a band called *Los Rebeldes del Sur* [The Rebels of the South], both composed of FARC ex-combatants demobilized during the peace process. In the festival's events and parades, FARC artists displayed a banner reading "Our only weapon will be art", mirroring the rebel group's commitment to abandon armed violence and legitimising its transition into legality. In several concerts, *Los Rebeldes del Sur* performed various tropical and Andean songs carrying messages of peace and reconciliation. Most recently, Julián Conrado, known as "the singer of the FARC", became one of the very few FARC ex-combatants to be elected as mayor in the 2019 local elections. Running under his real name, Guillermo Torres, and with the endorsement of the *Colombia Humana – Unión Patriótica* coalition, his music

was an integral part of his electoral campaign. These particular displays of rebel group culture are interesting examples of different ways by which rebels legitimise their political message.

How do rebel groups legitimise themselves in the eyes of their members, constituents and possible adherents? What is the role of cultural production in the legitimation of rebel groups? Recent attention to rebel governance (Kasfir, Frerks, and Terpstra 2017; M. A. Stewart 2018; Terpstra and Frerks 2017) underscores how selective incentives (Weinstein 2007), symbolic resources (Malthaner 2015; Seymour 2017) and social practices (Duyvesteyn 2017; Mampilly 2015; Schlichte and Schneckener 2015) contribute to an armed group's legitimacy. However, little attention has been given to cultural practices, despite the clear importance rebels place on developing a distinct culture (see Bolívar Ramírez 2017; Hegghammer 2017; Mampilly 2015). I aim to bridge this gap by investigating the role of cultural production in armed groups' legitimation, specifically the role of music. I argue that cultural production is a social practice that has an important role in legitimating rebel groups. In particular, cultural production is employed to bolster rebel group legitimacy internally, by justifying existing hierarchical relations between the leadership and fighters, and externally by positioning the rebel group as a legitimate alternative to established elites and a rightful representative of the people. Of course, culture within armed groups is not limited to the aforementioned dynamics. I nonetheless decided to concentrate on these important dimensions highlighted in the literature on armed groups legitimacy.

The article draws on the relational approach to armed groups legitimacy and the literature on rebel governance in order to analyse cultural production in the FARC. Given

the importance *Fariano*[31] culture had on the group's identity and propaganda (Bolívar Ramírez 2017; Gutiérrez-Sanín 2018; Quishpe 2020), this particular rebel group is an illustrative case that enhances our understanding of the ways rebels legitimise themselves and the role of culture in these practices. The article analyses *Fariano* cultural practices, music production and discourses to illustrate such dynamics. The topic has implications for the literature on the cultural dimensions of rebel legitimation and governance (see Duyvesteyn 2017; Hegghammer 2017; Hoffman 2015; Mampilly 2015; Schlichte and Schneckener 2015) notably by highlighting the role of cultural and artistic production in these processes. First, the article outlines the relational approach to armed groups legitimacy. Next, it provides an overview of the case, research method and data. The analysis section thereafter presents the origin of FARC cultural production and highlights how the group legitimises its *raison d'être* internally and externally through music.

Cultural Practices and the Relational Approach to Armed Groups Legitimacy

Most students of political violence consider such phenomenon to be instrumentally used by actors in their endeavour to accomplish different political and military goals (Valentino 2014). Culture within this perspective is often seen as an epiphenomenon in relation to more important processes. A rationalist perspective struggles to explain the important role

[31] The terms *Fariano* and *Fariana* are adjectives meaning "of the FARC".

of cultural practices in rebel groups.[32] As Hegghammer (2017, 1–2) argues in discussing jihadist movements, utility-maximising fighters should 'spend all their time honing their bomb-making skills, raising funds, or studying the enemy's weaknesses. Yet they "waste" time on poetry recitation, hymn singing, and other activities that serve no apparent strategic purpose. And it is not just that they do it – they do it *a lot*, which suggests it is significant to their whole enterprise'. Music, for instance, has played an important role in movements as varied as the Palestinian resistance (Salih and Richter-Devroe 2014), the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone (Nuxoll 2015) and the Maoists in Nepal (Mottin 2010). A reason why music may be so important in such groups is highlighted by research in the field of psychology: Music can foster group empathy and social bonding (Clarke, DeNora, and Vuoskoski 2015; Launay 2015).

Authors have underlined that culture plays an important role in the making of armed groups as meaningful political communities (Bolívar Ramírez 2017; Hegghammer 2017; Hoffman 2015; Mampilly 2015; Schlichte 2009a). Rebel group political culture can be understood as 'the values, norms, practices, beliefs and collective identities of insurgents' (E. J. Wood 2003, 19). Culture matters since '[rebel] groups, like all organisations are socially constructed systems of shared meaning designed to aggregate a variety of individual agendas and perspectives into a single purposive coalition' (Mampilly 2015, 82). Such symbolic processes – essential for mobilisation – allow armed groups to

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[32] Rebel groups are understood as 'consciously coordinated groups whose members engage in protracted violence with the intention of gaining undisputed political control over all or a portion of a pre-existing state's territory' (Kasfir 2015, 24).

construct a master cleavage that concentrates a myriad of local conflicts (Kalyvas 2003). The constitution of a rebel culture thus gives meaning to armed group actions and embeds their authority in pre-existing societal beliefs and values (Mampilly 2015).

Previous research on armed group culture highlights how cultural practices emanate from bottom-up and top-down processes. Brenner (2018), for instance, argues that grassroot militants in the Kachin independence movement have a certain agency in producing rebel cultural meanings that can in turn shape the group's political trajectory. Similarly, Hegghammer et al (2017) focus on the daily non-military activities of jihadists. Yet, approaches based on bottom-up processes tend to downplay the role of elites in providing resources and orienting such practices. Other authors adopt a more top-down perspective showing how rebel leaders employ culture to assert their authority in relation to various audiences (Hoffman 2015; Mampilly 2015; Mottin 2010). Mampilly (2015), for instance, illustrates how rebel political elites in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sri Lanka and Sudan legitimise their rule and assert control over civilians by mimicking state symbols. Both types of approaches are nonetheless suitable for different research puzzles and cases. For instance, jihadist cells who rely on transnational networks may provide more space for individual agency in cultural production. Conversely, in centralised and hierarchically structured Marxist revolutionary organizations, culture may be employed as a mechanism for internal discipline and political indoctrination (see Balcells and Kalyvas 2015; Mottin 2010). Therefore, building on a top-down approach, I suggest that cultural and art production can be understood as a practice that legitimates a rebel group both internally and externally.

The relational approach to armed groups legitimacy draws from Max Weber's (1978) ideal types of domination (Duyvesteyn 2017; Podder 2017; Schlichte 2009a) and Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) conceptualisation of power (Schlichte and Schneckener 2015). Rooted in political sociology, the relational perspective focuses on 'the practices and relations constituting how legitimacy is constructed during conflict' (Podder 2017, 687). An armed actor is considered legitimate to the extent that enough people believe in the actions and *raison d'être* of the group and/or the political order it promotes, no matter if this is due to the charisma of the leaders, the traditional authority it embodies or the legal-rational legitimacy of its institutions (Schneckener 2017). In that regard, Schlichte and Schneckener (2015, 413) define legitimacy as 'the belief in the justification or the moral validity of a political organization and its activities [that can exist] both within that organization and outside its boundaries'. Building on such approach, I argue that the practice of cultural production contributes to the construction of internal and external relations of power which constitutes the very basis of rebel legitimacy.

Internally, the legitimacy of a rebel organization rests on the belief that the hierarchical relationship between leaders and subservient fighters is justified, and that people will follow into combat. Rebel culture can contribute to the socialization of new recruits in ways that make them use violence for the group and remain loyal to its leaders (Hoover Green 2017; E. J. Wood 2008). For example, in armed organizations, military drills, marches, salutes and songs contribute to the recognition of the domination of commanders over their subalterns. Armed groups' support in that sense does not rest solely on the logics of violence and coercion but also on 'individual, personal and emotional rewards for militant activists, such as recognition by peers, social prestige in local

communities, etcetera' (Malthaner 2015, 431). Music, as a specific manifestation of rebel group culture, can for instance, make fighters bond together emotionally, help them construct and perform a common rebel identity, raise their political consciousness and mobilise them for war (Brenner 2018; Hegghammer 2017; Nuxoll 2015; Quishpe 2020). Concretely, this means that cultural production can entrench the power of the existing leadership, reinforce cohesion, and aid with recruitment and retention.

Externally, rebel groups base their legitimacy on their ability to construct a distinct social order through their relations with the state and the civilian population (Arjona 2017; Kasfir 2015; Podder 2017; Schneckener 2017; Staniland 2012b). Rebels can legitimise such subversion of state power by constructing a state-like authority drawing on cultural symbols of sovereignty such as flags, anthems, alternative banknotes and war memorials (Mampilly 2015). Similarly, Mexican drug cartels employ culture to position themselves in relation to other cartels, the public and the state (Campbell 2014). Cultural production therefore enables the group to position the authority of its leadership as the legitimate alternative to established elites. The constitution of a rebel order also implies that such actors must legitimise their rule over the civilian population beyond the use of violence and coercion (Arjona 2017; Podder 2017; Schlichte 2009a; M. A. Stewart 2018; Terpstra and Frerks 2017). When state power breaks down, armed actors that gain control over territory can develop alternative governance structures by providing security, justice and other types of service provisions (Jackson 2003; Kasfir 2015; M. A. Stewart 2018). Although not a sufficient condition, the belief in the moral validity of rebel rule may contribute to the compliance of civilians (Kasfir 2015, 38–39). Rebel cultural production can thus be understood as a type of service provision in contexts where state services – in

terms of art and culture – are minimal or non-existent (Quishpe 2020, 571). Culture can contribute to the constitution of an alternative political order by embedding the rebels' political messages in pre-existing cultural values and beliefs, nurturing the very legitimacy needed to assert domination over the civilian population (Hoffman 2015; Mampilly 2015). Hence, different manifestations of culture can help constitute a group from which armed group leaders can derive the mandated power to speak on its behalf (Bourdieu 1991, 213–14).

Case Study, Research Method and Material

The research draws on the FARC, a Marxist-Leninist guerrilla group that sustained more than 50 years of armed rebellion against the Colombian State. The FARC took root in peasant self-defence groups formed during *la Violencia*, a civil war opposing the Liberal and Conservative parties in 1949–1957. The FARC became the strongest guerrilla group in Colombia reaching 2 000 members in 1982, 8 000 in 1990 and 17 000 in 2000 due in part to revenues generated by the coca economy (Pécaut 2006, 15; 2016). Two peace processes in 1982–1987 and 1999–2002 failed to bring peace. Under the government of Álvaro Uribe Vélez (2002–2010), the increase in the state military capacity lead to a major territorial retreat of the group. In 2012, the FARC entered into peace negotiations with Juan Manuel Santos' government and an agreement was reached in 2016. In October 2016, the peace deal was put to a vote in a popular referendum, but a successful campaign led by former president Uribe Vélez resulted in its rejection. Eventually, a revised version was adopted by the Colombian Congress in November 2016, initiating the transformation of the guerrilla group into a legal political party. At the time of writing, FARC members have entered Congress, occupying seats guaranteed by the Havana agreement. However, the

organization has experienced important setbacks. Various FARC dissident groups emerged during the peace process, Iván Duque – an opponent to the Havana agreement – was elected to the presidency in 2018 and the FARC party performed poorly in congress (2018) and local elections (2019).

The FARC is an interesting case to understand the relationship between culture and the politics of legitimacy. According to a company commander interviewed by Gutiérrez-Sanín (2018, 639): 'Whoever wants to understand the FARC necessarily has to talk about the *cultura fariana*, which is different from the traditional culture of our society'. The group promoted its distinct culture and artists through official websites, affiliated news agencies, *YouTube* channels, as well as a clandestine radio channel *Cadena Radial Bolivariana – Voz de la Resistencia* [Bolivarian Radial Channel – Voice of the Resistance] and a journal titled *Resistencia* [Resistance]. Just like its overall army-like structure, the FARC cultural policies were highly institutionalised (Quishpe 2020). The fact that the FARC was a centralised and hierarchical armed organization with an ideological commitment to Marxism-Leninism allows us to generalise the dynamics of legitimation through cultural production onto other groups with similar structures (see Balcells and Kalyvas 2015; Gutiérrez-Sanín 2018). The peace process also provides a fascinating development that sheds light on how the rebel group legitimised itself in relation to the dominant political order in a contested transition.

The scarce research on FARC culture examines the groups' music with a focus on the trajectory and history of the organization (Bolívar Ramírez 2017), militants' experience with *Fariano* music (Quishpe 2020), and ideology (Samacá 2017). In contrast, I explore the legitimation dynamics inherent to cultural production. By focusing on *Fariano* culture

more generally and music more specifically, I provide illustrative examples of the group's cultural production practices. Music production has been meaningful in connecting the group with regional communities and national history whilst cementing the FARC 'guerrillas as a distinctive and meaningful armed community' (Bolívar Ramírez 2017, 211). Although hard to assess empirically, one can argue that *Fariano* music had some impact on the group's outreach. The FARC distributed music records to sympathisers and provided cultural services where state institutions had been historically absent (Quishpe 2020). Throughout the various peace processes, the FARC organized a series of concerts to promote *Fariano* culture (Bolívar Ramírez 2017; Quishpe 2020). At times, the FARC music was able to reach wide audiences. During the peace negotiations in La Havana, the rebel group launched a rap music video on *YouTube* with Cuban band *Cuentas Claras*. In less than a week, the video obtained almost 60 000 views (Camejo 2014). At the time of writing, songs by Julián Conrado (2008, 2011) have reached more than 400 000 views on *YouTube*. This suggests that FARC music production had important implications for the legitimation of the organization.

Anchored in political sociology, my approach aims to show how FARC politics, culture, music and legitimacy intersect. My focus is on how cultural practices are given meaning within the organization and how the group's legitimacy is reflected in cultural and music production. Drawing on studies on armed groups legitimacy (e.g. Schlichte and Schneckener 2015) and rebel governance (e.g. Kasfir, Frerks, and Terpstra 2017), I concentrate on four themes related to internal and external legitimation:

- The Secretariat (internal)
- Internal hierarchy (internal)

- Established elites (external)
- The civilian population (external)

I carried out a content analysis of FARC official documents, field notes and, most importantly, song lyrics. The main FARC internal documents analysed for the study are the conclusions from two guerrilla conferences important for the development of *Fariano* culture (FARC-EP 1982; 1993) as well as *The Code of open order of the* FARC-EP (n.d.). Furthermore, I consulted testimonies by FARC artists recorded during the conflict (e.g. CRB-Voz de la Resistencia 2007) as well as the peace process (e.g. Agencia Bolivariana de Prensa 2017; Noticiero Barrio Adentro 2017). Additionally, the article includes insights from four months of field work in Colombia taking place from March to June 2017. I made informal encounters with FARC artists and observed public performances during the *San Pedro* festivities in Neiva in June 2017 [33]. I also analyse songs that were produced by FARC combatants, including artists like Julián Conrado, Christian Pérez, Lucas Iguarán, Martín Batalla, Black Esteban, and bands like *Los Rebeldes del Sur, Horizonte Fariano* [*Fariano* Horizon] and *Los Compañeros* [The Companions]. The songs were found through diverse *YouTube* accounts affiliated with the FARC or third parties sharing its

[33] I worked in a project treating the reintegration of FARC women combatants for a Colombian non-governmental organization. The programme was financed by the Swedish International Development Agency. I abided to a code of conduct specific to the programme. Research activities were carried out in ways that respected the consent, anonymity and security of participants in an unstable environment. The observations and testimonies in this article respect those ethical principles. The analysis of the songs and other material available online was carried out as part of my PhD project.

material. I compiled and analysed all the songs accessible online at the time of writing, totalling 258 songs spanning from 1988 to 2019. Given that FARC artists have produced close to 500 songs (Quishpe 2020), the sample provides an illustrative outlook on the group's musical repertoire. For some songs, the exact production date was not identified but it has been possible to estimate the period by referring to other sources and, in certain cases, the song lyrics.[34] For instance, songs by Christian Pérez were all written before 2007 as this fighter died in combat that year. Julián Conrado was captured and imprisoned in Venezuela in 2011 giving a rough approximation of when certain songs were written.

The first part of the analysis presents a short history of *Fariano* culture. The second and third parts focus on music as an important and illustrative example of FARC cultural production. I aim to outline how the FARC's internal and external legitimation dynamics manifest themselves in music through the representation of the Secretariat, internal hierarchy, established elites and civilian population.

The Origins of *Fariano* Culture

The FARC's cultural policy took its roots in the beginning of the 1980's at the same time as the rebel group transformed itself from a mainly defensive guerrilla force into an offensive rebel army (Quishpe 2020). The 7th Guerrilla Conference of 1982 made official the FARC's constitution as a revolutionary army and oriented its military strategy towards territorial control and the seizure of power (Pécaut 2006; 2016; Gutiérrez-Sanín 2018). The transformation was symbolised by adding the words *Ejército del Pueblo* [People's Army]

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[34] No date (n.d.) is inscribed in the song reference when the year of production is unknown.

to the rebel group's name (FARC-EP) and had important implications. Internally, the army-like structure of the FARC crystallised a more hierarchical order based on norms, drills and ranks with formal distinctions inscribed in people's uniforms (Gutiérrez-Sanín 2008; 2018). The constitution of such internal order was matched with a strict separation between fighters and the civilian population (Gutiérrez-Sanín 2018). Guerrilla fighters were no longer embedded within the population, as in the early days of the rebel group, but lived in isolated camps replicating a regular army. The group's new strategy also implied increased discipline and an encompassing approach to control the fighter's life (Gutiérrez-Sanín 2018).

The constitution of the FARC as a self-contained rebel army made possible the emergence of a distinct *Fariano* culture. Culture – and education through culture – became increasingly institutionalised over time, playing a fundamental role in the social cohesion of the group (Bolívar Ramírez 2017; Quishpe 2020). The conclusions of the 7th Conference emphasised how the group had to develop mechanisms to politically educate its fighters and use other means to "work with the masses" (FARC-EP 1982; see also Quishpe 2020, 560). This conference marked the creation of the "insurgent cultural hour", a daily hour where group members met to discuss literature, read poetry, and perform stand-up comedy, theatrical acts and music (Batalla in Noticiero Barrio Adentro 2017). In the 8th Conference of 1993, the FARC integrated the *Fariano* culture as part of a process to construct combatants and produce propaganda adapted to regional cultural diversity (FARC-EP 1993; see also Quishpe 2020, 561). Cultural production can thus be understood as a practice that was enmeshed within the wider armed group institution of political education (see Hoover Green 2017). Externally, culture was also employed to legitimise new ideological

referents. As the Cold war came to an end, the FARC embedded its struggle in the legacy of Simón Bolívar, a hero of the independence of Colombia and Latin America against Spanish rule (Quishpe 2020).

Centralised cultural production made sense from the perspective of a hierarchical organization such as the FARC, since it provided the means to control cultural supply in line with the group's dominant political worldviews. The *Code of open order of the* FARC-EP (n.d.), underlines that guerrilla festivities were not mere entertainment but organized political acts that should always relate to the internal life of the guerrilla and the political situation. The way culture was institutionalised and centralised within the FARC mirrors practices common to revolutionary socialist rebels (Balcells and Kalyvas 2015) where artistic performance is closely linked to the group's political agenda (Mottin 2010, 59). One can hence conclude that FARC's war-time cultural production was directed towards the reinforcement of internal rule and external legitimacy. Such dynamic is also apparent in the music produced by *Fariano* artists.

Canto, guitarra y fusil: Music and Internal Legitimation

FARC music production illustrates how *Fariano* culture was employed in order to bolster the internal legitimacy of the rebel group. The influence that Secretariat members and high-ranking commanders had over music production as well as the meaning *Fariano* artists gave to their art underscores the role that music had as a legitimation practice. Songs also portrayed positive images of the leadership and the guerrilla's hierarchy, legitimising its internal order.

High-ranking members of the group were involved in *Fariano* music production processes. In 1988–1989, the FARC launched the production of its first music record called *Mensaje Fariano* [*Fariano* Message]. The compilation includes performances by musicians Julián Conrado and Lucas Iguarán from the 19th front in the Caribbean. The project was initiated by Adán Izquierdo, the front commander. Jacobo Arenas, the ideological leader of the group funded the project (CRB-Voz de la Resistencia 2007). *Mensaje Fariano* was released after the FARC's failed attempt to penetrate mainstream electoral politics[35]. The album came at a particular juncture in the movement's history where the leadership reasserted its authority while seeking to justify violence. The recognised authority of high-ranking members in orienting artistic production further underscores that music was relevant as a mean to reinforce internal order.

There was a common understanding between the FARC leadership and guerrilla artists on what music should do for the group. When producing *Mensaje Fariano*, Lucas Iguarán, Adán Izquierdo and Julián Conrado consulted each other and agreed that the album would convey a message for the struggle of the people (Iguarán in CRB-Voz de la Resistencia 2007). Furthermore, Iguarán's second album *Para mi Pueblo* [For my People] came from an initiative of the Secretariat in 1991 after the death of co-founder Jacobo Arenas. Iguarán mentioned that at that time he did not have any songs but 'it had to be done' (CRB-Voz de la Resistencia 2007). This quote shows how artistic production was

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[35] In 1985, during the peace process with the Belisario Betancur government, the FARC and the Communist party created the *Unión Patriótica*. As the party entered the political arena, many of its members were assassinated. The FARC left the party and resumed armed violence in 1987.

seen as a practice that did not emerge from the sole impulse of the artist but was also embedded within the hierarchical logics of the group. It does not mean however that guerrilla artists had no agency in producing their own musical styles and lyrics, but rather that they recognised the authority of the leadership in influencing their work. This dynamic is also apparent in album launches. Iguarán's *Métase al Cuento* [Get Into the Story], was released in 2000 as the FARC-EP formed its Bolivarian Movement for New Colombia (CRB-Voz de la Resistencia 2007). Such new structures were meant to provide a basis for the FARC to recruit in urban areas. Quishpe (2020), in that regard, highlights that the clandestine distribution of music was a way used by the FARC to connect its urban militants to the values of the group.

The Secretariat

The FARC's militaristic blueprint suggests that Secretariat members had an authoritative position within the group. This logic manifests itself in music as songs often legitimise the power of guerrilla elites.

Songs present Secretariat members as charismatic and legitimate leaders. Criticism of commanders or the internal order is absent in all the songs analysed. Notably, singers recognise the personal symbolic power of Secretariat members by saluting them at the beginning of their songs. This is apparent in the lyrics of *Picadito por la Paz* [Football Game for Peace] by Los Rebeldes del Sur (2016) and *A Bolivariar* by Julián Conrado (2012 [2005]) amongst others. Certain songs are tributes to prominent figures of the movement. Manuel Marulanda and Jacobo Arenas, founders of the FARC, are praised for their warrior credentials and for tracing the path that guerrilleros should follow (see Conrado 2009 [n.d.], Iguarán 2016 [1995]). Founders are also positioned as equals to other

revolutionary figures embedding their authority in a wider historical narrative. For instance, in *Arando la Paz* [Ploughing Peace], Conrado (2009 [n.d.]) tells how Manuel Marulanda, just like Fidel Castro, will be absolved by history. Comparing Marulanda to Castro, Conrado legitimises the FARC's armed struggle by equating it to the successful Cuban revolution. Lyrics also depict the FARC leader as a caring, resilient and combative peasant, contributing to the image of Marulanda as a mythical revolutionary fighter.

To consolidate the leadership, songs also transfer the legitimacy conferred to FARC's founding leaders to other members of the Secretariat. For instance, in an ode dedicated to Marulanda, Julián Conrado (2009) mentions the names of Secretariat members Alfonso Cano, Timoleón Jiménez, Iván Márquez and Raúl Reyes with no apparent link to the wider narrative of the song. While initially this may seem out of place, it makes sense if you consider that the artist aims to link Marulanda's legacy to the other commanders. Additionally, in *Canto a Jacobo* [Song to Jacobo], Lucas Iguarán (2016 [1995]) recalls how Jacobo Arenas had the blood of the people in his veins. In a section of the song, the charisma of Arenas is symbolically transferred to Timoleón Jiménez as Iguarán invokes Jiménez's name and states that the future will be theirs. The references to the Secretariat members that were deceased and those that were in charge at the time the song was written illustrates how music was employed to provide a sense of continuity in the leadership. Rebel group legitimacy however does not rest solely on the charisma of its leaders but also on how such authority is accepted by fighters.

Internal Hierarchy

Military logic entails that rank-and-file fighters follow orders dictated by their superiors. FARC songs legitimise such order by providing a positive image of the organization's hierarchy and motivating fighters for combat.

FARC artists often make references to Secretariat members in order to legitimise the internal command structure. For instance, in a song dedicated to the deceased commander Jorge Briceño, who died in 2010, Anderley Sánchez (2017 [n.d.]) emphasises that guerrilleros should follow his legacy by observing the internal rules designed by him. The lyrics portray how Briceño's guidelines are essential for leadership by mentioning that he created them with the majorities of the country and that, if applied, they guarantee protection against FARC enemies. The song attributes a particular value to internal rules of the group by building on Briceño's leadership credentials. This logic provides a sense that the hierarchical structure of the group is somewhat natural because it is derived from the legitimacy of the majorities. Furthermore, in the song *Vivo Feliz Luchando* [I Live Happy Fighting] by Horizonte Fariano (2008a), singers underline that they want to follow the steps of Jacobo Arenas and become new men in combat. The authority of the Secretariat member hence justifies the fact that people follow the guerrilla into battle. In both songs, the singers tacitly legitimise the belief of the internal legitimacy of the group by acknowledging how the goals of the armed group are their particular interests.

Fariano music conveys representations of various rites of passage important for the socialization of recruits to the group's norms and rules. This seems significant since the separation of fighters from civilian spheres and the sense of belonging to the FARC's cultural and political community was an important aspect of the groups internal cohesion

(Gutiérrez-Sanín 2018). In the song *La Cartilla* [The Code of Conduct], Christian Pérez (2013 [n.d.]) emphasises how the training for and initiation to combat make fighters become patriots of the insurrection. This example illustrates how music was directed towards the legitimation of FARC's military and political education institutions constituting the basis of its internal order. Furthermore, in *Guerrillero Nuevo* [New Guerrilla Fighter], the singer also claims that entering the ranks is like having a family in the insurrection (Pérez 2016a [n.d]). The integration within the FARC's rank is also associated with the construction of a new man in line with Marxist-Leninist ideology (Pérez 2016a [n.d]). The emphasis on the new family in the group and the ritualistic transformation of members into new persons seems important from the perspective of internal legitimacy since FARC recruits often had to cut ties with their family for security reasons and internal discipline (Gutiérrez-Sanín 2018, 17). This suggests that songs provided a positive image of the life in the guerrilla, despite its harsh conditions, to make new combatants accept commanders' authority and their 'new revolutionary duty'. Music thus aimed to make fighters bond both together and with the organization through a common purpose. Likewise, song lyrics elevate one's personal sacrifice to the group's emancipatory goals. *Canto, Guittarra y Fusil* [Song, Guitar and Rifle] by Horizonte Fariano (2010) is illustrative in that regard[36]. In the song, the singer expresses that he is ready to give his life to fulfil his revolutionary duty. He also notes that Bolívar and Che were the ones that gave the example to seek peoples' happiness. The lyrics illustrate how

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[36] Songs like *Pa' la Offensiva me Voy* [To the Offensive I Go] (Pérez 2016b [n.d.]) and *Pa'lante la Marcha* [Forward the March] (Conrado 2015 [n.d.]) also motivate fighters into combat.

FARC motivated troops for combat based on the idea that they continued the struggle for Latin American liberation instigated by previous revolutionaries. The references to Che Guevara and Bolívar, historical symbols well known among Colombians, underline that music was also directed towards external legitimation.

Colombia o nada: Fariano Music and External Legitimation

Fariano music production was intrinsically linked to the promotion of FARC beyond its boundaries. In songs, artists praise the group in relation to the established elites and assert the FARC's symbolic power over civilians.

Through their art, *Fariano* musicians expressed their commitment to the FARC's political project to transform society. Art was seen as an integral part of the struggle. Julián Conrado puts it bluntly, 'There is no revolution without songs, without poetry, without painting'(Agencia Bolivariana de Prensa 2017). Other musicians also argued that their art was crucial to advance the subversive goals of the FARC. Róbinson Forero, member of *Los Rebeldes del Sur*, noted that Manuel Marulanda 'understood that the war and the revolutionary struggle are not carried out solely with rifles, bombs and shootings if not, through propaganda and culture. He said that with our music we could reach where we could not with our weapons' (in Maldonado Tovar 2016). This quote clearly identifies music as a form of expression which can reach to a wider audience. Furthermore, as the rebel group disarmed, artistic work was still considered an important aspect of the political struggle. A manager for the Manuel Marulanda Art School told me that, as the FARC experienced its last days as a guerrilla, its artists were performing art for peace. Making music for peace did not however mean the end of the FARC's political project. Black

Esteban, a FARC rapper, argued that artistic production could help continue the political struggle. Esteban emphasised, ‘we are going to make a battle with words’ (in Noticiero Barrio Adentro 2017).

Through music, the FARC made the claim that it represented the people of Colombia. For instance, Lucas Iguarán and Julián Conrado stated that the FARC and its musical repertoire represented diverse Colombian regional cultures (in Bolívar Ramírez 2017, 215). *Fariano* music includes Caribbean rhythms such as *vallenato, cumbia* and reggae as well as styles from various Andean regions including *bambucos* and *música andina*. Local folklore in *Fariano* culture can be seen as a form of metaphor where the armed group embedded its political movement within the Colombian context (Bolívar Ramírez 2017). Likewise, members of the FARC cultural delegation participating in the *San Pedro* festivities in Neiva, 2017, expressed that they wanted to show people in the city that the guerrilla was full of artistic talent. At different events, they wore the distinct clothes for the festivities, performed the *Sanjuanero* – a typical dance of the Huila region – and even elected their own popular queen. For guerrilla artists, the fact that various regional cultures were represented within the group justified that it was truly a “people’s army”. Its artists saw themselves as representatives of the people. Julián Conrado, for instance, calls himself a “singer of the people” and that he symbolically represents its will as this quote underlines: ‘[The singers] of the people, in their state of nature, are the soul and the heart of the peoples and so we are the reflection of the desires of the people, of the problems of the people, well, of its sadness, of its joys, of the dreams of the people’ (NC - Nueva Colombia 2016). Here, Conrado, as spokesperson, gives voice to a group and derives his mandated power from it by making “I” mean “the people” (Bourdieu 1991, 211).

Evidently, songs also legitimised the FARC through position-taking and the claim that the guerrilla group represented people's interest.

Established Elites

Musical production was seen as a practice necessary to impose the FARC's worldview on politics as a legitimate form of domination. In its musical discourse, the FARC developed a vision of society that positions the FARC and the socialist order it aims to establish as legitimate over the established 'bourgeois oligarchy'.

Songs present the government as an illegitimate class enemy whose interests are subordinated to the *yanqui* (United States) oppressor. During the height of the conflict with the Álvaro Uribe Vélez government (2002–2010), the FARC launched songs about the president. In *Puya antiuribista*, Julián Conrado (2016a [n.d.])[37] depicts Uribe as a terrorist, a fascist and a *paraco*, an expression to denote somebody associated with right-wing paramilitaries. Conrado propounds the idea that the interests of the Colombian government are subordinated to those of the United States and calls upon the people to rise up and the soldiers of the military to stop defending the interests of a foreign power. The song *Para Uribe* by Horizonte Fariano (2008b) produces a similar message with wordplays revolving around the word "*para*" which can either mean "for" or "paramilitary". The group claims that Uribe protects the paramilitaries so that people remain silent and that the Senate approves laws so that right-wing groups never stop killing. The lyrics of both songs underscore that FARC artists had a role to play in the reproduction of the guerrilla group's

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[37] Lyrics clearly suggest that the song was written during the Uribe Vélez presidency.

dominant discourse. This worldview stipulates that on the one side, there are right-wing illegitimate elites, armed groups and institutions, and, on the other, legitimate socialist forces. Accordingly, music was employed by the FARC to position itself in relation to the state in ways that legitimised revolutionary warfare and the establishment of an alternative social order. Such positioning is also reflected in the way FARC artists make references of historical figures. The name of Bolívar is often mentioned in titles of songs and albums to emphasise FARC's anti-imperialist legacy. Lucas Iguarán notably released an album called *Con Bolívar a la Carga* [Charging with Bolívar]. The word Bolívar is also used to form neologisms which legitimise the FARC struggle. In the song *A Bolivariar*, Julián Conrado (2012) transforms the name Bolívar into a verb. *A Bolivariar* means to organize for the struggle and to fight against the oligarchy. It is an insurgent and a revolutionary conviction. FARC artists hence positioned the groups' struggle as part of the wider historical legacy of Bolívar, legitimising the overthrowing of the established order.

As the rebel group committed to the peace process, it replaced the goal of defeating the state with peace. Several songs written during the process underline the importance of 'winning the peace' over military victory (Los Rebeldes del Sur 2016, Black Esteban 2017). In the two-parts song *Desenterrando Memorias* [Unearthing Memories], Martín Batalla (2017a, 2017b) underlines how massacres and episodes of political oppression are re-enacted in a cyclical manner throughout Colombian history. For the author, this dreadful repeating history dignifies the FARC struggle. Batalla (2017b) mentions that the solution to such cycles of violence resides in studying history, disarming politics and constructing unity in a conscious mobilisation. Viewing history as recurring cycles, the artist still retains the FARC Marxist worldview. However, the fact that he

promotes disarming politics over the violent overthrowing of government appears to show a certain commitment to institutional politics. Other songs replicate such positioning. In a metaphor, comparing the peace process with a football game, Los Rebeldes del Sur (2016) narrate how FARC leaders Timoshenko (Timoleón Jiménez) and Iván Márquez, and the Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos are playing for peace and will make goals against the abomination of war. The song provides a powerful insight into the transformation of the FARC political strategy. It recognises that FARC political opponents are 'equal players' playing under common rules that constitute politics, symbolically represented by the football game. The discourse dividing Colombia between those who want a peaceful resolution to the conflict on one side – including the FARC – and those who do not accept the peace process reflect how the new party positioned itself in relation to other political contenders and justified its *raison d'être* in the political arena.

The Civilian Population

FARC musicians reflected on their personal lives and the situation in the country, producing music which could reach people who lived through similar experiences. Such art contributed to the constitution of group images from which FARC derived its mandated power. Guerrilla musicians also embedded their art in pre-existing meanings in order to legitimise the rebel group in relation to the civilian population.

In order to spread the belief in the legitimacy of the FARC, musicians made the claim that they spoke on behalf of particular groups within society. Such claim is reproduced in songs such as *Soy del Pueblo* [I am from the people] where Julián Conrado (2016b [1989]) states that he speaks for the people. Conrado first derives his personal legitimacy as an artist from "the people" and second, and more implicitly, legitimises the

FARC as the organization he represents. Song lyrics are often constructed in ways to be congruent with the lived experience of the people FARC claimed to represent. Many songs are odes to the marginalised population of Colombia. Artists often refer to indigenous people and the afro-Colombian community but mostly to the peasant population in which the FARC takes its roots. FARC songwriters repeatedly make references to the language of the field, notably by using the verb "*sembrar*" [to plant]. Guerrilla artists say that the FARC is planting new seeds and sowing for the future (Horizonte Fariano 2010, Reincidentes Bta and FARC-EP 2017). The use of such language not only reflects the peasant origins of the rebel organization but also the commitment of *Fariano* artists to mirror the reality of this particular group. For instance, the song *Campesino, Campesino* [Peasant, Peasant] by Lucas Iguarán (2009 [1989]) emphasises that the peasants are central to the struggle of the FARC and are symbols of the working people. Iguarán states that peasants should get better rewards for their work and are being fooled by the government. By showing sympathies for the condition of peasants, the singer contributes to the constitution of the peasantry as a group – enabling it to see itself as such. Furthermore, presenting the FARC and peasants as bound by shared grievances, Iguarán also makes the claim that the guerrilla represents the interest of the group.

Rebels embed cultural production in pre-existing meanings and culture to legitimise their authority (Hoffman 2015; Mampilly 2015). In 2009, the FARC notably launched an album which remakes popular Colombian songs originating from the Caribbean coast. In such songs FARC artists often changed the protagonists of songs and depicted them as members of the rebel group (Bolívar Ramírez 2017, 14). Among the different cover songs produced by the FARC throughout its history, one striking example of the embedding of

the political messages in local folklore is the reinterpretation of the song *La Guaneña* by Los Compañero (2012 [n.d.]). *La Guaneña* is a typical *bambuco* song from Pasto, in the department of Nariño, considered an important part of Colombian folklore (Romero 2012). The original song tells the story of a woman (*la Guaneña*) with subversive behaviour. This song – in which the woman fools her lover – was later appropriated by military organizations as an hymn to celebrate military triumphs in the 19th century (Romero 2012). In their version, Los Compañeros (2012 [n.d.]) tell of how *la Guaneña* joined the FARC and its leader Manuel Marulanda to fight in the mountains. By presenting the *Guaneña* as fighting alongside the FARC, the group legitimises its struggle in reference to an important national symbol of military victory and subversion. FARC music production hence illustrates how the rebel group legitimised its *raison d'être* in relation to different groups amongst the civilian population.

Conclusions

The present article sought to study the role of cultural production in the legitimation of rebel groups. It draws on the relational approach to armed groups legitimacy to illustrate how FARC cultural production can be understood as a legitimation practice. The analysis shows that music production conveyed the belief in the internal legitimacy of the organization by representing the Secretariat as having authority over fighters and aiming to make those fighters internalise the group's hierarchical structure. Externally, music positioned the FARC as a rightful alternative to established elites and conveyed the message that the guerrilla could talk on behalf of different groups in Colombia.

Cultural production in other armed groups (Brenner 2018; Hegghammer 2017; Mottin 2010; Nuxoll 2015) and crime syndicates (Campbell 2014) underscores that the dynamics outlined in this study could shed light on similar processes across a variety of cases. The analysis has indicated the importance of internal features to explain the meaning that culture has for an organization but also how it legitimises itself more generally. Research findings hence contribute to an emerging body of literature focussing on armed groups characteristics and practices, and their overall trajectories (Balcells and Kalyvas 2015; Hoover Green 2017; Gutiérrez-Sanín 2018). The creation of an official *Fariano* cultural corpus was made possible by the constitution of the FARC as an army and the allocation of resources to artists by the leadership. The hierarchical characteristics of the FARC and the physical separation of the group from the civilian population also shows that, at times, the co-production of a movement's culture between civilian and cadres does not lend itself easily to civilian participation as other research would suggest (Brenner 2018). Accordingly, the relational framework developed in the article may be better suited to study hierarchically structured organizations with centralised propaganda apparatus such as socialist revolutionary groups (Balcells and Kalyvas 2015) or larger Islamic insurgent organizations (Hegghammer 2017, 11).

The study also has implications for the cultural turn in the study of armed groups (Brenner 2018; Hegghammer 2017), their relation to social orders (Schlichte 2009a) and rebel practices and governance more generally (Hoffman 2015; Kasfir 2015; Mampilly 2015). Studying culture provides insights into these actors' worldviews and mindsets, thus enhancing our understanding of what constitutes life in an armed group and how they might sustain their movement over time (Hegghammer 2017). The analysis of FARC songs

contributed to this literature by demonstrating how music production is a practice that is embedded within wider legitimation dynamics. Song lyrics notably showed that organizational hierarchical logics manifest themselves in cultural practices, mirroring narratives that, if internalised, can foster internal cohesion. This suggests that cultural practices can play a role in legitimising armed groups institutions that maintain internal order and socialize fighters into the use of violence (see Hoover Green 2017; E. J. Wood 2008). In addition, the way music was employed within the group and in relation to external audiences clearly illustrates its role as an activity for social bonding (Clarke, DeNora, and Vuoskoski 2015; Launay 2015). *Fariano* music also reproduced the image of an enemy against which violence could be justified and embedded the group's message in wider historical and cultural references to vindicate its struggle. Cultural production may have contributed to the justification of FARC rule in the regions the group occupied despite important legitimacy deficits nationally (see Gutiérrez-Sanín 2018). However, I did not assess the extent to which FARC music resonated amongst fighters and civilians. Therefore, I cannot claim that cultural production has had a major effect on the group's internal cohesion and external outreach. Nonetheless, the fact that the FARC music was present in several aspects of its internal and public life suggest that the leadership considered culture significant to the organization's constitution. In line with existing research on FARC music (Bolívar Ramírez 2017; Quishpe 2020) and armed group culture (Brenner 2018; Hegghammer 2017; Hoffman 2015; Mampilly 2015; Mottin 2010), future research on rebel culture could focus on how the meanings produced by rebel artists are received and internalised by various audiences. This agenda for research could help us better understand how culture contributes to the continuation of armed violence.

Chapter 4

Civil War Afterlives: A Typology of Ex-Combatant Biographical Outcomes and Research Agenda

Introduction

What becomes of combatants after they demobilize? The demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) of combatants[38] is an important process in post-war transitions. Both internationally and nationally tailored programs have been implemented in a variety of post-civil war contexts. While much of the academic literature on such processes initially focused on the effectiveness of DDR interventions (e.g. Kingma 1997; Knight and Özerdem 2004; Muggah 2009), researchers have recently broadened the field to study ex-combatant post-demobilization trajectories (e.g. Duclos 2010; O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018a; Sprenkels 2018; Söderström 2020). After demobilization, former fighters may mobilize for political parties and social movements (Blattman 2009; Söderström 2020; Sindre 2016), integrate the security sector (Hoddie and Hartzell 2003; Krebs and Licklider 2016), go back to arms (Debos 2011; Nilsson and Söderberg Kovacs 2011; Themnér 2011), turn to criminal activities (Daly, Paler, and Samii 2020; O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018a), become peacebuilders (Dudouet, Giessmann, and Planta 2012; McEvoy and Shirlow 2009) or retire, turning their backs to violence (Sen 2021). Ex-combatant biographical outcomes[39] can thus vary both across contexts and groups, and over time.

[38] The term is commonly defined as the process of 'removing weapons from the hands of combatants, taking the combatants out of military structures and helping them to integrate socially and economically into society by finding civilian livelihoods' (UNDDR 2006, 6),

[39] The term refers to the life course patterns of individuals that have engaged in political violence (see Bosi and Giugni 2012; Neveu and Fillieule 2019).

Are certain post-demobilization outcomes predominant in some contexts and groups, and not others? In Central America, ex-combatants from various armed groups joined urban gangs (Jütersonke, Muggah, and Rodgers 2009). In Chad, some former fighters are found to "live by the gun", transiting between arms bearing occupations such as soldiers, illegal customs officials or rebel army fighters (Debos 2011). In Northern Ireland, ex-combatants turned to grass-root community engagement, social activism and conflict transformation leadership (Bosi 2019; McEvoy and Shirlow 2009). In Colombia, former paramilitaries were more prone to return to violence and delinquency than guerrilla ex-combatants (O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018a, 80–81) while in Sierra Leone fighters that participated in abusive military faction were more incline to experience reintegration difficulties (Humphreys and Weinstein 2007).

Despite progress, little work has been done to sort out various post-demobilization outcomes analytically. Research on trajectories tends to be compartmentalized into specific themes (re-recruitment, post-war crime, political engagement, etc.) anchored in competing research agendas. This siloed approach prevents a full appreciation of how various outcomes relate to one another[40]. Filling the gaps between various research programs, I develop a typology that maps post-demobilization outcomes at the micro-level to make sense of persistence and change in individual life trajectories over time. A life trajectory is here defined as *the individual process of moving across time and space producing*

[40] In the same vein, Bara, Deglow and van Baalen (2021) underline the pitfalls of compartmentalization in the literature on civil war recurrence and postwar violence and call for an integrated research agenda.

biographical outcomes. Biographical outcomes are based on the repertoire of actions[41] adopted by an individual which I track across three key dimensions: politics, violence, and the state. Following Goertz (2006, 30–34), I identify the positive and negative poles of each dimension, highlighting the political/apolitical, violent/non-violence and subversive/non-subversive character of individual repertoires. This categorization leads to eight types of biographical outcomes: armed rebel, regime enforcer, violent criminal, security professional, nonviolent activist, engaged citizen, disengaged civilian, and nonviolent criminal. Each outcome represents a *specific point in time,* while a life trajectory symbolizes persistence and change across categories *over time*. Drawing on Staniland (2012b) and Barnes' (2017) approach to typology building, the framework does not make causal claims about the determinants of ex-combatant outcomes, but instead provides a descriptive road map to chart civil war afterlives.

Given their violent skillset and networks, ex-combatants are pivotal actors in war-to-peace transitions. Mapping their social positions is hence critical to understand the legacies of war (see Sprenkels 2018). When aggregated, the prevalence of certain post-demobilization outcomes shapes whether violence continues in different forms, the intensity of ex-combatant post-war political and social participation, and the character and strength of opposition to the state. The typology also sheds light on complex and non-linear

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[41] The term repertoire echoes Tilly's concept of repertoire of contention referring to a set of performances available to political actors for claim making such as protests, electoral campaigns, insurgencies, kidnappings, etc. (Tilly 2003, 45). However, in this context, I use the term in a broader sense to encompass actions that fall outside of contentious politics.

life-course patterns of former combatants. This matters as focusing solely on collective-level aggregated outcomes, as most DDR research does, overshadows historical contingencies, bifurcations and multiple misfortunes in individual life courses (Malejacq 2019, 22). Furthermore, in contrast to other conceptualizations of ex-combatant trajectories that focus on a limited number of outcomes (see O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018a; Torjesen 2013), the framework aims to encompass the whole of an individual life course (see also Duclos 2010; Shesterinina 2021; Sprenkels 2018; Viterna 2013; Wiegink 2020). Such insights enhance our understanding of the social processes of civil wars through the ways people are transformed (E. J. Wood 2008), the different individual-level linkages between pre-war, wartime and post-war phases of armed conflicts (Shesterinina 2022) and the long-term aspects of reintegration that are especially hard to measure.

Existing DDR *foci*

Existing work on DDR focuses on narrow timeframes and outcomes. Survey studies highlight the factors influencing ex-combatant economic rehabilitation (P. Collier 1994; Gilligan, Mvukiyehe, and Samii 2013), satisfaction with DDR programs (Oppenheim and Söderström 2018), remobilization for armed groups and involvement in crime (Daly, Paler, and Samii 2020; O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018a), and political and community engagement (Blattman 2009; O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018b). The survey data employed is often a snapshot collected in short timeframes (see Gilligan, Mvukiyehe, and Samii 2013; Humphreys and Weinstein 2007, 540). This is problematic insofar as reintegration is a long-term process; as Söderström (2020, 8) puts it, '[we] have good reasons to expect different dynamics during different periods of the former combatant's life'. In contrast, case studies on Chad (Debos 2011) and Sierra Leone (Christensen and Utas 2008; Themnér

2011), and paramilitary factions in Colombia (Daly 2016) underline how former combatants oscillate between various armed and unarmed positions over time. While this work reveals that most people occupy different positions at different moments in their post-demobilization life, this research typically focuses on a limited number of outcomes. In that regard, researchers risk succumbing to what Bourdieu (1986) termed "the biographical illusion", a sense of obtaining the complete picture of a phenomenon based on the accumulation of individual life histories. Bourdieu (1986a, 71–72) likens biographical outcomes to the various possible stations of a metro system that structure individual itineraries; the locations of individual stations tell us little without understanding how they connect to one another on a map of the metro system. Mapping life courses and understanding how individual experiences relate to the counterfactual paths not taken requires consideration of the universe of possible outcomes.

What axes should we employ to map the positions of former combatants? Dichotomies enshrined in competing research programs tend to structure our thinking. As Wiegink (2020, 5) rightly points out, 'veterans' trajectories are best understood in terms of a mixture of ruptures and continuities, which are not easily captured in dichotomizing categories of civil and military life or victim and perpetrator, or in singular understandings of "home" and "community"'. Accordingly, different biographical outcomes, often treated separately in the literature, should be studied holistically in order to better understand the blurred lines between war and peace (Cockburn 2004; Debos 2011; Richards 2005), public and private acts of violence (Kalyvas 2003), crime and politics (Barnes 2017) as well as various repertoires of action (Shesterinina 2021).

Taken together, studies on the life trajectories of (former) combatants provide a wide array of biographical outcomes. However, no general framework allows us to compare the range of possible outcomes across cases and groups, and over time. Dudouet Giessmann and Planta (2012, 26), have argued in that regard that former combatants follow a variety of post-war career trajectories and that DDR policies should 'pay particular attention to the specificities of the conflict and context, as well as to individual profiles, pre-war backgrounds and wishes of combatants'. In the same vein, Sprenkels (2018, Chapter 6) systematically maps the trajectories of groups of former Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) combatants in post-war El Salvador, but, the categories he employs are not rooted in a general comparative framework. In contrast, Shesterinina (2021) has recently provided a holistic view of mobilization across pre-war, wartime and postwar stages. She differentiates between repertories of collective action from spontaneous everyday confrontations to more organized political contention and violent opposition. However, her framework does not encompass criminal activities, outcomes that are of particular interest for DDR policy. As a counterpart, Barnes (2017) argues that the scholarship on political violence has largely ignored criminal violence and has called for a greater scrutiny into the interactions between organized crime and politics.

Synthesizing these different accounts, I develop a framework that focuses on how individual life trajectories in and out of armed groups are embedded 'within a broader set of processes that combine politics and violence'(Staniland 2012b, 244). Drawing on such insights, I aim to develop categories that are general enough to be applicable across a variety of contexts – moving up the ladder of abstraction – while providing enough

differentiation between categories to grasp intermediary steps across clusters of outcomes (D. Collier and Levitsky 1997; Sartori 1970).

A Typology of Biographical Outcomes

Ex-combatant biographical outcomes can be differentiated by three key dimensions: *politics*, *violence, and the state*. Following Goertz (2006, 32–35), each category is constituted by negative and positive poles separated by a continuum. This approach has the main advantage of allowing the identification of "grey zones" between concepts and the potentially ambiguous positions individuals occupy at different points in time. Conceptualizing such grey zones is important as 'former [combatants are] often seen as a liminal [figures], filled with ambiguity, posed on the threshold of different boundaries: between war and peace; between the individuals' own experience and how they are perceived; as creators or destroyers of social order' (Söderström 2020, 7).

The *politics* dimension relates to the extent to which agents, engage in politics, adopting actions that 'seek to influence the distribution of power within and between political structures' (Weber in Gerth and Mills 1958, 83). I distinguish between primarily political and apolitical actions. Social movement and trade union activism, engagement in electoral campaigning and remobilization in a rebel group for ideological reasons are examples of politically motivated actions. Works by Shesterinina (2021), Söderström (2020) and Viterna (2013) notably point out how former fighters follow different paths of mobilization that move up and down politicization axis over time. On the lower end of the politics dimension, one may find actions that are mostly apolitical, including quotidian activities such as working and raising a family, but also for-profit criminal activities. I

emphasize (a)political actions over the public/private distinction since private is not the negative pole of politics. Such dimensions are however linked. The boundary that separates public political motivations from private, apolitical ones is ambiguous and fluid (see Kalyvas 2003, 475–76; Scott 1990). Kuran (1991) highlights for instance that the East European Revolution of 1989 came as a surprise because East Europeans suppressed their private contempt for the government. Public opposition grew rapidly as citizens did not fear to expose their political preferences in public, shifting from apathy to widespread political contention.

The *violence* dimension relates to actions that 'immediately [inflict] physical damage on persons and/or objects' (Tilly 2003, 3). The research on the remobilization of former combatants (P. Collier 1994; Debos 2011; Themnér 2011; Haer and Böhmelt 2016), recidivism into violent crime (Daly, Paler, and Samii 2020; O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018a) and electoral violence (Christensen and Utas 2008) underlines the often violent character of ex-combatant trajectories. Even in postwar settings, most people, most of the time, lead a non-violent existence. On the lower end of the spectrum, we therefore find individuals engaged in non-violent, quotidian activities of working and managing families, but also various forms of political participation and community engagement. In between, we might find former fighters who, though refraining from acts of violence, support other armed groups or use force under certain circumstances. Importantly, violent behavior includes the public and private domains. Østby, Leiby and Nordås (2019, 1) stress, in that regard, that there is 'strong empirical evidence that war leaves a discernable mark on the propensity of violence in intimate relationships'. This means that, as rightly pointed out by feminist scholars, there is often no clear-cut distinction between war and postwar situations.

Different kinds of violence, gender based and otherwise, comprise part of a continuum of violence that spans various timeframes, spaces and levels of society (see Cockburn 2004). Former fighters may reproduce different forms of violence that are not necessarily politically motivated, with serious implications for the safety of their communities. Research on US war veterans notably shows that combat exposure may lead to higher levels of aggression and intimate partner violence (Iovine-Wong et al. 2019; MacManus et al. 2015).

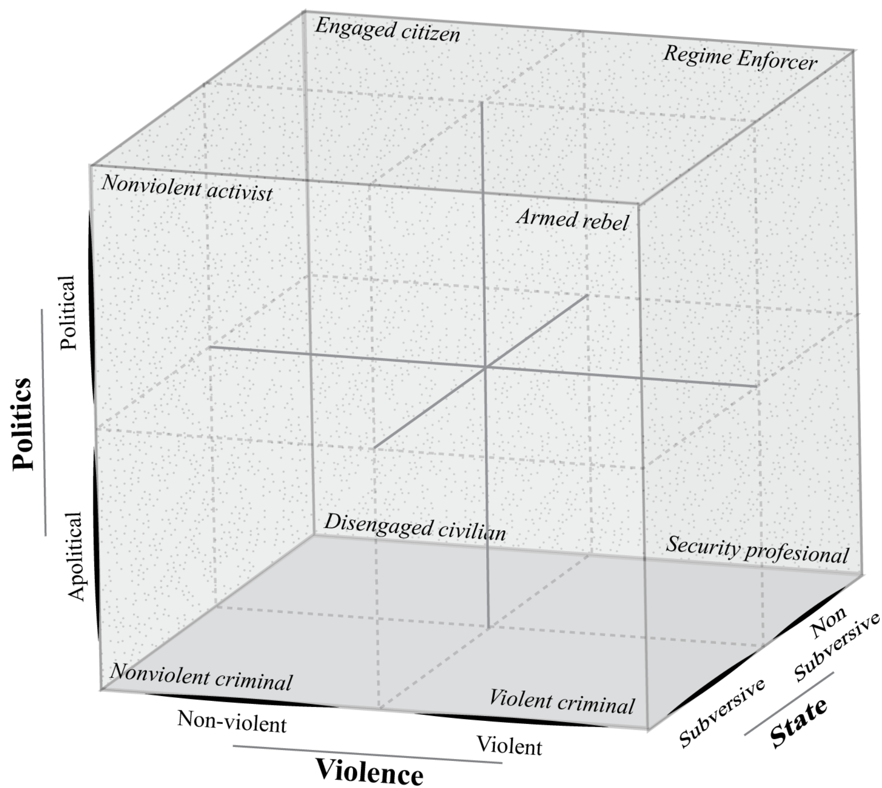
The state dimension relates to the extent to which former combatants adopt actions that are subversive or non-subversive in relation to state authority. The character of state authority differs based on regime types[42]. Regimes set the boundary for the legitimate use of force by state agents and citizens alike (Tilly, 2003: 27-28; Tilly and Tarrow, 2015: 20, 37-38), and 'prescribe, tolerate, and forbid different sorts of claim making performances' (Tilly and Tarrow, 2015: 62). What is deemed subversive may thus vary from one context to another depending notably on the regime's capacity and its (un)democratic character (Tilly and Tarrow 2015). Non-subversive actions include most everyday aspects of life, but also forms of violence that fall within state-sanctioned, legitimate uses of force, such as that committed in the context of policing or the security services. This dimension is central to DDR processes as ex-combatants are often expected to return to activities that put their skills as specialists in violence in the service of state authority. DDR processes

[42] Tilly and Tarrow (2015: 49) define regimes as 'regular relations among governments, established political actors, and challengers, and are perceived and acted upon by outside political actors, including other governments'.

thus represent important state-building and state formation functions as they aim to restore the state monopoly over the legitimate use of force and consolidate its legitimacy (Giustozzi 2016). Most subversive actions include rebellion and serious crimes, but subversion may also be a matter of degree. Bateson (2021, 927) for instance stresses that individuals engaging in vigilantism recognize the existence of a legal order, but 'necessarily challenge, usurp, supplant, or displace the state's authority—even as they may claim to be upholding or correcting the state's law'. In contrast, as Bosi (2019) demonstrates in the case of former Provisional Irish Republican Army activists, ex-combatants may take part in community engagement, grass-root peacebuilding initiatives and social movements that are sanctioned by the state but nevertheless subvert its power from within. The boundaries of what is deemed subversive – and political for that matter – are often contentiously renegotiated during postwar transitions.

The three dimensions of the typology allow us to map a universe of biographical outcomes, highlighted in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 3.1 Three-dimensional typology of ex-combatant biographical outcomes in relation to politics, violence, and the state



The axes distinguish individuals based on the political/apolitical, violence/non-violent, and subversive/non-subversive character of their actions. The eight corners of the cube translate into different biographical outcomes positioned at the opposite poles of each axis. The eight building blocks within the broader typology provide a space of possible positions that individuals may occupy at distinct moments. Understood as accentuated forms of a phenomenon, the ideal types highlight that an agent may be anchored in one category but also occupy a liminal position leaning toward more than one outcome. As an example, a committed rural revolutionary fighter, a predatory insurgent using his gun to extort civilians, and a member of an underground resistance cell gathering intelligence all potentially fall within the same *armed rebel* category. However, in theory, they are at

different points — the revolutionary fighter being firmly anchored in the *armed rebel* category, the opportunistic insurgent more inclined towards the *violent criminal* outcome and the underground resistant being closer to the *nonviolent activist* ideal type. On the aggregate level, groups may cluster around specific categories but also move from and towards different categories over time, as with armed groups that transform into political parties before taking up arms once again. The cube is not meant to be a static map but a dynamic framework where the boundaries of each dimension vary across contexts but can also be renegotiated, with important implications for the positions of agents.

Mapping Biographical Outcomes

The various outcomes of the typology make sense of a variety of individual- and group-level dynamics. In this section, I provide an overview of the biographical outcomes, and underline how the typology bridges different research programs and adds to our understanding of ex-combatant life trajectories.

The *armed rebel* and *regime enforcer* categories include actors that, respectively, adopt violence for political goals in opposition to, or the service of, the ruling regime. Revolutionaries, ethnic nationalists, and religious fighters that subvert state power come closer to the *armed rebel* category. Security personnel directly linked to a ruling regime such as presidential guards, or pro-government militias lean towards the *regime enforcer* outcome. They are in principle non-subversive since they use violence to reinforce regime control. Both categories are however often fluid. McLauchlin (2022) notably shows how some civil wars start out as army-splinter rebellions, emphasizing how military actors aligned with the regime shift to the armed rebel category. Furthermore, the “sobel” phenomenon in Sierra Leone, for instance, underlines how members of the national army

sporadically engaged in diamond plundering, pillage and collusion with the Revolutionary United Front rebels (Kandeh 1999, 362–64). Pro-government militias may also emerge as the outcome of state policies to delegate repression (Carey, Mitchell, and Lowe 2013; Eck 2015), but 'later develop a life of their own' (Schlichte 2009b, 247). Rebel fighters may turn their back to their insurgent movement by joining government forces or pro-state paramilitaries (Oppenheim et al. 2015; Seymour 2014), just as armed groups often emerge from within the patronage networks of state rulers (Reno 2011). In relation to post-demobilization trajectories, political elites may also re-mobilize former fighters momentarily for electoral violence thus bring them (back) towards the regime enforcer category if they support the government or the armed rebel outcome if they align with the opposition (see Christensen and Utas 2008). Non-subversive actors may also shift life trajectories in contexts of regime change. In Iraq, former members of Saddam Hussein's security apparatus resurfaced in key positions within the Islamic State insurgency, many years after the regime had been overthrown (Coles and Parker 2015; Hendawi and Abdul-Zahra 2015).

The *violent criminal* and *security professional* outcomes are agents adopting actions with no overtly political motivations. Police personnel, members of the military forces and private security that act within the boundaries of state control are, from this perspective, close to the security professional ideal type. However, in several contexts, such actors often perpetuate acts of violence for political motives meaning that agents may oscillate between the security professional, regime enforcer and armed rebel categories. Conversely, violent criminals subvert state authority with no overt political motivations, but this outcome, may also have an ambivalent relation to the state as Barnes (2017) and Volkov (1999) point out.

During the transition of the Soviet Union towards a market economy, state, private and illegal actors used racketeering schemes to enforce contracts, therefore blurring the line between the state and criminal enterprise (Volkov 1999). Post-war security sector reforms are also similarly premised on the notion that regime enforcers and armed rebels move towards the security professional outcome. However, the distinctions between those categories are often fluid. Persson (2012) shows for instance that in the context of Liberia, where insecurity lingers and police forces remains underfunded and ineffective, people have organized vigilante groups strongly influenced by former combatants. In this context, formal and informal security networks become intertwined in ways that blurred the boundary between actions that enforce and subvert state authority. The violent criminal outcome is also next to the armed rebel category. Hobsbawm (1971) argues for instance that so-called social bandits are proto-social movements susceptible to politicization by revolutionary movements. The inverse, one might add, is also true, and former combatants may oscillate between those outcomes. For instance, João Bernando Vieira, was a former rebel military and political figure within the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) that fought for Guinea-Bissau's independence from Portuguese colonial rule. In the immediate post-independence period, he was a regime enforcer repressing PAIGC opponents and internal rivals (Vigh 2017, 162). He eventually championed democratic reforms, was elected to the presidency in 1994 and 2005, to later turn the country into a hub for cocaine trafficking as its head of state (Vigh 2017, 157, 165–166, 171–72). Overtime, the former fighter thus occupied ambivalent positions across the armed rebel, regime enforcer, engaged citizen and violent criminal categories.

The nonviolent activist and engaged citizen categories include individuals engaged in politically motivated and non-violent actions. Nonviolent activists embracing civil resistance can notably be opposed to violence for religious, ideological or strategic reasons, even in the face of stark state repression, but seek to subvert existing political orders (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Schock 2013). In the United States, for instance, Vietnam War veterans joined the peace movement against the war in which they had fought, their biographical trajectories moving from security professionals to nonviolent activists working to end their government's war. The engaged citizen category includes politicized non-subversive actors. Rebel-to-party processes highlight for instance how former rebels may move towards the engaged citizen outcome by accepting the rules of the political game (Hensell and Gerdes 2017; Manning 2006). Blattman (2009) also demonstrates that Lord's Resistance Army abductees experienced post-traumatic growth and increased political and social participation, moving towards the engaged citizen outcome. Rebel groups, and by extension their members, often participate in politics in ways that blur the distinction between violent and nonviolent political engagement (Matanock and Staniland 2018). Nonviolent movements can also have radical flanks comprised disproportionately of violence specialists, whether rebels or security services defectors. While nonviolent activist and engaged citizen ideal types imply non-armed forms of political participation, reintegration experiences vary widely, and individuals may shift between categories.

The *disengaged civilian* and *nonviolent criminal* ideal types relate to individuals that disengage from politics and refrain from violence. Government employees, entrepreneurs and ex-combatants that have effectively disengaged from politics lean towards the disengaged civilian ideal type. For former combatants, becoming a civilian is

not always positive since it can be linked to processes of (re)marginalization, stigmatization and political disempowerment (see MacKenzie 2009; McMullin 2011). Nonviolent criminals engage in crimes with no violent undertones, often drawing on wartime experiences and networks involving illicit markets. In the absence of opportunities in the formal sector, ex-combatants may resort to illicit economic activities that are criminalized by the state such as drug dealing, illegal natural resource extraction or contraband. Spear (2006) convincingly argues in that regard that the embeddedness of individual fighters, mid-level commanders and the leadership of former rebel organizations within illicit war economies weighs heavily on their turn to criminal activity after demobilization. The distinction between nonviolent and violent criminal outcome as well as the (a)political nature of their actions matters as not all crimes committed by former combatants are violent, nor politically motivated (see O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018a; Nussio 2018). Individuals close to the disengaged civilian and nonviolent criminal categories may, however, transition towards the violent criminal ideal type. Ex-combatants that first engaged in nonviolent crimes may (re)escalate their actions and turn (back) to violence.

The typology provides a conceptual space of possible outcomes to describe a broad variety of ex-combatant transitions and life trajectories. No single DDR foci within the pre-existing literature encompasses all categories or the multiple processes that move individuals from one biographical outcome to the next. Economic reintegration emphasizes the return to civilian livelihoods and integration into labor markets (Gilligan, Mvukiyehe, and Samii 2013), mirroring the move from the armed rebel towards disengaged civilian. Reintegration failures express the inability to "move down" or de-escalate to the lower end the violence dimension. The concept of spoiler (Nilsson and Söderberg Kovacs 2011;

Stedman 1997; Zahar 2003) and the dynamics of violent remobilization (O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018a; Themnér 2011) highlight for instance how actors remain anchored in the armed rebel and regime enforcer categories amid a peace process. Research on the nexus between ex-combatants and criminal activity (e.g. Daly, Paler, and Samii 2020; Spear 2006) stresses how individuals navigate between armed rebel, (non)violent criminal and disengaged civilian outcomes. The literature on the social and political participation of former combatants (e.g. Berdal and Ucko 2009; Blattman 2009; McEvoy and Shirlow 2009) and rebel-to-party processes (e.g. Sindre and Söderström 2016; Söderberg Kovacs 2007) focuses mainly on the dimensions of the typology situated between the armed rebel, regime enforcer, engaged citizen, and nonviolent activist outcomes as political energy is shifted towards nonviolent and institutionalized forms of collective action. Outcomes often treated separately, thus omit important shifts in ex-combatant life trajectories that cannot be grasped empirically unless we adopt a holistic view blurring the boundaries between various research agendas.

Civil War Afterlives: A Research Agenda

War-to-peace transitions create forks in individual life trajectories, and at the crossroads, new opportunities may emerge for ex-combatants to move towards and away from certain biographical outcomes. The typology laid out above invites researchers to study such process in a holistic manner. Such focus opens two distinct avenues for future research. First, researchers could use the framework as a mapping device and tap into the multiple factors that shape the range of possible outcomes at different aggregate levels and over time. Second, scholars may employ the framework to study patterns of persistence and change in individual life trajectories.

Mapping and Explaining Ranges of Outcomes

What explains the predominance of some biographical outcomes in certain contexts and groups, and not others? Why do in some contexts ex-combatants adopt a wide range of outcomes while in others they tend to cluster around a much narrower set?

Research suggest that post-war conditions such as economic opportunities and security conditions (P. Collier 1994; O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018a; Spear 2006), and the characteristics of the state (Bosi 2019; Tilly and Tarrow 2015) have important bearings on the range of possible biographical outcomes. Ideally, post-conflict democratization should provide opportunities for the transformation of ex-combatants into engaged citizens, security professionals, disengaged civilians and nonviolent activists as political competition is institutionalized, or takes the form of nonviolent civil resistance instead of armed confrontation (see Dudouet 2013). Clearly, not all contexts fit this configuration. In instances of rebel victory and the establishment of authoritarian post-rebel parties (Lyons 2016) – as it is the case in Rwanda, Ethiopia and more recently Afghanistan –former fighters may transit into the role of regime enforcers in the service of authoritarians. Government capacity is also likely to shape the range of possible outcomes, as Tilly and Tarrow (2015, 57) suggest. High-capacity governments can raise taxes, control violence, and redistribute resources while '[low-capacity] governments may try to do the same things, but they have little effect'. For instance, in contexts of insecure peace (Höglund and Söderberg Kovacs 2010, 381), where security guarantees are inadequate and violence continues in criminalized forms, the violent and nonviolent criminal outcomes may notably be predominant. The proliferation of urban gangs incorporating young ex-combatants in Central America (Jütersonke, Muggah, and Rodgers 2009) and cases of former officers of

the Mozambiquan national army running criminal organizations (Alden 2002, 350) express this dynamic. Government policies also seem important. For instance, in 1997 the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA) staged non-violent and violent actions against the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) party to protest poor services, unequal land distribution and insufficient pensions (McCandless 2011, 79–80). Fearing further unrest, the ZANU-PF incorporated members of the ZNLWVA in the party and bonified its veteran social policies. The ZNLWVA aligned with the ZANU-PF, and veterans later carried out acts of intimidation and violence on behalf of the party (McCandless 2011, 118–23). Political incorporation in this case nudged some war veterans from the non-violence activist category into the regime enforcer outcome. Mapping the range of outcomes amongst former combatants can hence tell us about how post-war conditions shape individual life trajectories but also how former fighters, as pivotal actors with peace processes, shape the quality of peace.

The range of outcomes may also vary based on group characteristics. Armed groups harness different types of ideologies (Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2014; Maynard 2019), institutions (Eck 2010; Hoover Green 2017), violent and militarized rituals (Cohen 2017; E. J. Wood 2008), and training practices that may incline their members towards different types of post-demobilization outcomes. In Kosovo, an estimated 17 000 of 20 000 Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) members applied for a position in the Kosovo Protection Corps, mirroring the predominance of the security professional outcomes. In contrast, former Free Aceh Movement (GAM) fighters refused to integrate into the rival Indonesian security forces and there is no record of former Republican combatants integrating the Northern Ireland police force or British army (Dudouet, Giessmann, and Planta 2012, 26–27). The

cases of the KLA, GAM and IRA underlines that the security professional outcome may not always be predominant across groups. Peace processes also represent important critical junctures that shape the range of post-demobilization outcomes. General amnesties, security sector reforms, rebel-to-party transitions and community-based initiatives provide different kinds of opportunities for individuals and groups. As an example, in Colombia, the leadership of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) paramilitary organization could not participate in elections after its demobilization in 2003-2006 due to controversy over the group's links of the group to state officials. The Supreme Court rooted out politicians that had collaborated with the counter-insurgent organization (Gutiérrez-Sanín and González-Peña 2016, 114–15). In contrast, the peace deal with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC-EP) signed in 2016, included provisions to transform the left-wing guerrilla into a political party and guaranteed seats in the Colombian Congress. Paramilitary recruits thus had limited opportunities to transit towards the engaged citizen outcome – at least in the political field – in comparison to FARC-EP ex-combatants. Yet, both groups also had links to the illicit drug economy, which made the violent criminal category a possible post-demobilization outcome (Turkewitz 2022; Villarraga Sarmiento 2015).

Different subgroups of fighters may have varying ranges of outcomes. Research on the hierarchical division of insurgent groups underlines that former combatants have different opportunities based on their position as rank-and-files, mid-level commanders, and leaders (Spear 2006; Themnér 2015). This dimension is accentuated by that fact that, in civil wars, leaders tend to have different motivations to engage in violence from their (local) base (Kalyvas 2003; Scott 1979). Viterna (2013, 193–94) finds for instance, that in

El Salvador, the levels of postwar participation amongst FMLN women ex-combatants 'were easily predicted by their wartime work, with those who had occupied high prestige support roles in the guerrillas staying active in postwar community life, at least for a while, and those who had occupied low prestige support roles or high prestige combat roles eschewing postwar activism'. Post-demobilization transitions are also deeply gendered. Theidon (2009) points out that in Colombia, militarized and violent forms of masculinities are formed and forged through war, meaning that it is often challenging for male former combatants to move away from violent lifestyles. From another perspective, women's experience may vary from one group to another and within groups. The Maoists in Nepal, for instance, adopted an ideology that promoted women's empowerment but, such ideals did not translate into equal opportunities for all ex-combatants. Certain women cadres secured positions of power in port-war politics while other female recruits experienced difficulties returning to a civilian lifestyle (K.C. and Van Der Haar 2019; Yadav 2018). MacKenzie (2009) also points out, that in the case of Liberia, women's wartime roles were categorized as secondary positions rather than active soldiering duties. This impeded their access to reintegration programs and moralizing their reintegration as a return to "normal" life, mirroring a transition towards the disengaged civilian outcome. Mapping the range of possible outcomes across different subgroups of former combatants can hence help us better understand reintegration challenges associated within specific groups and positions within armed organizations.

Micro Dynamics of Persistence and Change

What explains persistence and change in individual-level outcomes over time? Are some transitions harder than others? From this perspective, it may be useful to think of the

life trajectories of former combatants as different types of activist, militant or criminal careers that unfold over time and are characterized by periods of engagement and disengagement from politics, violence, and subversion (see Becker 1966; Bosi 2019; Duclos 2010; Neveu and Fillieule 2019). In this section, I briefly underline how individual resources, socialization, or social embeddedness can help us explain patterns of persistence and change in individual life trajectories over time.

The accumulation of various types of resources or capital (Bourdieu 1986b) can shape the transition towards and from different ex-combatant categories. Military skills notably incline former combatants to reposition themselves as specialists of violence. Malejacq (2019, 30) points out for instance that warlords in Afghanistan and elsewhere 'survive because there is a need for people who can organize violence, provide trust, security and employment along the way'. Former combatants may also acquire anti-social capital (Nussio and Oppenheim 2014) that makes them more prone to (non)violent criminal outcomes. At different stages of war, combatants can accumulate social and political capital (Hensell and Gerdes 2017), as well as education credentials and social engagement experiences (Boulanger Martel 2022) that makes it easier to move towards the engaged citizen and nonviolent activist outcomes after demobilization. Resources can matter differently across contexts and at specific junctures. Bultmann (2018a) shows for instance, in the case of the post-conflict transformation of military strongmen in Cambodia, that despite their common life course and high status in the insurgency, not all were able to transfer such positions into post-conflict dominance. From another perspective, Manning (1998, 163–68) demonstrates that recruits entering Renamo after 1984, were more educated than their predecessors due to the forced recruitment of new members through attacks on

secondary school. '[Some] of Renamo's top military officers, many of whom joined Renamo before 1982, had education levels so low that they could not be integrated into the army effectively, and could not be given any other form of employment in the party's new political positions'(Manning 1998, 168). Resources in themselves, however, do not explain why former combatants are able to recognize, and seize certain opportunities and not others at different points in time.

Scholars have highlighted the importance of socialization processes in shaping persistence and change in political commitments, violent and subversive behavior. Social movement activists, and politically motivated rebel recruits alike, can have political commitments that take roots in primary socialization, are confirmed in mobilization and have lasting effects on their lifelong political engagement (e.g. McAdam 1989; Neveu and Fillieule 2019; Söderström 2020). Not all recruits, however, demobilize from the same position due in part to pre-recruitment socialization (Gates 2017), the incorporation into different subunits and institutions (Hoover Green 2017; Parkinson and Zaks 2018), wartime traumatic experiences (Blattman 2009), but also the degree to which individuals have internalized group norms (Checkel 2017). Wartime socialization may also have important long-term consequences on individual life trajectories, especially amongst young fighters. The still active Lord's Resistance Army emerging in Northern Uganda, for instance, socializes new child abductees through military and violent rituals, bringing children closer to the armed rebel category. Once rescued from the armed group, former child soldiers often bear the psychological burden of their wartime experiences and go through different stages of disengagement from violence and subversion. A community member in Awach, Northern Uganda, claims, in that regard, to '[…] be fearing these wild

children when they come back from the bush. They take whatever property they want. If we do not cooperate they become violent, telling us they are the soldiers in charge and we are to listen. It takes a long time before they start behaving like civilians again. If at all, because many of them never change' (in Vermeij 2011, 183). The quote expresses that the process of re-socializing former fighters may involve long-term dynamics as individuals progressively move away the armed rebel category towards to the violent criminal and then disengaged civilian – and the engaged citizen outcome as Blattman (2009) also suggests. Biographical outcomes may hence be linked to wartime experiences, but not always to the internalization armed group norms.

Social embeddedness in post-war networks, institutions and community structures shapes individual life trajectories. In Colombia, Daly et al. (2020) show that strong vertical ties between criminal commanders and rank-and-files as well as horizontal ties amongst ex-combatants can facilitate the transmission of skills, knowledge and pro-crime social norms leading individuals into criminal behavior. In Liberia, Themnér (2015) finds that ex-mid-level commanders are more likely to reactivate former command structures for violence when they lose privileged brokerage positions within post-war patronage networks. A focus on lingering command structures has however been questioned by Käihkö (2022, 36) that contends that in Liberia, 'electoral and more violent mobilisation cannot be understood without considering vulnerability, inclusion to state structures and social embeddedness [in neighboring war-prone Côte d'Ivoire]'. Other studies also demonstrate that ex-combatant networks may follow different logics, favoring unarmed political participation, emotional support and peacebuilding (de Vries and Wiegink 2011; Söderström 2020). Local communities (Ike et al. 2021; O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018b) also

arguably facilitate the transition of former fighters away from violence and subversion. Tanner's (2010) description of the life trajectory of Radislav, a Serb militant in the Yugoslavian conflict, illustrates the importance of social embeddedness. Radislav's pre-war education and healthcare profession led him to political engagement in self-help nationalist groups and the Serbian Renewal Movement. He joined a training camp in Croatia in 1991 and was deployed on the battlefield, bringing him closer to the armed rebel category. In the post-war period, he was employed in the local public administration and became a key figure of a local pro-Serb political party. He was also engaged in an illicit used car business, mirroring a position anchored in the engaged citizen category but with a particular inclination towards the nonviolent criminal outcome. The former fighter notably had an important brokerage position between state institutions, his party and illicit markets due to his recognized status as a "patriotic hero" (Tanner 2010, 256–62). Former fighters may thus navigate across social structures, shaping how they relate to politics, violence, and the state over time.

Conclusion

Existing work on former combatants often focuses on a limited number of outcomes, and in doing so, risks succumbing to the biographical illusion (Bourdieu 1986a). To overcome this problem, I argue that scholars should adopt a more holistic view to study ex-combatant life trajectories and map the space of possible outcomes. To do so, the article develops a typology that can be employed as a mapping devise and as an analytical tool to grasp patterns of persistence and change in life trajectories over time. By bridging different fields of research, the article contributes to the study of DDR processes (e.g. Humphreys and Weinstein 2007; Knight and Özerdem 2004) as well as the micro- (e.g. Cederman and

Gleditsch 2009; Kalyvas 2008; Oppenheim et al. 2015) and long-term turns in peace and conflict research (e.g. Mac Ginty 2022a; Shesterinina 2021; Söderström 2020). Conceptualizing life trajectories holistically allows us to go beyond false dichotomies emphasizing the role of ex-combatants as either peacebuilders or spoilers, criminals or activists, victims or perpetrators. A focus on ex-combatants' potentially fluctuating relations to politics, violence and the state makes sense of various grey zones in individual life trajectories. It also sheds light on the micro-level dynamics that can contribute to civil war recurrence and postwar violence (Bara, Deglow, and van Baalen 2021; Haer and Böhmelt 2016; Krebs and Licklider 2016), as well as postwar democratization and peacebuilding. In line with recent studies on mobilization trajectories and rebel group structures (Parkinson 2013; Parkinson and Zaks 2018; Shesterinina 2021; Viterna 2013), the framework highlights the importance of disaggregating the roles, experiences, functions, and repertoires of action adopted by (former) combatants over time in order to better understand post-demobilization trajectories. Future research can integrate such logic, identifying the factors that make certain transitions harder or easier than others across individuals, groups and contexts.

The mapping tool has implications for policy practice. The framework underlines that DDR policies, as Kingma (1997) and Muggah (2009) also point out, should be understood as embedded in their wider contexts of implementation. This means that no single policy can account for the range of ex-combatant outcomes. However, peacebuilding and democratization interventions often entail different imperatives and trade-offs between security and democracy (Jarstad and Sisk 2008). Emphasizing certain policies – such as amnesties, rebel-to-party transitions, security sector reforms, etc. – may lead to the

(re)production of certain categories of former combatants and not others. The mapping tool can therefore be employed to assess whether policies are linked to the predominance of certain desired (engaged citizen, security professional, nonviolent activist, disengaged civilian) or undesired outcomes (regime enforcer, armed rebel, (non)violent criminal) at different stages in their implementation. Mapping biographical outcomes and analysing life trajectories can help us develop policies that are better suited to the distinct experiences of combatants. It can also support practitioners in developing effective strategies to better allocate resources to groups that are more inclined to move towards certain undesired outcomes.

The research agenda developed in this article calls for the use of different research methods and materials. Survey data could be especially useful to chart predominant outcomes across contexts, armed organizations, regions, sub-groups, or cohorts. Researchers may also be interested in mapping the biographical outcome of ex-combatants previously embedded in specific organizational subunits (e.g., special forces, diplomatic apparatus, illicit financing) or occupying different ranks (e.g., leadership, mid-level, rank-and-file). Ethnographic and life-course methods may be especially useful to track the different life trajectories taken by distinct subgroups of former combatants. Sprenkels' (2018 Chapter 6) remarkable mapping of the life trajectories of FMLN ex-combatants based on wartime photographs provide a powerful example of how such methods can be employed to reconstruct the individual and collective trajectories of former fighters. Furthermore, personal accounts and memoirs can provide important sources of information to retrace the micro-sociological events and temporal dynamics that structure individual life trajectories (Mac Ginty 2022a). Adopting a holistic approach to the study of ex-

combatant life trajectories can hopefully better our understanding of the micro and long-term processes that shape and are shaped by broader war-to-peace transitions.

Chapter 5

¡*Zapatero, a tus zapatos*! Explaining the Social engagement of M-19 Ex-Combatants in Education and Social Work Institutions in Colombia

Introduction

Why do some former rebels transition into social engagement after demobilization while others do not? How do they adjust their militant aspirations to their context of reintegration? Studies on the political dimensions of rebel groups' disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes have focused on post-rebel political parties (Curtis and Sindre 2019; Söderberg Kovacs 2007), ex-combatant violence (Berdal and Ucko 2009; Christensen and Utas 2008; Themnér 2011), elite transformation (Bultmann 2018a; Hensell and Gerdes 2017; Zahar 2012), political participation (Blattman 2009; Söderström 2016; 2020), and social and community engagement (O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018b; McEvoy and Shirlow 2009; Ortega 2015; Özerdem 2012). Despite increased attention to reintegration processes, we know little about the processes that shape community engagement amongst ex-combatants (O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018b, 133). I address this gap by investigating the lifelong socialization processes that influence transitions in and out of violence and social engagement amongst ex-combatants. Socialization is here understood as 'the process through which actors adopt the norms and rules of a given community' (Checkel 2017, 592). I argue that socialization across various

institutional settings[43] in pre-recruitment[44] and wartime life stages provides ex-combatants with dispositions and resources that, in interaction with post-demobilization opportunities, shape their post-demobilization social engagement.

Social engagement is conceptualised as a form of entrepreneurship in social change. It involves actions that are carried out in the interest of a community and guided by commitments to causes and groups (Durkheim in Neveu 2019, 91). This broad definition encompasses community work, civil society engagement and activism outside of formal politics and political parties. It also includes activities in education, social work and public administration that aim to transform society. I differentiate between armed social engagement that takes place in violent politicised groups and unarmed social engagement that excludes violent means of action. From this perspective, unarmed social engagement stands in contrast to recidivism into arms – that can be politically motivated or not (O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018a) – and political disengagement (Fillieule 2010)[45].

Most studies focus on ex-combatant networks from the perspective of military structures and patron–client relationships (see Daly, Paler, and Samii 2020; Themnér 2018;

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[43] Institutions are defined as 'relatively enduring collection[s] of rules and organized practices, embedded in structures of meaning and resources that are relatively invariant in the face of turnover of individuals and relatively resilient to the idiosyncratic preferences and expectations of individuals and changing external circumstances' (March and Olsen 2006, 3).

[44] I use the term pre-recruitment instead of pre-war since in several contexts, including Colombia, it is hard to distinguish between pre-war, wartime and post-war conditions.

[45] I treat social and political commitment as roughly interchangeable.

Utas 2012). Yet armed groups take root in a variety of institutions and organizations (Daly 2012; Staniland 2014). This highlights that military and patrimonial institutions are not necessarily the only principles that structure network relations. Accordingly, I demonstrate how socialization in education and social work institutions shapes individual biographical outcomes over time. To do so, I analyse the trajectories of 32 ex-combatants from the Movement of the 19th of April (M-19) in Colombia. M-19 was a nationalist pro-democracy rebel group with an important urban social base (García Durán, Grabe Loewenherz, and Patiño Hormaza 2008). It was at war with the Colombian government between 1974 and 1990 until the two parties reached a peace agreement. The rebel organization emerged from within university life and incorporated groups engaged in community-based work. Grassroots armed activism was also part of M-19's strategy. After demobilization, many former cadres and rank-and-files reintegrated into education and social work institutions, and made use of their position within such sites to deepen their social engagement and transform society. The reintegration of M-19 militants is thus a most-likely case of post-demobilization social engagement that allows us to theorise on the long-term socialization processes influencing such an outcome. The analysis concentrates on formal education institutions, including universities and high schools as well as social work institutions, comprising social welfare activities led by state agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and informal groups. Education and social work institutions are analytically separate. However, the distinction between the two is blurry as individuals often cross boundaries between various sectors (see D. Lewis 2008).

Drawing on a biographical approach to social movements (Fillieule 2010; Fillieule and Neveu 2019) and ex-combatants (Duclos 2010; Söderström 2020), I conceptualise the

trajectories of (former) combatants as careers in social change. The approach traces the socialization processes, institutions and resources that shape individual paths in and out of armed and unarmed social engagement. Empirical material includes 32 life history interviews with M-19 ex-combatants, observations during events organized by former group members, M-19 internal documents, and interviews with five Colombian social leaders. The study contributes to the literature on the long-term consequences of ex-combatant reintegration (Bosi 2019; O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018b; Söderström 2020), socialization and violence (Checkel 2017) as well as the legacies of armed violence. It notably highlights how various dimensions of insurgent mobilisation can have lasting effects on individual life courses and society more broadly.

The article is divided into six parts. First, I survey the literature on the trajectories of (former) combatants and highlight how pre-recruitment, wartime and post-demobilization factors shape biographical outcomes. Second, I construct the analytical framework. Third, I discuss the research method and material. Fourth, I present a brief overview of M-19. Fifth, I shed light on the role of education and social work institutions in M-19 militants' socialization. Sixth, I analyse the diverse trajectories of M-19 ex-combatants and demonstrate the socializing effects of education and social work institutions on post-demobilization social engagement.

Research on the Trajectories of (Former) Combatants

The civil war literature underscores three broad explanations for ex-combatant outcomes: pre-war/pre-recruitment determinants, wartime experiences and post-demobilization opportunities. Little work integrates all three stages or investigates their interaction over

time (see Duclos 2010; Viterna 2013 for exceptions). Existing work suggests that the interaction of socialization processes across those different life stages can shape ex-combatant post-demobilization outcomes.

Research shows that certain ex-combatants internalise normative commitments and dispositions that take root in pre-war determinants and can withstand the test of time. Early work on civil wars traces social commitments back to primary and secondary socialization in family, party organizations and the education system (see Cohn and Markides 1977; Wickham-Crowley 1992). Ideological commitments are found to influence behaviour both in war and in peace (Friðriksdóttir 2018; Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2014; Maynard 2019; Ugarriza and Craig 2013). Humphreys and Weinstein's (2007) study on Sierra Leone highlights, for instance, that ideologically motivated recruits were more likely to retain links with their organization after demobilization. In Colombia, Oppenheim et al. (2015) find that ideologically motivated recruits were more prone to side switching or demobilizing when the organization departed from its original ideological fundaments. Pre-recruitment experiences may shape the disposition to specific types of post-demobilization outcomes. When armed group members have experience in political parties before taking up arms, the transition into politics is a 'natural' choice (Hensell and Gerdes 2017). Nonetheless, individuals join insurgencies for a variety of reasons including greed, social status, network ties, emotions or threats (e.g. Arjona and Kalyvas 2012; Humphreys and Weinstein 2008; Shesterinina 2016). Given the diverse pathways into armed groups and the importance of in-group socialization, post-demobilization outcomes may not always concord with causes for joining.

Wartime experiences can shape individual reintegration outcomes. Research on social movement activists (Fillieule and Neveu 2019; McAdam 1989; Passy and Giugni 2000) and rebel group militants (Bosi 2019; Gutiérrez-Sanín and Wood 2014; Hoover Green 2017) alike shows how politically motivated groups socialize individuals into adopting commitments to causes and groups. Alison (2013, 173) notably highlights that many women fighters from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam she interviewed became aware of issues relating to women's social conditions and rights after joining the rebel group. Insurgent organizations also stratify their participants (Viterna 2013), implying that membership in specific organizational subunits can influence post-demobilization outcomes. For instance, armed group institutions for socialization, such as military training or political education, regulate individual conduct, preferences and beliefs in different ways (Hoover Green 2017). Military socialization provides recruits with violent dispositions and skills, and a certain readiness to the use of force (Bultmann 2018a; Checkel 2017; Duclos 2010), while political socialization stresses the importance of commitments to ideologies, religious beliefs or groups. Individuals may, however, exit the group without retaining its norms (Checkel 2017), meaning that in-group socialization does not always have long-term effects. Experience of violence can also carry important legacies. Blattman's (2009) seminal study shows in that regard that many former Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) abductees in Northern Uganda experienced post-traumatic growth making them more prone to political and social participation. Wartime experiences may hence interact with post-demobilization factors.

Research has emphasised the effects of post-war opportunities on ex-combatant trajectories. DDR programmes (MacKenzie 2009; McMullin 2011; Metsola 2006),

community characteristics (O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018b) and perceptions (Ike et al. 2021) as well as security conditions (Nussio 2011) and economic opportunities (P. Collier 1994) can influence ex-combatants' reintegration. For instance, McMullin (2011) shows that protection regimes meant to support young fighters in Angola – and the discourse underpinning DDR interventions – excluded children from programming and marginalised them. Furthermore, MacKenzie (2009) underlines that women fighters in Sierra Leone had difficulties accessing DDR programmes since they were portrayed as bearers of domestic roles rather than active combatants. Gendered norms therefore shape post-demobilization opportunities. Many long-term effects related to the demobilization of fighters have been associated with ex-combatant networks that persist in spite of efforts to deconstruct them through DDR programmes (de Vries and Wiegink 2011; Söderström 2020; Themnér 2018; Utas 2012). In certain contexts, ex-combatant networks are associated with negative outcomes such as criminality and violence (Christensen and Utas 2008; Daly, Paler, and Samii 2020). In others, groups of ex-combatants contributed to state and peacebuilding processes (de Vries and Wiegink 2011; McEvoy and Shirlow 2009; Ortega 2015). This suggests that, like armed groups themselves, not all networks are alike and may be governed by different institutions (see Friedland and Alford 1991). The focus on former military structures in ex-combatant networks is relevant but tends to overshadow the influence of pre-recruitment socialization. A biographical approach is hence necessary to make sense of the influence of various life stages on post-demobilization outcomes.

A Biographical Approach to Ex-Combatant Social Engagement

Pre-recruitment, wartime and post-demobilization factors can reinforce and contradict one another, leading to different biographical outcomes. To make sense of such interaction, I

conceptualise the trajectories of ex-combatants as careers in social change. A career is composed of a sequence of objective positions occupied by an agent over time. It also includes the agent's subjective self-understandings of her actions (Becker 1966, 24–26; Duclos 2010, 38; Fillieule and Neveu 2019, 13). Careers in social change may take root at various life stages – even after demobilization, as Blattman (2009) underlines – and be marked by continuities, episodes of disengagement, and relapses into violence. Transitions in and out of (un)armed social engagement can be the product of heterogeneous socialization processes that emphasise competing norms, but also common social conditioning that accounts for regularities in ex-combatant paths.

Social engagement and disengagement can have multiple origins. This is due to the fact that individuals evolve across various social milieus and are 'governed by heterogeneous and sometimes even contradictory principles of socialization that they internalize' (Fillieule 2010, 5). Socialization is in that sense both layered and multiple (Checkel 2017, 595–596). Norms internalised in prior life stages can come into contradiction with post-demobilization (re)socialization, therefore shaping individual outcomes. Research on former activists highlights, for instance, that family, affect, study and work life can compete with political commitments, leading certain individuals to disengage politically (see Fillieule and Neveu 2019; Passy and Giugni 2000). From this perspective, socialization across overlapping and competing institutions seems important. Institutions infuse social relations with – potentially contradictory – meanings, and it is through them that individuals 'strive to achieve their ends, but also make life meaningful' (Friedland and Alford 1991, 249). This does not imply, however, that people have no agency in shaping their life trajectories. Personal choices at specific junctures can open up

opportunities for alternative socialization, leading to paths that were previously unthinkable.

Group members often emerge from a common social base and can be subject to similar in-group socialization. In turn, this produces certain regularities in career paths. Shared experiences notably incline former combatants to reintegrate into specific institutional settings. Bosi (2019) demonstrates, for instance, that some Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) volunteers were engaged in social services during the Troubles in Northern Ireland. This experience and the intervention of the British State in this sector shaped the reintegration of PIRA activists in community centres. Former fighters may also acquire dispositions and resources allowing them to reinterpret and subvert dominant practices and norms within a given institution or field (see Bourdieu 1977; Friedland and Alford 1991; Neveu 2019). Analysing ex-combatant lives as careers in social change can therefore shed light on the processes that allow such actors to act in and on the institutions that compose their community.

Research Method and Material

The article investigates the influence of lifelong socialization processes on ex-combatant social engagement by analysing the trajectories of former fighters from the M-19 guerrilla group in Colombia. The research draws on four months of fieldwork carried out in 2019 mainly in Bogotá and Cali, two metropolitan areas where M-19 had an important social base. I conducted 32 life history interviews that focused on ex-combatants' pre-recruitment, wartime and post-demobilization life stages. Respondents were recruited using two strategies. First, three personal contacts provided initial points of entry into M-

19 ex-combatant networks. Respondents then helped me identify additional participants. Second, I participated in events organized by former members, allowing recruitment on an ad hoc basis. Selecting participants, I sought variation in experiences across life stages to map possible paths in and out of (un)armed social engagement. The sample includes members of the central command, mid-level commanders, university organizers, urban militants, rural rank-and-files and cadres from the rebel group diplomatic and propaganda apparatus. The diversity of participation roles provides insights that go beyond a simplistic fighting/non-fighting dichotomy (see Parkinson 2013). Thirteen out of 32 respondents were women. The sample is, however, not without caveats. I mostly recruited amongst members who had retained strong emotional and personal ties to ex-combatant networks. Unarmed social engagement is, unsurprisingly, a prevalent outcome. However, I find important variation in the intensity and forms of social engagement over time. Most respondents also experienced periods of disengagement. Furthermore, there is evidence that some former M-19 turned to delinquency after demobilization (Díaz in Pérez 2019). Yet this outcome is absent in my sample. I therefore cannot assert that the framework explains transitions into violent outcomes that are not politically motivated. The generalisability of the theoretical claims should therefore be restricted to trajectories of individuals who have participated in organizations with similar institutional make-up, and have developed political commitments either within the group or prior to joining.

To retrace individual trajectories, I use life history interviews. This method considers people's lives as the main source of research material (Bertaux and Kohli 1984, 217; Söderström 2016). It is based on a personal reconstruction of experiences. I carried

out the interviews in Spanish[46]. The conversations were semi-structured and lasted between one and eight hours, sometimes over several sessions. I prepared open questions to address themes relevant for the research problem[47] and to help respondents construct their own narrative. Following a career framework, I retraced objective positions occupied by individuals over time as well as their subjective understandings of their actions. The value of the narratives produced does not necessarily lie in their truthfulness but 'in the meaning with which the narrator endows the events or moments she narrates' (Fujii 2010, 234). To maximise the reliability of the data, I draw on additional interviews with five social leaders, internal documents from the armed group and secondary sources.

The analysis demonstrates the interaction between pre-recruitment, wartime and post-demobilization factors in a four-pronged approach. First, I provide a short overview of the M-19 case. Second, I demonstrate how education and social work institutions contributed to M-19 militants' collective dispositions to social engagement. Third, I describe ex-combatants' heterogeneous transitions between armed and unarmed social engagement, and disengagement. Fourth, I explain why education and social work institutions were important sites for social engagement amongst certain ex-combatants. To do so, I carry out a content analysis of interview data and relevant material, emphasising:

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[46] I translated the citations included in the text in ways that respect as much as possible the meanings conveyed by interviewees. A native Colombian Spanish speaker verified the translations for consistency.

[47] Themes included social/political engagement, family, education, wartime activities, employment, etc.

- The resources that constrain access to specific institutions;
- The meanings ex-combatants give to their social engagement as evidence of the adjustment of personal dispositions to specific institutional contexts;
- The contribution of ex-combatants to institutional change as proof of the adjustment of institutional context to individual aspirations for social change.

If post-demobilization outcomes are produced by the interaction of socialization dynamics across life stages, one should expect similarities between the institutional context in which militants were politically socialized and their context of social engagement. If pre-recruitment socialization matters as much as wartime experiences and post-demobilization opportunities, social engagement should also be similarly shaped by pre-recruitment socialization despite individual variation in wartime experiences and post-demobilization context.

M-19: A Brief Introduction

M-19 is a former rebel group that takes its roots in the reported fraud of the 1970 presidential election in Colombia. Conservative party candidate Misael Pastrana Borrero took power even though Gustavo Rojas Pinilla from the National Popular Alliance (ANAPO) had won the popular vote. At its origin, M-19 was mainly composed of middle-class students and graduates, dissatisfied ANAPO members and segments of the urban popular class (García Durán, Grabe Loewenherz, and Patiño Hormaza 2008, 10; Guáqueta 2007). The group's urban and nationalist undertones distinguished it from left-wing rural-based guerrilla groups already active in Colombia such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the National Liberation Army (ELN) or the Popular Liberation Army

(EPL). M-19 was rather small, with effectives estimated between 791 and 2000 members, but it had a vast network of collaborators (Guáqueta 2007; Le Blanc 2012; Söderström 2016, 217). The group was also able to orchestrate highly symbolic acts that caught public attention, such as the theft of the Sword of Simón Bolívar in 1974, the siege of the Dominican Republic Embassy in 1983 and the siege of the Palace of Justice in Bogotá in 1985. M-19 demobilized in 1990 and, in collaboration with other left-wing movements, created the Democratic Alliance/M-19 (AD/M-19) party. AD/M-19 was an important force in Colombian politics and took part in the National Constituent Assembly that drafted the 1991 constitution. Its electoral success nonetheless quickly faded, and the party dissolved in 1994. Since then, certain M-19 ex-combatants have had important roles in politics and the advancement of human rights through NGOs, universities and think tanks (Guáqueta 2007, 20). The 30-year time lapse separating the peace process from the present day provides an opportunity to study the long-term consequences of participation in armed violence.

M-19's connection to universities and urban activist groups makes education and social work institutions likely sites for ex-combatant social engagement. In contrast, other groups in Colombia, like the FARC, mainly recruited in rural communities. Accordingly, rural cooperatives have been central to FARC's reintegration process. M-19 also differs from Colombian paramilitaries embedded in criminal networks (Gutiérrez-Sanín 2008) for which it is arguably less likely that social engagement is the product of in-group political socialization. The reintegration of M-19 has been studied from the perspective of rebel-to-party processes (Boudon 2001; García Durán, Grabe Loewenherz, and Patiño Hormaza 2008; Guáqueta 2007), post-settlement political participation (Florez-Morris 2005;

Söderström 2016; 2020) and women ex-combatants' civil society organizations (Ortega 2015). In contrast to such research, I focus on lifelong socialization processes and ex-combatants' engagement in education and social work institutions. More precisely, as a counterpart to Söderström's (2016; 2020) work on the political trajectories of M-19 rank-and-files, I focus on pre-recruitment socialization as well as the various positions within the armed group to explain variation in types of social engagement. Although similarly adopting a biographical perspective, Söderström and Florez-Morris (2005) provide primarily descriptive accounts, leaving out the institutional factors that explain why former fighters reintegrate in specific spaces and why they adopt certain forms of engagement and not others.

Education and Social Work Institutions in M-19 Socialization

M-19 emerges in the context of important social changes taking place in the 1960s and 1970s. The Cuban Revolution, the Viet Nam War and events of May 1968 in France inspired revolutionary movements worldwide. Wickham-Crowley (1992, 35–37) argues that in Latin America, the autonomy granted to educational institutions as an outcome of the 1918 Córdoba movement provided a context in which revolutionary beliefs – carried by the Cuban revolution – could proliferate and foster student mobilisation. The fragmentation of the Eastern bloc also spurred divisions amongst left-wing organizations, providing an important supply of revolutionary ideologies on university campuses. Radical students discussed the theses of Marx, Lenin, Mao and Debray and applied them to their context (Pizarro Leongómez 1996, 29–34; Vásquez Perdomo 2000, 67). Pécaut (2001, 69) highlights that for Colombian middle-class students, the discovery of Marxism often resembled a religious conversion to revolutionary ideals. In this context, M-19 would

distinguish itself from what it deemed the dogmatic Left by adopting a nationalist and Bolivarian platform. Although there were alternatives to violence in Colombia at that time, Grabe Loewenherz (2015), a former M-19 commander, underlines that armed struggle was a hegemonic concept amongst revolutionary organizations.

Part of M-19's social base comes from educational institutions. Unlike other guerrillas, who viewed intellectuals with suspicion, the academic background of M-19 militants was an integral part of the group's style (Pécaut 2001, 85). Several founding members were, in that regard, university educated. A 1977 internal survey estimated that half of the members were "petit bourgeois" – including categories such as employed, professors, students, unemployed and others – and the other half workers or peasants (M-19 1977b). A former M-19 regional cadre in the Valle del Cauca Department (Interview 18) claims that almost all of M-19 Cali-based militants were studying at the University of Valle. Interviewees also recall the importance of student movements in raising their political consciousness. Subversive political socialization was, however, not limited to higher education. Respondents mention that their high school teachers sympathised with various guerrilla organizations (Interviews 14, 18, 20, 34, 30). Youth groups associated with left-wing organizations also contributed to a "revolutionary ambience" (Interviews 14, 17, 18).

In the 1960s, critical scholars argued that academic practice should contribute to social transformation. Inspired by Paolo Freire and the principles of liberation theology,[48] students went to popular neighbourhoods to orchestrate literacy campaigns, organize cultural events and help workers and their families (Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 224–225; 254–255; Interviews 7, 31, 32, 34). While this form of social work was not specific to M-19, nor to armed groups per se (Interviews 2, 20), informal study groups became important contributors to M-19's organizational base (see also Vásquez Perdomo 2000, 57; 63–64). Drawing on the experience of the Tupamaros in Uruguay and the Montoneros in Argentina, M-19 was first formed as an urban-based vanguard group with a closed structure (Villamizar 1995). In 1977, the group developed into a political-military organization. Militants were embedded in the communities where they carried out their activities (M-19 1977a, 7; 11). Three respondents (Interviews 5, 7, 34) belonged to labour unions and disseminated propaganda, gathered resources and recruited members through their workplace. M-19 also emphasised autonomy over personal sacrifices, challenging the image of guerrilla fighters as heroic figures and revolutionary martyrs. Practically, this meant that militants could continue their studies and career while militating. It was also possible to leave the organization without being accused of treason[49].

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[48] Camilo Torres Restrepo was an icon in that field. This priest and co-founder of the sociology faculty of the National University of Colombia carried out social work in poor neighbourhoods; he later radicalised and joined the ELN.

[49] In comparison, the FARC demanded from members a lifelong commitment (Gutiérrez-Sanín 2008).

M-19 intended to foster grassroots support by incorporating popular claims and aligning itself with other social movements, notably through various community-based armed actions (Le Blanc 2012). Land invasions in urban peripheries aimed to provide access to affordable housing for poor families. In so-called retrieving operations, militants seized loads of milk, chickens, bricks or gasoline and redistributed them to inhabitants of poor neighbourhoods. In 1984, during the peace process with the Betancur government (1982–1985), M-19 armed civilian militias and created so-called peace camps that provided services to urban populations (Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 451; M-19 1985). M-19's community-based approach can hence be understood as a form of rebel governance (Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015) that aimed to regulate the relations between the organization and civilians. This structure had a lasting effect on certain former militants. Interviewees recall the importance of community actions for their personal growth as activists. Starting in 1980, however, M-19's military and political structures became increasingly separated, thus intensifying military socialization for some members. This coincided with the weakening of M-19's urban organization and an increase in its rural military presence. However, certain respondents (Interviews 23, 31, 34, 35) state that although they were deployed in rural fronts, they still carried out community work. In fact, Villamizar (1995, 92) argues that Robin Hood-like actions were a constant throughout the group's history. M-19's modus operandi suggests that despite becoming militarised, the rebel group transmitted dispositions to social engagement.

Post-demobilization Trajectories of 32 M-19 Ex-Combatants

The trajectories of M-19 ex-combatants after the 1990 peace agreement resemble a dispersion process. Social engagement fluctuates over time depending on objective

personal resources and subjective interpretations. In this section, I first make sense of the varied paths taken by M-19 former fighters. I then focus on social change careers in education and social work institutions.

The Dispersion of M-19 Militants

Post-demobilization opportunities for unarmed social engagement were distributed unequally depending on both pre-recruitment and wartime experiences. Some highly qualified and resourceful ex-combatants channelled their wartime commitment into jobs and volunteering activities that aimed to foster social change. For example, an urban-based university student militant (Interview 31) finished her history degree after demobilization and worked in social projects with peasant communities in conflict zones for several years. In contrast, militants with a lower social standing report difficulty adapting to civilian life. Many such ex-combatants express frustration with demobilization, noting that M-19 did not achieve its goals. Seven respondents held jobs to sustain themselves and their families, and did not consider their employment a form of social engagement (Interviews 8, 9, 22, 26, 27, 30, 32). Although politically disengaged for long periods of time, they still retained their wartime commitment. A former member of the urban special forces (Interview 9) highlights, for instance, how he survived in the workforce while 'maintaining himself as a revolutionary'. Demobilisation can hence imply a certain *déclassement* or downgrading in socioeconomic status that leads individuals to seek other types of engagement. Four individuals in this group periodically remobilised into armed groups and have very similar

socialization patterns (Interviews 8, 9, 22, 26). All were recruited very young,[50] came from urban popular classes, emerged from lower ranks of the armed group, report important military socialization and lacked pre-recruitment experience in unarmed social engagement. Their age of recruitment and their transition into armed militancy after the demobilization of M-19 stress the importance of in-group military and political socialization for their trajectory. The lack of opportunity for unarmed social engagement also contributed to their continued participation in illegal armed groups. Interestingly, after a period of disengagement from both politics and violence, all four militants became involved in unarmed social engagement. This was due, in part, to the acquisition of a steady income at a later point in life. Such trajectories reiterate Nussio's (2018) observations that, as they age, ex-combatants tend to grow tired of violence.

Competing socialization processes hinged on the decision to disengage from violence and social commitment. Gender dimensions are especially illustrative in that regard. For militants in urban areas, clandestine activities often coexisted with family and affective life (Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 372–74). In certain instances, primary and wartime socialization were consistent as one could, in practice, participate in the rebel group and fulfil one's aspirations to start a family. For instance, a former leader of the urban special forces (Interview 12) embraced motherhood, both within M-19's military structure and as an environmental activist after disarming. However, many women had to choose between motherhood and their 'revolutionary' duties for the safety of their children and the cause

[50] Interviewee 8 was 17 years old, interviewee 9 was 9, interviewee 22 was 12 and interviewee 26 was 12.

(Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 379; Interviews 5, 32, 35). An urban militant (Interview 32), for instance, mentioned her Catholic faith and her will to become an "ordinary woman" as a justification for disengaging from M-19 and politics. Conversely, male interviewees identified family and affective life as reasons to move away from armed violence but seldom as justifications for political disengagement. This observation reiterates research findings (MacKenzie 2009; Viterna 2013) that underline how women's political participation is unequally affected by dominant societal norms emphasising their role as caregivers. In the post-demobilization context, the AD/M-19 also had a tendency to marginalise women's voices and deny them positions in the party structure (Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 382; Interview 7). This is one reason why certain women ex-combatants channelled their engagement through civil society initiatives rather than formal politics.

Wartime experiences and post-demobilization opportunities also shaped the forms of social engagement adopted by ex-combatants. M-19 included members with diverse social backgrounds, which meant that militants had access to people who were seemingly unreachable prior to joining. Mariposa (pseudonym, Interview 35), an indigenous rural rank-and-file recruited in 1986 at the age of 12, is a case in point. After the peace process, she cut ties with her former comrades and refrained from engaging in politics due to her marriage, work life and child-rearing responsibilities. Nonetheless, after a divorce, she decided to reconnect with M-19 ex-combatant networks and "become political again". At that time, her ability to navigate in complex conflict settings and her relation to an important politician contributed to her social mobility. Mariposa provided guidance to lawyers and researchers who collected testimonies on disappearances in conflict-affected areas. This experience helped her integrate into public administration and later to lead

human rights initiatives. Mariposa's trajectory also shows that wartime experiences can have consequences for social engagement that are not directly visible in the aftermath of demobilization processes, but appear many years after.

Engaged Academics

Education institutions were important in the post-demobilization trajectories of respondents. Five interviewees were employed in Colombian universities and an additional three had held academic jobs. Eighteen of 32 respondents resumed their university studies after demobilization. M-19 fighters-turned-scholars/educators distinguish themselves from other fighters by their pre-recruitment education and position within the armed group. M-19's flexibility notably provided opportunities for the continuation of studies amid war. Beyond university life, many former fighters were involved in various education campaigns (Interviews 12, 15, 16, 26, 29, 30, 34) mirroring M-19's link to both educational and social work institutions. In certain cases, pre-recruitment occupations interacted with post-demobilization opportunities. For instance, before joining M-19, one respondent was a factory worker and syndicalist who took part in informal education work (Interview 34). After her demobilization she continued her studies, obtaining a master's degree in education and development. While completing her master's she worked with a government-led educational programme providing primary and secondary education to adult ex-combatants and populations affected by the armed conflict. M-19's embeddedness within education institutions thus explains why certain members reintegrated in such a context. Nonetheless, employment in education does not automatically entail social engagement.

Certain ex-combatants equated educational work with social engagement since they considered that professors/educators ought to transform society. Former commander Fabio Mariño (Interview 6), for instance, was a teacher before joining M-19. In 1978, he was sent to Nicaragua to fight for the Sandinista National Liberation Front. After the Sandinistas' victory, he managed a mass literacy campaign for the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education. Talking about his transition from *guerrillero* to educator, he used the expression "*Zapatero, a tus zapatos*" – the Spanish equivalent of "Let the cobbler stick to his last" in English – to convey how he adjusted his commitment to social change to a familiar professional role. Mariño came back to Colombia to fight with M-19 in 1981 and after demobilization continued to work in education. He expresses the complementarity of his wartime experiences and post-demobilization vocation in the following statement: 'the revolution that I lived was not war, war, guerrilla. The revolution was in education, although I had to be part of events of the war'. Similarly, M-19 militants stress the importance of constructing historical memory from the perspective of ex-combatants and transmitting M-19's ideas to younger generations (Grabe Loewenherz 2015; Interviews 14, 15, 17, 31, 34). In public lectures, commemorations, appearances on the news and book launch events, M-19 ex-combatants engage with public discourses on peace and violence and convey their perspective on important events in Colombian history.

M-19 ex-combatants have also had some impact on education institutions. In 1997, the University of Valle and M-19's NGO National Company for Peace created a programme to train former rebel cadres in political science and conflict resolution (Rouvinski 2009). Although small in scale – with about 64 ex-combatant graduates – the programme allowed the university to further develop its peace education activities. This

experience became an important asset for the ongoing peace process with FARC (Gómez in Proclama Cauca y Valle 2017; Rouvinski 2009). Also, programme alumni went on to lead peace education initiatives. In 1996, Vera Grabe, Otty Patiño, Álvaro Jiménez and other ex-combatants created the Observatory for Peace. This organization works in the field of education and peacebuilding. In 2009–2012, one of their programmes was adopted by the Ministry of National Education to address the educational needs of internally displaced persons (INEE 2013, 62)[51]. The observatory's adult literacy programme draws on the precepts of Paulo Freire, which include 'aspects of critical, liberating and social pedagogy' (Observatorio para la Paz n.d (b)). The reference to community-based pedagogy mirrors the activities that drew M-19 militants to activism in the 1960s/1970s (Grabe Loewenherz 2015, 224–25). For Grabe Loewenherz (2014), director of the observatory, educational institutions are sites for the struggle for peace where one can transform common dispositions to violence. The trajectories of former M-19 members turned academics/educators are hence consistent with the view that ex-combatants can have lifelong careers in (un)armed social engagement.

Rebel Social Workers

Pre-recruitment and wartime social work produced lasting dispositions to social engagement amongst certain respondents. M-19 ex-combatants exercised leadership in

[51] Since 2006, the *Bachillerato Pacicultor* programme has been implemented in 20 *municipios* within 12 departments, training more than 500 teachers and tutors. About 4000 individuals obtained high school certificates through the programme (Observatorio para la Paz n.d. (a)).

community-based work by founding the National Network of Women Ex-combatants (Ortega 2015), leading reintegration programmes (Interview 14) and supporting victims of the armed conflict (Interviews 8, 9, 27, 28). Ex-combatants engaging in social work have diverse social backgrounds and wartime experiences. There is also variation in the intensity and types of activities in which they take part over time. One can trace post-demobilization social engagement to the socializing effects of two institutions: pre-recruitment informal study groups and M-19's social work activities. For instance, two women mid-level commanders, now civil society leaders (Interviews 7, 34), were involved in social work within study groups prior to their recruitment and took part in M-19's community work. In contrast, for some individuals, socialization within M-19 was the main source of social engagement. For example, an urban militant from a popular class background (Interview 26) lives in the neighbourhood in which he was militating in the 1970s and 1980s and continues to be involved in the local community action board.

Respondents often make sense of their post-demobilization social engagement in light of their experience within the group. Several interviewees describe M-19 as a 'school' that provided them with a specific worldview and lifestyle. According to Mariposa, M-19's wartime grassroots work lends a certain credibility to the community work of former militants: 'because right now it is not about selling our image with weapons anymore, but selling it with politics, doing good social work, something nice for the community'. Dispositions to social change entrepreneurship are also expressed in the manner in which former fighters reinterpret and subvert professional roles. For instance, a former M-19 militant who became a civil servant in environmental policy (Interview 36) stresses how she strives to include a community perspective and transformative principles in her work:

> How can I get through to a person in a way that can transform her life and make her life better? How can I help this organization or this movement with values and fundaments that first allow transforming social reality, transform its own reality, but also transform the country? Migrate towards more, more meaningful things. A little of that is what I have been committed to.

The respondent's commitment to social change, acquired within M-19, influenced how she perceives and practices her work. Nonetheless, her move to subvert the principle of public administration neutrality was often resisted by higher-level public servants. Not all ex-combatants faced similar institutional constraints.

M-19 ex-combatants have had some impact on social work institutions, especially in the field of ex-combatant reintegration. The peace process of the 1990s was an important milestone in the Colombian DDR landscape that shaped subsequent government programmes (see Carranza-Franco 2012; 2019). M-19 ex-combatants contributed to this process. The municipal-level DDR programme[52] launched by the left-wing mayor of Bogotá, Luis Eduardo Garzón (2004–2007), is an illustrative example. The programme was implemented in parallel to the nationwide reintegration process for paramilitary groups and individual guerrilla fighters initiated by Álvaro Uribe Vélez's (2002–2010) national government. Local-level policies aimed to curb the challenges caused by the flow of ex-combatants to urban areas and functioned as social programmes for marginalised communities (Carranza-Franco 2012). This particular juncture meant that the wartime experiences of certain ex-combatants were recognised as an important public policy asset

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[52] The programme was called *Programa de Atención al Proceso de Demovilización y Reintegración en Bogotá*.

(ODDR 2012). Mayor Garzón appointed Darío Villamizar (Interview 14), a former M-19 propagandist, international secretary and academic, to lead the programme. Villamizar put together a team of 15 demobilized combatants. He underlines that, as former fighters, programme workers and recipients shared similar experiences and spoke a "common language". This, he points out, had a positive impact on the programme and on the city more generally:

> We brought together ex-combatants with displaced people, victims and perpetrators. There we began to carry out a reconciliation process. We formed theatre groups with them. We taught them photography from scratch. All those kinds of things, musical groups, candidates for the Community Action Board, we promoted the organization in them. […] We made it easier for them and their families to enter high schools and primary schools of the Bogotá District. We facilitated health care access.

The programme provided a platform that promoted ex-combatants' community and political participation. Thus, ex-combatants were not considered passive recipients of public services but agents of change. Local community transformation through participative processes and the construction of a culture of peace were central programme objectives (ODDR 2012, 8).

Conclusion

This article sheds light on the long-term socialization processes that influence social engagement amongst ex-combatants. I argue that socialization across various institutional settings and life stages shapes ex-combatant dispositions, resources and transitions in and out of (un)armed social engagement. The study shows that education and social work institutions have played an important role in the post-demobilization paths of certain M-19

ex-combatants. The biographical approach developed in this article has implications for the study of ex-combatant reintegration and political engagement (Blattman 2009; O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018b; Söderström 2016), armed group socialization (Checkel 2017; Hoover Green 2017) and the long-term legacies of armed violence. In line with existing work on M-19 (Söderström 2016) and social movement activists (Fillieule and Neveu 2019; Passy and Giugni 2000), I show that participation can have lasting effects on individual political commitment. Social engagement, however, is produced not only by socialization within militant organizations but through the interaction of pre-recruitment, wartime and post-demobilization stages. The successful reintegration of M-19 ex-combatants in education and social work institutions was facilitated by the fact that such actors had acquired dispositions and resources relevant for such institutional settings before and during the war. For lower-class individuals – for whom reintegration was generally harder – participation in M-19 provided access to resources otherwise unavailable in their social milieu. The study thus demonstrates the relevance of adopting a biographical and long-term view when studying socialization processes and ex-combatant trajectories (see also Söderström 2020).

The specificities of M-19 and the Colombian case call for caution regarding the generalisation of the findings. First, the study focused on individuals who – although often very young – were not coerced into recruitment. Recruitment strategies and the degree of internalisation of armed group norms can have very different effects on reintegration outcomes (see Blattman 2009; Checkel 2017). The post-demobilization trajectories of forced LRA recruits in Uganda or the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone are thus unlikely to resemble the lifelong commitments of certain M-19 militants. M-19 ex-

combatants also demobilized during an ongoing armed conflict. Some of them experienced targeted violence that impeded their reintegration. Nonetheless, the armed conflict also provided an environment where ex-combatant experiences were recognised as legitimate knowledge for DDR programmes. This dynamic highlights the importance of the ideational make-up of the context of reintegration (Clubb and Tapley 2018), since institutional rules explain why wartime experiences become valued at different points in time.

The urban composition of M-19 is not common to peasant-based rebel groups recruiting mainly in marginalised peripheries. However, findings can be generalised onto other urban-based insurgents, including the Tupamaros in Uruguay, the Red Brigades in Italy and the PIRA in Northern Ireland (see Bosi 2019; Staniland 2010). Furthermore, like M-19's leadership, rebel intelligentsias from African national liberation movements (Reno 2011) and Latin American insurgencies (Wickham-Crowley 1992) emerged from within university life. This suggests that there could be similarities in the post-demobilization trajectories of former left-wing rebel elites. In the Colombian context, the experience of M-19 ex-combatants could help us better understand the reintegration of FARC and ELN urban militants who face different conditions than their rural counterparts. The findings also suggest that the organizational make-up of a rebel group matters for reintegration. Other fields of activity such as peasant cooperatives, women's wings or religious organizations could have similar functions to those the education and social work institutions had for M-19.

To better understand the effects of ex-combatant networks on society, the framework suggests that one should scrutinise the institutions that provide them with content and meaning. Thus, the success of DDR programmes may not reside in their

capacity to dismantle networks and command structures per se, but in their ability to change the rules that govern relations amongst ex-combatants. The case of M-19 highlights a rather particular network structure, embedded within education and social work institutions, where knowledge production and community-based activities are valued. This echoes Themnér's (2018) and de Vries and Wiegink's (2011) findings that, under certain circumstances, it may be beneficial to integrate ex-combatant informal command structures into state-building processes. Future research could further problematise the organizational features of various rebel groups and investigate the influence of different institutions on post-demobilization outcomes. One could also scrutinise how specific ex-combatant dispositions (e.g. military, religious, patrimonial) shape the multiple institutions that compose post-conflict societies.

Chapter 6

Conclusion: Rebel Group Life Cycles Beyond Colombia

Summary and Main Contributions

This study examines the interrelationship between the organizational dimension of rebel groups and the life histories of individuals that compose them. The scholarship on civil wars has recently underlined the importance of organizational dynamics (Parkinson and Zaks 2018) and social processes (Shesterinina 2022; E.J. Wood 2008). While we know a lot about different categories of individuals who make up and go through rebel groups at specific points in time, we have a limited understanding of their life trajectories. Likewise, while we are starting to better understand organizational dynamics occurring at different stages of war, we still have incomplete knowledge of the processes that connect the different stages of the life cycle of rebel organizations. This is because, most scholarship on civil wars approaches the different phases of conflict independently, thus neglecting the *longue durée*. Such focus impedes our understanding of civil wars because wartime and post-war dynamics can take root at different points in time, including the prewar period (Shesterinina 2022).

This thesis starts to fill this gap by developing a novel longitudinal approach to study rebel group organizational life cycles. This approach, inspired by political sociology, underlines that the life stages of rebel groups are heavily conditioned by the experiences, mindsets, social ties and skills of individuals that comprise and go through them. In turn, individuals are transformed by their participation in particular organizations, subunits and roles in ways that have important implications for wartime and post-war dynamics. This perspective contributes to our overall understanding of civil wars as it sheds light on concomitant micro- (individual) and meso-level (organizational) mechanisms and processes that create linkages between the formation, maintenance and legacy of rebel

groups – important agents in the wartime production of violence and pivotal actors in war-to-peace transitions. Given that rebel group life cycles are embedded within the wider social process of civil war (Shesterinina 2022), a focus on longitudinal organizational dynamics provides meaningful insights on the different ways through which prewar, wartime and post-war stages of rebellion are linked to one another.

This dissertation had three goals. First, it aimed to show that different stages in the life cycle of rebel organizations are linked through meso- and micro-level mechanisms and processes. The four articles illustrate that brokerage and institutional bricolage, legitimation, life trajectory and lifelong socialization connect different organizational life stages. The second goal of the thesis was to show that individuals shape the inner workings of rebel organizations. The articles show that the experiences, social ties, mindsets, musical skills and violent capabilities of individuals composing M-19 and FARC influenced how both organizations operated. Third, the dissertation aimed to shed light on different ways through which insurgent groups affect individual trajectories and society. The four articles suggest that participation in rebel organizations shapes how individuals reorganize networks and institutions for collective violence (Article I), legitimize social orders (Article II), and relate to politics, violence, the state (Article III), and social engagement (Article IV). Furthermore, the thesis illustrates that, on an aggregate level, ex-combatant outcomes can transform the character and strength of the opposition to the state (Article III), and produce changes in the various institutions that compose society (Article IV). In this section, I summarize the main contributions of the four articles, highlight theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions and discuss limitations and possible extensions.

Contributions by Article

Article I provides a new bricolage framework to study rebel group formation. I argue that rebel organizers build operational capacity by reorganizing the social ties and organizational forms available in the networks and institutions in which they are embedded. Through brokerage rebel founding members attract individuals with the necessary skills to produce and organize violence. Conversely, institutional bricolage allows rebel organizers to articulate different organizational forms in ways that facilitate internal coordination. The article employs social network analysis and the analysis of organizational repertoires to retrace the formation of M-19 between 1970 and 1976. Empirical material includes a database on the social ties and social backgrounds of 39 M-19 founding members, archival documents, memoirs, biographies and insights from fieldwork in 2019. The article speaks to the literature on rebel and clandestine group formation (Braithwaite and Cunningham 2020; Della Porta 1995; 2013; Finkel 2015; Lewis 2020), urban conflict dynamics (Brathwaite and Konaev 2022; Kilcullen 2013; Nedal, Stewart, and Weintraub 2019), the organizational turn in civil war studies (Daly 2012; Parkinson and Zaks 2018) as well as research on leaders in civil war processes (Doctor 2020; Huang, Silverman, and Acosta 2022; Prorok 2018). The article also contributes to the scholarship on high-risk mobilization (Goodwin 1997; McAdam 1986; Parkinson 2013). The study stresses the importance of understanding the formation of clandestine organizations as part of broader urban networks and institutions. It also indicates that brokerage and institutional bricolage are important collective action mechanisms in environments characterized by scarcity and resource competition.

Article II builds on the relational perspective to armed group legitimacy to study cultural and music production in the FARC. The article argues that the rebel group employed music production to legitimize itself internally and externally. For the article, I analyse 258 songs produced by guerrilla artists, and FARC internal documents. I also incorporate insights from informal encounters with FARC artists and observations during performances by those artists in 2017. Music production can be interpreted as a legitimation practice since, through songs, FARC artists portrayed the Secretariat as rightful leaders of the movement and legitimized the internal hierarchy of the organization. Furthermore, *Fariano* music drew on different cultural repertoires to position the group as a legitimate alternative to established elites and the rightful representative of different groups within Colombian society. The article contributes to the scholarship on the culture, legitimacy and governance practices of irregular armed organizations (Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015; Brenner 2018; Duyvesteyn 2017; Schlichte and Schneckener 2015; Hegghammer 2017). It also speaks to the wider turn to the organizational dynamics of rebel groups (Parkinson and Zaks 2018). The research shows that cultural and music production is embedded within wider legitimation dynamics. Studying cultural practices thus enhances our understanding of the inner workings of rebel groups, and the role of beliefs, mindsets and organizational processes in insurgents' efforts to maintain their movement over time.

Article III develops a new framework to study the life trajectories of former combatants. The article builds on the work of Staniland (2012), Barnes (2017) and Goertz (2006) to build a typology of ex-combatant biographical outcomes. The framework provides a tool to map the range of possible outcomes at different levels of aggregation. It stresses the importance of understanding ex-combatant lives as characterized by complex

dynamics of persistence and change. Drawing on empirical examples from a variety of cases, the article demonstrates how individual- and aggregate-level biographical outcomes weigh on war-to-peace transitions. The study speaks to the literature on DDR processes (Blattman 2009; Duclos 2010; Humphreys and Weinstein 2007; Themnér 2011) as well as work on the microdynamics and long-term dimension of civil wars and war-to-peace transitions (Osorio, Schubiger, and Weintraub 2021; Shesterinina 2021; Söderström 2020). The article provides a novel framework to study and map ex-combatant life trajectories and develops a new research agenda on civil war afterlives. The framework provides a mapping tool that can be employed by academics and practitioners alike to track and evaluate the implementation of DDR policies. The tool invites practitioners to think of ex-combatant life trajectories holistically. This implies that DDR policies should take into account the varied social backgrounds of fighters. It also emphasizes that international and local-level interventions should be understood as part of a broad range of policies that may overwhelmingly reproduce some categories of ex-combatants over others.

Article IV studies the social engagement of M-19 ex-combatants in education and social work institutions. The article found inspiration in the social movement literature on militant careers (Fillieule 2010; Neveu and Fillieule 2019) and the trajectories of (former) combatants (Duclos 2010; Blattman 2009; O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018; Oppenheim et al. 2015; Söderström 2021). It develops a biographical approach to study ex-combatant social engagement and lifelong socialization processes. For this article, I carried out 32 life history interviews with M-19 former combatants. The analysis also draws from M-19 internal documents retrieved from archives, the rich literature on the Colombian armed conflict and conversations with 5 social leaders. The analysis shows that the interaction of

individual socialization processes across pre-recruitment, wartime and post-demobilization life stages shape patterns of post-demobilization social engagement and disengagement. The article contributes to the literature on the political dimensions of DDR processes (Blattman 2009; O. Kaplan and Nussio 2018; McEvoy and Shirlow 2009; Söderberg Kovacs 2007), recent work on socialization and violence (Checkel 2017; Hoover Green 2017) as well as research on the legacies of war. The study highlights important long-term dynamics in ex-combatant socialization and reintegration. The article also underlines how different dimensions of insurgent mobilization can have lasting effects on individual political commitments, life trajectories and different institutions within society.

Overall Contributions to the Study of Civil Wars

As a whole, the dissertation makes theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions to the broader field of civil war studies. Theoretically, the dissertation sheds light on social processes influencing the transformation of social actors, networks and practices in war (E. J. Wood 2008), creating linkages between civil war stages (Shesterinina 2022), affecting the structure and repertoires of actions of insurgent organizations (Hoover Green 2017; Parkinson and Zaks 2018; Staniland 2014) and shaping long-term legacies of war (Bara 2018; Daly 2012; Nussio 2012; Söderström 2020). More precisely, Article I highlights how brokerage and institutional bricolage mechanisms allow rebel organizers to reorganize social ties and various organizational forms to build operational capacity. Those two mechanisms create linkages between prewar conditions and the formation and maintenance of rebel groups. Article II shows how cultural production is a social practice that can be employed by insurgents to legitimize their struggle in relation to different audiences and socialize new members into the hierarchical

order of the group. Legitimation is hence a social process that shapes how rebel groups maintain themselves through various stages of war. Article III demonstrates the fruitfulness of studying ex-combatant biographical outcomes and trajectories to better understand complex war-to-peace transitions. The life trajectories of (former) fighters encompass the whole of the life cycle of a rebel group and produce micro-level linkages between prewar, wartime and post-war stages. Article IV shows that experiences in education and social work institutions, before and during war, can socialize individuals into different kinds of political practices, having long-term implications for individuals and society.

Methodologically, the thesis makes contributions to the study of armed conflicts by developing different methodological tools to study meso- and micro-level processes, mechanisms and outcomes. Employing network analysis and the analysis of organizational repertoires, Article I provides a novel approach to track the micro-level processes that structure nascent insurgent groups. Such focus on micro-level social ties (Dörfler, Stollenwerk, and Schibberges 2019; Zech and Gabbay 2016) and individual biographical attributes (Huang, Silverman, and Acosta 2022; Finkel 2015) has, so far, been limited in the study of rebel groups. Article II, demonstrates how the analysis of song lyrics and cultural practices can shed new light on the lifestyle, worldviews and internal workings of rebel organizations. Article III, develops a novel methodological tool that allows researchers to map ex-combatant biographical outcomes and track complex patterns of persistence and change in individual trajectories. This is a significant contribution because no existing framework allows us to analyse ex-combatant trajectories holistically. Article IV employs life history methods and shows how a career and long-term approach to political engagement can shed new light on complex lifelong socialization processes.

Empirically, the dissertation provides new insights and data on rebel groups. Article I shows how M-19 emerged by the complex combination of individuals with varied social backgrounds and relationships. The study also produced a database comprising information on the network ties and biographical characteristics of M-19 founding members. Article II provides original insights on the elaborate culture of the former FARC guerrilla, its artists and legitimation practices through war. Article III, builds upon existing work on former combatants to underline patterns of persistence and change in individual trajectories across armed groups, contexts and over time. Drawing on in-depth interviews with former M-19 militants, Article IV retraces the origins of ex-combatant social commitments. The study shows that the prewar experiences of militants that composed M-19, what they did during the war and the opportunities they had after demobilization shaped long-term patterns of social engagement. The article explains why some M-19 former fighters were able to reconvert their social engagement in education and social work institutions while others disengaged or turned to other armed groups after their formal demobilization. The study also points out that, given their normative commitments and dispositions towards social engagement, some Colombian former fighters have the potential to become important agents of positive change in different spheres of society.

Limitations and Extensions of the Life Cycle Perspective

The empirical evidence presented in this dissertation mainly comes from two Colombian left-wing guerrilla groups. The thesis thus falls within the single-country case study paradigm. Adopting this approach, I strived for internal over external validity, focussing on 'proper measurement of key variables, appropriate concepts, and contextually sensitive understanding of causal processes' (Pepinsky 2019, 193). Studying Colombian guerrillas,

I placed great emphasis on "getting the cases right" (Thelen and Mahoney 2015, 13) and acquiring a deep understanding of the context in which social processes and mechanisms unfolded.

While limited in their generalizability, single case studies have, however, important implications for cross-case comparisons. Case studies can notably generate conceptual innovations and theories that set new research agendas (Thelen and Mahoney 2015, 13–16). Accordingly, the dissertation, aimed to develop and deepen research programs on rebel bricolage and engineering (Article I), armed group cultural production and legitimacy (Article II), and ex-combatant trajectories and long-term reintegration (Articles III and IV). Furthermore, the study focussed on M-19 as a most-likely case of rebel bricolage (Article I) and ex-combatant social engagement (Article IV). It also studied the FARC as an illustrative case of rebel group legitimation through cultural production (Article II). The processes and mechanisms uncovered in those cases have implications for the broader study of armed groups and civil wars. This is because mechanisms operate in 'identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations' (Tilly 2001, 25–26). Future research could thus further tap into the mechanisms and processes uncovered in this dissertation, and evaluate whether there are differences and similarities in their activation across contexts (see Della Porta 2013 Chapter 10). Following this path, this section discusses limitations and possible extensions of the life cycle framework. I emphasize three central themes including, the features of the rebel groups studied, the impact of macro-dynamics on the organizational life cycle, and the interaction between various mechanisms and processes.

Rebel Group Structure and the Life Cycle Perspective

The rebel groups studied in this thesis are relatively well structured. M-19 and FARC were both composed of formal hierarchies, complex organizational cultures and deployed significant efforts in socializing members into group norms and practices. Furthermore, both groups institutionalized an elaborate system of guerrilla conferences where leaders discussed and implemented organizational strategies. This implies that the life cycle perspective should be limited to specific types of rebel organizations.

The framework is less likely to apply to spontaneous mobilization, progroms, riots or loosely organized rebel groups where in-group socialization, organizational cultures and institutions are arguably less significant. For instance, Fujii (2017) argues that socialization provides a limited explanation in the context of violent displays such as lynchings and other brutal acts of public violence. Mob lynchings do not necessarily emerge from a pre-constituted group, often contravene long-lasting communal norms and include individuals that were not part of the group that initiated the violence. Instead, she argues that socialization in combination with casting – understood as the 'process by which people take on roles and roles take on people' – explains various violent participation pathways in the Bosnian War and Jim Crow Maryland (Fujii 2017, 661; see also Fujii 2008). Fujii's argument is compelling and suggests that a longitudinal life cycle approach should be limited to organizations that emerge from relatively well-organized groups before war onset. This includes, but is not limited to, rebel groups forming from pre-established political parties, factions of a former regime, student organizations, trade unions or splinters from other insurgent groups or the state military (see Braithwaite and Cunningham 2020; McLauchlin Forthcoming).

International, Transnational and Local Levels of Analysis

The dissertation emphasized meso- and micro-level processes, therefore downplaying macro international and transnational processes. Macro processes may also shape the life cycle of rebel groups. Kalyvas and Balcells (2010) argue for instance that the end of the Cold War triggered an important shift in the "technologies of rebellion". Cold war insurgencies were robust because rebels benefited from superpower material support, revolutionary beliefs and military doctrine. The collapse of the Soviet Bloc had a debilitating effect on the capacity of states and rebels. This shifted the predominant technology of rebellion from Cold War irregular wars to nonconventional and conventional civil wars after 1990. More recently, Walter (2017) points out that since the fall of Saddam Hussein in Iraq in 2003, most civil wars are fought in Muslim-majority countries and involve actors adopting radical Islamist goals and transnational instead of national aims. She tracks this development to the emergence of a 'new information environment that rewards a more extreme and global orientation' (Walter 2017, 479). Undoubtedly, the processes studied in this dissertation were made possible by global conjunctures. The *air du temps* of the Cuban Revolution and the emergence of Latin American urban-based insurgents also shaped the formation of M-19 (see Pécaut 2001; Pizarro Leongómez 1996; Villamizar 2017). The demobilization of M-19 in 1990 and the FARC's incorporation of Bolivarianism to its orthodox Marxist ideology are also closely related to the end of the Cold War. Yet, Kalyvas and Balcells' (2010) and Walter's (2017) arguments neglect the deeply localized processes and repertoires that shape how armed organizations emerge and evolve. While some M-19 founding members had been politically trained by the PCC, the Komsomol and Cuba, they mainly drew from localized cultural and organizational

repertoires. Variation in the structure of the international system provides a backstory for different waves of insurgencies. However, local processes determine how insurgents organize and implement rebellions.

A focus on international, transnational and localized processes provides interesting opportunities for future research. A recent study by Huang et al. (2022) notably points out that rebel leaders with international experiences are more likely to secure external support than those that do not. Transnational networks may favour the transmission of skills, experiences, material and human capital amongst organizers. The scholarship on civil wars in the Caucasus (Derluguian 2005; Shesterinina 2021), and the African continent (Reno 1999; 2011) notably highlight the importance of complex transnational networks that link rebel organizers to the international system and to one another. In the same vein, Seymour, et al. (2016) find that dynamics of competition between states and self-determination movements and between rival movement factions explain the fragmentation of ethnopolitical movements. Linking international and local processes, they find that the 'international/transnational influences [might also] alter the competitive context by introducing diversity of preferences to the struggle' (Seymour, Bakke, and Cunningham 2016, 12). From another perspective, Stollenwerk et al. (2016) underline how insurgent groups can develop into transnational networks. The authors systematically map the structure of the global network of al-Qaeda cells using the United Nations Security Council's consolidated sanctions list. Both the global and local aspects of Islamist militant networks shaped the 'franchise' structure of the clandestine insurgent group. Future studies could find inspiration in such work and further tap into the interactions between international, transnational and local level processes.

Interactions Between Rebel Group Life Cycle Processes and Mechanisms

Understanding civil wars and rebel group life cycles as social processes also begs the question of how different mechanisms and processes interact with one another. Apart from Article I, the dissertation did not systematically study such interactions. How do micro-level processes and mechanisms such as brokerage, institutional bricolage and life trajectory shape broader processes of conflict escalation and diffusion? How do broad processes such as polarization (E. J. Wood 2008) and conflict diffusion (Campana and Ratelle 2014) influence individual life trajectories and patterns of lifelong socialization amongst civilians and combatants? Future studies could further disentangle the linkages between different stages of war and rebel group organizational life stages. The interaction between institutional bricolage and legitimation, for instance, may help us understand how insurgents consolidate their local authority. As an example, Staniland (2014, 142) points out regarding the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka, that

> Prabhakaran – [the group's main leader] – created a set of symbols and institutions that innovatively socialized fighters and reconfigured Tamil identity. Social ties that existed through caste and student networks provided a leadership infrastructure, but they do not seem to have been integral to the growth and institutionalization of the LTTE.

In contrast, Mampilly (2015) argues that the LTTE drew on local culture and the symbolic repertoire of the nation-state in order to legitimize its rule in the areas it controlled (Mampilly 2015). LTTE leaders might have acted as rebel bricoleurs, skilfully reorganizing symbolic systems, norms and practices to embed their message in local culture (see Klem and Maunaguru 2017). Bricoleurs are also restrained by the different tools and materials within their repertoires. This implies that retracing the life trajectory and lifelong

socialization of rebel organizers can help us better understand how they reorganize pre-existing institutions for the purpose of war.

The thesis focussed on individual and institutional legacies but little on organizational transformations. The biographical perspective of the study suggests, however, that certain rebel groups are more inclined to transform in some types of organizations over others. After the collapse of the AD/M-19, for instance, M-19 former fighters reconverted their political engagement in non-governmental organizations mirroring the "social activist" background of the former rebel group. In contrast, some Colombian paramilitary factions remobilized as powerful narcotics-trading organizations due to their initial organizational base in drug cartels (Villarraga Sarmiento 2015). Recent efforts to map the organizational base and characteristics of rebel groups (Braithwaite and Cunningham 2020; Malone 2022) could be employed to assess whether organizational formation creates path dependencies that affect post-war organizational transformations. At the meso-level, wartime organizational subunits, as Zaks (2017) points out, can constitute proto-party structures that facilitate rebel-to-party transitions, but also incline insurgent groups towards certain organizational transformation paths and not others. At the micro level, recent research on elite transformation (Bultmann 2018; Hensell and Gerdes 2017; Themnér 2017) underlines that former rebels become successful politicians when they transform their wartime ties into political power. Leadership and social ties may hence help explain why certain groups like the FMLN in El Salvador, Renamo in Mozambique and the Serb Democratic Party in Bosnia-Herzegovina transitioned into viable political parties while others did not. Studying the trajectories of influential individuals within rebel groups may also help us better understand leadership and coalition dynamics that structure

armed politics (Staniland 2017; 2021). For instance, certain types of biographical outcomes are likely to be prevalent in certain types of political orders and rebel organizations (see Article III). As shown in this thesis, combining micro- and meso-level analyses can provide new insights on the social and organizational dynamics of civil wars.

Concluding Remarks

This dissertation contributes to the study of civil wars by providing a novel longitudinal perspective on rebel organizations and their members. This approach emphasizes concomitant processes and mechanisms that compose the organizational life cycle of rebel groups and the social process of civil war (Shesterinina 2022) more broadly. Various research programs on civil wars tend to address different themes in isolation from one another. This includes, but is not limited to, the different stages of conflict (Lewis 2020; Jarstad and Sisk 2008; Seymour, Bakke, and Cunningham 2016), the various forms of violence deployed by armed actors (Hoover Green 2017; Kalyvas 2006; 2019; Weinstein 2007), the urban-rural spatial distinction (Brathwaite and Konaev 2022; Elfversson and Höglund 2021; Staniland 2010) as well as the interaction between violent and nonviolent repertoires of contention (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Della Porta 1995; 2013; Pearlman 2011). The life cycle approach developed in this thesis invites scholars to address those various themes from a holistic *longue durée* perspective. Such perspective is necessary since various dynamics may matter and interact differently at various points in time throughout the life course of (former) combatants and their organizations (see Söderström 2020, 8). Also, as underlined by Della Porta (2013), armed groups are composed of different generations that can emerge from long-standing social movements but also other social milieus, thus shaping the content and structure of organizations over time.

The different articles in this dissertation unpack the various stages of war and disentangle the complex effects of social institutions, networks and organizational structures on the repertoires of actions adopted by rebel organizations and individuals over time. Studying longitudinal processes shaping organizational and individual trajectories can help us better understand how rebel groups emerge, are structured, are transformed through war, and produce lasting post-war legacies. This broad research agenda sketched in this dissertation will hopefully find echoes in future studies on civil wars and political violence.

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Appendix I List of Interviewees

Interviewee	Organization	Main role	Urban/Rural operation	Gender	Interview location
1	AD/M-19	Party activist	Urban	Male	Québec, Canada
2	UP	Party activist	Urban	Male	Montréal, Canada
3	PCC	Youth party cadre	Urban	Male	Stockholm, Sweden
4	M-19	Commander / Medic	Rural	Male	Bogotá, Colombia
5	M-19	Urban militant / Rural rank-and-file	Both	Female	Bogotá, Colombia
6	M-19	Commander	Both	Male	Bogotá, Colombia
7	M-19	Political-military cadre	Urban	Female	Bogotá, Colombia
8	M-19	Mid-level commander special forces	Urban	Male	Bogotá, Colombia
9	M-19	Urban militant	Urban	Female	Bogotá, Colombia
10	M-19	Student cadre	Urban	Male	Bogotá, Colombia
11	M-19	Founding member / Commander	Both	Male	Bogotá, Colombia
12	M-19	Mid-level commander	Urban	Female	Soacha, Colombia
13	M-19	Propagandist / Urban militant	Urban	Male	Bogotá, Colombia
14	M-19	Propagandist / Rebel diplomat	Urban	Male	Bogotá, Colombia
15	M-19	Courrier / Party cadre	Both	Male	Bogotá, Colombia
16	M-19	Urban militant	Urban	Female	Bogotá, Colombia
17	M-19	Founding member / Commander	Both	Male	Bogotá, Colombia
18	M-19	Commander	Both	Male	Bogotá, Colombia
19	UP	Historian/ Party cadre	Urban	Male	Bogotá, Colombia
20	ELN/ADM-19	Collaborator / Party worker	Urban	Male	Neiva, Colombia
21a	UP/PCC	Party cadre	Urban	Male	Neiva, Colombia
21b	UP/PCC	Party cadre	Urban	Male	Neiva, Colombia
21c	UP/PCC	Party cadre	Urban	Male	Neiva, Colombia
22	M-19	Urban militant	Urban	Male	Cali, Colombia
23	M-19	Mid-level commander	Both	Male	Cali, Colombia
24	M-19	Urban militant	Urban	Male	Cali, Colombia
25	M-19	Commander	Both	Male	Cali, Colombia
26	M-19	Student militant	Urban	Male	Cali, Colombia
27	M-19	Militant	Rural	Male	Cali, Colombia
28	M-19	Founding member / Urban militant	Urban	Female	Cali, Colombia
29	M-19	Founding member / Commander	Both	Female	Cali, Colombia
30	M-19	Rural rank-and-file	Rural	Female	Cali, Colombia
31	M-19	Urban militant	Urban	Female	Cali, Colombia
32	M-19	Urban militant	Urban	Female	Bogotá, Colombia
33	M-19	Commander	Both	Male	Bogotá, Colombia
34	M-19	Mid-level commander	Both	Female	Bogotá, Colombia
35	M-19	Rural rank-and-file	Rural	Female	Bogotá, Colombia
36	M-19	Courrier / Communications	Urban	Female	Bogotá, Colombia
37	M-19	Urban militant	Urban	Male	Bogotá, Colombia
38	M-19	Founding member / Urban militant	Urban	Female	Bogotá, Colombia

Appendix II Interview Guide

Questions principales sur la trajectoire

Pourriez-vous m'expliquer votre cheminement en politique?

Comment avez-vous commencé à vous intéresser à la politique ?

Comment êtes-vous devenu un militant pour [le M-19, l'AD/M-19, l'UP] ?

Quels événements ont marqué votre chemin au sein de/du [M-19, l'AD/M-19, l'UP]? De manière positive ? De manière négative ?

Votre parcours politique est-il similaire à celui d'autres militants de/du [M-19, l'AD/M-19, l'UP]?

Spécifications sur les prérequis du champ (inclusion et exclusion politique)

Quelles sont les compétences nécessaires pour faire de la politique en Colombie?

Qu'est-ce qui définit un politicien en Colombie?

Comment est-il possible de devenir un/une politicien(ne) en Colombie?

Quels défis ou obstacles existe-t-il pour les personnes voulant faire de la politique en Colombie? Sont-ils les mêmes pour les hommes et les femmes?

À votre avis pourquoi certaines personnes sont-elles exclues de la politique?

Spécifications sur l'accumulation de capital

Où êtes-vous né?

Quelle expérience éducative avez-vous? (capital culturel)

Avez-vous des membres de votre famille impliqués en politique ? (capital culturel)

Quel était votre travail à ce moment? (capital économique)

Quel est votre travail en ce moment? (capital économique)

Avez-vous des contacts personnels qui vous ont amené vers ce chemin ? (capital social)

Votre expérience de la guérilla a-t-elle été utile pour votre carrière politique ? Comment ?

Après le déclin de [l'AD/M-19, l'UP] avez-vous continué à faire de la politique? Sous quelle forme? (capital politique)

Spécifications sur le sens pratique pour la politique

Pourquoi avez-vous choisi ce chemin après la politique?

Pourquoi n'était-il pas possible pour vous de continuer en politique à ce moment?

Si vous aviez eu la chance de vous faire réélire qu'auriez-vous fait? Pourquoi?

Si vous n'aviez pas joint [parti X] qu'auriez-vous fait? Pourquoi?

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Appendix IV Documents Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités de l'Université de Montréal

Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités (CERAH)

24 mai 2019

Objet: Approbation éthique – « Post-Conflict Transformation, Political Trajectories and Strategies in Colombia »

M. Simon Pierre Boulanger Martel,

Le Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités (CERAH) a étudié le projet de recherche susmentionné et a délivré le certificat d'éthique demandé suite à la satisfaction des exigences précédemment émises. Vous trouverez ci-joint une copie numérisée de votre certificat. Nous vous invitons à faire suivre ce document au technicien en gestion de dossiers étudiants (TGDE) de votre département.

Notez qu'il y apparaît une mention relative à un suivi annuel et que le certificat comporte une date de fin de validité. En effet, afin de répondre aux exigences éthiques en vigueur au Canada et à l'Université de Montréal, nous devons exercer un suivi annuel auprès des chercheurs et étudiants-chercheurs.

De manière à rendre ce processus le plus simple possible, nous avons élaboré un court questionnaire qui vous permettra à la fois de satisfaire aux exigences du suivi et de nous faire part de vos commentaires et de vos besoins en matière d'éthique en cours de recherche. Ce questionnaire de suivi devra être rempli annuellement jusqu'à la fin du projet et pourra nous être retourné par courriel. La validité de l'approbation éthique est conditionnelle à ce suivi. Sur réception du dernier rapport de suivi en fin de projet, votre dossier sera clos.

Il est entendu que cela ne modifie en rien l'obligation pour le chercheur, tel qu'indiqué sur le certificat d'éthique, de signaler au CERAH tout incident grave dès qu'il survient ou de lui faire part de tout changement anticipé au protocole de recherche.

Nous vous prions d'agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de nos sentiments les meilleurs,

Pierre Martin, président
Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités (CERAH)
Université de Montréal

c. c. Gestion des certificats, BRDV
Lee Joseph Marshall Seymour, professeur agrégé, FAS - Département de science politique

p. j. Certificat #CERAH-2019-064-P

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Université de Montréal

Nº de certificat
CERAH-2019-064-P

Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités (CERAH)

CERTIFICAT D'APPROBATION ÉTHIQUE

Le Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités (CERAH), selon les procédures en vigueur, en vertu des documents qui lui ont été fournis, a examiné le projet de recherche suivant et conclu qu'il respecte les règles d'éthique énoncées dans la Politique sur la recherche avec des êtres humains *de l'Université de Montréal.*

Projet	
Titre du projet	**Post-Conflict Transformation, Political Trajectories and Strategies in Colombia**
Étudiant requérant	**Simon Pierre Boulanger Martel**, candidat au doctorat, FAS - Département de science politique
Sous la direction de:	Lee Joseph Marshall Seymour, professeur agrégé, FAS - Département de science politique, Université de Montréal

Financement	
Organisme	Non financé

MODALITÉS D'APPLICATION
Tout changement anticipé au protocole de recherche doit être communiqué au Comité qui en évaluera l'impact au chapitre de l'éthique.

Toute interruption prématurée du projet ou tout incident grave doit être immédiatement signalé au Comité.

Selon les règles universitaires en vigueur, un suivi annuel est minimalement exigé pour maintenir la validité de la présente approbation éthique, et ce, jusqu'à la fin du projet. Le questionnaire de suivi est disponible sur la page web du Comité.

Pierre Martin, président
Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités (CERAH)
Université de Montréal

2 mai 2019
Date de délivrance

1er juin 2020
Date de fin de validité

1er juin 2020
Date du prochain suivi

Université de Montréal

N° de certificat
CERAH-2019-064-P-1

Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités (CERAH)

Le 23 avril 2021

Objet: Certificat d'approbation éthique – Renouvellement et amendement

M. Simon Pierre Boulanger Martel,

Le Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités (CERAH) a étudié votre demande de renouvellement pour le projet de recherche susmentionné et a délivré le certificat d'éthique demandé suite à la satisfaction des exigences qui prévalent. Vous trouverez ci-joint une copie numérisée de votre certificat. Nous vous invitons à faire suivre ce document au technicien en gestion de dossiers étudiants (TGDE) de votre département.

Notez qu'il y apparaît une mention relative à un suivi annuel et que le certificat comporte une date de fin de validité. En effet, afin de répondre aux exigences éthiques en vigueur au Canada et à l'Université de Montréal, nous devons exercer un suivi annuel auprès des chercheurs et étudiants-chercheurs.

De manière à rendre ce processus le plus simple possible, nous avons élaboré un court questionnaire qui vous permettra à la fois de satisfaire aux exigences du suivi et de nous faire part de vos commentaires et de vos besoins en matière d'éthique en cours de recherche. Ce questionnaire de suivi devra être rempli annuellement jusqu'à la fin du projet et pourra nous être retourné par courriel. La validité de l'approbation éthique est conditionnelle à ce suivi. Sur réception du dernier rapport de suivi en fin de projet, votre dossier sera clos.

Il est entendu que cela ne modifie en rien l'obligation pour le chercheur, tel qu'indiqué sur le certificat d'éthique, de signaler au Comité tout incident grave dès qu'il survient ou de lui faire part de tout changement anticipé au protocole de recherche.

Nous vous prions d'agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de nos sentiments les meilleurs,

Pauline Morin
Responsable de l'évaluation éthique continue
Pour le Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités
Université de Montréal

c. c. Lee Joseph Marshall Seymour, professeur agrégé, FAS - Département de science politique, ljm.seymour@umontreal.ca, Marie-Joelle Zahar
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Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités (CERAH)

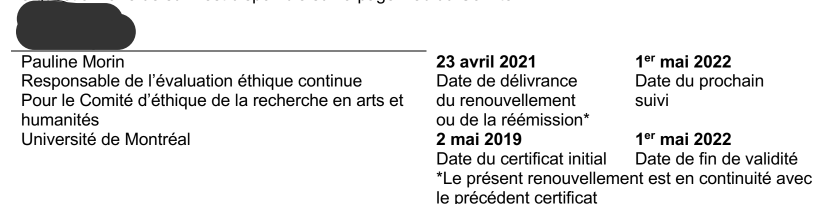
CERTIFICAT D'APPROBATION ÉTHIQUE
- Renouvellement -

Le Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités (CERAH), selon les procédures en vigueur et en vertu des documents relatifs au suivi qui lui ont été fournis, conclut qu'il respecte les règles d'éthique énoncées dans la Politique sur la recherche avec des êtres humains *de l'Université de Montréal.*

Projet	
Titre du projet	**Post-Conflict Transformation, Political Trajectories and Strategies in Colombia**
Étudiant requérant	**Simon Pierre Boulanger Martel**, candidat au doctorat, FAS - Département de science politique
Sous la direction	Lee Joseph Marshall Seymour, professeur agrégé, FAS - Département de science politique, Université de Montréal Marie-Joelle Zahar, professeure titulaire FAS - Département de science politique, Université de Montréal
Modifications	16 avr. 2021 : Ajout d'une bourse de doctorat, d'une co-directrice, collecte à distance, modification des participants visés, des documents de sollicitation, des modalités d'obtention du consentement, des mesures de confidentialité et du retour des résultats aux participants

Financement	
Organisme	Bourse d'études supérieures du Canada Joseph-Armand-Bombardier – Conseil de recherche en sciences humaines du Canada
Programme	Bourse de doctorat
Titre de l'octroi si différent	
Numéro d'octroi	767-2019-1288
Chercheur principal	
No de compte	

MODALITÉS D'APPLICATION
Tout changement anticipé au protocole de recherche doit être communiqué au Comité qui en évaluera l'impact au chapitre de l'éthique. Toute interruption prématurée du projet ou tout incident grave doit être immédiatement signalé au Comité. Selon les règles universitaires en vigueur, un suivi annuel est minimalement exigé pour maintenir la validité de la présente approbation éthique, et ce, jusqu'à la fin du projet. Le questionnaire de suivi est disponible sur la page web du Comité.



Pauline Morin
Responsable de l'évaluation éthique continue
Pour le Comité d'éthique de la recherche en arts et humanités
Université de Montréal

23 avril 2021 Date de délivrance du renouvellement ou de la réémission*	**1er mai 2022** Date du prochain suivi
2 mai 2019 Date du certificat initial	**1er mai 2022** Date de fin de validité

*Le présent renouvellement est en continuité avec le précédent certificat

Appendix V Ficha de información: Trayectorias militantes e inclusión política en Colombia

¿Quién dirige este proyecto?

Yo, Simon Pierre Boulanger Martel. Soy estudiante de doctorado en Ciencias Políticas en la Universidad de Montreal en Canadá. Mi director de tesis es Lee JM Seymour, profesor asociado en el Departamento de Ciencias Políticas de la misma universidad.

¿Cuáles son los objetivos del proyecto y cómo participo en la iniciativa?

El objetivo de esta investigación es mejorar el conocimiento sobre los desafíos de la práctica política en Colombia desde la perspectiva de diferentes movimientos políticos. Le contacto para una entrevista sobre su camino político. Durante esta entrevista, hablamos sobre sus experiencias de vida como activista político. Así mismo, sobre los eventos que lo encaminaron a hacer política de manera activa. Más específicamente, hablamos de su historia, de dónde viene y de su trayectoria como tal.

¿Qué va a hacer con mis respuestas?

Los intercambios que tenemos hoy van a ser utilizados para mi tesis de doctorado y para los artículos de investigación académicos. La conversación debe durar aproximadamente una hora, dependiendo de sus respuestas. Si usted me lo permite, voy a grabar la entrevista para que no se pierdan los elementos importantes de nuestra conversación. Si puedo, tomaré notas durante la entrevista.

¿Tengo que responder a todas sus preguntas?

No, no necesitamos tratar los temas de los que usted no quiere hablar. También podemos terminar la entrevista en cualquier momento. No tiene que mencionar ninguna razón si decide finalizar la entrevista. Si, en el futuro, cambia de opinión y ya no desea hacer parte del proyecto de investigación, puede contactarme y destruiré los datos de nuestra entrevista.

¿Mi información personal será protegida?

Nuestros intercambios son obviamente confidenciales. Sin embargo, si me concede su consentimiento, podría citar directamente su nombre en mi investigación. Si no desea que se le cite directamente, cualquier resumen del contenido de la entrevista o citaciones escritas en mis artículos o capítulos de libros serán anónimos.

Si acepta ser citado directamente, podré contactarlo nuevamente para enviarle los extractos del texto que se publicará. Podrá leer el extracto de la entrevista y aprobarlos (o no) antes de la publicación del texto.

La transcripción de la entrevista será realizada por mí, Simon Pierre Boulanger Martel. También soy la persona responsable del análisis y seré la única persona con acceso a las transcripciones de la entrevista. Sus datos serán encriptados y guardados en un lugar seguro.

¿Con quién puedo hablar si tengo preguntas sobre el proyecto de investigación?

Para cualquier pregunta, puede contactarme en los números siguientes: [illegible] o [illegible] por correo electrónico [illegible]

Este proyecto ha sido aprobado por el Comité de Ética para la Investigación en Artes y Ciencias de la Universidad de Montreal. Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos o las responsabilidades del investigador con respecto a su participación en este proyecto, puede comunicarse con el comité por teléfono al +1 (514) 343-5925 o por correo electrónico a cerah@umontreal.ca o consultar el sitio web http://research.umontreal.ca/participants.

Si tiene alguna queja sobre su participación en esta investigación, puede comunicarse con el conciliador de la Universidad de Montreal, por teléfono al +1 (514) 343-2100 o por correo electrónico a ombudsman@umontreal.ca (el conciliador acepta llamadas por cobrar).