



**Manuela Trindade Viana**

**Preparing for War, Preparing for Peace:**

**The Colombian Success Story and the  
Transformation of the Military Professional**

**Tese de Doutorado**

Thesis presented to the Programa de Pós-Graduação em Relações Internacionais of the Instituto de Relações Internacionais of PUC-Rio as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doutor em Relações Internacionais.

Advisor: Prof. Monica Herz

Rio de Janeiro  
April 2017



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I dedicate this dissertation to doubt  
– and to the few certainties in this life,  
in the figures of Vilma, Alfredo, Diego, Paulinho.

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## Abstract

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How was it possible that Colombia, a country stigmatized as a “problematic” one, has come to be taken as a reference for “solutions” regarding military operations? Such puzzle is related to the emergence of a “post-conflict” discourse in Colombia by the 2010s, that is, the claim of a transition from a problematic conflict to a successful post-conflict. By arguing that both the analyses pointing to a “post-conflict scenario” and those resisting such a claim are all operating with the logics of the presence/absence of violence, I propose to think about this puzzle in terms of the transformation of the rules through which violence is transmitted and the conditions allowing for this. This analytical effort unfolds in two main parts. In the first one, I investigate how the “problem of violence” has been historically built in Colombia. In the second, I explore how the “military professional” mobilized through this specific understanding of violence was historically constituted through a circuit of military *savoirs*. Based on this analysis, the research confronts the traditional institutionalist emphasis of civil-military debates. It does so by showing that as important as looking to the police-military boundary to think about violence and its relation to democracy, is looking to the school-training splitting observed in the ascendancy of the Colombian military as experts in the use of violence in Latin America. Finally, I claim that one can only understand the consolidation of an edifice of military *savoirs* in Colombia by framing it within broader dynamics of transmission of expertise.

## Keywords

Military; professionalization; circuit of *savoirs*; post-conflict; Colombia



## Resumo

Viana, Manuela Trindade; Herz, Monica. **Preparando para a guerra, preparando para a paz: a história de sucesso colombiana e a transformação do profissional militar**. Rio de Janeiro, 2017. 300p. Tese de Doutorado – Instituto de Relações Internacionais, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro.

Como foi possível que a Colômbia, um país estigmatizado como "problemático", tenha passado a constituir uma referência para "soluções" no que toca a operações militares? Essa pergunta está relacionada à emergência, na década de 2010, de um discurso do “pós-conflito” na Colômbia, ou seja, a ideia de uma transição de um conflito problemático a um pós-conflito exitoso. Parto do argumento de que tanto as análises que apontam para a existência de um "cenário pós-conflito" na Colômbia como aquelas que resistem à narrativa do "sucesso" operam com a lógica da presença/ausência de violência. Em contraste, proponho pensar esse quebra-cabeças em termos da transformação das regras através das quais a violência é transmitida e das condições que permitem tal dinâmica. Esse esforço analítico é empreendido em duas partes principais. Na primeira, investigo como o “problema da violência” foi historicamente construído na Colômbia. Na segunda, exploro como o “profissional militar” mobilizado por meio desse entendimento específico de violência foi historicamente construído por meio de um circuito de saberes militares. Com base nessa análise, a pesquisa confronta a ênfase institucionalista que tradicionalmente constitui os debates sobre relações civil-militares, mostrando que tão importante quanto olhar para a fronteira polícia-militar para pensar sobre a violência e sua relação com a democracia é olhar para a forma com que regras de violência são transmitidas. Em segundo lugar, afirmo que só é possível compreender a consolidação de um edifício de saberes militares na Colômbia por meio de seu enquadramento em uma dinâmica mais abrangente de transmissão de conhecimentos.

## Palavras-Chaves

Militar; profissionalização; circuito de saberes; pós-conflito; Colômbia

## Table of Contents

1. Framing the question.....	12
1.1 Analytical tools and plan of the dissertation.....	18
 PART ONE.....	25
The Colombian "success story"; or what is allowed to have happened....	25
 2. The problem as a condition to success: the construction of Colombia as a "problematic country".....	33
2.1. The "problematization" of violence in Colombia.....	37
2.2. Fighting a distant war: externalization and militarization of antidrug policies .....	51
2.3 Conclusion.....	61
 3. The success and its "monsters": disputing the metrics, dodging the criticism.....	63
3.1. Measuring success: assessing the impact of counternarcotic policies in Colombia .....	64
3.2. The silencing that makes the success audible .....	81
3.3 Conclusion.....	99
 PART TWO.....	101
Colombia and the circuit of military <i>savoirs</i> in Latin America: building "military professionals" through military schools and training centers....	101
 4. The circuit, the "military professional" and the limits of the discourse of modernization.....	110
4.1. The discourse of modernization and the organization of violence: Europe is where Latin America is supposed to be.....	111
4.2. The "military professional" is not improvised: professionalization and the emergence of a circuit of military <i>savoirs</i> in Latin America .....	138
4.3. "Technical, not political": the "military professional" as the "citizen-soldier" .....	159
4.4. Conclusion.....	183
 5. "All they understand is force": counterinsurgency and the "expert- soldier" .....	186

5.1. Counterinsurgency: an old new military <i>savoir</i> .....	187
5.2. Professionalizing counterinsurgency in Colombia: training centers as the site of the “professional” .....	214
5.3. Training as teaching: Plan Colombia, the “expert-soldier” and the re-positioning of Colombia .....	244
5.4. Conclusion.....	268
6. Final remarks.....	272
7. Bibliography .....	281

## 1. Framing the question

As many other researches, the puzzle I am dealing with here was found while I was looking for another one. In 2013, I was investigating the tensions between the police and the military in Colombia based on a particular frontier their forces were engaged with regarding counternarcotic policies – the JUNGLAS<sup>1</sup> and the Counternarcotic Brigades<sup>2</sup>, respectively. Starting my investigations with the official journals of both the Colombian National Police and the Colombian Army, the recurrence with which Mexico and Central America appeared in analyses published on such periodicals (MONTENEGRO RINCO; DURÁN ESTUPIÑÁN, 2008; CASALLAS R., 2015; PINZÓN, 2015) called my attention. The more I read about it, the more I found articles and discourses reinforcing an alleged “Colombian success”, which could serve as a reference for other “problematic” regions in the world. Are there similarities between the conditions fueling war in Afghanistan and the ones observed in the past in Colombia (FELBAB-BROWN, 2009a)? How can Nigeria learn from the Colombian experience in dealing with “terrorism” and “drugs” (JEROME, 2015)? What lessons can be extracted from Colombia in order to tackle the “violent drug market in Mexico” (FELBAB-BROWN, 2009b)? What are the risks of “Colombianizing” Mexico (CÁRDENAS; CASAS-ZAMORA, 2010)?

The “exemplary” position of Colombia in those approaches was quite puzzling to me, especially considering that one of the most remarkable features of the analyses I had most often encountered about Colombia was the “problematic character” of this country. The latter was associated with an amalgam of variables incorporated to an equation of violence comprising guerrillas, paramilitary groups, drug trafficking, terrorism, internal displacement, corruption, environmental damage, among others. A “narco-democracy” (ALMARIO, 1992; SWEENEY, 1995), the “most problematic country in South America” (ALBRIGHT, 1999), a “problematic country”

<sup>1</sup> The JUNGLAS were created in 1989 as an elite force of the Colombian National Police’s Direction of Antinarcotics (DIRAN, in Spanish) specialized in the jungle terrain.

<sup>2</sup> The Counternarcotic Brigades (BACN, in Spanish) are an elite force of the Colombian Army, created in 1999, within the context of Plan Colombia.

(GARCÍA-PEÑA, 2006), a “protracted conflict” (CHERNICK, 2008), a country “on the brink of state disintegration” (DeSHAZO *et al.*, 2007, p. 50) – all expressions mobilized in order to describe the nature and the outreach of the pathologies of Colombia. As most of the expressions highlighted above suggest, speaking about Colombia has generally come to mean speaking about a country whose problems irradiate beyond its boundaries, constituting a source of instability to the region and to the world (ALBRIGHT, 1999; RAMÍREZ, 2004; GARCÍA-PEÑA, 2006; ROJAS, 2006).

But how was it possible that a country historically stigmatized as “problematic” came to be taken as a reference for “solutions” regarding police and military operations? Engaging with such a puzzle, one of the first aspects that called my attention was the fact that the Colombian “success story” was vocalized even before a peace agreement was signed with one of the main guerrillas in the country – the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC, in Spanish). As the references mentioned in the beginning of this Section illustrate (FELBAB-BROWN, 2009a, 2009b; CÁRDENAS; CASAS-ZAMORA, 2010; JEROME, 2015; PINZÓN, 2015), the “success” was already considered to be “exportable” to other countries even before the Peace Agreement negotiated in La Habana had been announced by the Parties, in 2016. Indeed, in an addition to the military and police operations that were taken as a reference to other countries by the late-2000s, there was already a series of conferences organized and books published on the agenda, challenges, roles and costs of the “post-conflict” in Colombia. How to make sure that the peace (“to be) achieved” in the agreement would last was the main question around which such initiatives revolved.

This leads me to a second remark regarding the puzzle I am dealing with. The “success story” in Colombia is not a consensual narrative – if such a thing exists. The profusion of analyses dedicated to reinforce the “successful” character of the efforts undertaken in Colombia in order to solve its problems has been challenged by a myriad of texts, and from different angles – from the challenge of making the military achievements durable in time (VILLAMIZAR, 2003; RANGEL, 2005) to the contestation

of the “facts” constituting the “success story” (TICKNER, 2014; ISACSON, 2010), or to the human rights violations failing possibilities of “success” (COORDINACIÓN COLOMBIA EUROPA-ESTADOS UNIDOS, 2017).

Despite the contested character of the “success story”, the latter is not proclaimed in the vacuum, nor is it sterile. It rests upon a set of material conditions and a web of credentials allowing for the story to be told, and producing concrete effects. For instance, from 2009 to 2013, the Colombian National Police and Army trained 10,310 professionals from Mexico; 3,026 from Panama; 2,609 from Honduras; 1,732 from Guatemala; 1,132 from Ecuador; 510 from Peru; 465 from El Salvador; and 377 from Costa Rica (TICKNER, 2014, p. 3). Furthermore, on April 2013, the Escuela de Lanceros (Lancers’ School), one of the nine training schools in Fuerte Tolemaida (Tolemaida Fortress), concluded its 367th course, having resulted in the capacity building of Colombian military personnel and also of 582 “international students”, from 19 different countries (among which Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Peru and United States)<sup>3</sup>.

That Fuerte Tolemaida hosts an increasing number of courses to foreign soldiers is an expression of how the claim to “success” in Colombia is partly possible because it is immersed within a set of material conditions. Indeed, the fortress has received massive investments within the context of Plan Colombia, aiming at developing its infrastructure in order to transform it into a center of excellence in military training. Through a similar logic, the equipment, and financial resources invested in the professionalization of the Colombian Armed Forces – which, in Colombia includes the Police<sup>4</sup> – is considered to be a key condition for achieving military advantage in comparison to the guerrillas (VILLAMIZAR, 2003; ROJAS, 2006; RANGEL, 2008).

In this sense, understanding the terms under which the professionalization of the Colombian Military Forces was undertaken allows us not only to shed light on the conditions under which the “success story” is possible (FELBAB-BROWN, 2009a, 2009b; DeSHAZO *et al.*, 2007;

<sup>3</sup> See: <http://www.cenae.mil.co/?idcategoria=344179>.

<sup>4</sup> The Colombian Armed Forces are constituted by the Army, the Air Force; the Navy; and the National Police.

DAVIS *et al.*, 2016; PINZÓN, 2015), but also on the effects of the latter (DeSHAZO *et al.*, 2009; FELBAB-BROWN, 2009a, 2009b; MILLS, 2015; PINZÓN, 2015). This point is made explicitly in an article signed by Juan Carlos Pinzón (2015, p. 8), former Minister of Defense (2011-2015) and the Ambassador of Colombia in the United States since 2015:

Because of the sustained progress since the turn of the century, and their exceptional expertise and experience, the Colombian Armed Forces are well positioned to evolve into a regional leader in training, education, and actively participate in international peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief missions around the globe. Colombia's experience successfully combating insurgent groups, illicit facilitators, transnational criminal organizations, and drug trafficking organizations, makes it uniquely capable and qualified to assist other nations that today, or one day, may face similar threats. Over the past five years Colombian armed forces have trained almost 24,000 police and military from more than 60 nations, thus, making Colombia a consistent security partner for Central America, Caribbean, and other friendly nations.

The central position of the Military Forces in the narrative of “success” (FELBAB-BROWN, 2009a, 2009b; DeSHAZO *et al.*, 2009; VILLAMIZAR, 2003; DAVIS *et al.*, 2016; PINZÓN, 2015) suggests that the puzzle mentioned above may be pertinently reframed as: how have the Military Forces managed to capitalize their experience in the conflict as an expertise taken as a reference to other countries?

Interestingly, on the one hand, such a professionalization is considered key to the “success” from which stability and development derive – “the door through which much follows” (MILLS, 2016). On the other hand, what to do with the military is a question repeatedly posed in debates about “post-conflict” Colombia (RUIZ B., 2014; VELÁSQUEZ R., 2015). If violence is expected to be controlled within a context of peace, the historical involvement of the Military Forces in internal operations (ATEHORTÚA V.; VÉLEZ R., 1994; PIZARRO L., 1987ab, 1988; VARGAS V., 2012) is incorporated to the “post-conflict” debates as a problem: what function could be attributed to the Military Forces in a “peaceful” Colombia (VARGAS V., 2003; CIRO G.; CORREA H., 2014; VELÁSQUEZ R., 2015)? Such discussions were simultaneously concerned with the functions of the Colombian National Police in the “post-conflict”

context, which would acquire a privileged position as the face of a more “peaceful” Colombia (CASTRO C., 2004; CARVAJAL-CARVAJAL, 2004; MANRIQUE Z., 2013; VELÁSQUEZ R., 2015).

Through these lines, the boundary drawn between “conflict” and “peace” in the “post-conflict” narrative operates within a logic of presence/absence of violence. As I discuss further in this research, this logic resonates with central a assumption underlying the discourse of modernization: the understanding that the formation of the “modern state” relies on the consolidation of a “pacified social space”, in which human coexistence is not (“anymore”) regulated through the use of violence, but through the diffusion of “socially accepted conducts” – a process which is intimately, though not exclusively, related to the function of policing. The presence of the military inside the social space, which was supposed to be “pacified”, is foreign to this logic in two main senses. Firstly, because it challenges the “normal historical trajectory” constituting the discourse of modernization, through which the police and the military have both functional and spatial contrasting scopes: police, crime inside; military, war outside. Secondly, the backbone of such a “division of labor” lies in the affirmation of the “modern state” as the authority which successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of (political) violence within the “pacified social space”. In other words, the discourse of modernization delineates a boundary between “ordinary violence” and “political violence”. To deviant social conducts framed as “ordinary violence”, the “modern state” provides a penal “solution”; to the radical deviant social conduct framed as “political violence”, war. The historical engagement of the military in the Colombian “social space” disturbs the norm constituted through the reproduction of the discourse of modernization precisely because it suggests that the legitimacy of the state has been historically shaken by the durable existence of a challenge to its monopoly over “political violence”. If this radical otherness (BONDITTI, 2014) has been killed or de-mobilized (or framed as delinquency)<sup>5</sup>, re-articulating the

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<sup>5</sup> However, as the discussion developed in the next pages will show, the systematic engagement of the military in “internal” operations has been followed by an increasing de-



function of the military implies assuming the absence of “political violence”, and “humanizing” the function of the police is understood as possible within this “post-conflict” context.

Instead of discussing the “success story” as one eventually inaugurating “peace” in Colombia, I propose that we think the conflict-peace relation as one traversed by processes of reorganization of violence. In other words, how is violence organized in the context of “peace”? Given the central position of the Military Forces in the “success story”, I focus my research in the military schools and training centers in Colombia in order to explore how the rules through which violence is transmitted are re-articulated through this story. As these schools and training centers are, at the same time, the result of and the condition for the production of the “military professional”, I investigate how the practices constituting the “professionalization” of the Military Forces were historically transformed. The focus of my discussion will be the Colombian Army, not only because it holds a central position in the “success story”, but also because it is found at the core of the initiatives aiming at “exporting” the Colombian military expertise (PINZÓN, 2015). Furthermore, I concentrate my discussion in the schools constituting the center of gravity of the main professionalization projects throughout the Colombian Army’s trajectory<sup>6</sup>, as I will specify when presenting the dissertation plan.

All of the elements above form the puzzle with which this dissertation engages. In the next pages, I advance in the presentation of the main analytical axes of this research by discussing some of the discomforts which have guided my reflections throughout this journey. As I will show,

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politicizing and delinquent approach towards the reading of the “problem of violence” in Colombia.

<sup>6</sup> Dissecting all of the professionalization programs within the Army’s schools would constitute an impossible task. Currently, the Colombian Army has twenty professionalization schools, without mentioning those involved in the line of command: three formation schools (Escuela Militar de Cadetes and Escuela de Suboficiales, and Escuela de Soldados Profesionales); two training schools (Centro Nacional de Entrenamiento and Escuela de Paracaidismo Militar); and fifteen capacity building schools (Escuela de Misiones Internacionales y Acción Integral, Escuela de Equitación, Escuela de las Armas y Servicios, Escuela de Infantería, Escuela de Caballería, Escuela de Ingenieros Militares, Escuela de Artillería General, Escuela de Inteligencia y Contrainteligencia, Escuela de Comunicaciones, Escuela de Aviación del Ejército, Escuela de Logística, Escuela de Policía Militar, Escuela de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario, and Escuela de capacitación en asuntos jurídicos). See: <<http://www.ejercito.mil.co/?idcategoria=27>>. Access on: May 2, 2017.

these hesitations are directly linked to two main analytical tools I work through in the text: problematization and circuit of *savoirs*.

### 1.1 Analytical tools and plan of the dissertation

The discussion here developed has been moved by three main discomforts. The first one is related to how we have come to naturalize the association of drugs with violence – to such an extent that one cannot be thought through without the other. This does not imply claiming that homicide rates related to drugs are false, but investigating the processes through which they came to be so closely correlated. If drug trafficking only exists because there is a legislation prohibiting drugs to be sold, then the position of the state as a provider of “solutions” is ironic, to say the least, considering that the “problem” resulted from political decisions fermented within the state. Of course, the chemistry of social processes traversing the dynamics of drug trafficking has also created specific responsibilities, budgets, and bureaucratic inertia, as well as conducts aiming at circumventing the constellation of prohibitive policies towards drugs – all of which operate towards reinforcing the drug-violence connection, rather than towards debating the conditions under which such a connection has come to be not only possible, but natural.

My second discomfort is directly linked to the naturalization of the drug-violence connection: the historical stigmatization of Colombia as a “too violent”, “too militarized”, “too problematic country”. Importantly, I am not disputing whether Colombia is “problematic” or not. Rather, my hesitation is related to confining the reading of a “problem” in a specific territorial container and/or a specific social group. In this sense, my discomfort – or suspicion – is as related to Colombia as it is to the *favelas* in Rio de Janeiro, for instance. On what assumptions our building of “anomalies” rests? Under what conditions is it possible to claim a given “problem” as something external to “us” – in this case, a “Colombian problem”? What are the effects of the confinement of the “drug problem” as something foreign to “us”?

The third and last discomfort I would like to highlight is projected towards claims to peace. Months before the referendum of the Peace Agreement between the FARC and the Colombian government, in 2016, the campaign for the “Yes” was organized with the motto “*Por la Paz*” (“For Peace”), and the “No” was presented as the vote for the continuation of war. Particularly, I hesitate towards the claim that the “logics of dialogue” is represented in the “Yes”, as an opposition to the “logics of war” represented in the “No”. What is the connection between the war which preceded the negotiating table and the Agreement in La Habana? Are they the opposition of one another, or could we conceive them as one as being constitutive to the other? In other words, how does dialogue coexist with violence? In the specific context of this research, it is certainly relevant to explore the conditions under which war persists. As important as this effort, however, is to discuss the conditions under which we claim for “peace”.

Based on these discomforts, the discussion developed in the next chapters draw from two main analytical tools, each one organizing the two main parts of this dissertation. Starting from the idea that the Colombian “success story” is based on a set of problems that have been overcome, it is key for us to understand the processes through which Colombia has come to be framed as a “problematic country”. In this sense, Part One (Chapters 2 and 3) engages with the “success story” through Foucault’s concept of “problematization” (2010a) in order to expose the assumptions underpinning the construction of Colombia as a “problem”.

With this objective, Chapter 2 plunges into the system of problematizations constituted by the “problem of violence”, the “problem of drugs”, and the “problem of the guerrillas” (Section 2.1) and discusses how they intersect with the so-called “war on drugs” advanced by the United States (Section 2.2). I argue that, by late-1990s, these processes resulted in a very specific reading of violence in Colombia: one deriving from the activity of guerrillas which found in drug trafficking the source of financial resources for their military power – in other words, “narcoguerrillas”, which, in the context of the “war on terror”, came to be reframed as “narcoterrorism”. Importantly, Section 2.2 underlines that externalization and militarization constituted the two main features of the “war on drugs”

outlined in mid-1980s in the United States. In other words, the construction of the “problem of drugs” was translated, during Ronald Reagan’s administration, into law enforcement and military policies whose implementation was concentrated on the “supply-side”<sup>7</sup> – that is “drug producing countries”.

Against the portrayal of Colombia as a mere receptacle of interventionist policies of the United States (CRANDALL, 2001; GARCÍA-PEÑA, 2006), the discussion on Chapter 2 shows that the conditions for a delinquent and de-politicizing approach towards the reading of violence were already cemented in Colombia when such processes were intersected with the “war on drugs”. Likewise, the inscription of delinquency within a spectrum of radical otherness through the mobilization of the vocabulary of “terrorism” was fermented in Colombia since the 1980s, when incorporated to the Penal Code and recurrently activated through police and military operations.

On Chapter 3, I build on the discussion on the problematization of violence in Colombia and explore the web of criteria allowing for the “success story” to be told. By arguing that the objectification of Colombia is one of the main implications of the externalization characterizing the US approach to drugs, I show how the “Colombian problems” became the object of analysis of governmental agencies and economics-based academics. More specifically, Section 3.1 dissects the metrics mobilized through these diagnoses in order to assess the performance of Colombia in the implementation of mainly counternarcotic policies. I argue that the disputes around the more appropriate metrics came to be increasingly insulated in a quest for accuracy, preserving the pillars of the problematization from which those “solutions” emerged.

Contrastingly, Section 3.2 invests the analytical framework of the discursive field in order to grasp the mechanisms through which “monstrosities” (FOUCAULT, 1981) were kept at bay. The metaphor of the

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<sup>7</sup> It is important to highlight that the “externalization” also had effects over the US territory. Among them, it is worth mentioning that within the American society there was an externalization produced through the construction of the “problem of drugs”, that is, the framing of specific social groups as the source of the problem within the United States – “outsiders” within the American society. See: Campbell (1992, pp. 204-207).

“monster” is here understood as an external critique, once challenging the “aseptic accuracy” of the ordering principles of the discursive field. More than that: through an analysis focused on human rights organizations, I argue that the content of their denunciations point to an alternative problematization of violence in Colombia – one in which the state is not part of the solutions, but of the problem. Importantly, Section 3.2 also sheds light to how the intelligence apparatus has been mobilized in the constant surveillance of unionists in Colombia. Based on lists specifying different degrees of “dangerousness”, the intelligence apparatus separated leaders from followers and framed mostly the former as “targets” for military and police operations. Extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances and forced detention of unionists constitute human rights violations which are outside the horizon of the disputes on the metrics addressed on Section 3.1 and, therefore, do not resonate in the “success story” – although coexisting with it. In addition to that, the silencing mechanisms discussed on Section 3.2 define the limits of what the “success story” can be about: it is not about the state as part of the problem of violence, and it is not about social or land reforms.

If the metrics mobilized in the “success story” cannot be detached from the problematization of violence in Colombia, and the latter is based on the understanding that the expansion and intensification of the “war on drugs” would result in the gradual weakening of the “narcoguerrilla’s” military capacity, as argued on Chapters 2 and 3, it is almost a self-fulfilling prophecy that the Colombian Armed Forces emerge as the protagonists of the “success story”. What could the “success story” be about if not a narrative focused on those in charge of implementing the policies at the core of the “solution” emerging from that specific problematization? Given the central position of the Colombian Army in the “success story”, Part Two (Chapters 4 and 5) engages with the conditions under which the Colombian Army has managed to capitalize their experience in the armed conflict into an expertise to be taken as a reference by other countries.

The analytical moves constituting Part Two have as their starting point the emphasis on “expertise” which has been highlighted in the first section of this Introduction. In this sense, the discussion developed on

Chapters 4 and 5 is structured upon the idea that knowledge is a central piece of the puzzle. However, it is a specific kind of knowledge that is mobilized in the claims of “success”: as Juan Carlos Pinzón claims in the excerpt mentioned above, the Colombian Armed Forces have an “an exceptional expertise and experience” (PINZÓN, 2015, p. 8). The specificity of the vocabulary of knowledge is thus related to practice: the expertise is not solely built from books, but from the constant articulation of a knowledge which is specific to the military domain with the practice of the military operations. It is in this sense that I use the term “*savoirs*” (*saberes*) in this dissertation, as an attempt to approach the articulation between classroom and terrain in the production of a domain specific to the military. Under these terms, the relevance of the military schools and training centers to this research is read as the sites where these *savoirs* are transmitted. As I argue on Section 4.1, the consolidation of a military edifice of *savoirs* is directly linked to the historical processes that came to constitute the building of the “military professional”.

According to Pinzón’s excerpt once again, “the Colombian Armed Forces are well positioned to evolve into a regional leader in training, education, and actively participate in international” operations (PINZÓN, 2015, p. 8). In other words, these *savoirs* circulate among military forces across different countries. Importantly, exploring the main fluxes through which these *savoirs* have historically circulated is revealing of how it is impossible to speak about the professionalization of the Colombian Army without addressing the professionalization of the Chilean Army in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century; or how it is impossible to speak about the professionalization of the Colombian Army since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century without addressing how counterinsurgency came to constitute a central element in the professionalization of the US Army.

How do these *savoirs* circulate? The analysis developed on Chapters 4 and 5 map the main “transmission currents” constituting the circuit when addressing the participation of the Chilean military mission in the professionalization of the Colombian Army by late-19<sup>th</sup> century. They include the intense transit of Prussian and French military missions in Latin America, the creation of journals specialized on military *savoirs*, the

translation of manuals from the French and Prussian Armies, as well as Latin American official commissions visiting military schools in other countries in the region. These “transmission currents” allow us to identify what states are taken as “models” for the professionalization of a specific Army, as well as how they are re-articulated throughout the decades – for instance, when the United States became the main reference for the professionalization projects of the Latin American states.

There is an additional aspect which I think is relevant in order to justify the use of the expression “circuit of military *savoirs*” in the analysis developed on Part Two: as any circuit, the circulation of information is made possible by material conditions. Here, I am referring to the fluxes of equipment and weapons, but also to the financial conditions allowing a given state to formalize a contract with an external military mission. As we will see on Chapter 5, for instance, Plan Colombia was key to the professionalization of the Colombian Army in late-1990s because it constituted the channel through which a massive volume of resources equipped and trained the “military professional”.

In light of the analytical elements mentioned above, I want to draw attention to the organization of the sections within each of the chapters. While Section 4.1 discusses how professionalization is inscribed in the discourse of modernization, Section 4.2 explores how the reproduction of the discourse of modernization is the condition for the emergence of the circuit of military *savoirs* in Latin America in the context following the independence wars, and dissects the main characteristics of this circuit. Section 4.3 analyzes the specificities of how the discourse of modernization was reproduced in the professionalization of the Army in Colombia, aiming at producing a “citizen-soldier” through a comprehensive pedagogical program whose center of gravity was found in the Escuela Militar. As a whole, Sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 build the following logic: conditions for the emergence of the circuit – circuit – Colombia.

On Chapter 5, I start with a discussion on the circuit constituted in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Latin America, mainly characterized by the United States as a reference for the professionalization of armies in the region. On Section 5.1, I show how the central position of

counterinsurgency in the United States results from the combination of the “expertise” that had been built by France in Algeria with the attempts to design a military strategy for Southeast Asia in the context of the Cold War. Section 5.2 plunges into the practices constituting the professionalization programs guided by the United States in Colombia since the 1950s. I argue that, differently from the “citizen-soldier” expected to result from the Escuela Militar, the emphasis on the operational level characterizing counterinsurgency *savoirs* led to the transfer of the center of gravity of the professionalization of the Colombian Army to training centers. Section 5.3, in its turn, addresses the terms under which Plan Colombia can be read as a turning point in the production of the “military professional”. Finally, it opens a set of questions regarding how the re-positioning of Colombia in the circuit of military *savoirs* in Latin America rearticulates the conditions underpinning the discourse of modernization, civilization, and professionalization, not only in the country, but also in the region more broadly.



## PART ONE

### The Colombian "success story"; or what is allowed to have happened

*Today in the streets I saw, in two different moments, two friends  
who were mad at each other. Each one of them told me his  
narrative on why he was mad. Each one of them told me the truth.  
Each one of them told me his reasons. Both had reason. Both were  
full of reason. It was not that one saw one thing, and the other saw  
another, or that one saw one side of things, while the other saw a  
different side. No: each one of them saw things exactly as they had  
occurred, each one of them saw things with a criterion identical to  
the other. But each one of them saw a different thing, and  
therefore, each one of them had reason.*

*I was confused with this double existence of truth.<sup>8</sup>*

– Fernando Pessoa,  
excerpt from *Livro do Desassossego* (2011, p. 149)

*Just the basic facts  
Can you show me where it hurts?*

– excerpt from “Comfortably Numb”, song by Pink Floyd

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<sup>8</sup> In the original: “Encontrei hoje em ruas, separadamente, dois amigos meus que se haviam zangado. Cada um me contou a narrativa de por que se haviam zangado. Cada um me disse a verdade. Cada um me contou as suas razões. Ambos tinham razão. Ambos tinham toda a razão. Não era que um via uma coisa e outro outra, ou um via um lado das coisas e outro um lado diferente. Não: cada um via as coisas exatamente como se haviam passado, cada um as via com um critério idêntico ao do outro. Mas cada um via uma coisa diferente, e cada um portanto, tinha razão. Fiquei confuso desta dupla existência da verdade”.

## INTRODUCTION TO PART ONE

A “new Colombia”, built in contrast to its past: a country which is no longer taken by violence, inequality, corruption, but by peace, prosperity and education (PRESIDENCIA DE LA REPÚBLICA DE COLOMBIA, 2014abc, 2015)<sup>9</sup>. “A new Colombia that shines today, at home and abroad, converting itself into an example for the rest of the world. It is amazing how people now say: look at Colombia, observe Colombia, do what Colombia does”<sup>10</sup> (PRESIDENCIA DE LA REPÚBLICA DE COLOMBIA, 2014c), hailed President Juan Manuel Santos on January 31, 2014. This optimistic portrait of Colombia was crafted approximately fifteen years after Andrés Pastrana, then President of Colombia (1998-2002), used part of his inaugural speech to ask for the support of the “international community” in order to tackle the problems of the country: “Colombia cannot do it by itself. The challenge that we now face as a nation and as part of the global community is, perhaps, the greatest challenge of our history” (*Apud* Bonilla, 2001, pp. 61-2)<sup>11</sup>. The contrast between these two speeches is quite seductive: it expresses a “metamorphosis from ‘failing state’ to ‘success story’” (TICKNER, MORALES C., 2014, p. 242), the abandonment of a condition of weakness to another, of strength.

To President Juan Manuel Santos (2010-present) and to many others already mobilizing the vocabulary of a “post-conflict era”, this “new” country is already in the making: 2.6 million jobs were created in Colombia from 2010 to 2013 (MINHACIENDA, 2014, p. 2); the country was the fourth major destination of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Latin America from 2012 to 2013, behind Brazil, Mexico and Chile (UNCTAD, 2014, p. 4); and Colombia has recently become the third major economy in Latin

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<sup>9</sup> In addition to the recurrent reference to “new Colombia” in his speeches, government officials now have spread this expression through social networks, by using the “#UnNuevoPaís” (“a new country”).

<sup>10</sup> In the original: “Una nueva Colombia que hoy brilla hacia adentro y hacia afuera, convirtiéndose en un ejemplo a seguir en el resto del mundo. Es increíble como ya dicen: miren a Colombia, observen a Colombia, hagan lo que hace Colombia”.

<sup>11</sup> In the original: “Colombia no puede sola. El reto al que nos enfrentamos como nación y como parte de la comunidad mundial, quizás, es el mayor desafío de nuestra historia”.

America<sup>12</sup>. Economic growth is but one sphere on which achievements are claimed by the Colombian government officials in order to characterize this “new Colombia”.

Interestingly, such an enthusiasm with a “post-conflict” Colombia was manifested by officials and organizations – inside and outside the government – even before a peace agreement was reached in La Habana (Cuba) between the government and the FARC<sup>13</sup>. Fundación Ideas para La Paz (FIP, in Spanish), a think tank which has worked closely to the Colombian National Police in the restructuration of its teaching and training program, created a research axis dedicated to the “Post-conflict”, drawing special attention to the re-articulation of the role of the Armed Forces in this scenario (FIP, 2015), as well as transitional justice, governance of the territory, and education for peace. On June 2015, while visiting Norway, one of the guarantors to the peace process in La Habana, President Santos claimed that Colombia has already entered the post-conflict period. According to him, the infrastructure and housing projects advanced by the Colombian government are already part of this process: “we are addressing the very roots of our conflict, which has been particularly cruel and violent”<sup>14</sup> (EL ESPECTADOR, 2015).

Most notably, on September 2014, President Santos created the Minister-Advisor (now called High-Advisor) of Post-conflict, Human Rights and Security (Decree No. 1.649/2014) and named, for this position, General Oscar Naranjo Trujillo, former chief of the Colombian National Police (2007-2012). The Minister-Advisor is responsible for assisting the president in the formulation, structuring and development of policies and

<sup>12</sup> See: <http://www.economistinsights.com/countries-trade-investment/event/colombia-business-summit>. Access on: June 6, 2015.

<sup>13</sup> The exploratory talks were officially started on February 2012. The main negotiation axes were formally announced on August 2012: (i) comprehensive agrarian development; (ii) political participation; (iii) ending the conflict; (iv) drug trafficking; (v) victims’ rights; and (iv) implementation, verification and referendum. On August 2016, the Peace Agreement on the six pillars was announced. The content of each one of the pillars of the Agreement is available here: <https://www.mesadeconversaciones.com.co/>. Access on: May 3, 2017. A timeline of the negotiations is available here: <http://www.eltiempo.com/datos/linea-del-tiempo-de-los-dialogos-de-paz-56584>. Access on: May 3, 2017.

<sup>14</sup> In the original: “Podemos decir que, en la práctica, el posconflicto ya comenzó en Colombia y que estamos atacando las raíces mismas de nuestro conflicto, que ha sido especialmente cruel y violento”.

programs related to the post-conflict, with emphasis on security matters, demining and human rights (Article 25.2); as well as the re-integration of former combatants (Article 25.3). The Minister-Advisor is also responsible for the coordination with the Ministry of Defense on issues related to citizen security (Article 25.9). Although Naranjo remained in the position for only 11 months<sup>15</sup>, it is relevant to underline some remarks regarding the conditions allowing for his appointment to be possible, especially if we consider that General Óscar Naranjo was voted Vice-president of Colombia on March 2017, with the task to assist in the implementation of the peace agreements with the FARC, signed in 2016.

It is both intriguing and unsurprising that the former chief of the Colombian National Police was chosen as Advisor to the President as regards the “post-conflict agenda”. Naranjo is a kind of celebrity in Colombia: he is considered to have led the operation which resulted, in 1993, in the killing of Pablo Escobar, leader of the Medellín cartel. Trained by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) on antinarcotics operations, the United States Department of State on antiterrorism, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on crime prevention, he has been chief of the counterintelligence group in the Information Division of the Judicial Police and Intelligence Central Direction (DIJIN)<sup>16</sup>. When the latter was transformed into a specific direction of the Colombian National Police, in 1995, named Intelligence Direction<sup>17</sup>, Naranjo was transferred and continued to work with counterintelligence operations.

<sup>15</sup> The position of High-Advisor of Post-conflict, Human Rights and Security is currently held by Rafael Pardo Rueda.

<sup>16</sup> Naranjo worked for 36 years for the Colombian National Police, where he started as a Cadet and was granted the rank of General. From 2007 to 2012, he was the Director-General of the Police, having received the Award of Exemplary Leadership from one of the main magazines in Colombia, *Revista Semana* (Exemplary Leadership), as well as the recognition as one of the 500 more influential people in the world by *Foreign Policy*. After leaving the Police, Naranjo founded and directed the Latin-American Institute of Citizenship in Monterrey (Mexico), where he also worked as Advisor to the Presidency of Mexico on security affairs. Finally, his curriculum also includes a participation as Plenipotentiary Delegate of the Colombian Government in the Peace Talks in La Habana (PRESIDENCIA DE LA REPÚBLICA DE COLOMBIA, n.d.).

<sup>17</sup> The intelligence operations were undertaken under the umbrella of the DIJIN until 1995, when the Decree No. 4.222/2006 has created a direction especially dedicated to intelligence operations. Currently, the Colombian National Police has six Directions on the operational level: i) Antinarcotics Direction; ii) Anti-kidnapping and anti-extortion Direction; iii) Police Intelligence Direction; iv) Criminal Investigation and INTERPOL Direction; v) Protection and Specialized Services Direction; and vi) Citizen Security Direction. Available

Importantly, Naranjo is now widely known in Latin America – if not worldwide – as an expert on citizen security. More than that, he has been a spokesperson of the Colombian government on that topic: Naranjo has participated twice on the World Economic Forum (WEF) on Latin America (2013 and 2015, in Peru and Mexico, respectively), occasions in which he addressed how to revamp public policy in order to ensure citizen security<sup>18</sup>. In the first occasion, he attended the WEF as the director of the Latin American Citizenship Institute (*Instituto Latinoamericano de Ciudadanía*) at the Monterrey Tech. (Mexico), in addition to the two other positions he held at that time: counselor to the Mexican Presidency on security issues and to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). In this sense, more than a personal story, Naranjo conciliates, on the one hand, a trajectory resulting from the combination of professional experience on intelligence, antinarcotics and antiterrorism techniques with, on the other hand, the mobilization of “citizen security” as the key word for conceiving possibilities of public policy in the context of “post-conflict”. Rather than arguing that the latter imposes over the former, erasing it, I argue that the “post-conflict” narrative and the “war on drugs” and “on terror” advanced in Colombia are constitutive parts of the same logics.

However, that General Oscar Naranjo was chosen as Minister-Advisor on Post Conflict, Human Rights and Security is also unsurprising: the National Police and, more generally, the Armed Forces, have been recently portrayed – and have portrayed themselves – as the protagonists of the beginning of a “new” (hi)story, one in which the country is not a reference only when it comes to problems of the world: it can also be a reference to solutions on security problems, as well as to inspirational

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at:

[http://www.policia.gov.co/portal/page/portal/UNIDADES\\_POLICIALES/Direcciones\\_tipo\\_Operativas](http://www.policia.gov.co/portal/page/portal/UNIDADES_POLICIALES/Direcciones_tipo_Operativas). Accessed on: June 16, 2015. Also, see: MINISTERIO DE DEFENSA NACIONAL, 2006.

<sup>18</sup> On 2013, Naranjo has actually been the theme of a whole session, titled “An insight, An idea with Óscar Naranjo”. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZAJekAXjKc>. Access on: June 8, 2015. In addition to that, he participated on a panel titled “Drugs Policy: untangling the knot”, which can be accessed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pRHDqQ0cXs>. The full program of the World Economic Forum on Latin America is available here: [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/LA13/WEF\\_LA13\\_Programme\\_public\\_0D5FBA2AA3.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/LA13/WEF_LA13_Programme_public_0D5FBA2AA3.pdf).

stories about the resurrection of Colombia from the brink of the abyss (DeSHAZO *et al.*, 2007).

Furthermore, the Armed Forces claim that the expertise they have acquired through years of training have now placed them in the position to train others. In addition to the privileged position enjoyed by branches and representatives of the Colombian National Police, as discussed above, the Military Forces have also come to highlight how its expertise can be useful to its counterparts in the region. Through the analogy outlined between the Colombian guerrillas and organizations such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and Al Qaeda (KELLY, 2015) or, more generally, the so-called “transnational organized delinquency”<sup>19</sup> (UNCTAD, 2004), both the Colombian and the US armies have claimed that the expertise of the former in irregular conflict and in the protection of infrastructure (EL PAÍS, 2013) can be applied in countries such as Paraguay (DIÁLOGO, 2014), Peru and Argentina (ISACSON, 2013). In addition to that, the “success story” insistently reproduced by officials in the US (KELLY, 2015; THE WHITE HOUSE, 2012) and Colombia (EL PAÍS, 2013) – both civil and military – has nurtured the idea of using Colombian professional soldiers in peacebuilding operations, counternarcotic and anti-terrorist operations in West African, Central American and South American countries. According to the former Minister of Defense, Juan Carlos Pinzón, the Colombian Armed Forces have given capacity building and training to more than 13,000 members of police and military from 2005 to 2013<sup>20</sup>.

But how was it possible that a country which has been historically stigmatized as a “problematic country” came to claim itself as a reference on solutions to others? Part One engages with the “success story” through three main analytical moves. On Chapter 2, I mobilize Foucault’s concept of “problematization” (FOUCAULT, 2010a) in order to investigate the processes through which Colombia came to be constructed as a

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<sup>19</sup> The term was crystallized by the UNODC in 2000 and it has been increasingly used by the Colombian military and the police, suggesting a more technical understanding of the once so-called “transnational organized crime”. See, for instance, how the term has been appropriated by the Colombian Air Force here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oB9V6EgcGqU>.

<sup>20</sup> Available at: <http://securityassistance.org/blog/and-without-us-aid-colombias-training-other-security-forces-increases>. Access on: November 27, 2015.

“problematic country”. I argue that, by late-1990s, these processes resulted in a very specific reading of violence in Colombia: one deriving from the activity of “narcoguerrillas”, understood as delinquents whose activities were funded by the resources deriving from drug trafficking. In the context of the “war on terror”, this framing came to mobilize the vocabulary of “terrorism” in order to refer to these “delinquents”.

The identification of the constitutive pillars of the problematization of violence in Colombia allows us to explore, on Section 3.1, how the Colombian performance in the implementation of counternarcotic policies became a focus of disputed claims and measuring tools. I argue that the inquiries about Colombia, the diagnoses elaborated about its problems and their correspondent treatments, as well as the disputes about the success of the counternarcotic policies are all embedded in the same discursive field, which, by its turn, is anchored on the problematization of violence in Colombia, analyzed on Chapter 2. By focusing on governmental agencies and economics-based academics, Section 3.1 shows how the disputes around metrics came to be increasingly insulated in a quest for “technicality” regarding variables such as drugs seized, detentions, and size of the drug market. Based on this discussion, I argue that these disputes can be read as “internal critiques”, for they did not challenge the constitutive pillars of the problematization from which the “solutions” being measured emerged.

Contrastingly, Section 3.2 exposes de silencing allowing for the “success story” to be told. More specifically, I discuss the mechanisms through which the “monsters” of the discursive field were marginalized or even annihilated. Through an analysis focused on human rights organizations, I argue that the content of their denunciations point to an alternative problematization of violence in Colombia – one in which the state is not part of the solution, but part of the problem. More than working with “policing” as a metaphor of such mechanisms separating, isolating and differentiating the circulation of discourses, I focus on how unionists have been historically framed as the object of constant surveillance by the intelligence apparatus in Colombia, as well as the “targets” of military and police operations. In this regard, I firstly argue that extrajudicial killings,

forced disappearances and forced detention of unionists constitute human rights violations which are outside the horizon of the disputes on the metrics addressed on Section 3.1 and, therefore, do not resonate in the “success story” – although coexisting with it. In addition to that, I argue that the silencing mechanisms discussed on Section 3.2 define the limits of what the “success story” can be about: it is not about the state as part of the problem of violence, and it is not about social or land reforms.

Through the discussions developed on Part One, I argue that, far from erasing the “problematic past” of the country, the “success story” needs it: after all, claiming Colombia as a “successful” case also requires a story about what problems have been overcome. However, I argue that it is a particular past that is produced through the “success story”, as well as a particular present. In the next pages, therefore, I expect to expose the criteria of eligibility of what is allowed to be told in this story, thereby providing the limits of what the “success story” can be about.



## 2. The problem as a condition to success: the construction of Colombia as a “problematic country”

Colombia is a success: true or false? Most analytical efforts aiming at understanding how the image of Colombia has been transformed from one of a “failing state” to one of a “success story” have focused on debating the truthfulness of this narrative. Approaches such as those adopted by DeShazo, Primiani e McLean (2007), DeShazo, Forman e McLean (2009) and Felbab-Brown (2012) claim that there has been a “net gain” in Colombia when goals, achievements and costs are weighed against each other. Focusing on security, peace process, human rights, narcotics, governance, economy, social conditions and US assistance, DeShazo, Primiani e McLean (2007) argue that “Plan Colombia” is a turning point in the repertoire of attempts aiming at addressing the problems that were leading Colombia to the brink of “collapse” (DeShazo *et al.*, 2007, p. 9). Álvaro Uribe’s (2002-2010) “Democratic Security Policy”, by its turn, is understood as having strengthened the main axes which were already established by its predecessor, Andrés Pastrana (1998-2002).

As regards human rights, for instance, DeShazo, Primiani e McLean recognize that “grave problems persist, among them extrajudicial killings, kidnapping and hostage taking, forced disappearances, recruitment of child soldiers, incidents of torture, involuntary displacement, overcrowded prisons” (DeSHAZO *et al.*, 2007, p. 24). Nevertheless, they claim that “snapshots examinations of the human rights situation in Colombia often do not reflect that progress has been made under very difficult circumstances” (DeSHAZO *et al.*, 2007, p. 24) and that the Colombian government has been recognized for its efforts towards improving the administration of justice (DeSHAZO *et al.*, 2007, p. 26). By mobilizing data, building graphs and sketching trends, the authors seem confident that should these efforts continue, the human rights situation in Colombia would have its position as a contrast to the “success” gradually sliding into a part of this transformation of Colombia. Against analyses arguing that not only the Colombian Armed Forces but also the US assistance have an active role in

such a human rights picture (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 1996; FOR; CCEEU, 2014; RONDEROS, 2014), the authors claim that “the driving force behind so many of the gravest abuses of human rights has been violence from the illegal armed groups and the inability of the state to impose the rule of law more effectively” (DeSHAZO *et al.*, 2007, p. 24).

Contrastingly, another cluster of analyses (FELDMANN, 2012; ISACSON, 2010; TICKNER, 2014) criticizes the “success story” on the grounds that “the correspondence between empirical facts and the stories told about Colombia has been imperfect at best” (TICKNER, MORALES C., 2014, p. 243). Concerned with the vocabulary of “model” orbiting around the Colombian “success story”, Isacson argues that “Colombia’s security gains are partial, possibly reversible, and weighed down by ‘collateral damage’” (2010, p. 1). In his work, Isacson exposes the scandals constituting the narrative of “success”, addressing the systematic involvement of the intelligence service with paramilitary groups, and of the latter with political parties, as well as the extrajudicial killings scandal known as the “false positives”<sup>21</sup> (ISACSON, 2010). In addition to that, he shows how the drug strategy undertaken through both “Plan Colombia” and “Democratic Security Policy” was misguided and only in the more recent years seemed to recognize the failure of the strategy as a whole (ISACSON, 2010, p. 8). Through these analytical lines, Isacson claims that the prolonged war in Colombia has resulted in “human and financial costs” which are too high to be claimed as a “success”. Underlying analyses found within this cluster, there is the idea that the human costs cannot be understood as a mere marginal collateral damage: bringing them to the front of the analysis implies brushing aside the vocabulary of “model” in order to refer to the Colombian experience.

The point of departure of the two clusters here identified is considerably different, as are the effects of their arguments. Indeed, the second cluster highlights that the lives lost in the conflict cannot have the

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<sup>21</sup> The “false positives” scandal involved the killing of civilian non-combatants as combatants by the Colombian Military Forces. Their bodies were later dressed in guerrilla uniforms and presented as members of the armed groups killed in combat. In 2002, investigations led to the identification of 1,302 cases. For more information on the “false positives”, see: FOR; CCEEU (2014).

same analytical weight of, for instance, “cocaine seizures” in the equations mobilized in the debate about the “solutions” provided to the “Colombian problems”. On the other side, as we have seen above, studies within the cluster arguing in favor of the “successful” character of the “Colombian story” do encompass “human costs” – in the case of human rights and social conditions (DeShazo *et al.*, 2007), this appears more clearly. Importantly, however, by incorporating “human costs” in a graph in which the identification of a trend is what matters, this cluster seems to encourage us to celebrate that Colombia has gone from approximately 80 massacres with at least 5 deaths in 1999, to around 30 massacres in 2004 – as the reading of the graph in the work by DeShazo, Primiani e McLean (2007, p. 20) suggests. In this sense, if those operating with the “success” authorize the continuity of efforts which are already in course and the eventual “export” of security policies as a reference for other countries (PINZÓN, 2015), those questioning the “success” of Colombia argue for the revision and reform of such policies.

Even if they scrutinize a different set of numbers and attribute a different analytical weight to them, these works are similar when it comes to considering numbers as windows to truth. Their disagreements rely either on the method and/or source through which indicators are obtained, or on the hierarchy built between the domains upon which relations of costs and benefits are based. Indeed, discussing what set of indicators are more appropriate in order to assess whether the Colombian “success story” is true or false can reveal the tensions underlying the confection of these metrics. In other words, exposing what is left out of the equation can be more than building a more accurate one. But this is so only if one sees numbers as constructions resulting from visions of the world and, hence, *claims* to truth. According to these lines, the claim that human costs, democratic deficit or environmental damage must be brought to the fore of the analysis is inescapably an ethical one. Although moves such as these can contribute to reveal and transform (improve?) the terms of equations, to debunk formulas as useful mechanisms for a specific purpose, or even to de-authorize a certain political discourse, I am more interested in exploring the Colombian narrative of “success” through another angle here.

Instead of diving into a fact-finding aimed at inquiring the truthfulness of the Colombian “success”, I propose to take one step back and explore the conditions under which this narrative is even possible. Particularly, I shall focus on how this very claim to success becomes an object of analysis and dispute. What I find intriguing in this regard is how, among various disputed claims, how does a specific set of claims is put in a privileged position, downplaying other possible readings of a given cutting (*découpe*, in Foucault’s terms) in the world? Foucault has called “emergence” this arising of a certain framing to a privileged position amid a particular play of forces. He adds a caution note to that: “we should avoid thinking of emergence as the final term of a historical development” (FOUCAULT, 2010b, p. 83). Likewise, that the narrative about Colombia’s success is “dominant” does not imply the extinction of the forces struggling with its arising, and perhaps precisely because of this point, the narrative is constantly being challenged and transformed by the play of confrontations in which it is continuously found. In this sense, neither the claim of Colombia as a “failure” nor as a “success” should be seen as a historically natural or necessary depiction, for they do not exist apart from the play of forces from which they have emerged. Nor they should be seen as immutable – although the crystallization of renderings about Colombia in policies, edifices and piles of reports and books exerts resistance in this process.

This Chapter is a first move in this effort. Since the narrative about the “Colombian success” relies on its contrast to a problematic past, as important as the question about the processes that made the claim of success possible is the question about the processes through which Colombia has come to be identified as a “problematic country”, whose problems had to be tackled by a specific set of policies. Here, I am interested about a critique on how Colombia – and/or the problems associated to it – has come to be understood as an object of concern, debate and search for solutions. This is a specific kind of critique, that is, “pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought the practices we accept rest” (FOUCAULT, 1988, p. 154). Importantly, in the pages to follow, I was not able to explore alternative or concurrent

narratives to the construction of Colombia as a “problem”, as it would be necessary according to the idea of “emergence” of a specific problematization presented above. In this sense, while this Chapter mobilizes analytical elements for us to understand how a “dominant” problematization of Colombia emerged, as well as its main traits, I ask the reader to be patient and reach out to Chapter 2 in order to find narratives challenging the specific construction of Colombia as a problem that we are about to explore here.

## 2.1. The “problematization” of violence in Colombia

The element which has been most often highlighted in reference to Colombia as a problematic country is that of violence<sup>22</sup>. Indeed, one of the most violent confrontations registered in the official historiography of Colombia has come to be called *La Violencia* (1948-1958)<sup>23</sup>, suggesting that violence had reached such impressive levels that it was as if Colombians had witnessed the meaning of the noun “violence”. Likewise, the expression *violentología* (“violentology”) has become known in Colombia as a reference to the study of the phenomenon of violence, aiming at providing a detailed explanation of its nature and causes. Although this kind of endeavor had already marked the 1960s, when analytical efforts were invested

<sup>22</sup> For an analytical overview of the literature on violence published in Colombia during the 1990s, see Peñaranda (2003).

<sup>23</sup> This period is only used as a general reference for the reader, for the determination of both a beginning and an end taking into consideration only the arms being fired and then silenced is highly problematic – and, still, even this criteria would be easily subjected to questions. Although I am not writing this text in similar methodological lines to those of Cynthia Enloe, the question she raises in *Nimo's War, Emma's War* (2010) when discussing Maha's history is guiding the way I look to those beginnings and endings of *La Violencia* and so many other moments of Colombia. In this chapter of her book, Enloe shows how the war in Iraq has affected the trajectory of Maha and her whole family, by killing her husband, restricting her options for jobs, and narrowing the places where safety could be found, just to mention a few aspects. These effects are fundamental elements to be taken into consideration when we ask: when the war in Iraq ended? For Maha and her children, the effects of war surely transcend the ceasefire. I hope to provide, throughout this work, elements that allow for us to be as uncomfortable as Enloe is with the sharp periodizations constituting numerous violent chapters in Colombian historiography, as if one had nothing or not too much in connection with the others and, above all, as if ceasefires and other official agreements sufficed for us to understand how war carries on in people's lives even after no gun is shot.

towards explaining *La Violencia*<sup>24</sup>, the term *violentólogos* became popular by the end of the 1980s, when President Virgilio Barco (1986-1990) appointed nine academics and one military<sup>25</sup> to constitute the Commission of Studies on Violence (*Comisión de Estudios sobre la Violencia*), which was expected to elaborate a microscopic diagnosis of violence in Colombia<sup>26</sup>.

In 1987, the Commission concluded that the armed conflict involving the guerrillas was not the only, nor the main source of violence in Colombia. On the contrary: there were multiple kinds of violence (political, economic, organized, familial etc.), and tackling them would require reforms aimed at transforming the objective causes that nurtured these forms of violence. Implementing land reform, human rights policies and expanding the inclusive character of democracy in Colombia are some of the reforms suggested in the report presented by the Commission (SÁNCHEZ G., 1988).

Among its main conclusions, the Commission highlighted that “political violence”, understood as the struggle for power and control of the state apparatus (SÁNCHEZ G., 1988, p. 56), corresponded to only 7.51% of the homicides registered in 1985 in Colombia (SÁNCHEZ G., 1988, p. 18). In addition to the “non-political” character of more than 90% of homicides registered in Colombia in 1985, the Commission argued that the urban space was the site in which not only a greater share of violence was perpetrated, but also in which there was a more significant increase in violence (SÁNCHEZ G., 1988, p. 57). Considering “crimes against life and personal integrity” from 1983 to 1985, Medellín was considered the most violent city

<sup>24</sup> See, for instance, SÁNCHEZ G. *et al.*, 1962.

<sup>25</sup> The Commission was constituted by: Jaime Arocha R., Álvaro Camacho G., Darío Fajardo M., Álvaro Guzmán B., Carlos Eduardo Jaramillo, Carlos Miguel Ortiz S., Eduardo Pizarro L., Gonzalo Sánchez G. and General (r) Luis Alberto Andrade A.

<sup>26</sup> Intriguingly, one year before President Barco appointed the Commission of Studies on Violence, he created another one, formed by his minister of Government, Fernando Cepeda, and other members of the government, as well as renowned lawyers and high-ranked military officers. The mission assigned to this 1986 Commission was quite different: it was expected to study anti-terrorist legislations of England, France, Germany, Italy and Spain, given the concern of the government with mounting levels of violence (OROZCO A., 1992, p. 174). Here, “terrorism” was understood in similar lines to what the Commission of Studies on Violence considered to be the most concerning kind of violence facing Colombia: one which was notably urban and non-political, and mainly perpetrated by civilians against other civilians.

in Colombia, with 8,729 crimes of that category; Bogotá, the third, with 7,993; and Cali, the fourth, with 6,696 (SÁNCHEZ G., 1988, p. 77). According to the Commission, “delinquency” was mostly found in relations involving citizens, not in those between citizens and the state: among the crimes registered in 1980, only 3.7% were of a citizen-state kind; and 41.5% involved “private patrimonial relations” (SÁNCHEZ G., 1988, p. 18).

The dissection of violence undertaken by the Commission provided a taxonomy and a hierarchy of the categories of violence, according to which recommendations were elaborated to Virgilio Barco’s administration. This task was particularly relevant in the 1980s in Colombia. The violent chapters the country had piled up into its historiography from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were written with emphasis in the two political parties – the protagonists around which the story revolved. In this regard, the 1980s offered an analytical challenge, given the rising indicators of violence in Colombia, “despite” the “consortium democracy” (PIZARRO L., 1987a) articulated between the Liberal and Conservative Parties after the Thousand Days’ War (1899-1902).

The report of the Commission was elaborated with data provided by the Direction of Judicial Police and Intelligence (DIJIN, in Spanish) when referring to the crimes registered in Colombia, and on data from the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE, in Spanish) when referring to the population and specific characteristics of the state. This methodological option was claimed by the Commission of Studies on Violence as appropriate, for both the DIJIN and the DANE were believed to have “the most reliable data available” (SÁNCHEZ G., 1988, p. 58). By reproducing the general lines of the police diagnosis about violence and claiming that the report was technical and methodologically aseptic, the Commission had the political effect of legitimizing the official narrative on violence. One of the immediate implications of this methodological option is the silence of the report regarding violence perpetrated by the Colombian Armed Forces. Although the latter is mentioned in two categories of violence mapped by the Commission – state violence against ethnic minorities and social movements, and violence of the Armed Forces staff

while on duty (SÁNCHEZ G., 1988, p. 20) –, excesses of violence by state forces are barely mentioned in the report and, in some of the passages, the link between victims and Armed Forces is only considered as a “possible” one (SÁNCHEZ G., 1988, p. 93).

By elaborating a detailed analysis of the categories of violence in Colombia, as well as a rank of priorities anchored on allegedly sharp data, trends and criteria of classification, the Commission organized the field of knowledge about violence. It produced an “analytical flash, which, by reading what happens, recommends something easy to digest and operate through public policy”<sup>27</sup> (JARAMILLO M., 2011, p. 249). Once this “digestive diagnosis” had been commissioned by the government, its claim to truth concerning violence in Colombia was invested with a certain degree of authority, conferring strength to the narrative constituted through the report.

By the end of the 1980s, the academics who were part of the Commission founded the Institute of Studies on Politics and International Relations (IEPRI, in Spanish) within the National University of Colombia, one of the first research centers focused on violence in the country (PÉCAUT, 1998; REVISTA SEMANA, 2007; JARAMILLO M., 2011). The creation of IEPRI, the report of the Commission and the sources upon which the latter relied contributed to the crystallization of the association of Colombia with violence. They became nodes around which knowledge about that topic was agglomerated and organized through the dissemination of studies on that matter, as well as the fabrication of debates and of research agendas, thereby channeling the visibility of certain approaches to that problem instead of others. This circuit did not constitute the point of origin of the problematization of Colombia as a “violent country”, for it has, itself, emerged from it. The creation of the Commission, IEPRI and the term *violentología* were both an engine fueling this narrative and an expression of it.

Importantly, the Commission framed the problem in accordance to a set of assumptions, criteria, categories and data produced by the DIJIN. If

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<sup>27</sup> In the original: “para producir un *flash* analítico, que a la vez que lee lo que pasa, recete algo fácil de digerir y operar en política pública”.



we take this aspect into consideration, the conclusions of the Commission report based on the distinction between “political” and “non-political” violence are misleading. This is so because what was framed as “political delinquency” by the Colombian National Police before and after the 1980 Penal Code was considerably different. When the Commission elaborated its report, in 1987, the guerrillas were recurrently framed as “regular delinquents”, hence deprived from the privileged treatment attributed to “political delinquents”. The latter was a legal category inherited from a classical conception of civil war which, recognizing a certain degree of legitimacy and political organization to the “rebels”, as well as their “ability to negotiate” (OROZCO A., 1989, n.p.), established rights such as access to dialogue channels and reduced penalties to these “political delinquents”. Throughout the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the range of practices framed as “political delinquency” became narrower, and the decision processes through which a certain practice was classified as such were increasingly turned into *ad hoc* mechanisms<sup>28</sup> (OROZCO A., 1992). According to Orozco Abad, this process is not specific to Colombia: it is inscribed in the transformation of the interpretation of war, based on a “punitive conception of the public international law, (...) whose main corollary is a delinquential – and not political – definition of war”<sup>29</sup> (OROZCO A., 1989, n.p.).

In this sense, when the Commission report claims that political violence was not the most concerning face of violence in Colombia, it is suggesting that guerrillas were not significant in that context. However, guerrilla warfare was framed, since the 1960s, as a kind of *bandolerismo* (banditry), understood as an association of individuals aimed at committing offenses merely for the sake of disorder. The denial of a political character to the guerrillas through its framing as a “regular delinquent” erased any possibility of reading them as an organized mobilization with “political

<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, it is important to highlight that guerrillas, narcotraffickers and paramilitary groups have tactically appropriated terms such as “political delinquent” depending of the benefits granted to this category in particular contexts, aiming at an advantageous position in a negotiation with the government, for instance (OROZCO A., 1992).

<sup>29</sup> In the original: “Una concepción punitiva del derecho internacional público, concebido a manera de un derecho público interno mundial, y cuyo corolario principal es una definición delincuencial – no política – de la guerra”.

agendas” such as land reform and improvements in labor rights in rural areas – which for long had constituted the key demands in these parts of Colombia (GONZÁLEZ *et al.*, 2003; PÉCAUT, 2010). The juxtaposition of *bandolerismo* and communism which characterized the state of exception issued by the administration of President Julio César Turbay Ayala (1978-1982) through the Security Statute (*Estatuto de Seguridad*) has intensified the depreciation of the penal figure of the “political delinquent”. Within the logics of the national security doctrine, guerrillas and bandits were agglomerated into the same category of “enemy of the state”, that is, armed groups threatening the existence of the state. The problem of the guerrillas was thereby rearticulated from one of *bandolerismo* to one of counterinsurgency (LEAL B., 2002, pp. 21-2), as we will see more attentively on Chapter 4. By the beginning of the 1980s, the only political component attached to these groups was their threatening character to the existence of the state – move which was crystallized only after rights deriving from their political character were aseptically removed and, importantly, within a state of exception. Therefore, that the Commission report has used the data produced by the DIJIN within this context can only result in declining statistics about “political violence”, for any possible political character of guerrillas had already been erased through their framing as “regular delinquents” by 1987. These processes indicate that the meanings of categories such as “regular delinquent” and “political delinquent” cannot be detached from those who create and transform them – as Bonditti has argued in relation to the framing of “terrorism” as a threat (BONDITTI, 2014, p. 193).

If the report elaborated by the Commission is key for us to understand the emergence of the “problem of violence” as a distinctive feature of Colombia, it is also important to underline that the conclusions of the report do not consider drugs as a specific category of the manifestations of the phenomenon of violence by that time. Indeed, none of the kinds of violence worked through the Commission report (political, economic, organized, familial) connected drugs to violence indicators such as homicide rates. On the other hand, one cannot ignore that, by late-1980s, when the report was crafted, drugs were increasingly projected in the debates

involving police professionals concerned with the “delinquency” indicators related to drug activity (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 1980, pp. 200-202). It is not a coincidence, in this sense, that Medellín and Cali, two of the three cities highlighted in the report as the most violent ones in Colombia (SÁNCHEZ G., 1988, p. 77) were also the ones which the so-called “drug cartels” were later to be associated with. Given that the report was elaborated based on data collected by the Colombian National Police’s DIJIN, it is relevant, for the purposes of our analysis, to understand how the “problem of violence” intersected the construction of the “problem of drugs” in Colombia, as well as what were the effects of such a combination. In this sense, we need to first investigate how drugs slid from a “public health problem” to a “public order” one.

From the 1920s, when the first drug control legislation (Law No. 11/1920) was issued in Colombia, to 1936, when the Penal Code was reformed for the first time, drugs were mainly framed as a “public health problem”. Accordingly, in 1928, Law No. 118 assigned the national government the task to update the list of substances considered as “pernicious drugs”, built according to the criteria established by the National Hygiene Division (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 1980, p. 192). This legal mechanism established that “drug users” had to be sent to committal in clinics or hospitals, where they would be supervised by a sanitary authority. As for the fabrication of substances which “constitute pernicious habit”, the penalty was a 100-500 pesos fine, in addition to 1-6 months imprisonment. The 1936 Penal Code not only increased the penalties – both in monetary (50-1,000 pesos) and carceral terms (6-60 months) –, but also synthetized a wider set of modalities for these crimes, ranging from supply, to fabrication, distribution, and allowance for drug use or production at one’s property.

In addition to that, despite the persistent emphasis on “public health” in the 1930s, there was a significant move in the vocabulary adopted by the 1936 Penal Code and the following legislations on that matter: instead of focusing on the individual habit, its chapter on drug-related crimes was titled “crimes against *public health*” (my emphasis). In the former approach, the individual was considered as a deviation of the norm, and his

“correction” was based on the adjustment of his relation to society in accordance to the norm. Under such terms, even those conducts subjected to fines or imprisonment were articulated in terms of the individual: the fabrication of substances used to produce “harmful drugs”, for instance, was punishable on the grounds that these substances “formed the pernicious habit” of the individual (*“fabricación de sustancias que formen hábito pernicioso”*, in the wording of Law No. 118/1928).

Contrastingly, in the 1936 Penal Code, the drug-related criminal *threatened* the norm and, thereby, also the social. Here, the crime was considered as a conduct *against* “public health”. More than that: it was not only a habit with threatening effects over the individual, but over the hygiene of society as a whole – hence “*public health*”. This link was more explicitly developed in the following years, when the “anti-social conduct” of the drug-related criminal was characterized as threatening to the most cherished values in Colombian society: private property, life and social order – as specified by the Decree No. 1699, issued in 1964 (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 1980, p. 195). The latter established penalties even more severe than the past legal mechanisms: 2-5 years in colonies working with agriculture to those who grew, produced, distributed, sold, supplied or owned *marijuana*. As for drug use, the Decree No. 1699 addressed the possibility of “true addiction” in a special article, the reason why the individual had to be sent to committal in clinics or hospitals, under the supervision of specialized doctors (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 1980, p. 195) – that is, the framing of drugs as a “health problem” persisted, but exclusively in reference to drug users. Nonetheless, such an approach was not in a privileged position within the drug control legislation anymore.

Despite the contrasts between the different mechanisms analyzed above, they operated with a similar logics regarding two main aspects. Firstly, the objective of such regulations was to wipe out “pernicious substances” of society. Secondly, they express a logics anchored on a bifurcation between modalities of drug use, on the one hand, and modalities of production and commercialization, on the other. Within the semantic field of “public health”, the former was constituted by a logics – persistent,

though narrowing – of normalization of the individual with “pernicious habit”. The specialist in charge of “solving” the “problem” was the sanitary/medical authority; its object, the drug user. As for modalities of production and commercialization, the vocabulary of criminalization was marked by an increasingly punitive character, whose objective was “sanitizing” society from a constellation of deviant conducts which were considered as threatening to the core values of Colombian society. This logics was translated into penalties which became more severe throughout the years. In this case, the matter was to be handled by the police, whose scope could also be interpreted as a “moral authority” of society.

This cleavage gradually faded in the years following the reform of the Penal Code and, with it, both drug use and other modalities were criminalized – and increasingly so. Central to this process was the 1974 National Statute on Stupefying Substances (*Estatuto Nacional de Estupefacientes*), issued by the Decree No. 1188/1974, and later substituted by the 1986 National Statute on Stupefying Substances (Law No. 30/1986), with stronger penalties and an even narrower margin for a public health approach – which was basically reduced to some articles on campaigns against the use of drugs<sup>30</sup>. But the key to understand the crystallization of a repressive character in the whole range of modalities of drug control policies resides in the 1980 Penal Code and the sequence of states of exception starting in 1978. The reform of the Penal Code in 1980 resulted not only in the framing of drug-related crimes as “crimes against public security”, but also in the incorporation of “terrorism” to the same category of crimes.

According to Article 187 of the 1980 Penal Code, “terrorism” is a practice of those who, “with the purpose of creating or maintaining an atmosphere of turmoil, or disturbing public order, employ means of collective destruction against persons or goods”<sup>31</sup>. The incorporation of such a penal type to the Colombian legislation was the result of debates within a

<sup>30</sup> See, for instance, Articles 8-13 in the 1986 National Statute on Stupefying Substances.

<sup>31</sup> In the original: “El que con el fin de crear o mantener un ambiente de zozobra, o de perturbar el orden público, emplee contra personas o bienes, medios de destrucción colectiva, incurrirá en prisión de diez (10) a veinte (20) años, sin perjuicio de la pena que corresponda por los demás delitos que se ocasionen con este solo hecho”.

Reform Commission, constituted by Colombian jurists, whose work on the reform of the Code stretched from mid-1970s to the approval of its new version, in 1980. Among an increasing number of strikes and students' demonstrations, as well as the multiplication of guerrillas and the consolidation of Colombia as a major drug producer and exporter, the debates in the Commission were marked by "the panic from the imminent revolution through insurrection"<sup>32</sup> (OROZCO A., 1992, p. 166). In this context, members of the Commission, such as Giraldo Marín, believed that mutinies in the streets were the first step to insurrection. They argued for the need to punish disorder with severity, on the grounds that claims for reforms had to be vocalized through democratic channels (OROZCO A., 1992, p. 165). According to Marín, the rural war paradigm had been transformed into an urban insurrection one – that is, the guerrilla combat had been substituted by the general strike (OROZCO A., 1992, p. 166). The final version of the Penal Code reveals a similar logics, when preserving the link between "disturbances of public order" (understood in broad terms) and "terrorism" (Article 187), allowing for the association of the latter with a wide range of contestation movements. Another element contributing to this reading is the emphasis laid by Article 187 on damage caused to goods – not only to people –, without any further specification on what kind of damage and what kind of good was being considered. This patrimonial concern regarding "public order" allowed for an expanded spectrum of possible associations of social conducts (social movements, protests, and sabotage, for instance) with terrorism.

Furthermore, Article 127 of the 1980 Penal Code established that "Rebel or seditious individuals shall not be subjected to penalty for punishable conducts undertaken while in combat only if the latter do not constitute acts of ferocity, barbarism or terrorism"<sup>33</sup>. The room for discretion left by the vague language adopted on Article 187 was filled by the framing of the guerrillas as "ordinary delinquents", except in the rare occasions when the national government conducted negotiations with these groups and

<sup>32</sup> In the original: "pánico a la revolución inminente por la vía insurreccional".

<sup>33</sup> In the original: "Los rebeldes o sediciosos no quedarán sujetos a pena por los hechos punibles cometidos en combate, siempre que no constituyan actos de ferocidad, barbarie o terrorismo".

framed them as “political delinquents”. In these situations, the risk of explosions resulting in people wounded or killed was tolerated in order to make peace processes feasible. On the other hand, this move had clear implications for the guerrillas: their removal from the legal background linked to armed conflict erased any possible association of the guerrillas with political legitimacy. In this sense, the de-politicization of their legal framing led to the de-legitimation of the guerrillas, which were thereby brought closer to the legal (criminalizing) framing of social movements, whose conducts threatened public security, under the terms of the Penal Code.

The 1980s were also marked by the increase of drug production in Colombia, trajectory which started mainly with the production of *marijuana*. However, by mid-1970s, the demand for cocaine in the United States and Europe surpassed that of *marijuana*, and producing the former became far more profitable (CRAIG, 1983; THOUMI, 2002). Years later, most of the cocaine production and distribution chain was concentrated in Colombia and the country was the main source of the cocaine consumed in the United States. By mid-1980s, there were two major networks<sup>34</sup> concentrating the production chain in Colombia, as well as national and international distribution channels: one, with Medellin as its core; the other, with Cali. By late-1980s, the Colombian National Police reported that drug-related crimes responded for 90.75% (11.090 cases) of the “crimes against public security” (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 1987, p. 69). These crimes were concentrated in three Colombian departments: Antioquia (34.67%), Bogotá (11.07%), Quindío (10.87%) and Valle (8.18%) (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 1987, p. 69). The core zones of the two “drug cartels” were located in two of these departments: the city of Medellin, capital of Antioquia; and Cali, capital of the department of Valle del Cauca. Similarly, Antioquia (19.35%), Valle (17.92%), Bogotá (14.34%) and Santander (12.54%) concentrated the crimes registered as “terrorism” in 1987 (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 1987, p. 70).

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<sup>34</sup> As Thoumi underlines, “In reality, these were not truly cartels with the capacity to exclude and control production but rather were syndicates that improved the efficiency of distribution. Smaller syndicates remained in the shadow of the two main ones” (2002, p. 108).

Despite the innumerable triggers associated to drug-related violence, resistance to the Treaty of Extradition accounted for a significant share of assassinations perpetrated by “drug cartels”. Signed in 1979, during the administration of Turbay Ayala (1978-1982), the Treaty only entered into force in 1984, which meant that those whose crimes were also considered as an offense to the United States had to be judged and serve their penalty in the US. Organized as a group called *No Extraditables* (“Not ‘Extraditables’”), some of the main drug trafficking organizations escalated violence in resistance to extradition. In what became known as *guerra sucia* (“dirty war”), the mounting levels of drug-related violence characterizing the 1980s and the years later were framed as “narcoterrorism” and used as justification for the issuing and maintenance of the state of siege through the Decree No. 1038.

So far, I have sketched two processes. Firstly, I have shown how the framing of guerrillas was re-articulated from “political delinquency” to “regular delinquency”, and from the latter to an “enemy of the state”. Secondly, I have discussed how drugs came to be addressed not anymore as a “problem of public health”, but as one of “public order”, leading to its gradual criminalization and inscription in a vocabulary of “regular delinquency”. The framings resulting from these two processes intersected through the mobilization of the category of “terrorism”, operating, at once, towards the de-legitimization of those framed as such – for “there is no dialogue with terrorists” – and the authorization of a more intense use of violence against it.

Although the processes mentioned above were not linear, nor irreversible, their traces make links such as guerrilla-terrorism and drug trafficking-terrorism possible. These associations can be built, abandoned and then rebuilt – as shown by the recurrent return of states of exception and, with them, the widespread framing of guerrillas and drug trafficking as “terrorism”. As we have seen, it is precisely the lack of precision on how “terrorism” is understood that allowed for a greater discretionary power in the interpretation of the 1980 Penal Code. Although it is possible that links such as drug trafficking and terrorism are dismantled, a series of practices operated within the logics of those links, institutions were built basing upon



those links, professionals were hired in order to invest their work in those links and knowledge has been produced about those links. At the same time these processes were triggered by these associations, they also reinforced these links, providing cement, life and substance to them.

An example of my point can be found in the Colombian National Police's Antiterrorist Unit, created in 1991 with the objective of preventing "terrorist attacks" in the capital, Bogotá (EL TIEMPO, 1991). Gathering police professionals from the Special Operations Group (GOES, in Spanish), the Anti-extortion and Anti-Kidnapping Special Corps (COPEs, in Spanish), and from the DIJIN's Laboratory on Explosives, the Antiterrorist Unit combined the specialized knowledge that had already been developed within each of these branches. The transformation of violence since the dismantling of the "drug cartels" in the early-1990s and the de-mobilization of guerrillas in the 1990s (the M-19, for example) has been translated into the re-articulation of the work undertaken by the Antiterrorist Unit in two main ways. Firstly, the expansion of its geographical scope, from Bogotá to Medellín – when it joined the Search Bloc (*Bloque de Búsqueda*) aiming at killing Pablo Escobar – and then to "urban and rural zones" in general (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 2009, p. 16). Most importantly, instead of constituting *one* of the branches of the Command Unit on Special Operations, "terrorism" came to encompass the whole special operations organizational chart – currently called Command Unit on Special Operations and Antiterrorism (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 2009, p. 16), suggesting a privileged position of "terrorism" within the Colombian police architecture. Secondly, and in direct relation to the elements mentioned above, if the mobilization of "special operations" was initially restricted to drug trafficking (EL TIEMPO, 1991, 1993), their scope was gradually expanded and is currently defined as: "high-risk operations against targets of high-value, delinquent structures and criminal organizations both in the urban and rural areas, with the objective of preserving the citizen coexistence and security across all the national territory"<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>35</sup> In the original: "operaciones de alto riesgo contra objetivos de alto valor, estructuras delincuenciales y organizaciones criminales tanto en el ámbito urbano como rural, con el

These processes have resulted in the crystallization of specific “problems” that came to be associated with Colombia, in the sense that it was through such processes that a specific set of phenomena acquired the status of “problems”, and not others. As we have seen, the production of knowledge by *violentologists* in Colombia was an analytical effort to explain violence in the country. In this sense, the report itself resulted from renderings of Colombia as a “violent country”. On the other hand, I have argued that by building a diagnosis of a predominantly “non-political” violence and proposing “solutions” accordingly, the Commission of Studies on Violence contributed to the crystallization of a specific reading of violence in Colombia. After all, it is not the violence perpetrated, for instance, by the Armed Forces or the entanglement between public and private perpetrators that stands in the center of the Commission report.

As we have seen, the construction of Colombia as a “problem” resulted from a system of problematizations. The projection of “delinquent violence” as a specific “problem” of Colombia intersected two additional processes: the problematization of drugs and that of “terrorism”. Their intersection contributed to the consolidation of a particular reading about violence in Colombia: that of the guerrillas as “regular delinquents” and that of the drug-problem as a “public order problem”. When intersected with the vocabulary of “terrorism”, these processes have allowed for bringing guerrillas and drug trafficking organizations closer in terms of their means (collective destruction), targets (persons and goods) and effects (disturbing public order). Most importantly, we also saw how the expansion of the margins through which a given conduct could be associated with “terrorism” dragged more than guerrillas and drug trafficking organizations to that category. In other words, the processes here analyzed show that protests, strikes, and sabotages, for instance, were increasingly associated with the “usual suspects” in interpretations of “disturbances to public order”.

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fin de preservar la convivencia y seguridad ciudadana en todo el territorio nacional”. This excerpt was removed from the COPES’ official institutional video, available at: <https://www.policia.gov.co/especializados/copes#resena-historica>. Access on: April 25, 2017.

The articulation between guerrillas, drug trafficking and terrorism has been crystallized to such an extent by the 1990s that they have come to be understood as components of the same phenomenon. On Section 2.2, we turn to the processes which have resulted in the terms “narcoguerrilla” and “narcoterrorism” as conceptual formulations referring to the specificities of the “problem of violence” in Colombia. Advancing such a claim implies exploring how the problematization of drugs in the United States intersected the processes mentioned above.

## **2.2. Fighting a distant war: externalization and militarization of antidrug policies**

The “war on drugs” is often addressed as an intervention of the United States in Colombia and other states in the Andean region (CRANDALL, 2001; GARCÍA-PENÑA, 2006). As we have seen, however, the construction of Colombia as a “problematic country” was far from a reading which was foreign to Colombian society. The reform of the Penal Code is but one of the expressions of the gradual strengthening of the depolitization of the guerrillas and the criminalization of drugs, but also of manifestations of social unrest in general. In this sense, one of my argument here is that, by mid-1980s, there were already conditions in Colombia allowing for the convergence of the discourse on drugs mobilized by US agencies with that of the Colombian National Police.

Claiming that the “war on drugs” advanced by the United States was not imposed does not imply refusing the relevance of its effects for the construction of Colombia as a “problem” – on the contrary. Synthetized with the processes I have discussed above, the volume of financial and human resources involved in policies designed by US agencies has given more distinctive contours to a specific reading of the “Colombian problems”, as well as a set of solutions articulated in accordance to that rendering. As we have seen on Section 2.1, the blurring between guerrillas, drug trafficking and terrorism is key for us to understand the construction of Colombia as a “problem”. The first conceptual articulation that contributes

to this analysis is that of the “narcoguerrillas”<sup>36</sup>, precisely because it expresses the idea that the problem of guerrillas cannot be read apart from that of drugs. As any problematization, its terms already contain the horizon of possible solutions for the problem it points at (FOUCAULT, 2010a, p. 389).

The general lines of this idea are unequivocally drawn in the 1986 National Security Decision Directive 221 (NSDD 221), issued during Ronald Reagan administrations (1981-1989). The previous administration had already advanced the claim that the drug problem constituted a threat to the “national security” of the United States (CAMPBELL, 1992, p. 200). Indeed, Richard Nixon (1969-1974) defended that the consumption of illicit substances was a “plague” that had to be fully combatted. Notwithstanding, this claim only found a legal resonance during Ronald Reagan administration. In this period, the combat against drugs was elevated to the extra-national level, under the argument that this problem could only be definitively solved if attacked in its source, that is, in the states where drugs were produced. The NSDD 221 makes this claim explicitly:

While the domestic effects of drugs are a serious societal problem for the United States [...] the national security threat posed by the drug trade is particularly serious outside US borders. Of primary concern are those nations with a flourishing narcotics industry, where a combination of international criminal trafficking organizations, rural insurgents, and urban terrorists can undermine the stability of the local government (THE WHITE HOUSE, 1986, p. 1).

Of “primary concern” to the United States were the countries where drug trafficking organizations were based, that is, the main threat of drugs was located “outside US borders”. According to the document issued by the Reagan administration, if not addressed in its source, the “drug problem” could spread to other countries. Although considered as “endemic to most

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<sup>36</sup> As with “narcoterrorism”, the category of “narcoguerrilla” had already been fermented in Colombia. The reports published by the DIJIN in 1987, for instance, highlight that “The re-emergence of violence in rural zones as a result of the merging between guerrilla and drug trafficking, which for years has been disturbing harmony and tranquility in rural Colombia, has reached unpredictable levels” (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 1987, p. 226). In the original: “El resurgimiento de la violencia en las zonas Rurales como resultado de la fusión de guerrilla y narcotráfico que desde años atrás viene perturbando la armonía y tranquilidad del campo colombiano, alcanza imprevisibles niveles”.

nations plagued by narcotics (...) the expansion of narcotics creates a regional, as well as a country specific, problem” (THE WHITE HOUSE, 1986, p. 1). The priority given to what came to be known as “supply-side approach” has invariably characterized every counternarcotic policy designed by almost every US agency from the 1980s to the 2000s (CRANDALL, 2002; INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, 2005; TICKNER, 2007) and its persistence has had major implications to the discussion here advanced.

Throughout the decades, the externalization of the “drug problem” reproduced through the “supply-side approach” (CAMPBELL, 1992, p. 198) has had at least four effects which are relevant for our analysis. Firstly, framing the problem as something external to the United States implies that the latter is found in a better position to formulate solutions to that problem, for “democratic institutions” in the United States are not understood as corroded by it, such as the ones in “nations plagued by narcotics”. An illustration of this point can be found in the Extradition Treaty signed in 1979 between the United States and Colombia, and expanded in 1981 by the Reagan administration in order to encompass “narcotics violations, aircraft hijacking, bribery, and obstruction of justice” (US SENATE, 1981, p. iii). Based upon the claim that a given Colombian “drug trafficker” is also framed as a criminal according to the United States antidrug legislation, the Extradition Treaty defines the terms under which the US government can claim the rights to judge and incarcerate that “drug trafficker”. Considering that the NSDD 221 highlights that “The narcotics trade threatens the integrity of democratic governments by corrupting political and judicial institutions” (THE WHITE HOUSE, 1986, p. 2), the Extradition Treaty was presented as the best law enforcement solution to circumvent the problems of effectiveness of Colombian judicial institutions in dealing with renown “drug traffickers” such as Pablo Escobar (OROZCO, 1990).

In this sense, the externalization of the “drug problem” allowed for the United States to engage with Colombia and other “drug producing countries” in a position of authority. In more specific terms, such claim of authority derived from the idea that: i) the concrete manifestations of the problems identified in the “supply-side” were not found in the United

States; ii) the “drug problem” irradiated from “drug producing countries” to the United States, in an unidirectional flux; and iii) the United States had no connection with the processes through which the “drug problem” emerged. Such position of authority allowed for the differentiation between those states which cooperated with the US counternarcotic policies and those which did not. The creation of a certification mechanism in 1986 is directly related to this dynamic. Every year, the President of the United States sent a report to the Congress detailing the attitude of “drug producing” states towards US antidrug policies and classifying them according to one of the following categories: i) full certification; ii) de-certification; and iii) certification on the grounds of national interest<sup>37</sup>. Among the sanctions comprehended in cases of de-certification was the suspension of trade preferences, the blockage of credit in international banks, and a partial suspension of the US external aid to that state. Cooperating with US antidrug policies implied, among many things, signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) for the latter to establish an office in the cooperating state – as it was the case in Colombia in 1972.

The second effect of the externalization I want to highlight is that the very position of authority mentioned above was the condition that made the objectification of “drug producing countries” possible – that is, the construction of an object of analysis, towards which US agencies projected themselves in order to produce knowledge about the “problems” within that object and provide solutions for them. In the case of the establishment of a DEA office in Colombia, for instance, this meant that police investigations related to drug trafficking would incorporate the DEA into their information circuit, thereby allowing for a flux of privileged information to flow to the United States. Needless to say, at the same time the logics of externalization of the “drug problem” allowed for the construction of “drug producing states” as an object of analysis and knowledge production, the position of authority allowed for expanding the flow of information to the United

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<sup>37</sup> Colombia was de-certified in 1996 and 1997, and certified on the grounds of national interest in 1998, all of them during Ernesto Samper’s administration (1994-1998). For more information on the tensions involving the United States and the Samper administration, see: Crandall, 2001; Isacson, 2005; Chernick, 2008.

States, nurturing the production of diagnoses about those “problematic countries”. On Section 3.1, we will connect the discussion on the objectification of Colombia as a “problematic country” to the metrics aimed at assessing its performance on counternarcotic operations.

Thirdly, externalization ascribes functions and responsibilities aimed at solving the problems resulting from the diagnoses built upon the knowledge produced about such problems. In this sense, the repertoire of agencies put in charge of US counternarcotic policies cannot be detached from a specific construction of the “drug problem”, nor from the construction of Colombia as a “problematic country”. It is noteworthy that both the police and the military are explicitly framed as the protagonists of the “solutions” provided by the United States to be implemented in “drug producing countries”. According to the NSDD 221, the Secretary of Defense, in conjunction to the Attorney General and the Secretary of State, should “develop and implement any necessary modifications to applicable statutes, regulations, procedures, and guidelines to enable US military forces to support counter-narcotics efforts more actively” (THE WHITE HOUSE, 1986, p. 3). The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is also mentioned in the NSDD 221 as responsible for enhancing and supporting “drug enforcement effort targetted against international drug traffickers” (NSDD 221, p. 4) – that is, in support to the DEA, which was already established in Colombia since 1972. The mobilization of intelligence, military and police work indeed constitute a remarkable feature of the counternarcotic polices implemented in Colombia from the late-1980s onwards, as I will show throughout the chapters.

The fourth implication of the externalization of the “drug problem” is related to the groups most often associated with “deviant conducts” associated to the “drug problem”<sup>38</sup>. As we will see with the discussion about

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<sup>38</sup> As mentioned on footnote number 7, the “externalization” characterizing the problematization of drugs in the United States also had effects inside its territory. By the early-20<sup>th</sup> century, the prohibitionist discourse was based on the “moral degenerated habits” of specific social groups (mostly immigrants and blacks), to whom drug addiction was discursively associated (CAMPBELL, 1992, p. 205; RODRIGUES, 2008). According to Campbell, “Although they make up only 11 percent of the population, the black community's percentage of drug arrests has risen from 30 percent to nearly 40 percent since the emergence of crack” (CAMPBELL, 1992, p. 206). Although falling outside the scope of this research, which is concerned with how the logic of externalization affected the

the vocabulary of “narcoguerrilla” and “narcoterrorism”, the counternarcotic policies advanced by the United States confined the “drug problem” not only to the “nations plagued by narcotics”: military and police operations comprehended in such policies targeted specific groups. Although the idea of a “combination of international criminal trafficking organizations, rural insurgents, and urban terrorists” (THE WHITE HOUSE, 1986, p. 1) suggests the articulation underlying the category of “narcoguerrilla” and “narcoterrorism”, these particular conceptual formulations are not explicitly mentioned in the NSDD 221 or any other legal instrument issued in that period.

Since the early-1980s, however, the term “narcoguerrilla” was repeatedly evoked by the US ambassador in Bogota, Lewis Tambs, as well as in congressional debates. For instance, in a 1984 session in the Senate, the representatives alerted that the guerrillas were connecting their activities with drug trafficking organizations in order to fund their operations (ROJAS, 2006, p. 40). Nevertheless, by then, the predominant position among US agencies was that the guerrillas had an indirect participation in drug trafficking, mainly through the tax called *gramaje*, to the surveillance of crops and laboratories and to the tax charged over the use of clandestine airplane tracks in regions controlled by these armed groups (ROJAS, 2006, p. 40). In other words, the guerrillas were not found at the core of the construction of the “drug problem”.

It was not before the 1990s that the term “narcoguerrillas” was used in a more systematic way. Indeed, the 1990s are associated with an increasing presence of armed groups in almost all strategic regions for the production of cocaine in the country<sup>39</sup> (INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, 2005; ECHANDÍA, 2006). In 1993, the US General Accounting Office (GAO) published a report aiming at informing the debates in the House of Representatives on counternarcotic policies implemented in

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construction of Colombia as a “problematic country”, the analysis developed by Campbell highlights this double effect of externalization: identifying the “source of the problem” both in the “drug producing countries” and in the “outsiders” within American society.

<sup>39</sup> It is relevant to consider that the paramilitary groups were also involved with coca leaf crops and clandestine laboratories, but the expression coined by the US government makes only reference to the guerrillas – asymmetry which is also evident in the operations backed by the US.



Colombia. The document underlined US Embassy's and DEA's reports on the close links between insurgency and drug trafficking (GAO, 1993, p. 26) – which, according to the US ambassador, required that the military conducted “both counterinsurgency and counternarcotic missions” (GAO, 1993, p. 27).

It is in Plan Colombia that we can find this reading in its most explicit form. The priorities revealed through the distribution of the resources mobilized in Plan Colombia points to an emphasis on counternarcotic initiatives (VILLAMIZAR, 2003; ROJAS, 2006; PABÓN A., 2008; VARGAS V., 2012, p. 186). Between 2000 and 2006, the US foreign aid to Colombia achieved US\$ 4.7 billion, of which more than 80% (US\$ 3.8 billion) were destined to weapons, helicopters, equipment, training and fumigation (ISACSON, 2006). However, the Plan specified that the Colombian Armed Forces were not allowed to use the equipment provided to counternarcotic operations by the United States against the guerrillas (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 51). Months after the approval of Plan Colombia, however, this restriction was suspended after the FARC took over a police station in Arboleda, in the end of July 2000 (ROJAS, 2006, p. 52). Resulting in 17 police agents killed, the attack occurred 150 km away from Bogotá, suggesting that the FARC had the military capacity to approach the capital. From this moment on, the United States authorized the use of police and military equipment to counterinsurgency operations in Colombia (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 51). The creation of the Counternarcotic Battalions in 1999 within the Colombian Army is revealing on how counterinsurgency was translated into counternarcotic terms: indeed, as we will see more attentively on Section 5.3, these battalions were responsible for eradication and interdiction operations very similar to those undertaken by the Colombian National Police's DIRAN: fumigation, destruction of processing laboratories, and detention of “narcoterrorists”, for instance (PABÓN A., 2008, p. 162-163).

Thus, rather than leading to the reformulation of the US policies towards Colombia, the vocabulary of “narcoguerrilla” allowed for counternarcotic policies to be associated with the Colombian armed conflict. The linkage between guerrillas and drug trafficking was based on the claim

that the latter was the main funding source for the former: as a consequence, eradicating illicit crops meant also weakening the guerrillas military capacity, contributing “thereby” to peace in Colombia. The content of the strategy, however, had not been changed: it was still focused on eradication and interdiction through war and law enforcement policies – but now with an additional “positive effect”. The 2002 National Security Strategy, issued during George W. Bush’s administration, clearly expresses the rationale mentioned above:

Parts of Latin America confront regional conflict, especially arising from the violence of drug cartels and their accomplices. This conflict and unrestrained narcotics trafficking could imperil the health and security of the United States. Therefore, we have developed an active strategy to help the Andean nations adjust their economies, enforce their laws, defeat terrorist organizations, and cut off the supply of drugs (...) In Colombia, we recognize the link between terrorist and extremist groups that challenge the security of the state and drug trafficking activities that help finance the operations of such groups<sup>40</sup> (THE WHITE HOUSE, 2002 *Apud* VARGAS V., 2012, p. 186).

Although the claim underlying the idea of “narcoguerrilla” is a contested one<sup>41</sup>, it has permeated the debates in the US Congress and resulted in the full depreciation of these armed groups: whatever the political project these guerrillas claimed to represent or defend when they were founded (PÉCAUT, 2010), it was considered lost by such a perspective. Similarly to the discussion developed on Section 2.1, when merging drug trafficking and guerrilla in the same formulation, the concept of “narcoguerrilla” stood out the rent-seeking aspect of these armed groups and silenced any possibility of political claim underlying their activities. This process of depreciation of the guerrillas was radicalized after September 11, when the term “narcoguerrilla” was escalated to

<sup>40</sup> The “regional plan” mentioned in the excerpt above is the Andean Counterdrug Initiative. Approved in 2003, with 46.2% of its US\$ 882 million destined to fumigation of coca leaf crops and other eradication policies in Colombia, while the remaining share was distributed among Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Brazil, Panama, and Venezuela.

<sup>41</sup> Chernick (2005) and Pécaut (2006; 2010), for instance, argue that the mobilization of drug trafficking resources by the guerrillas is not a sufficient condition for privileging “greed” – in Collier’s (2000) terms – instead of political claims. According to these authors, the resources pursued by the FARC in narcotraffic are in service of a political project. For Chernick (2005, p. 205), “[t]he Colombian experience suggests that resource mobilization (greed) alone does not explain the origins or the duration of the war. Other factors – such as grievances, ideology, leadership, military strategy, and international factors – are also key”.

“narcoterrorism”. Such a move was advanced during both George W. Bush (2001-2009) and Álvaro Uribe Vélez (2002-2010) administrations under the claim that the former expression was anachronistic in the context of the threat of “terrorism”. In a hearing held in the US Congress in October 10, 2004, with the title “US Southern Command (SouthCom) Struggles to Justify its Role in the War on Terror”, the COHA researchers Eleanor Thomas and Lindsay Thomas argued that the idea of “narcoterrorism” was pervasive among US high-ranked military officers within the SouthCom by that time. In the analysis the researchers presented to the US Congress, they quoted Lieutenant General Bantz Craddock, former Assistant Deputy Director for Strategy to the Secretary of the State, according to whom:

the terms “insurgents” or “guerrillas” are less applicable today than in the past. I believe the term “narcoterrorists” is more appropriate, given the fact that the center of gravity for these groups is the incredible financial support they get from illicit drug trafficking, which motivates them to protect and manage the entire process of growing, processing, and trafficking illicit drugs (US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, 2004, p. 23243).

Despite the claim of anachronism, it is worth underlining that “terrorism” itself has not emerged in the context of the global war on terror; it has been evoked since the 1960s by US agencies to refer to a tactic/strategy (for instance, bombings, hijackings and kidnappings) aimed at instilling fear in the population (BONDITTI, 2014). In this case, however, the mobilization of the category “narcoterrorism” in Colombia resulted in the expansion of the outreach of the US “war on terror”. This has been done without re-articulating the terms upon which the US approach to Colombia was based. According to Colin Powell, Secretary of State by then, “we really should remove this barrier between narco trafficking activities and narcoterrorist activities. (...) It all essentially leads to the same end, and that is the destruction of the Colombian democracy”<sup>42</sup> (US DEPARTMENT OF

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<sup>42</sup> A more complete version of the excerpt reads: “For a number of years, our efforts were strictly directed at narco trafficking. Congress wanted to make sure that we didn't get involved in the other aspects of the terrorism situation in Colombia. But after 9/11, as we looked at terrorist activities around the world, and maybe the FARC and the AUC and the ELN do not have global reach in the sense that al-Qaida has global reach, but when you start to see members of the IRA in Colombia. [...] [T]he President, since 9/11, has increased the attention we have given to terrorism of all forms, even if they may not all be of the form of al-Qaida. [...] we really should remove this barrier between narco trafficking

STATE, 2003, n.p.). From this moment on, the Colombian armed conflict was increasingly interpreted as the main terrorist threat in the Americas. In this context, Colombian armed groups were recurrently evoked as an example when trying to show that the anti-terrorist crusade led by the United States was not restricted to Islamic organizations (ROJAS, 2006, p. 54).

As we have seen, the juxtaposition of “narcoterrorism” to “narcoguerrilla” did not imply a change of repertoire of US policies towards Colombia, only the updating of its regime of justification to the “war on terror”. The picture built through the agglutination of these elements has had two main implications. First of all, guerrilla and terrorism came to be understood as manifestations of the same phenomenon. Secondly, the radical otherness characterizing the framing of the enemy as a terrorist (BONDITTI, 2014) resulted in the full depreciation of the guerrillas, for “there is no dialogue with terrorists”. As these specific readings of the problems also prescribe a set of solutions claimed as appropriate, this radical framing of the guerrillas implied a transformation in terms of intensity in the use of violence in Colombia.

As we have seen on Section 2.1, however, “terrorism” was not only incorporated to the 1980 Penal Code, but it also came to be recurrently mobilized due to the expanded margins of what was conceived as a “disturbance to public order”. In addition to that, the strengthening of the punitive approach towards “pernicious substances” characterizing the 1980s in Colombia resulted in the framing of drugs as a “public order problem” – and increasingly so. I argued that one of the main effects of the combination of these processes was that guerillas, drugs and terrorism were brought closer in the problematization of violence in Colombia. Indeed, the discussion here developed shows how the articulation of these processes throughout the decades nurtured the claim that the main problem of Colombia was the violence perpetrated by illegal armed groups, whose profits resulting from drug trafficking made the continuation of their military capacity building possible, thereby corroding democratic

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activities and narcoterrorist activities. [...] It all essentially leads to the same end, and that is the destruction of the Colombian democracy”.

institutions in Colombia. As we will see on Section 3.1, this rendering of the “Colombian problems” is the condition under which Colombia has come to be the object of disputed claims, and the condition under which its performance in the implementation of the solutions articulated to its problems has come to be the object of measuring tools.

## 2.3 Conclusion

In this Chapter, I have discussed a specific problematization of violence in Colombia, that is, the main processes through which Colombia came to be framed as a “problematic country”. Having walked through the system of problematizations constituted by the “problem of violence”, the “problem of drugs”, and the “problem of the guerrillas” on Section 2.1, I analyzed how these processes intersected with the so-called “war on drugs” advanced by the United States (Section 2.2). As we have seen, the combination of the processes mentioned above resulted in a very specific reading of violence in Colombia: one deriving from the activity of guerrillas which found in drug trafficking the source of financial resources for their activity.

Importantly, these processes converged towards a delinquent and de-politicizing approach towards the reading of violence. As the discussion developed on Section 2.1 shows, such features were already cemented in Colombia when the system of problematizations in this Andean country intersected with the externalization of the “drug problem” by the United States. Likewise, the inscription of delinquency within the vocabulary of “terrorism” was fermented in Colombia since the 1980s, when incorporated to the Penal Code and recurrently activated through police and military operations.

The analysis developed in this Chapter also reveals that the framing of the “Colombian problems” already contains the possibilities within which solutions can be articulated. As emphasized on Section 2.2, externalization and militarization constituted the two main features of the “war on drugs” outlined in mid-1980s in the United States. In other words, the construction of the “problem of drugs” was translated, during Ronald Reagan’s

administration, into law enforcement and military policies whose implementation was concentrated on the “supply-side”<sup>43</sup> – that is “drug producing countries”. In the next Section, we turn to the profusion of analyses which, by mid-2000s, aimed at measuring the impact of such policies.

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<sup>43</sup> It is important to highlight that the “externalization” also had effects over the US territory. Among them, it is worth mentioning that within the American society there was an externalization produced through the construction of the “problem of drugs”, that is, the framing of specific social groups as the source of the problem within the United States – “outsiders” within the American society. See: Campbell (1992, pp. 204-207).

### **3. The success and its “monsters”: disputing the metrics, dodging the criticism**

What are the mechanisms through which Colombia has come to be framed from a “problematic country” to a “success story”? The point of departure for the discussion advanced on Chapter 2 was the logics that any “success story” is based on the idea that a set of problems has been overcome. As we have seen, the externalization characterizing the construction of Colombia as a “problematic country” allowed for the latter to be framed as an object of analysis. The discussion developed so far also showed that the diagnoses and the knowledge they are anchored on cannot be detached from a specific problematization of violence in Colombia. Having walked through the main axes through which “solutions” were provided to “Colombian problems”, in this Chapter, I explore the main elements constituting the web of criteria allowing for the “success” to be told.

More specifically, in the next pages, I dissect the metrics used to assess Colombia’s performance in the implementation of counternarcotic policies. In 2006, when the possibility of renewing Plan Colombia was under scrutiny, there was a profusion of efforts aiming at measuring the impact of the policies comprehended in that initiative. By discussing how the Colombian “success” became a focus of disputed claims and measuring tools, I argue that the inquiries about Colombia, the diagnoses elaborated about its problems and their correspondent treatments, as well as the disputes about the success of the policies implemented in Colombia are all embedded in the same discursive field. The latter is a system of relations whose constitutive elements are but its criteria of formation and (constant) transformation (FOUCAULT, 1991). It is not a coherent whole, but a dispersion of objects, operations, concepts (FOUCAULT, 1991, pp. 54-5) and authors (FOUCAULT, 1981, p. 64), and they are always found in relation to one another in the discourse. This dispersion is, nonetheless, ordered by a set of principles (FOUCAULT, 1981, pp. 59-60). In this regard, the first point I want to highlight is that it is only possible to develop

such discussion through an analysis of the tensions *between* these expert groups. In other words, I will not focus on the specific positions of these experts, but on how these positions are always defined through the disputes between these groups.

Analyzing the main fronts in which such disputes took place results in the identification of two categories of criticism. The first one corresponds to “internal criticism”, that is, arguments aiming at reforming measurement tools without proposing the re-articulation of the pillars upon which the problematization of Colombia rests. On Section 3.1, I show how most of the assessments of counternarcotic policies evolved towards an econometric jargon, in search for accurate data and models that made the best translation between data entry and behavior in the drug market. Insulated in their quest for precision, debates constituted by such criticism did not reveal concerns with the constitutive elements of the problematization from which the policies under scrutiny derived. On Section 3.2, contrastingly, I explore what I call “the monstrosities” (FOUCAULT, 1981) of this discursive field, that is, those criticism which propose alternative problematizations of violence in Colombia. Here, I draw special attention to how the intelligence apparatus has been mobilized against these “monsters”, constantly observing and differentiating the “dangerousness” attached to groups whose criticism towards counternarcotic policies project the Colombian state to the center of the problematization of violence in that country.

Read as a whole, Chapters 2 and 3 discuss the conditions under which the “success” is claimed, as well as the silencing mechanisms allowing for a specific story to be told. I thereby expect to provide elements for us to understand the limits of what the “success story” can be about, and under which terms it produces a specific past and present of Colombia.

### **3.1. Measuring success: assessing the impact of counternarcotic policies in Colombia**

As we have seen on Chapter 2, the predominant reading of violence in Colombia has been consolidated as one deriving from drug trafficking.



By its turn, the latter has been understood as an activity mainly undertaken by guerrillas – hence referred as “narcoguerrillas” – and, following September 11, the reading of these armed groups was re-articulated as “narcoterrorism”. I have also argued that this problematization of Colombia has been unequivocally attached to a specific set of solutions. More specifically, the preservation of the prefix “narco” in the re-articulation from “narcoguerrilla” to “narcoterrorism” reveals the backbone of the juxtaposition of these policies<sup>44</sup>. Indeed, since the 2000s, the justification of Plan Colombia was based on the fight against illicit drugs, that is, the Plan operated with the expectation that, through effective counternarcotic policies, the guerrillas were to be militarily weakened and then defeated, as discussed on Chapter 2. In other words, the defeat of “narcoterrorism” would naturally derive from an effective “war on drugs”. Given the importance of the latter, I focus my discussion on how the performance of Colombian agencies in the counternarcotic operations launched through Plan Colombia has been scrutinized by a set of measurement tools.

Importantly, the implementation of Plan Colombia, in 1999, is inscribed in a broader context of the emergence of a “managerial logics” in the domain of public policy. Known as “New Public Management”, such rationale was constituted by the absorption, in the 1970s and 1980s, of practices which were already institutionalized within the private sector, aiming at optimizing the use of public resources and improving the techniques mobilized in the assessment of the impact of public policies (RUIZ V. *et al.*, 2006, p. 205). The investment of this rationale in the work of governmental agencies required the translation of routine procedures and “policy problems” into “numerical representations of complex phenomena intended to render these simpler and more comparable” with other phenomena<sup>45</sup> (DAVIS *et al.*, 2012, p. 8). In more concrete terms, this

<sup>44</sup> Although counterterrorism policies do play an important role in the solutions articulated to address the “Colombian problems”, they operate within counternarcotic terms, that is, based upon the logic of “narcoterrorism”, as it has been argued on Chapter 2.

<sup>45</sup> Of course, the mobilization of numbers in the rationality of government was not invented by the 1980s. According to Foucault, the use of statistics as a technical knowledge which is essential to the exercise of power emerged in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries in Europe as a technical knowledge used to calculate the resources of the state (FOUCAULT, 2007, p. 274). Through the quantification of the strengths and weaknesses of the state, this administrative apparatus allowed for a more productive use of the bodies in order to

“managerial logics” involved a goal-oriented organization of work, the *a priori* definition of control and evaluation methods, and the use of indicators. By mid-1990s, these main features of the New Public Management were already guiding – though with different degrees of pervasiveness – the work of governmental agencies throughout the world.

In the United States, this context is illustrated by the Government Performance and Results Act, approved in 1993. Such a legal instrument aimed at avoiding “waste and inefficiency in Federal programs” (US CONGRESS, 1993, Section 2.a.1), improving the provision of adequate “information on program performance” (US CONGRESS, 1993, Section 2.a.2), as well as rationalizing “policymaking, spending decisions and program oversight” by focusing on performance and results (US CONGRESS, 1993, Section 2.a.3). With those main purposes, the Government Performance and Results Act required that US federal agencies systematically incorporated strategic plans and performance reports in their bureaucratic routines. The “focus on results, service quality, and customer satisfaction” (US CONGRESS, 1993, Section 2.b.3), a characteristic practice within private companies, suggests that its projection to the public policy domain would improve the relation between government and citizens. To be sure, it assumes that US federal agencies would provide better services if their routine was guided by the objective of making sure

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increase state forces. However, the conditions for the emergence of this *savoir* are not exclusively found in the state apparatus: universities have played a major role in the development of statistical knowledge. To be fair, Foucault refers to the central role played by German universities in the development of what came to be known as *Polizeiwissenschaft*, that is, “the science of police” (FOUCAULT, 2007, p. 318). Statistics and police, however, walk hand in hand in Foucault’s analysis. Through discipline, the police organizes the social life and, in doing so, it produces knowledge about the social (FOUCAULT, 1995, p. 220). Now, this complex political equation of ordering the social raises the question of scale: how to know the (infinite) disorders to be put right in the social body? It is in this sense that Foucault claims that “[p]olice makes statistics necessary, but police also makes statistics possible” (2007, p. 315). At the same time statistics allows the police to produce information about the social body, the police is the condition for the emergence of statistics. Therefore, there is an osmosis between knowledge developed in universities and knowledge used as an administrative apparatus of the state. More than that: this technical knowledge has been “statized”, that is, absorbed by the state apparatus because it was useful to the exercise of power. Such claim is made more explicitly by Foucault when referring to the police. According to the author, the modern police results from the “statization” of state-control of disciplinary mechanisms – of which the police is but one (1995, p. 213). In this sense, the centralized police we easily associate with the modern state is seen, through Foucault’s terms, as a state apparatus circumscribing already existent functions of surveillance and order into a unitary, administrative institution (1995, p. 213).

that “customers were satisfied” with the quality of their service (RUIZ V. *et al.*, 2006, p. 206). In the same way, citizens would feel that the “public goods market” would be guided by their consumption demands if treated as “customers”, rather than citizens. Furthermore, the requirement that agencies worked with objective, quantifiable, and measurable performance goals and that assessment became a regular practice within the workflow of such agencies relied on the assumption that more efficient and effective policies would result from a decision-making and policy-making process based on “objective information” (US CONGRESS, 1993, Section 2.b.5).

Similarly, by mid-1990s, a series of diagnoses produced inside and outside the Colombian government pointed to the need for a “cultural transformation” in the National Police (RUIZ V. *et al.*, 2006, p. 203). In response to a poll on the citizens’ perception about the police, General Rosso José Serrano, the Director-General of the Police, created a “technical group”<sup>46</sup> whose task was to identify the main problems in the institution. The reforms suggested in 1995 by the “technical group” included an indicator-based assessment of the activities of the Police, as well as the elaboration of performance reports. However, the former was diffusely incorporated to the bureaucratic routine, and the latter was based on forms considered as confusing, resulting in their archival even before they were translated into subsidy for the performance reports (RUIZ V., 2006, p. 206). As regards the elaboration of “strategic plans” that could guide the work of the Colombian National Police and define parameters for the assessment of its performance, a first attempt in this direction occurred in 1997, but without a comprehensive format: each unit undertook its own strategic planning (RUIZ V., 2006, p. 209). The first Strategic Plan referring to the Police as a whole was only launched in 2003 (RUIZ V., 2006, p. 209). In this sense, although the implementation of some of the elements constituting a “managerial logics” was already being instilled in the Colombian National Police by mid-1990s, this process was still rarefied. More than that: it was remarkably asymmetrical among the Police units, as we will see in the next pages.

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<sup>46</sup> Known as *Grupo de los 30* (“Group of the 30”), this “technical” commission was headed by a civil advisor and integrated by numerous police professionals.

That the use of metrics in order to assess public policy performance has been increasingly pervasive in Colombia is certainly of interest to our discussion. However, I am particularly interested in how such a dynamics is related to the “success story”. In order to do that, I will explore the main terms under which the metrics used to assess counternarcotic policies was disputed, as well as the effects of those disputes. My objective here is not to identify a specific metrics which is considered to be “truer” or technically superior in relation to others. Rather, I am mostly concerned with what could be called the “politics of numbers”, that is, the struggle between these metrics and the narratives constituted through them about the world. To the extent that measurement tools are always based upon a specific standard, their use “embodies a theoretical claim about the appropriate standards for evaluating (...) what a good society is” (DAVIS *et al.*, 2012, p. 9). The disputes for the “most appropriate” metrics are, therefore, struggles between claims to authority based on expert knowledge<sup>47</sup> (HUYSMANS, 2006). Since the production of knowledge about the “vital public needs” (US CONGRESS, 1993, Section 2.a.1) addressed through a specific policy cannot be detached from the problematization from which the identification of a “need” has arisen, the investment of this expert knowledge in the dispute with other metrics is unescapably a way of establishing a hierarchy between prioral domains within that problematization.

This play of forces between different “expert groups” will be here referred to as a discursive field – one which emerged from the problematization of “the Colombian problem” we have analyzed on Chapter 2. Once the discursive field is a system of relations involving objects, operations, concepts and authors, “drugs” are not the object from which the discursive field emerged. Because the solutions articulated to address “the problem of Colombia” have been so emphatically translated into a counternarcotic logics, much of the disputes in this discursive field are strongly attached to the knowledge built around the issue of “drugs”. However, as we have seen on Chapter 2, the problematization of violence in

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<sup>47</sup> According to Huysmans (2006), these claims to authority permeate the routine of experts and aim at providing or consolidating a justification system in which these experts enjoy a privileged position within the architecture they are inscribed in.

Colombia as a drug-related one has been crystallized through the intersection of numerous processes, privileging the police and the military as the protagonists of the solutions to this problem. Drugs have thereby been built as a problem in a very specific way and it is *only* in relation to these historical processes, to the operations ordering the production of knowledge and to the disputing claims of authority that drugs have been placed as the main object of this discursive field. Consequently, not everything that was said about drugs was considered as true, or even as having a potential for such. Likewise, not everyone speaking about drugs had a recognized credential for claiming it as truth in this discursive field. As it has been mentioned, this system of relations, although not a coherent whole, is ordered through principles of dispersion – among which, the numeric representation of complex phenomena, through which claims to truth are evaluated, and either conserved for having a potential of truth or dismissed at once.

In the primacy of numbers as a filter to the terrain of the true, there is a claim to “scientificity” which derives from “individualized discourses” (FOUCAULT, 1991, p. 54) such as the one we have come to associate with Economics (econometrics and rational decision making, in particular), Law (especially criminology) and Medicine (such as epidemiology and psychiatry) (RODRIGUES, 2008; VARGAS, 2008). In this Chapter, I concentrate my attention in four main clusters: governmental agencies directly involved in the implementation of counternarcotic policies; economics-based academia; unionists; and human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In this Section, I show how governmental agencies and economics-based academia disputed the “more appropriate” metrics to assess counternarcotic policies, relying on a set of assumptions from Economics. On Section 3.2, I discuss the mechanisms through which the criticism vocalized by unionists and human rights organizations were marginalized from this discursive field. I am aware that these clusters do not reflect the complexity of what I am here referring as the discursive field of

the metrics of counternarcotic policies<sup>48</sup>. Nonetheless, I am also aware that mapping the latter would constitute a research project on its own.

In light of the remarks registered above, the selection of economics-based academia and counternarcotic agencies was based on the criterion that these clusters had the most significant resonance in the Colombian “success story”. More specifically, some of the main elements constituting the “solutions” provided to the problem of violence in Colombia rely on concepts such as rationality, efficiency and supply-demand. Indeed, eradication (i.e. the destruction of drugs or the control over key intermediary ingredients used in the production chain) and interdiction (i.e. preventing drugs shipments to penetrate the US territory), the two main axes of counternarcotic policies, aim at increasing drug prices in the retail market (“that is”, the United States) (WALSH, 2004). Eradicating coca leaf crops, destructing drug producing laboratories, seizing drug shipments and arresting “drug traffickers” or leaders of drug trafficking organizations would increase the costs of production. “Drug producers” would, as a consequence, pass the increasing costs to the consumer, raising the price in the retail market (MacCOUN; REUTER, 2004, pp. 76-78). Facing higher prices, the consumer would “naturally” stop buying drugs – or so the argument goes –, and drug trafficking would become an unprofitable business (MacCOUN; REUTER, 2004, pp. 76-78). This whole logic assumes a chain of events involving rational actors, whose behavior is rationally anticipated by policy makers, who, based on those assumptions, create incentives and constraints to modify that behavior and achieve the expected outcome (RASMUSSEN; BENSON, 2003, pp. 679-683; MacCOUN; REUTER, 2004, pp. 76-78).

When Plan Colombia was launched, in 1999, it had only one specific goal: “to reduce the cultivation, processing and distribution of narcotics by

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<sup>48</sup> This discursive field involves experts in the domain of Medicine, Chemistry, Pharmaceutics, and Psychology, just to name a few. In the case of Medicine, for instance, it is important to remark that almost every antidrug regulation is anchored on the authority of the medical *savoir* (RODRIGUES, 2008; VARGAS, 2008), to which is granted a gatekeeping function in two main directions. Firstly, by incorporating professionals of the domain of Medicine and Pharmaceutics in permanent commissions working with governments in the updating of lists specifying substances considered as harmful to “human health”. Secondly, as the filter separating “legality” from “illegality” through the definition of the exceptional use – and its doses – of specific drugs when treating a patient.

50%” in six years, that is, from 1999 to 2005. It did not present any other numeric goal or indicator to be used as reference in order to assess the implementation of counternarcotic policies. On the other hand, the six objectives constituting Plan Colombia do suggest – though in general lines – the metrics through which the major goal of the Plan was expected to be achieved. Among the key actions established in the Objective No. 1 (titled “Strengthen the fight against drug trafficking and dismantle the trafficking organizations through an integrated effort by the armed forces”), the Plan mentioned the destruction of “processing structures and improve land, air, ocean and river interdiction of drugs and illegal precursor chemicals” – indicating that both the destruction of processing laboratories and the seizure of drug and precursor chemicals shipments constituted an appropriate metrics to assess the impact of Plan Colombia. Importantly, the concern with violence is only timidly mentioned in the text, and in strict connection with “drug-related violence” (Objective No. 4: “Neutralize and combat violence agents allied with the drug trade”)<sup>49</sup>.

In addition to these two indicators, the assessment of any progress in the counternarcotic operations was also based on hectares fumigated; drug traffickers/combatants arrested or killed; and number of weapons captured. These were not new indicators: they were extensively used in the 1980s, when the “war on drugs” was intensified against the major drug cartels in Colombia (DEA, n.d., pp. 31-32, pp. 36-37). However, the development of

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<sup>49</sup> Although Objective No. 4 did not present any specific goal, it did mention that the number of arms seized was a key indicator, once it specified, as one of the corresponding lines of action, to “halt the acquisition of arms by those groups that profit from drug trafficking”. Nevertheless, Objective No. 4 does not contain any guideline according to which the “increase security for citizens against kidnapping, extortion, and terrorism” can be achieved. In the Objectives No. 2 and 3 (respectively, “Strengthen the judicial system and combat corruption” and “Neutralize the drug trade’s financial system and seize its resources for the state”), words such as “strengthen” (institutions, for instance), “reinforce” and “support” (anti-corruption groups, e.g.) were mentioned, but without any further specification on how that would be assessed. Likewise, Objective No. 5 (“Integrate national initiatives into regional and international efforts”) did not specify how or what kind of “information and intelligence [would be shared] with other security agencies in the country”, nor how Colombian agencies could “Contribute to and coordinate with regional and international operations and efforts”. Following a series of (general) actions related to interdiction and eradication, only Objective No. 6 presented a contrasting approach: “Strengthen and expand plans for alternative development in areas affected by drug trafficking”. The latter was expected to be achieved through the provision of “job opportunities and social services to people living in the cultivation zones” and promotion of “public information campaigns on the dangers of illegal drugs.

technologies as well as the production of knowledge about “drug markets” have allowed for the expansion of data collection horizons, as well as the refinement of those numbers (WALSH, 2004, p. 4) – which, by their turn, reinforced the claim for accuracy. In this sense, the incorporation of a specific indicator to a measurement matrix and the development of methodological criteria through which such indicators were formulated is both a cause and an effect of an increasing specialization of knowledge on drugs. The claim to authority in the debates about how to measure the impact of counternarcotic policies increasingly came to walk hand in hand with the claim to accuracy. There were three main conditions from which this claim to authority derived: i) an in-depth knowledge within a given scope; ii) a technological device (i.g. a satellite); and iii) a “hands-on” experience. In Colombia, the branch of the police which was specialized in the implementation of the eradication policies was the Antinarcotic Direction (DIRAN, in Spanish). As an illustration on that claim to precision, in its 2005 report, the DIRAN highlighted three record-breaking achievements in its performance during that year: the seizure of 74.418 kilos of cocaine, “the greatest volume registered since 1975” (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 2005, p. 15); the eradication of 172.946 hectares of coca leaf crops, “the greatest area fumigated since 1974” (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 2005, p. 15); and the destruction of 910 laboratories, “the highest number since 1990” (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 2005, p. 15). The DIRAN’s report illustrates not only how the debate about the performance of counternarcotic policies was based on numbers, indicators and goals – hence the repeated mention of “record breaking” –, but also the level of accuracy of the numbers evoked in the debate – with each unit of measurement accounted (WALSH, 2004; THOUMI, 2005). Likewise the Colombian Army started to publish the numbers of its own performance on its website. The most recent “Operational Results” report (January-April 2017) highlights four axes of operations, each constituted by specific numbers achieved: i) “seizure of war material”: 816 arms seized; 135.117 ammunitions seized; and 155 launching devices; ii) “drug trafficking”: localization of 721 production infrastructure; seizure of 92,725 kg of solid input and 994,269 GL of liquid



input; and 18,721 kg of drugs seized; iii) “seizure of explosive material”: 2,730 explosive artifacts seized; and 1,456 antipersonnel mines; and iv) “weakened structures of illegal armed groups”: 4,213 captures, and 391 voluntary surrenders<sup>50</sup>.

Such logic is expressed through and reinforced by the pervasive use of metrics relating to each part of the chain (processing laboratories, inputs, and drugs) specified above by those agencies directly engaged in counternarcotic operations. This particular way of attesting the efficiency of drug policies has been not only normalized throughout the first six years of Plan Colombia, but also strengthened. By 2005, the US Congress was expected to give its verdict on the renewal of Plan Colombia. As the assessment of public policies was marked by a goal-oriented logics, in the United States, the main questions driving the discussions on the performance of counternarcotic policies included: has Plan Colombia met its goals? What were the impacts of Plan Colombia? At which costs they were achieved? By that time, the puzzle facing the US government was the following: although US and Colombian agencies have registered record numbers in most of the interdiction and eradication indicators, the retail price remained stable in the US market, and Colombia remained as the provider of 90% of the cocaine entering the US (GAO, 2005). Instead of triggering the reformulation of the approach adopted towards drugs, this diagnosis has led to debates on how to improve the metrics used to assess the impact of counternarcotic policies. In other words, discussions aimed at refining the repertoire which already existed. According to a report prepared by the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) to inform a Congress Session held in 2005 on Plan Colombia, such a refinement could be achieved if agencies shared their data and harmonized the indicators they used<sup>51</sup> (GAO, 2005, pp. 25-26).

<sup>50</sup> See: <<https://www.ejercito.mil.co/#>>. Access on: May 4, 2017.

<sup>51</sup> The report elaborated by the GAO was focused on the coordination of US agencies operating in counternarcotic efforts through the Joint Interagency Task Force-South (JIATF-South). Based in Key West (Florida), under the coordination of the US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) – one of the nine Unified Combatant Commands in the Department of Defense, responsible for military operations in Central and South America – the JIATF-South has primary responsibility for US detection and monitoring drug trafficking in the transit zone connecting the Andean region to the US. Within the JIATF-South, the Department of Justice provides prosecutorial and law enforcement assistance;

The lack of coordination among those engaged in counternarcotic policies, as suggested by the GAO report, was indeed one of the traits of the constellation of agencies agglomerated around Plan Colombia. In part, the lack of coordination is an unescapable effect of the increasing specialization characterizing the production of knowledge and numbers about drugs. At the same time, the key areas in which operations were undertaken were understood as parts of the chain of operations aiming at a major goal: to reduce the cultivation, processing and distribution of narcotics by 50% in six years. This aspect pushed agencies towards connecting their achievements with the main goal in order to prove their relevance in the counternarcotic architecture. As regards the first aspect, the Colombian National Police reports that, “Considering that the estimation of cocaine production based upon cultivated area is 4.7 kilos per hectare, the amount eradicated in 2005 implies that 812.8 metric tons of cocaine were prevented from entering the distribution chain” – corresponding to 80 billion dollars

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the Department of Defense provides maritime patrol aircraft, helicopters, and ships; the Department of Homeland Security provides maritime patrol aircraft, ships, and law enforcement assistance primarily through the Coast Guard (which also has the operational control of most interdiction operations) and the Bureau for Customs and Border Protection (CBP) (GAO, 2005, p. 2). According to the GAO, the performance measures developed by the Department of Defense focused on the number of disruptions of cocaine trafficking events but had no specific goal to be achieved – neither in terms of volume of drugs seized, nor in terms of interdiction events. On the other hand, the Coast Guard had specified goals aiming at reducing the flow of cocaine: for instance, its goal for 2004 is to remove 15% of the cocaine flow to the US through the transit zone. The CBP, contrastingly, focused the development of its metrics on operational readiness (that is, how fast it responded when requested), but the rates resulting from this effort were not specifically related to the transit zone, nor to counternarcotic policies (GAO, 2005, p. 25). The lack of convergence and precision in these metrics has a political use in the context of competition between these expert groups. If all of the agencies which are part of the JIATF-South were subjected to the same issue-oriented goals, the comparison between their performances would constitute an easy task. Under these circumstances, these agencies would be more exposed to scrutiny. Moreover, that the CBP had based its performance assessment on readiness rates suggests that this agency, as part of the Department of Homeland Security, may be more interested in having a good performance on a function which could be valued and applied in other issue-areas. The lack of precision of the goal set by the Department of Defense, by its turn, can be interpreted, as an example, in light of the reduced availability of P-3 maritime patrol aircraft, the US Navy’s primary maritime patrol aircraft. According to the Department of Defense, if persisting, this trend would damage the JIATF-South’s ability to detect and monitor vessels suspected of transporting illicit drugs in the transit zone (GAO, 2005, p. 29). Therefore, the absence of any specific goal can be read as a way to avoid being examined in the future according to standards which could not be kept with, given the declining availability of appropriate equipment. At the same time, registering the number of disruptions can be useful for the Department of Defense in order to support any claim regarding the relevance of its participation on interdiction policies. Justifying its importance within the general interdiction strategy has the double implication of keeping the agency’s privileged position in the US counternarcotic architecture, and upholding future requests for an increase of maritime patrol aircraft P-3, for instance.

away from narcotraffickers and illegal armed groups, according to the report<sup>52</sup> (POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 2005, p. 15). By situating these achievements within the whole production chain, the reports produced by the Colombian National Police highlight not only its participation in the reduction of drug consumption, but also its contribution to alleviate the “burden” falling upon interdiction policies undertaken in the United States.

Agencies directly engaged in the implementation of counternarcotic policies were not the only ones engaged in the debate about the metrics used to assess such policies. Although there were criticism to Plan Colombia since its inception, it has become more recurrent in the context of the renewal of Plan Colombia. The profusion not only of texts (RASMUSSEN; BENSON, 2003, p. 682, fn. 12; TRACE *et al.*, 2004; MacCOUN; REUTER, 2004; THOUMI, 2005; BEWLEY-TAYLOR, 2012) but also of think tanks especially dedicated to monitoring drug policies regarding public spending, assessment tools and impact are indicative of that. How these criticism has resonated in the discursive field, however, was intrinsically related to the principles ordering this system of relations. As long as certain requirements are met, there is room for refinements, improvements and criticisms in the discursive field (FOUCAULT, 1981, p. 59). These requirements classify, separate and hierarchize propositions, defining those which are to be conserved for they have the potential to truth and those which are “destined to disappear without any trace” (FOUCAULT, 1991 p. 60). In other words, “before it can be called true or false, it [a certain proposition] must be ‘in the true’, as Canguilhem would say” (FOUCAULT, 1981, p. 60) – that is, in the terrain of the true. Much of the criticisms drawn against the metrics used in the assessment of counternarcotic policies fell upon the “rules of the game” in this discursive field. To be sure, they do not offer criticisms to the pillars upon which the grid filtering and hierarchizing claims to truth is built, such as the assumption on the rationality of actors, the principle of efficiency as a

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<sup>52</sup> In the original: “Si se tiene en cuenta que la producción estimada de cocaína por hectárea cultivada es de 4.7 kilos, quiere decir que, con la cantidad erradicada en 2005, 812.8 toneladas métricas de cocaína dejaron de entrar a la cadena de distribución. Se evitó así la comercialización de aproximadamente 812 millones de dosis personales y 80,000 millones de dólares dejaron de ingresar a las arcas de los narcotraficantes y los grupos armados ilegales”.

normative driver for public policy management, the primacy of numeric representations, and the boundary between values and objectivity.

In a paper published in 2003, for instance, David W. Rasmussen and Bruce L. Benson (2003), two renowned scholars in the area of drugs, criticize the “war on drugs” for its lack of “rationality”. Arguing that the centralized character of US drug policy is at the root of its inefficiency in achieving its stated purpose, the authors draw from economic theory, for it allows “to see why the incentives and constraints emerging from laws do not promote their stated purpose” (RASMUSSEN; BENSON, 2003, p. 680). As a methodological caution note, the authors add that normative aspects were removed from the analysis, for they are only interested about “measurable costs and benefits” (RASMUSSEN; BENSON, 2003, p. 684). Here is the footnote they add to that:

Issues of civil and economic liberties are undeniably important in this debate, for instance, but the current Article analyzes the efficiency of drug prohibition policies without consideration of the more fundamental issues of individual rights with respect to drug use. (...) Objective rather than moral harms will be the focus of our drug policy analysis because any morals-based policy debate inevitably involves competing and highly subjective values and rights (RASMUSSEN; BENSON, 2003, p. 684).

As suggested by mainstream economic theory, Rasmussen and Benson argue that drug suppliers rationally adjust their behavior to offset the effectiveness of drug policies<sup>53</sup> (RASMUSSEN; BENSON, 2003). Enforcing the seizure of drug trafficking, destroying processing laboratories and increasing interdiction of drug and precursor chemical shipments indeed lead to increasing costs in the supply of drugs – they argue. Workers will demand a higher payment given the greater risks they are exposed to; and the construction of a new laboratory and the replacement of components essential to drug processing. However, the authors claim that drug suppliers adapt to these rising costs in multiple fronts. Since the dismantling of the

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<sup>53</sup> Rasmussen and Benson claim that the same rationality ascribed to actors in the legal markets must be incorporated in any analysis aiming at understanding the behavior of actors in the illicit market: “there is no reason to believe that entrepreneurs in illicit drug markets are any less likely than those in legal markets to engage in these efforts [technological change and product development]” – terms used by the authors in order to describe rational responses to changes in incentives and constraints in the market (RASMUSSEN; BENSON, 2003, p. 700).

Colombian cartels, for instance, drug production was re-articulated into a more dispersed processing: “Suppliers created labs processing cocaine in many Latin American countries, and greatly increased the number of transshipment points (...) making subsequent interdiction efforts much more costly and ineffective” (RASMUSSEN; BENSON, 2003, p. 699). Other kinds of adaptation include the geographic displacement of production (RASMUSSEN; BENSON, 2003, p. 698); the so-called “outcome substitution”, that is, the displacement of the production to a different drug (RASMUSSEN; BENSON, 2003, p. 699); and the substitution of the workers demanding higher payments for others, given that “there is no scarcity of people prepared to enter the drug business to replenish the personnel needs for suppliers” (RASMUSSEN; BENSON, 2003, p. 697).

According to the authors, these adjustments make the expectation that such policies will ultimately lead to increasing drug prices implausible. More than that: the authors claim that keeping the theoretical proposition upon which the whole architecture of drug policies is erected intact, after years of evidences piled up in a different direction, constitutes a matter of faith, not facts (RASMUSSEN; BENSON, 2003, p. 696). Aiming at “rationalizing drug policy”, the authors recommend its de-centralization so that local officials are “more likely to be held accountable for their actions and therefore are more likely to carefully consider the full costs of a largely ineffective drug policy (RASMUSSEN; BENSON, 2003, pp. 733-734). In other words, the key to a rational drug policy lies in its institutional design: through de-centralization, constraints over the preservation of inefficient policies become stronger and the costs for keeping them, higher. Their analysis suggest that this institutional dynamics will lead to a more factual analysis – perhaps even to the change in the approach adopted through US drug policies, from a supply-side to a public health one.

Even strong critics of counternarcotic policies work within the requirements of this discursive field that is being analyzed here. A good example can be found in one of the various texts published by the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) on that matter. Created in the 1970s, the non-governmental organization has defined as one of its three major goals for the 2000’s “to shift U.S. aid for Colombia, Mexico, and

Central America away from military assistance and toward economic and social development programs”<sup>54</sup>. John Walsh, WOLA’s Drug Policy program coordinator, has criticized the engulfment of the US counternarcotic policies by a “flood of numbers” (WALSH, 2004, p. 1) under the argument that it only expresses a “mirage of success” (WALSH, 2004, p. 9). According to the author,

The array of indicators traditionally presented as measures of progress in international drug control (...) undoubtedly convey a sense of action and accomplishment, and give us a sense of the pace at which overseas drug control activities are being conducted. But the number of drug control operations conducted and their immediate accomplishments do not tell us anything about whether progress has been made toward the fundamental U.S. policy goal of making supplies scarce enough to drive up cocaine and heroin prices in the United States (WALSH, 2004, pp. 8-9).

Walsh argues that most of the metrics used by counternarcotic agencies are not reliable because they can be used both as an evidence of a successful operation and as an indicative of the increased drug production and trafficking – as in the case of drug seizure (WALSH, 2004, p. 9). In other words, that greater volumes of drugs are being seized can either mean that interdiction operations are being effective or that the whole network of counternarcotic policies is inefficient in decreasing the volume of drugs trafficked. In addition to that, Walsh argues that eradicated crops must not be considered as an appropriate metrics for assessing the impact of drug policies either. This is so for two main reasons, argues Walsh. Firstly, coca farmers have adapted to aerial fumigation by “planting in smaller plots in remote zones, interspersing their coca with other crops, and taking advantage of taller vegetation to hide their coca from aerial surveillance” (WALSH, 2004, p. 10). Secondly, eradicating coca crops has little impact on the profits of drug trafficking organizations, for leaves respond for a tiny fraction of cocaine’s ultimate retail price in the United States. Walsh uses data from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to show that “For less than US\$ 1,000, traffickers can purchase the coca leaf needed to

<sup>54</sup> Available at: [http://www.wola.org/history\\_of\\_wola](http://www.wola.org/history_of_wola). Access on: January 22, 2016. In addition to that, it is noteworthy that WOLA is one of the members of the Count The Costs, an organization created in 2011 and dedicated to shed light to the human costs of the “war on drugs”. See: <http://www.countthecosts.org/>. Access on: January 22, 2016.

produce a kilogram of cocaine that retails for about US\$ 150,000 in the United States (when sold in US\$ 100 units of one gram each, two-thirds pure)” (WALSH, 2004, p. 15). Furthermore, he points out to the unreliable character of numbers regarding aspects such as crop yield and refining capabilities when it comes to illegal activity. Due to this inescapable inaccuracy, the author argues that a good methodological starting point would be to work with a range, rather than with a point estimate (i.e. a numerical estimate as a single figure) (WALSH, 2004, p. 10).

In support of a “factual debate about how to improve drug policy” (WALSH, 2004, p. 19), Walsh suggests that policymakers focus on price trends instead of eradication, seizures and arrests numbers in order to measure progresses in supply-side drug control policies. That is, the author is arguing that they are looking at the wrong numbers. If price trends were taken “not as an afterthought, but as the point of departure” (WALSH, 2004, p. 18) for assessing the effectiveness of such policies, these would certainly be considered as an inefficient approach. Walsh mentions the same RAND 1994 report cited by Rasmussen and Benson in order to argue that, actually, evidences point to a solid efficiency of a public health approach to the drug problem. Walsh writes: “the effectiveness of drug treatment in reducing drug use is supported by three decades of scientific research and clinical practice (...) every dollar invested in treatment saved the state’s taxpayers seven dollars in future costs, primarily by preventing crime” (WALSH, 2004, p. 18).

These two samples of a recurrent perspective in the debate about the assessment of such policies are revealing of how even analyses arguing for the reformulation of the approach emphasized through drug policies – from a supply-side approach to one of public health – are made within the formal requirements of production of knowledge within this discursive field. Such an approach preserves both an ontology and epistemology based upon the rationality of actors and the separation between morals and objectivity, associated with a language anchored in numeric representations of phenomena and guided by efficiency. Particularly, in such analytical efforts, the problem is presented as a methodological one: it is either found on the design of drug policies, which are not yielding the expected outcomes, or in

the evidences upon which the implementation of such policies rely. In both cases, problems are identified as resulting from imperfections or misinterpretations regarding the incentives and constraints channeled through institutions; and/or from the lack of coordination between different institutions – which, by its turn, can be reduced to a problem of information management or of duplication of work (in other words, lack of efficiency in the use of resources). In the discursive field we are analyzing, this methodological debate has been mostly concerned with the identification of the most appropriate metrics in order to assess the impact of drug policies, how to refine the precision of such metrics and if policies have been efficient according to this logic – that is, at what cost was a given number achieved.

The focus on method has been so pervasive in this discursive field that agencies directly engaged in counternarcotic policies reacted to criticisms with so-called “technical” adjustments in how the components of such policies were presented. From the Fiscal Year (FY) 2003<sup>55</sup> to the FY 2004, for instance, the ONDCP removed from its drug-related budget the spending on prosecution and incarceration of drug offenders. Importantly, these activities responded for a US\$ 4.4 billion request during the FY 2003. In this sense, removing this share of the federal drug-related expenditures allowed for the ONDCP to present a more balanced budget in terms of supply control and demand reduction initiatives – which corresponded to one of the most recurrent criticism towards the US drug policies. This case exposes how methodological adjustments have political effects: they may silence a concurrent perspective by suggesting that the problem identified by the latter has already been “solved”.

The political implications of the “technical” demarcation – which is always presented as a value-free and apolitical movement – is also clear in the texts we have walked through. As Rasmussen and Benson put more explicitly, that which is not measurable – “such as civil and economic liberties” – is placed outside the scope of the analysis (RASMUSSEN;

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<sup>55</sup> The US federal government's “Fiscal Year” (FY) is the budget approved by the Congress for a 12-months period, starting on October 1. The FY 2003, for example, started on October 1, 2002 and ended on October 1, 2003.



BENSON, 2003, p. 684), for there must be no subjective footprint in the production of knowledge. The same move underlies Walsh's claim on the need for a "factual debate about how to improve drug control policy" (2004, p. 19). Here, the key is not only a fact-based analysis, but an analysis built upon a specific representation of facts: numbers, indicators, rates, ranges, estimations.

In the discussion developed in this Section, I am particularly interested in grasping the limits of what the "success story" can be about. As the analysis here shows, the disputes about the metrics anchored on the criteria mentioned above have resulted in marginal adjustments on counternarcotic policies, but kept the problematization of violence from which the latter derived intact. In the next Section, we will look more attentively to "external critiques", that is, those challenging the ordering principles of the discursive field.

### **3.2. The silencing that makes the success audible**

As we have seen in the previous Section, it is necessary to speak on rational grounds and to master the language of rationality in order to participate in the conversation – although it does not guarantee the status of true to a certain proposition. Through the definition of what is possible to be said and what is not, these requirements constituting the dispersion we have been analyzing separate and hierarchize certain enunciations within the discursive field. In this system of relations, propositions are only granted with the credentials of "knowledgeful" if they are somehow useful in the debate about how to provide efficient solutions to practical problems within a specific problematization. At the same time true and false propositions are defined within the limits of the discursive field, the latter "pushes back a whole teratology of knowledge beyond its margins" (FOUCAULT, 1981, p. 60). Put differently, more than defining the boundaries between what is technical and what is not, the confinement of the debate within a set of requirements defines what is eligible to be said (be it true or false) and what is not (the "monstrosities" facing the ordering principle of the discursive

field). However, because the discursive field is a dispersion whose constitutive elements are but its criteria of formation and (constant) transformation (FOUCAULT, 1991, p. 54), its boundaries can only be understood as infinite and ungraspable. In this sense, I want to think the limits of the discursive field as a frontier constituted by the tension between two kinds of deviations from the norm: the “mad” and the “monster” and the respective principle of exclusion to which they are subjected, “division” and “rejection” (FOUCAULT, 1981, p. 53).

According to the analysis developed by Foucault in *The Order of Discourse* (1981), in the Middle Ages, the need for the use of reason in the will to know implied either the rejection of the speech of the madman or its deciphering when the latter was “regarded as more rational than that of the sane. In any event, whether excluded, or secretly invested with reason, the madman’s speech, strictly, did not exist” (FOUCAULT, 1981, p. 53). By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the will to know had already brought the speech of madness to its domain<sup>56</sup>: by dissecting the word of the mad and his body, the psychoanalyst and the doctor produce knowledge about the characteristics of this “pathology” (e.g. typology, patterns of behavior, associated variables, evolution) and about the cure for it. Importantly, either as a speech rejected by an external cut or as a speech transformed into an object of analysis through an internal division, the speech of the madman remains in an underprivileged position – through different moves and with different effects, however. “[L]earned societies in the past and laboratories now” (FOUCAULT, 1981, p. 55). In the first case, the speech of the madman is ignored, for madness and reason can only be irreconcilable. In this very process, nevertheless, madness reinforces what reason is understood to be. In the second case, the value of the speech of the madman derives from what is taken out from it: the speech of the madman is one among various raw materials for knowledge to be produced about deviations of the norm

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<sup>56</sup> “Of the three great systems of exclusion which forge discourse – the forbidden speech, the division of madness and the will to truth (...) it is towards this third system that the other two have been drifting constantly for centuries. The third system increasingly attempts to assimilate the others, both in order to modify them and to provide them with a foundation. The first two are constantly becoming more fragile and more uncertain, to the extent that they are now invaded by the will to truth, which for its part constantly grows stronger, deeper, and more implacable” (FOUCAULT, 1981, pp. 55-56).

(thereby reinforcing the norm), how dangerous they are or can be and how to keep the norm safe (by curing the mad or isolating him from the social body).

The circulation of the speech of the madman is restricted through the uses made of it: the doctor and the psycho-analyst speak to the madman in order to speak about him; the madman speaks about no one but himself, but he only exists as an object of analysis. Although the speech of the madman alleviates the anguish of the doctor and the psycho-analyst in their quest for truth, the separation between them persists. As Foucault argues, “If the silence of reason is required for the curing of monsters, it is enough for that silence to be on the alert, and it is in this that the division remains” (FOUCAULT, 1981, pp. 53-54). The speech of the madman is tamed: it is brought in, but under a set of conditions and principles according to which knowledge about this “pathology” is produced. There, in madness, where there seems to be disorder, a system of classification, separation and hierarchy of different kinds of madness operates.

But the taming of the speech of the madman is as much revealing of the anguish for order as it is of the fear from disorder. As Foucault suggests, “It is just as if prohibitions, barriers, thresholds and limits had been set up in order to remove from its richness the most dangerous part, and in order to organize its disorder according to figures which dodge what is most uncontrollable about it” (FOUCAULT, 1981, p. 66). The “monster”, contrastingly, is that which has not been tamed, that which lies outside the discourse; the monster is the imaginary, the belief – as opposed to scientific knowledge (FOUCAULT, 1981, p. 60). In this sense, the monster is outside pathology, for it has not been transformed into its object of analysis, it has not been tamed. It is an exteriority created in the limits of what is normatively acceptable. At the same time, the monster is an extreme deviation of the norm, it is the most dangerous form of disorder, for it is the negation of the order built within the discourse.

Foucault refers to a “discursive ‘policing’” in order to think the constraining effect of the rules operating within the discourse: “It is always possible that one might speak the truth in the space of a wild exteriority, but one is ‘in the true’ only by obeying the rules of a discursive ‘policing’

which one has to reactivate in each of one's discourses" (FOUCAULT, 1981, p. 61). Here, Foucault is not suggesting that there is a centralized apparatus in charge of checking whether rules are being obeyed. Rather, this metaphor emphasizes the constraining effect of dispersed enforcements of such rules through practices which reactivate the ordering principles of discourse. Now, as we have seen, divisions (as the one operating in relation to the "madman") and exclusions (as the one operating in relation to the "monster") are the conditions under which these very rules operating "in the true" are possible. Having this in mind, I consider this "policing" as concentrated in these divisions and exclusions, once it is from "there" that the unexpected is expected to come. Although this attention is even more emphasized in the frontier separating the ordered discourse from the monsters (created through its ordering principles), it is important to remember that the division upon which the analysis of the speech of the madman relies always operates on a silent alert (FOUCAULT, 1981, p. 54) – that is, under the suspicious gaze that anytime that madness can subvert the taming impinged upon it.

However, the systems of exclusion operating in the specific discursive field on the assessment of the effectiveness of counternarcotic policies in Colombia rely on a set of institutionalized practices that go well beyond the policing as a metaphor. The specific kind of silencing operating in this discursive field is directly related to Foucault's "carceral system" (FOUCAULT, 1995), which has as one of its main components the police itself – not a metaphor. My argument is that the "madman" produced through the dynamics of the discursive field has had the circulation of his discourse controlled under surveillance and detention. In this sense, I suggest that the "madman" can be more accurately interpreted as the "delinquent", in the terms developed by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* (FOUCAULT, 1995).

To be clear, "delinquency" is a population which is analyzable because understood as potentially dangerous to the order of the social body, that is, to the mass of disciplined and productive bodies. In Foucault's terms, delinquency is "a politically or economically less dangerous – and on occasion, usable – form of illegality" (FOUCAULT, 1995, p. 277). The

knowledge built from the examination of the delinquent is, therefore, also a knowledge which is useful to the social body, for it is only by mapping the profiles considered as “prone to crime” and by knowing the resistances against disciplining practices that the techniques of government can be re-articulated in order to circumvent, tame or even repress them. The system of records and the permanent surveillance produce and constitute a grid of knowledge against which delinquency is classified, separated and hierarchized. Operating as a kind of “political observatory” of the social body, delinquency – this “apparently marginal, but in fact centrally supervised milieu” (FOUCAULT, 1995, p. 277) – allows for disorder to be tamed. As we have seen in this Section, the “speech of the madman” is both an effect and instrument of the order of discourse: madness cannot be understood without the ordering principles of the discourse (hence, its effect), but it is also through the analysis of the “speech of the madman” that madness can be tamed, thereby preserving the order of the discourse. Similarly, “delinquency” is both the effect and instrument of the order of the social body.

To continue my discussion about the discursive field regarding the metrics of the Colombian “success”, I propose that we use the metaphor of the “madman” and of the “monster” in order to understand the mechanisms through which some discourses are kept at bay from the circuit through which the narratives of “success” are debated (disputed, criticized, reformulated and then claimed once more, and so on). My discussion is focused on two main fronts: unionists and human rights organizations. Needless to say, as on Section 3.1, these clusters do not exhaustively reflect the complexity of the discursive field and its “monsters”. I am aware, for instance, that the silencing I am addressing in reference to unionists also affects other kinds of social movements in Colombia (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 1996; COLECTIVO DE ABOGADOS, 2005; COORDINACIÓN COLOMBIA-EUROPA-ESTADOS UNIDOS, 2016). Nevertheless, by focusing on the mechanisms of discursive marginalization and exclusion, perhaps the analysis here developed can be mobilized in analyses about how other groups engaged with this discursive field. Such mechanisms reveal the limits of the circulation of certain discourses – an effect of both “discursive

‘policing’” and a “carceral system” of which the intelligence apparatus is a central component. Importantly, although, according to Foucault (1995, p. 282), the “carceral system” is constituted by police, prison, and delinquency<sup>57</sup>, I will here focus on police, army, and intelligence. Despite what may seem a distortion of what Foucault has conceived as the “carceral system”, I will show that: i) the particularities of Colombia cannot afford leaving the military – especially the army – out of the analysis, considering the pervasive presence of the military in operations related to “public order”; and ii) intelligence is somehow already comprehended in Foucault’s analysis of the “carceral system”, given the central position of the production and circulation of knowledge regarding the social body.

More than constituting an object of surveillance, unionists respond for a significant share of the striking levels of violence registered in Colombia. According to Colectivo de Abogados, a renowned Colombian NGO of human rights defenders, between 1991 and 1999, 1,336 unionists were killed (2005, n.p.). From 2001 to 2005, Colombia registered 33 disappearances, 37 kidnappings, 90 forced detentions of unionists, in addition to 1,276 threats of death to unionists and 14 bombings of unions’ headquarters (COLECTIVO DE ABOGADOS, 2005, n.p.). For us to understand why “unionism” has come to constitute a central aspect for our discussion, it is necessary to recall one of the main effects of the processes leading to the crystallization of a specific problematization of violence in Colombia. If categories such as “narcoguerrilla” and “narcoterrorism” were central to the construction of Colombia as a “problematic country”, we also saw that the emergence of this narrative resulted in the expansion of the margins of what was considered as a “disturbance to public order”. Associated to the vagueness characterizing the penal type “terrorism” – and the discretionary power it allowed for –, these processes are the conditions that made the association between labor unions and other social movements with “insurgency” not only possible, but an association which has come to

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<sup>57</sup> According to Foucault, “Police surveillance provides the prison with [law] offenders, which the prison transforms into delinquents, the targets and auxiliaries of the police supervisors, which regularly send back certain number to prison” (1995, p. 282).

constitute a regular object of surveillance by the intelligence apparatus in Colombia.

The Administrative Department of Security (DAS, in Spanish) was created in the 1950s as the state central agency for intelligence activities<sup>58</sup>, directly linked to the Colombian Presidency. The DAS was in charge of collecting biographical information, mapping the social network, analyzing personal habits, routine and displacement routes, as well as building political and psychologic profiles of people considered to be “disturbing the security or threatening the integrity of the constitutional regime” (Article 6 of Decree N. 2110/1992). Based upon the information gathered, the DAS classified those who were under surveillance according to the risk attributed to their profile.

It is also possible to find practices related to intelligence in the Armed Forces – although diffusely. Indeed, since the escalation of violence in the 1990s, the Colombian National Police and the Army developed their own intelligence units<sup>59</sup>. The Direction of Judicial Investigation and Intelligence (DIJIN, in Spanish) is the branch of the Police in charge of intelligence operations. In the case of the Military Forces, there is an Intelligence Unit attached to the Command of the Military Forces, as well as a web of diffused intelligence networks. More specifically, one of the secret manuals disclosed by Human Rights Watch instructed soldiers to infiltrate houses as workers or visitors, dressed in civilian clothes. In this covert practices, soldiers tested the reaction of civilians towards the troops and classified them as suspected of having some alignment with “subversives” or not according to their impression (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 1996,

<sup>58</sup> Firstly created in 1953 as the Colombian Administrative Department of Intelligence Services (SIC, in Spanish) during General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla’s Presidency (Decree No. 2872), the DAS had its name changed 7 years later by the Decree No. 1717, during Alberto Lleras Camargo’s administration. In 1992, the Decree No. 2110 determined that the DAS was an official, technical, professional and apolitical organization aiming at assuring the security of the Colombian State. Following a series of scandals related to massive phone interceptions of court magistrates, journalists and activists and to the involvement of the DAS with paramilitary groups, and operations, the intelligence agency was dismantled in 2011.

<sup>59</sup> The creation of multiple intelligence systems suggests that intelligence information does not circulate evenly amongst the different agencies inscribed in the Colombian security architecture. If we consider the pressure for “results” – efficient ones, to put it more properly – yielded over these agencies and intensified by the competition between them, the restrictions over the circulation of intelligence information may create the need for these agencies to search for short-term solutions in the domain of intelligence.

chapter 3). Based on this information, the military built different lists organizing these “suspects” according to the degree of “dangerousness” they allegedly represented: those who were highly suspected of cooperating or being part of guerrilla movements have their names registered in a “black list”; those whose alignment to the “insurgents” could not be identified with certainty were kept in a “grey list” (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 1996, p. 19).

The information nourishing this intelligence apparatus stemmed from infiltrated personnel, as the manual above shows, as well as from the interception of phone calls and e-mail communications and a widespread network of informants. Interrogation and torture of detainees constituted an additional and recurrent practice for obtaining information – what Central Intelligence Agency’s (CIA) manuals refer as the “human resources of information”<sup>60</sup> (CIA, 1983). In 2003, the Democratic Security Policy launched by President Álvaro Uribe’s administration (2002-2010), institutionalized the practice of using citizens as informants in order to assist the Colombian Armed Forces in the fight against “terrorism”. More specifically, in the first years of Uribe’s Presidency, 1.5 million citizens were allegedly incorporated to a network of “informants” (INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, 2003, p. 5), who were expected to provide the military and the police with information on any “suspicious activity”, and were paid for providing information which contributed to the capture of members of the armed groups or to the prevention of a hostile action (INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, 2003, p. 15). The focus of such a network of “collaborators” leaves outside any information that may point to the Colombian Armed Forces as the perpetrator of violence. If such

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<sup>60</sup> The Human Resource Exploitation Training Manual was used in trainings provided by the CIA and the US Army Special Forces to Latin American states during the 1980s (CIA, 1983, n.p.). As we will see more attentively on Chapter 5, the historical transformation of intelligence manuals was justified as operating towards a less coercive and a more “aseptic” procedure. The 1983 version of the CIA intelligence manual was developed in cooperation with British military officers (CIA, 1983, n.p.) and it is a version based on the renown Kubark Intelligence Manual and still preserves an emphasis on “coercive questioning”: “we will be discussing two types of techniques, coercive and non-coercive. While we do not stress the use of coercive techniques, we do want to make you aware of them” (CIA, 1983, K-1).



information is not registered by the state, that particular violence did not exist.

The investment of an attitude of silent observation of the suspects' conducts (infiltration and use of informants), in which the speech of suspects only counts as an informational subsidy (interrogation) for what the intelligence apparatus already knows about "subversion" can be read in similar lines to the speech of the "madman". As the CIA manual (1983) shows, the "questioner" controls the conditions of the facility where the questioning will take place (CIA 1983, E-1), classifies the personality of the "source" according to a typology already existent (CIA, 1983, G-1), and, above all, controls the emotions of the "source" through "psychological techniques" (CIA, 1983, 1-D). As mentioned in the beginning of this Section, the value of the speech of the "madman" derives from what is taken out from it. Both the silent compilation of information based on infiltration and informants and the extraction of information from the "source" feed the typologies used by the intelligence apparatus, whose knowledge about deviations of the norm is in constant transformation given the continuous flux of information provided to intelligence agents. Typologies guiding an interrogation include categories of "sources" who most often provide "information of intelligence value" (CIA, 1983, G-7-G-13), kinds of personality of the "source" (CIA, 1983, G-14-G-102), or different degrees of priority regarding the information that can be extracted (CIA, 1983, G-2-G-6). Through the analysis of all the information obtained, intelligence separates, for instance, who is the leader of a "cell", who is the "follower", what kind of actions these groups are organizing that are considered as "suspicious" or "threatening".

The step given from the elaboration of lists classifying different degrees of "dangerousness" of the "suspects" towards additional detentions in search for more information, or even killings, connects the intelligence apparatus to the operational level of the police or the military, undertaken with the objective of "neutralizing" specific "targets". One of these cases took place in Arauca, in 2004. In that occasion, the Army reported a confrontation with the National Liberation Army (ELN, in Spanish) during a military operation held in the department of Arauca, which resulted in the

death of three “insurgents” and detention of two others. The operation was heavily criticized by human rights organizations for aiming at unionists, not guerrillas: the three people killed in that occasion were Leonel Goyeneche, who worked in the financial department of the Central Workers’ Union (CUT, in Spanish) in Arauca; Jorge Eduardo Prieto, who was the president of the hospital workers’ union; and Héctor Alirio Martínez, who was a leader amongst *campesinos*. Those who were detained by the Army had a similar profile: Samuel Moreno was the president of the CUT in Arauca; and Raquel Castro was the director of the teachers’ local union. Responding to criticisms, the Minister of Defense, Jorge Uribe, claimed that the operation was legal: firstly, it was backed by detention warrants for rebellion, issued by the local Fiscalía; and secondly, the military personnel, acting in self-defense, responded to the shots of the “insurgents”. By then, the Vice-President, Francisco Santos, who also headed the Presidency’s Human Rights Office, recognized that those people were indeed leaders of social movements, but added that they were also “involved, according to the intelligence reports, in activities which were not related to their work” (EL TIEMPO, 2004).

The association of labor movements with “insurgency” dates back to the first decades to the Cold War period, when unions were framed as a “communist “threat” in Colombia (ATEHORTÚA C., 2010; URREGO A., 2013). The persistence of such a link despite the end of the Cold War seems to rely in a broader understanding of “disturbances to public order”. As we have discussed on Chapter 2, the debates on the reform of the Penal Code stretching from the 1970s to 1980 were marked by a context of an increasing number of strikes and other forms of protest. Linking “mutinies in the streets” to “insurrection” was the cement upon which the members of the Reform Commission argued for the need to punish disorder with severity. That labor movements came to be so naturally associated with insurgency is directly related to this context and it is connected to both a specific idea of socially accepted conduct and a specific content of the political agenda. As regards the former, strikes and forms of workers’ protest were considered as punishable on the grounds that they challenged what the jurist Giraldo Marín saw as the “appropriate” way of vocalizing

social demands, through the use of the existent “democratic channels” (OROZCO A., 1992, p. 165). In very similar terms, President Álvaro Uribe justified the terms of his “Democratic Security Policy” as follows:

there is no contradiction between security and democracy. On the contrary, security guarantees the room for divergence, which is the oxygen of every democracy. But it is necessary to draw a clear line between the right to dissent and the criminal conduct. It is only when the state is implacable when punishing crime and fights impunity that full guarantees for the exercise of opposition and criticism exist. The contrary to democratic politics is terrorism, which aims at imposing, through the use of violence, its will over the others, at the expense of thousands of civilian lives<sup>61</sup> (MINISTERIO DE DEFENSA DE COLOMBIA, 2003, p. 5).

As we have seen in the 2004 Arauca case, the work of intelligence apparatus not only builds on the historical associations of unions with “insurgency”, but it also separates leaders from followers and it “neutralizes” the former – through practices such as threat, arbitrary detention, and extrajudicial killings<sup>62</sup> (ARCHILA, 2012, p. 177). Although the processes leading to the crystallization of the link between unions and “insurgency” have emerged long before the implementation of Plan Colombia, they not only persist until the present (ARCHILA, 2012; GONZÁLEZ R. *et. al.*, 2012; PEREIRA F., 2012). At the same time, the repression of unions as “disturbances to public order” brushed demands such as the protection of worker’s rights aside. In this sense, the effects of these persisting practices are directly related to what the “success” can be about. If the articulation of police, military and intelligence operates towards silencing unionists – and other social movements, such as shown in the Arauca case –, demands that would emerge from these movements do not resonate in the content of the “success story”. In this sense, the latter does not encompass workers’ rights – nor land reform, if we extend the analysis

<sup>61</sup> In the original: “No hay contradicción entre seguridad y democracia. Por el contrario, la seguridad garantiza el espacio de discrepancia, que es el oxígeno de toda democracia, para que disentir no signifique exponer la seguridad personal. Pero hay que trazar una línea nítida entre el derecho a disentir y la conducta criminal. Sólo cuando el Estado castiga implacablemente el crimen y combate la impunidad hay plenas garantías para ejercer la oposición y la crítica. La antípoda de la política democrática es el terrorismo, que pretende imponer por la violencia su voluntad sobre los otros, al costo de la vida de miles de civiles”.

<sup>62</sup> These are characteristic traits of what counterinsurgents call “decapitation”, that is, “neutralizing” the leader from a given “dangerous cell”, as we will see on Chapter 5.

to Héctor Alirio Martínez, the *campesino* leader who was also killed in the military operation undertaken in Arauca, in 2004<sup>63</sup>.

The Arauca case, which is only one among thousands of others if we consider a wider spectrum of violence – stretching from intimidation to forced disappearance and extrajudicial killing –, reveals two different mechanisms of silencing in the discursive field. As we have already discussed, the “speech of the madman” can be used as a metaphor for us to understand how the intelligence apparatus silences unionists and other leaders of social movements through a silent observation of their individual conduct and collective activity and the use of their speech under a specific understanding of information: a subsidy for the knowledge about the deviations of the norm that these groups are already considered to be suspect of. However, we have also seen how intelligence lists informing police and military operations constitute the basis for claims on “dangerousness” attached to “insurgency”. As discussed through the Arauca case, such narratives of a “radical danger” associated to unionists have been mobilized so as to justify their “neutralization”, in the vocabulary of the police and the military – “extrajudicial killings” in the vocabulary of human rights organizations.

With the objective of shedding light to the striking levels of violence against unionists and social movements in general in Colombia, organizations such as Coordinación Colombia-Europa-Estados Unidos, Colectivo de Abogados, Movimiento de Víctimas de Crímenes de Estado (MOVICE), Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular (CINEP), Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have been key in denouncing human rights violations in Colombia. Through regular reports, conferences and hearings with victims, these organizations have disseminated the content produced by them in international organizations such as the Organization of American States’ (OAS) Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (CIDH, in Spanish), and the United Nations’ (UN) High

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<sup>63</sup> As a recent report published by Coordinación Colombia-Europa-Estados Unidos (2016) shows, the number of forced disappearances of leaders of *campesinos* movements is still very expressive. In this specific text, the Coordinación reports the case of Henry Pérez, a *campesino* leader in Tibú (Northern Santander), region disputed by the military forces, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC, in Spanish) and paramilitary groups. Since his disappearance, seven additional leaders were threatened.

Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR). Coordinación Colombia-Europa-Estados Unidos, for instance, operates through the organization of workshops (*mesas de trabajo*) where victims and other human rights organizations gather in order to discuss and produce a systematic analysis about a specific topic – extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances, to mention two recent cases (COORDINACIÓN COLOMBIA-EUROPA-ESTADOS UNIDOS, 2014, 2016). These reports are presented to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the CIDH, as a strategy aimed at exposing human rights violations in Colombia to international courts and advancing its debate in international fora.

Since at least the 1990s, NGOs such as the Human Rights Watch have been placing the Armed Forces in the center of debates on violence in Colombia. In a report published in 1996, Human Rights Watch claimed that it had:

obtained evidence (...) that shows that in 1991, the military made civilians a key part of its intelligence-gathering apparatus. Working under the direct orders of the military high command, paramilitary forces incorporated into intelligence networks conducted surveillance of legal opposition political figures and groups, operated with military units, then executed attacks against targets chosen by their military commanders (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 1996, n.p.).

According to the NGO, the Military Forces worked in partnership with paramilitary groups in intelligence gathering and extrajudicial killings of “anyone perceived as supporting the guerrillas, but also members of the political opposition, journalists, trade unionists, and human rights workers”<sup>64</sup> (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 1996, n.p.). One of the regions in which such networks operated was Barrancabermeja, where the largest oil refinery in Colombia is found, in addition to the port on the Magdalena River. In an interview given to Human Rights Watch, a former intelligence agent of the Barrancabermeja network said that Navy Captain (*Capitán*) Juan Carlos Alvarez Gutiérrez and Lieutenant Colonel (*Teniente Coronel*) Rodrigo Quiñones “would identify the targets, which included the membership and leaders of the Oil Workers' Union (...), the San Silvestre

<sup>64</sup> The full document of the Military Forces was made available by Human Rights Watch here: <<https://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1996/killertoc.htm>>. Access on: April 30, 2017.

Transportation Workers' Union, the Regional Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (...) and the UP” [Patriotic Union Party] (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 1996, n.p.). As the NGO highlights, such a partnership involving the Military Forces and paramilitary groups made no mention to drugs: “Instead, the Colombian military (...) presented a plan to better combat what they call ‘escalating terrorism by armed subversion’” (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 1996, n.p.).

There are two main implications from denunciations such as the ones vocalized by the Human Rights Watch report. The first one is related to the military-paramilitary connection, which is far from being restricted to specific cases, according to human rights organizations. Indeed, the links between the Colombian Military Forces and paramilitary groups have constituted the object of several denunciations of human rights violations in Colombia – and until the present days (CINEP, 2004; COORDINACIÓN COLOMBIA-EUROPA-ESTADOS UNIDOS, 2014, 2017; PROJECT COUNSELLING SERVICE *et al.*, 2014). Although this would require a whole new research, the recurrence with which the military-paramilitary links operate where infrastructure facilities considered as key to “development”<sup>65</sup> are found suggests that there is a political use made out of this association. Indeed, Barrancabermeja (located in the department of Santander) hosts the port of the Magdalena River and the largest oil refinery (Ecopetrol’s) in Colombia. Furthermore, both Arauca and Santander departments are traversed by one of the most important oil pipelines in Colombia: Caño Limón-Coveñas<sup>66</sup>. In light of these elements, I suggest that we read the military-paramilitary connection as one in which the latter is a useful form of illegality for the former – which does not imply claiming that the Military Forces render the paramilitary “manipulable”<sup>67</sup>, as Foucault

<sup>65</sup> The concern with the protection of infrastructure facilities with the characteristics mentioned above is so central for the formulation of military operations in Colombia, that a battalion specialized in the protection of Caño Limón-Coveñas has been created in the context of Plan Colombia (ROJAS, 2006, p. 54).

<sup>66</sup> Caño Limón-Coveñas passes by the following departments: Córdoba, Sucre, Bolívar, Magdalena, Cesar, Norte de Santander and Arauca.

<sup>67</sup> As Ronderos (2014) shows, the history of paramilitarism in Colombia and its associations with the Military Forces can be thought more in terms of an *ad hoc* basis than a systematic instrumentalization that the latter make of the former.

argues in his analysis on “useful delinquency”<sup>68</sup> (FOUCAULT, 1995, p. 280). Anyhow, among the political uses inferred from the cases here discussed, I would highlight that the military-paramilitary association keeps those “strategic” regions away from the “disturbances to public order” that are systematically attached to unionists, allowing for a “stable” atmosphere for investors. By exposing the link of the Armed Forces with illegality, one of the most immediate effects is certainly to stigmatize the image of the protagonists of the Colombian “success story”. More than that, denouncing those human rights violations blurs the boundary between legality and illegality upon which the “success story” is erected and, in this process, it destabilizes the relation between legality and peace.

The second implication deriving from the violations reported by Human Rights Watch is that the Colombian Military Forces are framed as perpetrators of violence against citizens, and not those fighting the violence perpetrated against citizens. Such a reading affects the problematization of violence in Colombia. In the terms we have discussed on Chapter 2, the construction of Colombia as a “problematic country” was based on the idea of “narcoguerrilla” and “narcoterrorism”, from which a series of “solutions” were articulated and implemented. In other words, the whole architecture of “solutions” to the problem of violence in Colombia was built having this specific problematization as its basis. Recognizing the Armed Forces as perpetrators of violence lies outside such a problematization: more than that,

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<sup>68</sup> According to Foucault, the use of specific delinquencies is a historically persistent feature of the exercise of power (at least since the 19<sup>th</sup> century). In this sense, it does not refer to a “problematic specificity” of Colombia, nor a “new” phenomenon – although certainly an alarming one in Colombia, in terms of the violence it involves. A more extended version of the excerpt reads: “Arms trafficking, the illegal sale of alcohol in prohibition countries, or more recently drug trafficking show a similar functioning of this ‘useful delinquency’: the existence of a legal prohibition creates around it a field of illegal practices, which one manages to supervise, while extracting from it an illicit profit through elements, themselves illegal, but rendered manipulable by their organization in delinquency. This organization is an instrument for administering and exploiting illegalities. It is also an instrument for the illegality with which the very exercise of power surrounds itself. The political use of delinquents – as informers and *agents provocateurs* – was a fact well before the nineteenth century. But, after the Revolution, this practice acquired quite different dimensions: the infiltration of political parties and workers’ associations, the recruitment of thugs against strikers and rioters, the organization of a sub-police – working directly with the legal police and capable if necessary of becoming a sort of parallel army – a whole extra-legal functioning of power was partly assured by the mass of reserve labour constituted by the delinquents: a clandestine police force and standby army at the disposal of the state” (FOUCAULT, 1995, p. 280).

it requires another problematization, one in which the state is part of the problem of violence, and not part of the solution to it<sup>69</sup>.

My argument is that the implications of the human rights violations reported by NGOs could not be accommodated within the problematization upon which all of the policies aiming at solving the “problem of violence” in Colombia relied. In other words, human rights organizations offered an alternative problematization which concurred to the one analyzed on Chapter 2: one in which the Colombian state was part of the “problem of violence”. This “monstrosity” of the discourse reproduced through the activities of these organizations was brushed to the margins of the discursive field through two main mechanisms. Firstly, their inscription within the discursive field as the “speech of the madman”. Indeed, by the time the report was published, in 1996, the silencing practices surrounding human rights organizations were already at work. Indeed, that “human rights workers” had been incorporated to the lists guiding the work of intelligence networks in Colombia (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 1996, n.p.) suggests that the “madness” of their speech already constituted the object of the silent and attentive gaze of the intelligence apparatus. Threats and other forms of intimidation to human rights defenders constituted such a pervasive practice, that the UN HCHR dedicated a specific section in its regular reports to cover the situation in this regard. From September 2011 to January 2012, the UNHCHR reported 107 threats to human rights defenders in Colombia (UNHCHR, 2012, p. 5).

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<sup>69</sup> A similar argument could be made regarding the implications of how the United States appears in the 1996 Human Rights Watch report. When addressing the military aid to Colombia, however, the NGO does not incorporate the United States to its reading of the “military-paramilitary connection” problem. Reproducing the externalization logics that we saw on Chapter 2, Human Rights Watch keeps the “fight against drugs” goal intact and preserves the confinement of the problem to Colombia. An excerpt of the report reads: “Under the stated objective of fighting drugs, the U.S. has armed, trained, and advised Colombia's military despite its disastrous human rights record. Strengthened by years of U.S. support, the Colombian military and its paramilitary partners instead have waged a war against guerrillas and their suspected supporters in civil society, including members of legal political parties, trade unionists, community activists, and human rights monitors. Far from moving to address the mounting toll of this war, the U.S. has apparently turned a blind eye to abuses and is moving to increase deliveries of military aid, including weapons, to Colombia” (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 1996, n.p.). Thus, the “problem” of the United States, according to the NGO, is to give support to a country with such a “disastrous human rights record”. As a natural consequence, the recommendations made by the Human Rights Watch to the US government include suspending military aid to Colombia and visas to Colombian military officers.



The second mechanism I want to highlight is a full refusal of the “monster”, for the problematization such as the one implied through the human rights organizations reports here analyzed was not eligible to be said. In more concrete terms, in 1996, when the Human Rights Watch report was made public, Juan Carlos Esguerra, the Minister of Defense by then dismissed its full content under the argument that it was based on outdated information<sup>70</sup> (EL TIEMPO, 1996). By his turn, Military Forces Commander, General Harold Bedoya, declared that the work of some organizations aimed at de-legitimizing the Armed Forces and keep them from fighting drugs and terror in Colombia (EL TIEMPO, 1996). The dismissal of the content produced by human rights organizations was inscribed in the vocabulary of “terrorism” during Álvaro Uribe’s administration. In 2003, Uribe rejected the human rights violations reported by 80 NGOs<sup>71</sup> under the argument that it had been produced by those

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<sup>70</sup> A recurrent argument for the rejection of human rights organizations’ reports is the “lack of credible evidence”, which is mostly related to the form they present the denunciation. Addressing this point, a report prepared by FOR (2010, p. 6) claims that: “reports of extrajudicial executions that result in the Prosecutor General’s office or Inspector General’s office opening a formal investigation constitute credible evidence that the military committed the violation. We also are aware of the strict standards used by the human rights organizations that constitute the Working Group on Extrajudicial Executions, and contend that reports of extrajudicial executions from these organizations also constitute credible evidence”.

<sup>71</sup> Focused on the impact of the policies implemented in the first years of Álvaro Uribe’s Presidency, the report was titled *La encrucijada del autoritarismo* (“The crossroads of authoritarianism”, in free translation to English) and was signed collectively by Plataforma Colombiana de Derechos Humanos, Democracia y Desarrollo. The NGOs signing the report are: Acción Ecueménica Sueca (Colombia); Asociación de Familiares de Detenidos y Desaparecidos en Colombia (ASFADDES); Asociación de Trabajo Interdisciplinario (ATI); Asociación Minga; Asociación Pro-Bienestar de la Familia Colombiana (PROFAMILIA); Asociación Proniñez CORASCOM; Asociación Tierra de Esperanza (ATE); CENSAT Agua Viva; Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular/Programa por la Paz (CINEP/PPP); Centro de Promoción Ecueménica y Social (CEPECS); Comisión Colombiana de Juristas (CCJ); Comité Permanente por la Defensa de Derechos Humanos (CPDH); Consejo Regional Indígena del Tolima; Corporación Casa de la Mujer; Corporación Colectivo de Abogados “José Alvear Restrepo” (CCAJAR); Corporación Ecológica y Cultural Penca de Sábila; Corporación para el Desarrollo del Oriente ‘Compromiso’; Corporación para la Integración y Desarrollo de la Educación Superior en el Suroccidente Colombiano (CIDESCO); Corporación para la Vida Mujeres que Crean; Corporación Viva la Ciudadanía; Defensoría del Pueblo de Colombia; Escuela Nacional Sindical (ENS); Federación Nacional de Organizaciones de Vivienda Popular (FEDEVIVIENDA); Fundación Colombiana CEDAVIDA; Fundación de Apoyo Comunitario (FUNDAC); Fundación Diálogo Mujer; Fundación Educativa Vocacional (FUNDEV); Fundación Foro Nacional por Colombia (FORO); Fundación para la Comunicación Popular (FUNCOP); Fundación para la Defensa del Interés Público (FUNDEPÚBLICO); Fundación para la Educación Superior y el Desarrollo (FEDESARROLLO); Fundación Teatral Kerigma; Fundación Transformar; Fundación Universitaria María Cano (FUMC); Instituto de Estudios Sociales y Culturales Pensar

engaged in “politicking” (*politiqueros*) who are “in service of terrorism” and “hide themselves behind the human rights flag”<sup>72</sup> (EL TIEMPO, 2003).

Such an outright rejection does not mean that there was no rearticulation in the discursive field as a result of criticisms based on the vocalization of the human rights violations constituting such a “success story”. Importantly, however, the responses to such criticisms had different interlocutors. In 1997, the approval of the so-called Leahy Amendment by the US Congress meant that the foreign aid provided by the United States would be blocked to states whose military officers were involved in human rights violations. In addition to that, in the context of the implementation of Plan Colombia, the US Presidency created a certification on human rights, authorizing the Embassy to conduct investigations about the respect for human rights in the Colombian military troops. Chernick (2008, p. 133) and Isacson (2005, pp. 141-142) consider such concerns with human rights to be merely apparent, given the continuous flux of US foreign aid to Colombia despite the emergence of a series of scandals of abuses of violence by the military and the police in the latter.

Incorporating a section specially dedicated to “human rights” in the Army’s website, multiplying human rights’ course certificates to high-ranked military officers<sup>73</sup>, insisting on the “rotten apples” narrative (COORDINACIÓN COLMBIA-EUROPA-ESTADOS UNIDOS, 2014, pp. 71-78) in order to respond to accusations of human rights violations. These were the main moves made in order to accommodate criticisms within the discursive field on the performance of Colombia in the implementation of the “solutions” to the problem of violence. Such moves did not lead to the re-articulation of the pillars constituting the problematization of violence in Colombia, however. As we have seen in this Section, the mechanisms of

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(PENSAR); Instituto Latinoamericano de Servicios Legales Alternativos (ILSA); Instituto Nacional Sindical (INS); Instituto Popular de Capacitación (IPC); Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo en el Tercer Mundo-América Latina-Colombia (ENDA-AL-Colombia); Movimiento Nacional Afrocolombiano Cimarron; Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia (ONIC); Proceso de Comunidades Negras en Colombia (PCN); Red de Justicia Comunitaria; and Universidad Nacional de Colombia (Sede Bogotá).

<sup>72</sup> Uribe differentiated this “kind of NGO” from two others: theorists whom he disagreed with, but had respect for; and ii) respectable human rights organizations (EL TIEMPO, 2003).

<sup>73</sup> See: <https://www.ejercito.mil.co>. Access on: May 1, 2017.

division and exclusion operating in the “margins” of the discursive field had the effect of silencing “madmen” and “monsters” – either as the object of analysis of intelligence apparatus, the annihilation of vocalizers of criticism or by the outright rejection of the content of their speech. This silencing does not operate towards the gradual fading away of those positions, on the contrary: they coexist with the “narrative of success”, challenging it and yielding pressure towards rearticulations in the discursive field, without altering, nevertheless, its ordering principles.

### 3.3 Conclusion

What are the mechanisms differentiating what is eligible to be said from what is not? On Chapter 3, I build on the discussion regarding the emergence of Colombia as an object of analysis as a result of the specific problematization of violence analyzed on Chapter 2. Since the debates, diagnoses and cures distilled about such a “container of pathologies” cannot be detached from that problematization, the emphasis laid by the latter on drugs is reflected in the repertoire of “solutions” to the “Colombian problems” – hence the privileged position of counternarcotic policies in this debate.

I also showed that the implementation of Plan Colombia was inscribed in a context in which governmental agencies were guiding their bureaucratic routine by a logic of “metrics performance”. Furthermore, I claimed that the disputes on whether the “Colombian problems” were being solved by counternarcotic policies came to be translated into a discursive field in which the disputes were based on the search for the “more appropriate metrics”. Section 3.1 dissects two fronts of dispute: governmental agencies and economics-based academics. I argue that the disputes around the more appropriate metrics came to be increasingly insulated in a quest for accuracy, preserving the pillars of the problematization from which those “solutions” emerged.

Section 3.2 discusses the mechanisms through which the criticism targeting the constitutive pillars of the discursive field were silenced. Using

the metaphor of “discursive monstrosities”, I explore how unionists have come to constitute the object of surveillance of the intelligence apparatus, and under what terms the denunciations of human rights violations have been fully ignored in the Colombian “success story”.

As regards the first axis, I argue that, based on lists specifying different degrees of “dangerousness”, the intelligence apparatus fed military and police operations, pointing targets for extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances and forced detention of unionists. As an effect of such practices, the social demands vocalized by unionists and denunciations of the excesses of violence by the state were silenced and kept at bay from the disputes on the metrics addressed on Section 3.1 – and, therefore, did not echo in the “success story”, although coexisting with it. As for the human rights organizations, I argue that the content of their denunciations was rejected under the claim that it lacked credible information. The mobilization of a methodological criteria in order to refuse human rights denunciations such as the one involving unionists echoes the primacy of a rational and accurate account of the “problems”, as discussed on Section 3.1. More than that, I argue that these denunciations offered an alternative problematization of violence in Colombia – one in which the state was a perpetrator of violence, that is, part of the problem of violence – and not exclusively of the solutions. Based on the discussion advanced on this Chapter, I conclude that the limits of the “success story” exclude the appreciation of state violence and social or land reform from the “Colombian problem”.

## PART TWO

### Colombia and the circuit of military *savoirs* in Latin America: building “military professionals” through military schools and training centers

*The national security policy is the set of measures, plans and norms aimed at nullifying, reducing, neutralizing or repulsing the current obstacles to the realization or preservation of the national goals*<sup>74</sup>

- Definition of “national security policy”, as published on *Revista brasileira de estudos políticos* (Jun. 1966) *Apud* Rouquié (1984, p. 319).

*In past times it was the Cross or the Koran, the sword or the book, that made the conquests of civilization; at present it is the powerful locomotive, flying along the shiny rail, breathing like a volcano, that awakens peoples to progress, to well-being, and to freedom (...) And those who are resistant to progress are crushed under its wheels*

- Rafael Reyes, former commander of the Colombian National Army and former president of Colombia (1904-1909)

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<sup>74</sup> In the original: “La política de seguridad nacional es el ‘conjunto de medidas, planes y normas destinadas a anular, reducir, neutralizar o rechazar los obstáculos actuales a la realización o mantenimiento de los objetivos nacionales’”.

## INTRODUCTION TO PART TWO

In contrast to the concerted emergence of military regimes in South America during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Colombia was repeatedly pointed as one of the most stable democracies in Latin America (PIZARRO L., 1987a; ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994; GALLÓN-GIRALDO, 2001; GÓMEZ-SUÁREZ, 2010, p. 152). According to Mainwaring *et al.* (2006, p. 8), “In 1976-1977, they [Venezuela and Colombia] were exceptional cases in the region; along with Costa Rica, they were two of three islands of democracy in a sea of authoritarianism”. This claim may be surprising, if we consider that this assertion refers to a historical period in Colombia in which the Thousand Days’ War (1899-1902) and *La Violencia* (1948-1953) were still echoing, after having resulted in 300.000-400.000 deaths (BUSHNELL, 1993, p. 151, p. 205). In addition to that, by the 1980s, “Colombia’s problem” of drug production and trafficking had already been framed as a “national security problem” by the Ronald Reagan administration in the United States (1981-1989)<sup>75</sup>. Although the claim of an enduring democracy in Colombia continued to be repeated from the 1990s onwards – though more scarcely<sup>76</sup> –, this could not be done without some degree of discomfort. After all, the galloping levels of violence persisted in many forms<sup>77</sup> and, with this, the

<sup>75</sup> As analyzed on Section 2.1, it was during Reagan’s administration that the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and the National Security Directive No. 21 (NSD 21) outlined what would come to constitute the characteristic traits of the so-called “war on drugs”: the militarization through the authorization and financial resources granted to the Department of Defense to coordinate anti-drugs initiatives; and the supply-side approach, that is, the claim that the most efficient anti-drug policy was focused on the states where production was concentrated, and not the consumption. For additional analyses on this matter, see: Campbell (1992, pp. 195-222) and Rojas (2006).

<sup>76</sup> Currently, such a claim is mostly voiced in political leaders’ speeches, especially by those representing the Colombian government. The Embassy in Washington, D.C., for instance, highlights Colombia as “Latin America’s oldest and most stable democracy. For more than a century, the country has experienced peaceful changes of government every four years as citizens have elected government representatives in free and fair elections in a political environment that proudly supports full freedom of the press”. Available at: <<http://www.colombiaemb.org/overview>>. Access on: August 25, 2016.

<sup>77</sup> During the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the levels of violence were alarming in Colombia. Even before the 1990s, considered as one of the most violent decades in that period (see, for instance, ECHANDÍA, 2006), there had been a proliferation of studies aiming at explaining the phenomenon of violence in Colombia. As it has been addressed on Section 2.1, the *violéntólogos* (“violentologists”) is a term emerging in late 1980s in order to designate the group of analysts to whom President Virgilio Barco (1986-1990) commissioned a study on the situation of violence in Colombia by then. The results

image of Colombia as a source of problems to the region and the world gained strength (GARCÍA-PEÑA, 2006; TICKNER, 2007).

However, claiming that Colombia is one of the most enduring democracies in Latin America was possible under the argument that it has only been under military ruling in rare occasions during its history. Indeed, Colombia was ruled by military governments for a total of seven years: the governments of Rafael Urdaneta (1830-1831) and José María Melo (1854) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and those of Gustavo Rojas Pinilla (1953-1957) and the Military Junta (1957-1958) in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This aspect made the Colombian case an exceptional one, particularly by the 1960s-1980s, when most of the Latin American states were under military ruling. Nevertheless, the “absence” of the military in “civil offices” in Colombia has coexisted with their pervasive influence on politics, particularly as regards the deliberation of policies related to the management of public order, as we will see in the discussion to follow (PIZARRO L., 1987b).

Intrigued by Colombia’s “exceptional character”, some scholars have started, by the 1980s, to advocate more soundly for more studies about the history of the Colombian Armed Forces. “How was it possible for the military, (...) without resorting to the extremes of the Southern Cone or Central America, to reach an important presence in the state power, by the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century?” – asked Pizarro Leongómez (1994, p. 22) in one of the first systematic studies on the professionalization of the Colombian military. Some of the most quoted works developed in that direction have examined the history of the professionalization of the Armed Forces<sup>78</sup> in order to understand how this process is connected to its persistent engagement with “party politics”, as well as with the management of public order (PIZARRO L., 1987a, 1987b, 1988; ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R.,

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published by the Commission, that “political violence” only corresponded to 10% of the homicides registered in Colombia, were thoroughly debated. In an article contemporaneous to the Commission report, Pécaut argues that “As the crisis aggravated, the separation line between what was related to politics and what was independent from it, was particularly fluid” (2006, p. 351). In the original: “A medida que se agrava la crisis, la línea de separación entre lo que proviene de la política y lo que es independiente de ella se hace especialmente fluida”.

<sup>78</sup> To be more precise, most of these studies are interested about the Military Forces. In Colombia, the police has been, currently and during most of the country’s history, part of the Armed Forces – as it is currently.

1994; LEAL B., 1984). In such works, the element connecting the recurrent engagement of the military with the “civil domain”, on the one hand, and the “military professional”, on the other, is precisely the assumption that the latter is characterized as technical, disciplined and motivated by a *esprit de corps* – traits which are claimed as “apolitical” and, according to this logic, strange to the participation in state power (see, for instance, ROUQUIÉ, 1984; PIZARRO L., 1987a, 1987b, 1988; BUSHNELL, 1993; ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994). In this sense, the puzzle is presented on the grounds of the “contamination” of the military with “politics”, which is both claimed as the reason why professionalization is necessary and the obstacle for the realization of this professionalization.

By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the attempts to consolidate military schools failed amidst the fragmented and widespread violence that exposed the local and partisan loyalty networks<sup>79</sup> through which violence was perpetrated in Colombia. During the Liberal governments (1930-1946), for instance, to control the conservative weight within positions of command in the army was one of the main challenges. Indeed, this was the focus of the efforts of Alfonso López Pumarejo (1934-1938) during his first presidential administration. “After having failed [in this effort], in his second administration [1944-1945], López chose to find strong support in the police forces”<sup>80</sup> (ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994, p. 131).

<sup>79</sup> Here, two caution notes are important. Firstly, “party identity” or “loyalty” to one of the political parties was often achieved through political favors, threats and the use of force. The recruitment of the Liberal or Conservative forces illustrates in bright colors how these approaches were used depending on whom the loyalty was to be “gained from”. In the lower social strata, the recruitment was mainly undertaken with the use of force. “Marketplaces, *chicherías* and other sites of popular gathering were the favorite places for troops to take recruits. Both in the rural and urban areas, workers were forced to leave their jobs and many, as in previous civil wars, were tied and only released in the moment of combat” (ATEHORTÚA CRUZ; VÉLEZ RAMÍREZ, 1994, p. 48). In the original: “Las plazas de mercado, las chicherías y todos los sitios de reunión del pueblo eran los lugares predilectos hasta donde llegaba la tropa para tomar reclutas. En el campo y en la ciudad, los trabajadores eran obligados a abandonar sus faenas y a muchos, como en anteriores guerras civiles, incluso se les llevaba amarrados hasta el momento del combate”. Among the middle- and high-ranked military officers, the common mechanism of access was directly linked to the *padrinazgo*, that is, a position earned because of personal ties or as a political favor in exchange of protection (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 98); ATEHORTÚA CRUZ; VÉLEZ RAMÍREZ, 1994, p. 45).

<sup>80</sup> In the original: “Al fracasar en ese intento, López optó en su segunda administración por apoyarse más firmemente en las fuerzas policiales”. López Pumarejo’s administration was not inaugurating any dynamic in this regard. Local landowners, for instance, were resistant to the nationalization and professionalization of the police: they found a “malleable” and



In this context, the civil war known as *La Violencia* is often referenced as a watershed as regards the professionalization of the military (ROUQUIÉ, 1984; PIZARRO L., 1987a, 1987b, 1988; ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994). For Atehortúa Cruz and Vélez Ramírez, the insurrection that followed the assassination of the political leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, in April 9, 1948 (known as *Bogotazo*), marks the transition from a period of insulation to an active role of the military in the Colombian state (1994, p. 23) – particularly understood as the “civil domain”. According to these authors, this transition can be illustrated by the contrasting answers provided by the Liberal Alfonso López Pumarejo (1942-1945), on one side, and the Conservative Mariano Ospina Pérez (1946-1950), on the other side, to the question on “what to do with the Armed Forces” (ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994, p. 158). Considering useless to invest resources in the technical development of the Military Forces in times of peace, for “in those periods there is no enemy to be annihilated”, López Pumarejo proposed a more social role for the military, such as building infrastructure and literacy (ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994, pp. 204-5). Contrastingly, the ordering role played by the military to cease the mutiny of *Bogotazo* was celebrated by Ospina Pérez for having defended “the threatened institutions, offering me [the President] its absolute support in the task of restoring, in the Nation, the empire of authority and order”<sup>81</sup> (OSPINA PÉREZ *Apud* ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994, p. 206).

These readings of *La Violencia* as a watershed reveal an interesting and recurrent feature of these studies. When looking at the professionalization of the Military Forces in order to understand how was it possible that they came to constitute relevant political actors in Colombia, these authors draw on a very particular reading of what is “political”: that which is linked to the

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fragmented police force more palatable to their interests, once it could be easily bought into their radius of influence (ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994, p. 63). Also, during the period under Conservative governments, known as “Conservative Hegemony” (1886-1930), the police has been marginalized in contrast to the privileged position assigned to the military, which has brought the police closer to the Liberal militias (ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994, p. 45).

<sup>81</sup> In the original, the complete quote reads: “Me rodean con decisión heroica, prestigiosos jefes, oficiales y soldados del ya glorioso Ejército Nacional que acudieron desde los primeros instantes a defender las instituciones amenazadas, brindándome su respaldo absoluto en la tarea de restaurar en la Nación el imperio de la autoridad y del orden”.

political parties (Liberal and Conservative) in Colombia. With this, they are not referring to the formation of a military party in Colombia, or even to a direct exercise of power. The rupture identified by Pizarro Leongómez (1987a, 1987b, 1988) and Atehortúa Cruz and Vélez Ramírez (1994) when referring to the Military Forces before and after *La Violencia* is related to that degree and shape. Before, the disputes between the two Parties resonated in the Armed Forces and resulted in its oscillation as a priority or not in the political agenda. The exacerbation of the disputes between the Liberal and Conservative parties led to the expropriation of the armed instruments from the state, according to Atehortúa Cruz and Vélez Ramírez (1994, pp. 211-2). For Pizarro Leongómez, the halt in the disputes between the two political parties was the very condition that made possible a more consistent professionalization of the Colombian Armed Forces (1987a). Likewise, the degeneration of this balance between Liberals and Conservatives (in favor to the Liberals from 1930 to 1946) has led to the reduction of the personnel and budget of the Military Forces – context in which the plots and *coup* attempts have taken place and, hence, according to Pizarro Leongómez (1987a, 1987b), the acute politicization of the Military Forces. After *La Violencia*, the role of the Military Forces in the repression of *Bogotazo* is read by these authors as the beginning of a more persistent interference of the military in politics. For Atehortúa Cruz and Vélez Ramírez, this expropriation has gradually weakened the Colombian state's capacities and has made the participation of the military in politics a necessity – or, in their own terms, their “absence [in politics became] theoretically unthinkable in theory and impossible in practice” (1994, p. 214).

The disputes between the two political parties have certainly played a central role in the position the Armed Forces have enjoyed in (party) politics in Colombia. Also, the “penetration” of the Armed Forces in Colombian politics has had major implications for how “democracy” in Colombia could be conceived, as we have discussed in Part One and as we will see in the following pages. Nevertheless, the way the problem of the professionalization of the Armed Forces has been framed in Colombia overshadows two aspects which are crucial for us to grasp how the formation of these professionals is related to how the rules on the use of violence are organized and transmitted

within the Colombian “democracy”. The first of these aspects is the boundary between “civil” and “military”. The claim on the need to professionalize the military has relied upon the demarcation separating the “civil” as the “domain of politics” from the “military” as the professionals whose technical character – hence, apolitical, according to this narrative – derives from war doctrine, strategy and tactics transmitted within the military schools. The military, so the argument goes, does not belong to the domain of politics, but to the domain of war. This narrative, as we will see, is also anchored in the claim of a pacified social space, in which it is the duty of police to maintain order, and not of the military. The boundary civil-military thereby determines not only the proper space for the military, but also the proper space for the police. The development of a “profession” for two different kinds of “men in arms” – the police and the military – implies the inscription of what I have been calling a specific *savoir* into the realm of the police (CASTAÑO CASTILLO, 1947), and of another specific *savoir* into the realm of the military. By claiming the separation between what is “civil” and what is “military” as necessary, the way professionalization of the Armed Forces has been framed in Colombia reifies such boundary and does not allow us to grasp how military tactics has been key to the *savoirs* mobilized in the organization of the social body by the police (FOUCAULT, 1995, p. 168)<sup>82</sup> and, therefore, how the knowledge of war making is constitutive of what liberalism claim as peace<sup>83</sup>.

The second aspect is that the reading of *La Violencia* as a moment of rupture lies upon a boundary between technical and political. As we have seen, before this civil war, the Armed Forces were seen as too much “politicized” (PIZARRO L., 1987a; ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994), contaminated by the disputes between the Liberal and Conservative parties. The claim that is only in the 1940s or 1950s that the Armed Forces in Colombia can be considered as professional in modern terms (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, pp. 232-3; PIZARRO L., 1988; ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994, p. 197) is directly linked to the privileged position the Military Forces are put in the management of public order in Colombia at that time, in addition to the

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<sup>82</sup> This point has also been developed, through a different angle, in the discussion of the policing of discourse on Section 3.2.

<sup>83</sup> For a developed version of this argument, see Neocleous (2014).

police. This intersection of professionalization and the protagonist role of the Military Forces in public order is certainly relevant for it exposes one of the main directions schools and training centers have headed to in Colombia. And, in the terms of these authors, it is a “paradox” that the “modernization which, explicitly or not, had as its main objective to separate the military from politics” has resulted in the re-politicization of the armed forces on new terms” (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 86). In other words, that which is technical must be separated from that which is political. The focus on the elements of professionalization that have allowed the ascension of the Armed Forces emphasizes the military when they get out of the barracks, either to make politics (politicization as a problem), or to make war (as protagonists of public order).

What I propose, instead, is to look to the military as political actors inside the military schools, and to the military schools as sites in which we can understand professionalization as articulated within society, not apart from it. In the making of a “modern Colombia”, the Armed Forces were a central piece in the production of the model of the ideal citizen, in the building of the infrastructure that would connect the territory as a national one, and in the production of *savoirs* of order. Chapters 4 and 5 discuss the practices constituting the professionalization of the Colombian Army in two different moments: from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; and from the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until the present days. Such an organization is based on the identification of two different characterizations of the professionalization programs constituting the circuit of military *savoirs* in Latin America.

In this sense, Chapter 4 unfolds into three main analytical moves: i) how professionalization is inscribed in the discourse of modernization, particularly as regards the organization of violence; ii) the emergence of a circuit of military *savoirs* in Latin America by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the position of Europe as a reference of “military professional”, the characteristics of the circuit and its effects; and iii) the position of Colombia within this circuit. Chapter 5 is constituted by three additional analytical moves: i) the characteristics of the circuit of military *savoirs* emerging in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the position of the United States as a

reference for the professionalization of the military in Latin America; ii) the position of Colombia in such a circuit; and iii) how Plan Colombia allowed for Colombia to claim itself in the position to teach other military forces in the region, based on its expertise.

#### 4. The circuit, the “military professional” and the limits of the discourse of modernization

If the discussion opening Part Two underlined how professionalization is key to the organization of violence running through the claim of a “modern Colombia”, Chapter 4 aims at understanding what is at stake in the claim on the need to professionalize the military forces and what are the effects of such a claim. The Chapter is organized into three main analytical moves. Section 4.1 digs in the discourse of modernization by engaging with Elias’ *The civilizing process* (2000) and Weber’s *Politics as a Vocation* (2004). Read as expressions of the discourse of modernization, these works reveal how civilization and professionalization are both a condition and an effect of the pacification of the “social space”. In other words, these texts expose how central the organization of violence is in the discourse of modernization. The final part of Section 4.1 mobilizes Sarmiento’s *Facundo* as the expression of how the discourse of modernization has been reproduced in Latin America. Particularly, I aim at identifying how the problem of the organization of violence – or, more specifically, the problem of the military – was framed in the context following the independence wars in Latin America.

Section 4.2 continues this discussion in search for the effects of the reproduction of the discourse of modernization in Latin America. More specifically, it explores how the drawing of the boundary separating what is “civil” from what is “military”, and what is “technical” from what is “political” has constituted a recurrent feature in the construction of the “problem of the military” in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Latin America. In this sense, Section 4.2 argues that the discourse of modernization is the condition for the emergence of a circuit of military *savoirs*: indeed, looking to Europe as a reference of “military professional” has resulted in several French and Prussian military missions circulating in Latin America in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Linking the intense transit of “military professionals” in the region with the emergence of a circuit, I map the main characteristics of this circuit of military *savoirs*, its main transmission currents and effects.

While Section 4.2 analyzed the homogenizing effects of the reproduction of the discourse of modernization in Latin America, Section 4.3 observes more attentively how Colombia is inscribed in the circuit of military *savoirs*. By analyzing the main principles, procedures and content of the professionalization advanced by the Chilean mission – taken as the “messenger” of the Prussian Army in the region – in Colombia, I discuss the tensions in which the work of the military mission was immersed. Importantly, I expect to provide elements for us to see, through the limits of the work of the Chilean mission, the limits of the discourse of modernization.

#### **4.1. The discourse of modernization and the organization of violence: Europe is where Latin America is supposed to be<sup>84</sup>**

In 1993, David Bushnell has published *The making of modern Colombia: a nation in spite itself*. In this renowned and widely quoted book, Bushnell is interested in the processes through which Colombia has been fabricated as a nation despite the persistence of political disputes and widespread violence between the Liberal and Conservative parties. Importantly, there is no evidence in the text suggesting that actually *any* modern nation is fabricated – which leads us to two possible readings. In the first, Colombia had to be fabricated given that there were no conditions “naturally” leading to its consolidation as a nation. In the second, as *every* modern nation, Colombia has been fabricated but, once its fractures have not been overcome, it is a nation in spite itself. In both cases, Colombia constitutes an anomaly.

Far from the assumption underlying Bushnell’s analysis – that modern nations are usually homogeneous and pacific –, I want to draw attention to how violence is a constitutive element of the discourse of modernization, and not foreign to the latter. As I argue in this section, the fabrication of a so-called “pacified social space” is claimed, within such discourse, as a simultaneous process to the *organization* of violence, rather

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<sup>84</sup> I borrow and adapt this title from the insight by Walker (2010), in “Europe is not where it’s supposed to be”, that we are better off understanding “Europe” – and, therefore, also “Latin America” – not as spatial categories but as political entities produced through discursive practices.

than its *extinction*. I look at this intricate relation between peace and violence through a particular angle: that of the professionalization of the Armed Forces as both a condition for and an effect of the reproduction of the discourse of modernization. To be clear, I argue that the monopolization of the means of violence by the state, civilization and professionalization are the pillars of the discourse of modernization at play not only in Colombia, but in Latin America in general – most notably since the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In such a discourse, Europe was taken as the reference of what history “had to be” for those recently-independent Latin American states. As we will see on Section 4.2, the frictions resulting from attempts to reproduce a specific “story” about Europe in these states has not led to the emergence of a critique to the pillars constituting the discourse of modernization: on the contrary, those frictions were mobilized as the basis for claims on the need to deepen the modernization process. As I argue further in this section, the resonance of such discourse throughout Latin America was the condition for the circulation of *savoirs* on how to deepen the professionalization of the military forces<sup>85</sup>, allowing for a certain homogenization of their regulations, schools, formations, and functions amongst the different Latin American states.

In order to develop this argument, I engage Elias’ *The civilizing process* (2000) and Weber’s *Politics as a Vocation* (2004) to understand how monopolization, civilization and professionalization are entangled in the discourse of modernization. Instead of mobilizing these texts in order to grasp the historical details of the modernization process in Europe, Elias and Weber are here read as expressions of the discourse of modernization<sup>86</sup>.

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<sup>85</sup> As I will insist in other passages of this text, the professionalization of the police was anchored in the same pillars as that of the military. Although the circulation of *savoirs* regarding the police crosses the professionalization of the military in several moments, as we will see, it follows a different dynamics, expresses contrasting concerns (only sometimes) and mobilizes a different vocabulary (also, only sometimes). Despite its relevance for the discussion on the organization of violence, the study of the professionalization of the police will be left for a future occasion, given the additional analytical breath it would require. In the case of Colombia, key references in this regard include: CASTAÑO CASTILLO, 1947 (one of the first works about the history of the Colombian National Police); LLORENTE, 1999; RUIZ V., 2006.

<sup>86</sup> Therefore, I will not address aspects which are of fundamental importance if one is reading them as sources of historical sociology, as it is the case of Elias’ concept of



While the former explores how the diffusion of norms of social conduct is related to the organization of violence in “pacified social spaces”, Weber centers his analysis on the rationalization constituting the consolidation of the modern state in Europe, allowing us to connect such processes with that of professionalization. By engaging these texts, I want to discuss how the discourse of modernization is constituted by the claim on the need to separate war from peace, as well as what is civil from what is military, and what is technical from what is political.

With that in mind, the idea of a “pacified social space” in Elia’s work (2000, p. 373) is a good starting point, for it is the center of gravity of several of the processes mentioned above. Indeed, according to the author, it is the consolidation of “pacified social spaces” which has allowed for durable institutions to be built and functions to be increasingly specialized in a given society<sup>87</sup>. According to Elias, “Through the formation of monopolies of force, the threat which one person represents for another is subject to stricter control and becomes more calculable. Everyday life is freer from sudden reversals of fortune” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 372). Immersed in a complex, interdependent and expanding web of actions, individuals were increasingly compelled to regulate their conducts in a stable manner, and abrupt oscillations of emotions and actions have thereby become scarce<sup>88</sup>. The crystallization of ideas of socially accepted behavior specific to each time and place has not only led to the individual’s conscious self-control: “an automatic, blindly functioning apparatus of self-control is firmly established” (ELIAS, 2000, pp. 367-368). It is in this sense that Elias claims that the battlefield has moved within: “Part of the tensions and passions that

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“sociogenesis” (ELIAS, 2000, pp. 257-362), which opens the possibility for incongruence and non-linearity in certain passages of the European historical trajectory. The same can be claimed regarding Weber’s awareness that his historical analysis was based on “ideal types” – not “actual ones” (WEBER, 2004, p. 34).

<sup>87</sup> The formation of this “pacified social space” cannot be dissociated from the monopolization of violence – or, what Elias calls the “monopoly mechanism”. Through the “monopoly mechanism”, the competition amongst princes results in the elimination of contestants and, hence, in the monopolization of the means of violence and its gradual transformation into a public monopoly (ELIAS, 2000, p. 276).

<sup>88</sup> It is important to highlight that, here, Elias is referring mainly to the medium and upper social strata. According to him, “the lower strata, the oppressed and the poorer outsider groups at a given stage of development, tend to follow their drives and affects more directly and spontaneously, that their conduct is less strictly regulated than that of the respective upper strata” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 382).

were earlier directly released in the struggle of man and man, must now be worked out within the human being” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 375).

What Elias has called the “civilizing process” is not unidirectional, however. The nobles who used to derive their social status from the use of violence have gradually lost their privileged position in the organization of society, firstly because the use of violence was not as frequent and necessary in “pacified social spaces”, which implied not only that their social status was downgrading, but also that their main source of monetary gain was becoming scarce (ELIAS, 2000, p. 393). Secondly, customs and traditions (of land titles as a prize for their participation in wars) were losing strength to capital accumulation as a parameter of social status (ELIAS, 2000, pp. 394-395). In Elias’ own words, differently from the other social strata, the courtiers had a social function but no occupation (ELIAS, 2000, p. 388). “The rising bourgeois strata are less free to elaborate their conduct and taste; they have professions. Nevertheless, it is at first their ideal, too, to live like the aristocracy exclusively on annuities and to gain admittance to the court circle” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 424).

Importantly, not only the knights, but the king himself was losing strength to the bourgeoisie within this context. In this sense, despite its lack of economic relevance in this historical context, the court had a key political use for the king<sup>89</sup> (ELIAS, 2000, p. 396): preserving the position of the court in this society meant assuring a counter-balance to the bourgeoisie and all that its ascension would mean to customs and traditions as the condition for kings, nobles and knights to hold themselves in the upper social strata. Elias suggests that:

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<sup>89</sup> According to Elias, the central ruler is key to these processes – and this is the reason why the author refers to this dynamic as the “royal mechanism” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 396). “So much presses directly and indirectly on the central ruler and his close entourage from the whole dominion, each of his steps, each of his gestures may be of such momentous and far-reaching importance, precisely because the monopolies still have a strongly private and personal character, that without this exact timing, these complex forms of reserve and distance, the tense balance of society on which the peaceful operation of the monopoly administration rests would rapidly lapse into disorder” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 388). Through the “royal mechanism”, the expansion of the rules of *civilité* from the court to other social strata, as well as the differentiation of courtly manners from those of the bourgeoisie were continuous processes which simultaneously assured the preservation of the nobility as a counterweight to the bourgeoisie, and stimulated the tensions between nobility and bourgeoisie, “to allow neither estate to grow too strong or too weak” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 396).

It is the necessity to distinguish themselves from anything bourgeois that sharpens this sensitivity; and the particular structure of court life – under which it is not professional competence or even the possession of money, but polished social conduct, that is the main instrument in the competition for prestige and favour – provides the opportunity for the sharpening of taste (ELIAS, 2000, p. 422).

Read together, these processes have both led to the incorporation of knights as dependents on the king in the court – what Elias referred to as the “courtization” of the warriors (2000, pp. 387-397) –, but also to another feature of the civilizing process: the continuous refinement of “habits of the court”, social conventions on gestures, speech, on how to behave at the table, how to dress etc. The constant update of rules of etiquette operated as a permanent mechanism of differentiation between the “court society”, on one side, and the bourgeoisie, on the other: irrespective of the monetary power of a bourgeois, there was always something he could not grasp in order to be recognized as part of the upper social strata. In this sense, the civilizing process analyzed by Elias is, at once, the unceasing refinement of human conducts within the court as a mechanism of social differentiation, which is stimulated by the social ascension of the bourgeoisie; but also the continuous transformation of human conducts both as a result and an effect of the consolidation of durable institutions and the increasing specialization of functions.

Following this logic, the civilizing process is a condition for and an effect of social control. Constituted by the assimilation of socially accepted behaviors and by the repulsion of this approximation through the refinement of manners, the civilizing process walked “hand in hand with an increase in the social power of that class, and a raising of its standard of living to that of the class above it, or at least in that direction” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 429). This attraction-repulsion movement was, at the same time, a condition for social order to be kept. Indeed, the social control produced through the civilizing process is key to the optimal circulation of goods in those urban, pacified spaces, and the accumulation of capital resulting from that trade flows to the government structure through taxes and charges. The civilizing process is, therefore, a dynamic through which power relations were organized

(ELIAS, 2000, p. 431), a central instrument to social ordering and a condition allowing the government to be possible.

For us to grasp how Elias thought the organization of violence as constituting the consolidation of the modern state, it is key to further explore what is at stake in the “courtization of the warriors”. As we have seen, the gradual replacement of a warrior nobility “by a tamed nobility with more muted affects” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 389) cannot be dissociated, in Elias’ account, from the processes through which social spaces are durably pacified. Nor can it be dissociated from war making. Indeed, Elias understands “court” as the home of a large number of people and whose ruler achieved a position of predominance over other warriors in battles, allowing for him to concentrate a greater share of lands and military power (ELIAS, 2000, p. 389). The analysis of such processes exposes how central war making was to the formation of increasingly complex human agglomerations and to the pacification of the social space this agglomeration was found in. It is this relative stability that allows for a more optimal circulation of goods and for the specialization of social functions in this space, nurturing the conditions for the strengthening of the bourgeoisie. At the same time this dynamics challenges the structure and the criteria which that society was erected upon, the upward thrust of the bourgeoisie, due to the resources yielded through trade, feeds the ramification and crystallization of the state institutions.

But what happens to war makers once the monopolization of the use of physical violence is found in an advanced stage? According to Elias, as the control over the instruments of physical violence is gradually centralized and the functional interdependence of nobility and bourgeoisie grows, physical violence is no more a frequent resource with which social tensions are addressed<sup>90</sup> (ELIAS, 2000, p. 423). Through the courtization of the warrior nobility, thus, violence is tamed: it becomes organized through rules and mechanisms of control – an internalized self-control (both conscious and unconscious) characteristic of the *civilité*, as well as the control

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<sup>90</sup> It is in this sense that Elias argues that the court aristocracy of the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards “is the first of the more constrained upper classes, which is followed in modern times by even more heavily fettered ones” (2000, p. 423).

resulting from the centralized apparatus of weapons and troops. As interdependence increases with the deepening of functional specialization in a given society, notions of socially acceptable behaviors are crystallized across those functionally interdependent strata. Through the courtization of the warrior, physical violence gives way to control as the key word of governing human agglomerations – which implies that war must not be waged in “pacified social spaces”.

This close link between “socially accepted behavior” and “civilizing process” is crucial for us to grasp what is at stake in the emergence of control as the mechanism through which social coexistences are regulated inside what Elias refers to as “pacified social space”. As Neocleous claims, based on the works of Lucien Febvre, it is only in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with the emergence of the bourgeoisie as the ruling class that “civilization” acquires the meaning of a process – different, thus, from “*civilité*”, as the term designating the behavior, refinement and social manners distinguishing the courtly aristocracy from the lower classes (NEOCLEOUS, 2014, p. 128). This “civilizing process” was, furthermore, understood as a key instrument in dealing with internal conflict. Revolving around the works published in this period, Febvre argues that the word “civilization” was either absent, occasions in which its meaning appeared associated to “police”; or it was used interchangeably to “police”<sup>91</sup> (NEOCLEOUS, 2014, pp. 130-131). According to Neocleous, “civilization” can be read not only as a process, but one which is connected to the idea of “ordering”. However, as we have seen so far, even if “*civilité*” implies a quality and not a process, it is notably immersed in the social dynamics of the “pacified social space” in Elias’ account. The diffusion of ideas of “socially accepted behavior” throughout this “pacified social space” are, as we have discussed, both the condition for and the effect of government to be possible and, therefore, cannot be dissociated from ordering practices within the analytical framework developed by Elias. That said, the connection between “civilization” and “policing” relies on the assumption that there are

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<sup>91</sup> Amongst the references mentioned in Febvre’s work, Neocleous singles out Voltaire’s *The Philosophy of History* (1766), which “shifts from *police* to *civilisé* and back again, and at one point writes of peoples becoming ‘united into a civilized [*civilisés*], polished [*policés*], industrious body” (NEOCLEOUS, 2014, pp. 131-132).

always people whose conduct, manners and language had to be polished for society to be ordered – “well-policed” (NEOCLEOUS, 2014, p. 133). There lied the work of the police: the fabrication of social order through the enforcement of laws. Through this reading, the emergence of control, instead of violence, as the key word for the government of human agglomerations implies that, in “pacified social spaces”, the police is the most appropriate state apparatus to be mobilized when it comes to social ordering.

The monopolization of the means of violence<sup>92</sup>, as well as the consolidation of a “pacified social space” deriving from it, the deepening of functional specialization within societies, the monetization of social relations (as tradition is downplayed as a parameter of prestige), the diminishing contrasts between social strata and the internalization of norms of socially accepted behavior have created, according to Elias, the conditions for the bourgeoisie to emerge as the privileged social strata by the eighteenth century, and for absolutist-courts to gradually disappear from the political landscape in Europe by the nineteenth century<sup>93</sup>. The spread of civilized conducts in this context still operates according to the movements of assimilation-repulsion that have characterized the previous period (ELIAS, 2000, p. 428, p. 430), but with a different logics: “from now on profession and money are the primary sources of prestige, and the art, the refinement of social conduct ceases to have the decisive importance for the reputation and success of the individual that it had in court society”<sup>94</sup>

<sup>92</sup> According to Elias, the monopolization of tax and of the means of violence are but one of numerous interdependent processes leading to the process of “civilization” (ELIAS, 2000, pp. 388-389). Indeed, it coexisted, traversed and was traversed by these processes to such an extent that it is even hard to tell where each of these processes begin without touching upon the other. As we have seen, this was not only possible because of the social tensions involving the bourgeois and the courtier: these processes were also necessary re-articulations within this context. In other words, if the “society of court” has been, for a long period, both the ignition and the engine of the civilizing of human conducts, this dynamic cannot be understood without the pressure yielded upwards by the bourgeoisie.

<sup>93</sup> According to Elias, the French Revolution was not, in this sense an abrupt rupture with the Ancient Regime: the conditions for this bourgeois “revolution” were already under a maturation process, which, though not historically predetermined, pointed to a historical direction. As the author argues, when referring to the civilizing process, “In fact, nothing in history indicates that this change was brought about ‘rationally’, through any purposive education of individual people or groups. It happened by and large unplanned; but it did not happen, nevertheless, without a specific type of order” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 365).

<sup>94</sup> Expressions of good taste, etiquette or courtly-like rituals are, according to Elias, relegated to the sphere of private life (ELIAS, 2000, p. 426).

(ELIAS, 2000, p. 425). The functional specializations are now reflected in an increasingly professional compartmentalization of societies – domains in which the wealth accumulated by individuals as a result of their work defines its social status, not hereditary or other customary criteria.

In this social context, the courtiers have to work in order to make a living, and the monopolization of the physical force is not anymore personalized, that is, attached to the person of the king: it is now considered as a profession within the bureaucratic apparatus of the state. These transformations analyzed by Elias allow us to highlight not only the taming of violence through the pacification of social spaces and the courtization of the warriors: they are also revealing of the conditions under which violence is organized as a profession whose political character derives from its connection to the modern state. In other words, no other kind of political violence is allowed within that durably “pacified social space”.

It is not hard to recognize Weber’s classic definition of the modern state through these lines: “a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory” (2004, p. 33, emphasis in the original). In other words, it is not only the use of physical force, but the monopoly of its legitimate use that defines the modern state in Weber’s terms. In his understanding, the monopolization of the means of violence is the condition for the consolidation of a whole bureaucracy erected in response to the technical needs of the public administration (WEBER, 2004, p. 46). As in Elias, the “pacified social space” is key for Weber, for the rationalization characterizing the organization of domination in the modern state is only possible in the context of the monopolization of the means of violence. In this “pacified space”, “force is certainly not the normal or the only means of the state (...) but force is a means specific to the state” (WEBER, 2004, p. 33). In this sense, Weber’s analysis resonates not only some of the main categories mobilized by Elias, but also the relations Elias draws between them.

One of the aspects emphasized by both authors is the organization of violence constituting the formation of the modern state. Weber’s analysis, in particular, underlines a fundamental implication of such process: that

legitimacy is locked-in in the use of “political force” by the modern state. Weber argues that “the right to use physical force is ascribed to other institutions or to individuals only to the extent to which the state permits it. The state is considered the sole source of the ‘right’ to use violence” (WEBER, 2004, p. 33). The monopolization over the means of violence in the modern state is, therefore, also the monopolization of political violence: or, in different words, when the modern state monopolizes the use of violence, political violence is founded. Under these terms, the use of violence by institutions or individuals other than the state – or other than those authorized by the state – is not only outside his understanding of “political violence”, but also illegitimate. “Ordinary violence” and “political violence” are thereby differentiated and hierarchized: against the former, the penal state; against the latter, the mobilization of the means of violence.

The use of force by the state is legitimate because it has successfully claimed the monopoly on the legitimate use of force – Weber’s formulation expresses a circularity which is constitutive to the discourse of modernization, as Bartelson has argued in his analysis on how political authority and the use of force/right to war are linked in the Western discourse. According to him, “[s]overeign states have the right to defend themselves and their citizens with violent means against internal as well as external enemies, yet the very source of this legitimacy is nothing but the ability to do so successfully” (BARTELSON, 2010, p. 86). For Bartelson, it is actually this “double-bind” that “makes contemporary efforts to relocate legitimate authority to agents other than the states difficult” (2010, p. 83).

There is yet an additional aspect regarding the organization of violence which is extremely relevant for us to understand how professionalization is related to the discourse of modernization. As we have seen in Elias, the courtization of the warrior has constituted a process towards the taming of violence, both through the crystallization of rules applicable in wars against external offenders, and through the consolidation of a durably “pacified social space”, within which the use of violence was less and less frequent. Importantly, as members of the court, these former warrior nobles were tied to the king: the state’s wealth and lands were still considered as properties of the king – he who personified the state – and the



bureaucratization of the modern state in Weberian terms was not found on an advanced stage by then. As the absolutist regimes gradually faded away in Europe throughout the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, tradition decreased in importance as a reference for social prestige, as work (profession) – and money accumulated through it – and knowledge (education) emerged as the main parameters according to which social prestige would be assessed.

The state apparatus was not immune to these social transformations. More than that: it was also their catalyzer. According to Weber (2004), bureaucratization was one of the most important processes in the consolidation of the modern state. The creation of specialized and technical institutions in what we have come to associate with the “public domain” dates back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when the financial tasks of the prince were placed under the responsibility of a specialized administrator. Later on, jurists have also been incorporated to the state apparatus as the protection of private property became a key function of the state. As both Elias and Weber claim, the monopolization of the use of violence is also immersed in this more comprehensive process of specialization of the institutional ramifications of the modern state. Functions increasingly seen as indispensable for the preservation and strengthening of the state apparatus are thereby gradually detached from a familial or personal logics of control. Instead, politics is taken over by the de-personalized vocabulary of “administration”. For Weber, one of the main implications of the bureaucratization of the modern state is the complete separation between ownership and administration. In his words:

No single official personally owns the money he pays out, or the buildings, stores, tools, and war machines he controls. In the contemporary “state” (...) the “separation” of the administrative staff, of the administrative officials, and of the workers from the material means of administrative organization is completed (WEBER, 2004, p. 38).

The de-personalization of the state – which also defines the boundary between “public” and “private”<sup>95</sup> – marks the transition from

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<sup>95</sup> A very similar argument is advanced by Elias, for whom the absence of any distinction between the expenses of the prince or the king and those related to the administration of the realm (ELIAS, 2000, p. 272) fades away throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. By that

Weber's "charismatic authority" to the "legal" one (WEBER, 2004, p. 34). The "Political Man" of the modern state emerges as the administrator of a bureaucratic apparatus whose resources he does not possess and whose legitimacy derives from an authority anchored on the "belief in the validity of the legal statute and functional 'competence' based on rationally created rules" (WEBER, 2004, p. 34). For Weber, the emergence of such an "ideal type"<sup>96</sup> of political authority resulted from long-term transformations in the relations of social groups and in the material conditions negotiated through the tensions amongst such groups<sup>97</sup>.

Both Elias and Weber do not see these processes as linear ones: the steps constituting the rationalization and the expansion of the bureaucratic web of the state apparatus were taken in the context of specific practical challenges<sup>98</sup>. According to Weber, by the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the appointment of persons to positions in the state bureaucracy was made in accordance to one's mastery of a specific domain of knowledge considered as necessary to the administration of the state. Importantly, the rationalization of politics as an organization which required training in the struggle for power led to

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time, a gradual separation between the administrative staff from the material means of the public administration takes place.

<sup>96</sup> Weber is aware that these categories are not found in its homogeneous and coherent forms in reality. According to him, "These conceptions of legitimacy and their inner justifications are of very great significance for the structure of domination. To be sure, the pure types are rarely found in reality. But today we cannot deal with the highly complex variant, transitions, and combinations of these pure types, which problems belong to 'political science'" (WEBER, 2004, p. 34).

<sup>97</sup> As Elias argues, these changes were not linear, nor rationally planned: the fabric resulting from individual plans and actions can produce effects different from those expected with a single planned action of an individual. Nevertheless, it is this very web of interdependence that generates a certain pattern of order in these undetermined processes. According to Elias, "It is his order of interweaving human impulses and strivings, this social order, which determines the course of historical change; it underlies the civilizing process" (ELIAS, 2000, p. 366).

<sup>98</sup> According to both Elias and Weber, it was facing practical problems that princes have delegated key functions to technical administrators – processes which have triggered a centuries-long and increasing rationalization of the state apparatus. Many of these "practical solutions", however, were not taken as definite solutions in a first moment: even taxes, found at the heart of the extractive function of the modern state, were created and dissolved on an *ad hoc* basis until they were made regular, and the same occurred with offices created to be in charge of administering and collecting taxes (ELIAS, 2000, pp. 353-354). For instance, the *Chambre des Aides* was recurrently established and then dismantled in France during the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, until it was made one of the regular institutions constituting the state apparatus (ELIAS, 2000, p. 354). According to Elias, these fluctuations "make it clear how little all these functions and formations resulted from the long-term, conscious plans of individuals, and how much they arose by small, tentative steps from a multitude of intertwining and conflicting human efforts and activities" (ELIAS, 2000, p. 354).

the separation of public functionaries into two categories, which, however, are by no means rigidly but nevertheless distinctly separated. These categories are “administrative” officials on the one hand, and “political” officials on the other. The “political” officials, in the genuine sense of the word, can regularly and externally be recognized by the fact that they can be transferred any time at will, that they can be dismissed, or at least temporarily withdrawn. (...) Even under the old regime, one could be the Prussian minister of education without ever having attended an institution of higher learning; whereas one could become *Vortragender Rat* [Advisor to the Emperor], in principle, only on the basis of a prescribed examination. The specialist and trained (...) *Vortragender Rat* were of course infinitely better informed about the real technical problems of the division than was their respective chief (...). Consequently, in all routine demands the divisional head was more powerful than the minister, which was not without reason (WEBER, 2004, p. 52).

Although “faceless”, these highly specialized “bureaucrats” provide and systematize the information upon which relies the creation of (rational) rules. Bureaucracy is, thus, the condition for the modern “Political Man” to emerge, for the management of the public affairs and the “technical functions of the state apparatus would be endangered” without them (WEBER, 2004, p. 48). This differentiation between “political” and “administrative” officials within the state apparatus is key for our discussion on the professionalization of the military as a central process constituting the discourse of modernization.

Under Weber’s terms, the distinctive element of the professional of violence within the state apparatus is not the passion invested in the combat, but the knowledge on war doctrine and strategy, as well as the fighting skills developed through a disciplined training. As other branches of the “administrative” bureaucracy, the military must serve the “political officials” leading the management of public affairs. As I argue, it is within this context that we must interpret the building of military schools by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and mid-19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>99</sup>. The Prussian War Academy is an emblematic example of a more comprehensive and systematic attempt to form professionals of the army. Founded in 1653 as a cavalry school and dismantled shortly thereafter, the military academy was inaugurated in 1765 with an expanded curriculum, comprehending areas such as history,

<sup>99</sup> Although there were schools of cavalry and infantry in Europe already in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the fighting skills of those on the battlefields of the Seven Years’ Wars (1756-1763), for instance, were still considered to be poor.

geography, philosophy, geometry, rhetoric, grammar, French, dance and equitation. As others of the kind throughout Europe, this military academy was dissolved a few years later. In the context of the Prussian military reform, in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Military Academy was once more established as the main school in charge of professionalizing Prussian military officers<sup>100</sup>.

The connection drawn by Elias and Weber between the monopolization of political violence and the bureaucratization of the state apparatus reveals two aspects which are relevant for our analytical purposes. Firstly, it constitutes the claim that the professionalization of the military in the 18<sup>th</sup> and, most notably, 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, advances the taming of violence within the modern state. If monopolization and bureaucratization are mutually reinforcing processes, there can be no professionalization in a space which has not been pacified. The organization of violence under such terms of the discourse of modernization confines the military in specialized schools so that they can prepare for war in times of peace. Secondly, to claim the existence of a “pacified social space” implies the primacy of *civilité* over “warlike actions” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 161) in this space. This means that, for progress to flourish, the use of violence cannot be the mechanism through which social coexistences are regulated. According to Elias,

opportunities that previously had to be won by individuals through military or economic force, could now become amenable to planning. From a certain point of development on, the struggle for monopolies no longer aims at their destruction; it is a struggle for control of their yields, for the plan according to which their burdens and benefits are to be divided up, in a word, for the keys of distribution (ELIAS, 2000, p. 275).

In this sense, the discourse of modernization of which Elias and Weber are expressions is based on the claim that violence is not extinguished, but organized in the context of the primacy of *civilité*. The “pacified social space” is the “civil space”, whose authority corresponds to

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<sup>100</sup> The professionalization of the army was not understood as restricted to the specific domain of war: as an example, during a three-year period, students of the new Prussian Military Academy were offered courses on Military Sciences, Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics and Foreign Languages. In each of these years, nine months corresponded to indoor classes, and the other three months were dedicated to troop exercises and training.

the “domain of politics” – not the “domain of warfare”. Amidst the decreasing relative importance of the pursuit of the monopolization of the means of violence – which is “no longer a question”, as follows from Elias’ account –, the “Political Man” emerging from these social transformations is the administrator of the terms and material conditions under negotiation for the distribution of the yields resulting from the web of interdependent and productive functions of this society. As we have seen with Weber, however, the “domain of politics” is constituted by both the “political” and the “administrative” officials. If, on the one hand, the professionalization of the military is placed in the latter, as one bureaucratic branch among others in the state apparatus, on the other hand, its position within this bureaucracy is a very specific one, though.

As Weber highlights, the specific means peculiar to the modern state is the use of political force (2004, p. 33). Ultimately, it is the *possibility* of the use of physical violence – and not its recurrent use – that constitutes the sociological specificity of the modern state. As we have discussed, the formation of the modern state cannot be dissociated from the monopolization of political violence. But, through Weber, this must be read as a claim that every violent attempt competing with the state is considered as illegitimate. Following this logic, the political content of the “bureaucracy of violence” derives exclusively from its linkage with the modern state. Although it may sound redundant, this observation is important for us to understand the position of the military within the bureaucratic architecture constituted through the lines here analyzed. To be clear, this linkage with the political community “modern state”, which is the only condition under which this violence acquires a political character, must be interpreted through the primacy of *civilité* over “warlike actions” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 161). This implies, firstly, that the wielders of political violence are subjected to the “domain of politics”; and secondly, that both the professionals of war and the “political officials” were expected to fulfill their functions under the precepts of what “civilized conduct” was understood to be – each one of them, however, was to exert its function in its own professional domain.

It is in this sense that the professionalization of the military is a step further in the taming of violence. The once-upon-a-time-knight-and-then-courtier, now called the military, is part of the bureaucratic apparatus. As such, he is a professional specialized on warfare, whose authority derives from the technical knowledge mastered by him in this area, as a result from his training on and for war. Within the “pacified social space”, so the argument goes, this professional will only be mobilized in exceptional cases, which are to be determined by “political officials” – who are, by their turn, trained “in the struggle for power” (WEBER, 2004, p. 52). Despite the privileged position of the “professionals of violence” in the bureaucratic apparatus of the modern state, they are subjected to the “professionals of politics” – those occupying the civil offices in the state apparatus. It is possible to infer that it is precisely the privileged position in which the military is placed within the bureaucratic apparatus that authorizes, in specific moments in history, discourses (not exclusively vocalized by the military officialdom) on the need for the military to take a more protagonist role in politics. Indeed, the “courtization of the warrior” and the “professionalization of the military” must not be read as processes operating towards the extinction of violence: rather, they have both re-articulated, in different ways, the terms under which violence was to be used within the “pacified social space”. It is upon the terms of such a discourse that military schools are erected as the sites where professional soldiers and commanders are taught the rules on the use of violence.

Although the works by Elias (2000) and Weber (2004) are based on the consolidation of the modern state in different places of Europe, the professionalization of the military in Latin America in the post-independence context reproduced the same terms of the discourse of modernization analyzed so far. As we will see on Sections 4.2 and 4.3, the demands for more professionalization in Latin America and Colombia, respectively, were anchored on the separation between civil and military, and technical and political. It is precisely in this regard that the relevance of mobilizing Weber and Elias resides: their works express the terms under which the “European experience” has been taken as a “normal”, according

to which experiences in Latin America have been assessed and towards which such experiences must converge.

In this sense, if Elias saw the “historical past” of Europe in Peru when he wrote *The civilizing process*, in 1939 – “areas where the social structure is nearer to that of Western medieval society”<sup>101</sup> –, the reproduction of the discourse of modernization in Latin American independent states reaffirmed this position, as the Europe’s past – and implied a demand for the acceleration of history in Latin America in order to “reach” Europe. It is, therefore, only *within the terms* with which this discourse has been reproduced in Latin America that “deviations” from the “European parameter” will be interpreted as historical pathologies that must be corrected.

Furthermore, if the consolidation of “pacified social spaces” was the condition allowing for the bureaucratization and professionalization characterizing the discourse of modernization<sup>102</sup>, the reproduction of such a discourse unescapably authorizes pacification. The latter has implications not only for Latin America, but also for Europe. As it will be argued more in detail on Sections 4.3 and 5.2, the claim on the need to professionalize the military in Colombia has walked hand in hand with the acceptance of a protagonist role of the Army in the internal pacification, authorizing its engagement in operations against workers and protesters, as well as against the guerrillas. In the case of Europe, on Section 5.1, I argue that the professionalization of the military by the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries has coexisted with the emergence of another “military professional” on the colonial terrain: the “small warrior”, considered by the “conventional warriors” as brutal and uncivilized. The tactical *savoirs* developed with the objective to pacify the colonies such as Algeria and India were used in

<sup>101</sup> The complete excerpt reads: “We encounter similar contrasts in areas where the social structure is nearer to that of Western medieval society than that of the West today, for example in Peru or Saudi Arabia” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 391).

<sup>102</sup> There are numerous passages in Elias (2000) in which this point is clearly expressed, amongst them the following: “Classes living permanently in danger of starving to death or of being killed by enemies can hardly develop or maintain those stable restraints characteristic of the more civilized types of conduct. To instill and maintain a more stable super-ego agency, a relatively high standard of living and a fairly high degree of security are necessary” (ELIAS, 2000, pp. 428-429).

military operations in several occasions in Europe<sup>103</sup>. This was the case in France, during the Revolution of 1848 (PORCH, 2013, p. 17), and in Great Britain, against the Irish Republican Army (IRA) (PORCH, 2013, p. 112). As it will more carefully argued in the pages to follow, these pacifications were all undertaken in the name of the preservation of order and of republican or democratic values, which were seen as the conditions for progress to flourish.

Of particular interest for our analysis is to explore how the reproduction of the discourse of modernization has constituted the condition for the emergence of discourses on the professionalization of the military and, consequently, the consolidation of a circuit of professionals of violence which had Europe as its norm. As wars have gradually resulted in the formal independence of different states in Latin America, their colonial position lost ground for the “promise of modernization”: that these newly independent countries would be considered as equals to European states in international politics *if* they reproduced a certain story of progress. According to Pamplona, the narratives emerging in the 19<sup>th</sup> century around the “nation” in Latin America revealed a vision of modernity which was so profoundly dependent on the “European optics”, that it was unthinkable to “see us, define us and be”<sup>104</sup> (Pamplona, 1997/1998, p. 32) something different from Europe. In this sense, the discursive elements analyzed above with Elias (2000) and Weber (2004) echoed through every effort aiming at purging anything resembling a “relic of colonialism incompatible with notions of republican equality before law” (BUSHNELL, 1993, p. 85). Likewise, the repulse of social deposits considered as inheritances from

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<sup>103</sup> Practices such as the census and some of the disciplining and punishment tactics found in Europe have been firstly articulated in the colonies and then appropriated by continental Europe as rational techniques of government – through different angles, the colonies were not the “past of Europe” in the sense of a container where governing practices considered as obsolete for Europe could be applied, nor the irrational side of Europe in the sense that rationality could only be conceived as flowing from metropolises to colonies. Despite constituting a plausible and pertinent analytical path, a post-colonial perspective on the formation of Latin American states will not be developed here. Analyses attentive to how the colonial alterity was and still is a constitutive element of the production of European modernity include: Kapoor (2003); Inayatullah & Blaney (2004); and Fernández & Esteves (2017).

<sup>104</sup> In the original: “uma visão da modernidade (...) marcada, como afirmam certos autores, por uma profunda ‘dependência cultural’, o que nos obriga a ver-nos, definir-nos e sermos, em última instância, a partir de ‘ópticas europeias’”.



colonialism and the praise of liberal values as the pillars for the erection of these “new” societies have impregnated the narratives of modernization regarding how violence was to be organized in these states emerging from the independence wars (ROUQUIÉ, 1984; BUSHNELL, 1993; LOVEMAN, 1999).

In this sense, if we have walked through Elias (2000) and Weber (2004) in order to grasp how they express the constitutive pillars of the discourse of modernization, we now turn to a specific appropriation of such a discourse which was pervasively present in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Latin America: Sarmiento’s *Facundo*<sup>105</sup>. Published in 1845 and originally titled *Civilización*

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<sup>105</sup> I am aware that Elias’ account of civilization comprehends the colonization process. The author claims that, in their relation with the colonies, the European nations play an equivalent analytical role to the upper-classes in Europe (2000, pp. 385). According to Elias, by expanding the networks of functional specialization to other parts of the world, Europe becomes dependent on them, as well as makes these regions dependent on it. Thinking European nations as the “upper-class” in that process, Elias saw the same dynamics of assimilation-differentiation characterizing the civilizing process in Europe when he looked at the relations of the latter with its colonies: “On the one hand they are building, through institutions and by the strict regulation of their own behavior, a wall between themselves and the groups they are colonizing and whom – by the ‘right of the stronger’ they consider their inferiors. On the other, with their social forms, they also spread their own style of conduct and institutions in these places. Largely without deliberate intent, they work in a direction which sooner or later leads to the reduction in the differences both of social power and of conduct between colonists and colonized” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 385). As parts of this expanding social network of interdependence, colonization is not only about the extraction of resources from the colonies: it necessarily involves the productivity of the workforce in the colonies, as well as the yields resulting from their consumption (ELIAS, 2000, p. 432). In this sense, the transformation of human conducts towards constant (consciously or not) foresight and affect-control is both a condition for and an effect of the government of the human agglomeration connected through the colonial relation. As Elias underlines, “Just as it was not possible in the West itself, from a certain stage of interdependence onwards, to rule people solely by force and physical threats, so it also became necessary (...) to rule people in part through themselves, through the moulding of their super-egos” (ELIAS, 2000, p. 432). Simultaneously, the wall built through the constant update of differentiated conducts marks the limit of the assimilation and set the terms of the repulsion: there will always be something ungraspable to the colonized irrespective of how high they can socially ascend. More than a condition for and an effect of power, the civilizing process is remarkably eurocentric: it has been ripened within Europe and then expanded by Europe. Thus, colonization is, according to Elias, another wave of the civilizing process that has constituted the formation of modern states in Europe (ELIAS, 2000, p. 386). As such, although triggered by Europe and having Europe as its reference, the civilizing process commingles with local particularities, synthesizing new and diverse configurations of affect formations, as a result of the relations between upper and lower classes in a specific society – and of the pressure yielded both upwards and downwards by each towards the other (ELIAS, 2000, pp. 385-6). Here, I want to make a remark and register a methodological option. The first one is that, despite this room for considering the role of the colonies in an even greater increase in the variety of civilized conducts, the colonies do not enjoy an analytical position relevant enough in order to have an impact on the affect-control of the metropolises. In other words, as the engine of the civilizing process is found in the relation involving bourgeoisie, courtly nobility and king, the lower urban and agrarian classes have no analytical importance in this dynamics, except

y *Barbárie* (“Civilization and Barbarism”), the book was named after Juan Facundo Quiroga, a federalist *caudillo* in Argentina who had defeated unitarist military troops<sup>106</sup>, including the one of which Sarmiento was part. *Facundo* is considered as one of the canonical texts<sup>107</sup> about the “nation” Argentina – or how it came to be narrated (PAMPLONA, 1997/1998). In this work, Sarmiento expresses the problem of violence as an obstacle to the realization of civilization in Argentina. Particularly, what interests here is how *caudillismo* came to be framed as the main challenge to the monopolization of the means of violence and, following this specific problematization, also to the modernization of Argentina. As such, it hindered the constitution of a pacified social space – one of the conditions for progress to be achieved, as we have seen in the discussion above.

The way independence wars were fought against the Spanish crown intensified the pulverization of arms in what was roughly considered as

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through the assimilation of standards of civilized conducts (ELIAS, 2000, p. 386). That is, the lowest social group whose participation in the social dynamic has an effect of re-articulating human conducts of the higher social groups is the bourgeoisie: below them, it can only be expected, in analytical terms, the imposition of norms of behavior. Something similar could be claimed as regards the colonies in their relation to the metropolises, given that Elias considers that the former have an analogous position to the European lower classes in the “wave of the civilizing process” of which the colonization is part. Therefore, Elias leaves no room in his analysis for us to consider how social dynamics in the colonies re-articulate the civilized conducts of the European metropolises. As regards my methodological decision, I have chosen not to engage directly with the analysis developed by Elias on colonization as part of the civilizing process because I did not want to switch from the reading of his work as expressing the discourse of modernization to another, emphatic on his historical sociology. This is also the reason why I am not directly engaging with Centeno (2002) – who aims to develop a historical sociology of state formation in Latin America. It is in this sense that, if Elias and Weber can be interpreted as referential works expressing the discourse of modernization, I chose to work with another referential text expressing the very reproduction of such a discourse in Latin America: Sarmiento’s *Facundo*.

<sup>106</sup> The wars of independence in Latin America were fought in several axes. The main ones include loyalists to the Spanish Crown against independentists, all of which were part of the *criollo* elite, that is, a land-owning elite and nobility; monarchists against republicans, who, amongst the independentists, disputed the political regime that would be created after independence; and federalists against unitarists, who, amongst the republicans disputed the federal regime that would be established. The disputes characterizing the wars of independence and the period thereafter cannot be summarized in these lines, however. For a more in-depth analysis on this historical context, see: Bushnell (1993, 2004); Loveman (1999); Safford; Palacios (2002); Lynch (2004); Safford (2004).

<sup>107</sup> According to Pamplona (1997/1998, p. 25), Sarmiento was part of a “pantheon of writers”, whose narratives about the “nation” were inscribed in schoolbooks widely diffused in Latin America since the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Pamplona argues that “with the generalization of the school system, the fixation of the canons was made possible. (...) the elementary schools had a role which was only equated in importance to the press”. In the original: “Com a generalização do Sistema escolar, a fixação de cânones tornou-se possível. (...) as escolas do ensino fundamental tiveram um papel só equiparado em importância ao da imprensa”.

“national territories” by then. Indeed, the defense system adopted by the independent states in Latin America was characterized by militia warfare (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 36; MORELLI, 2007, p. 138), that is, a decentralized organization of violence that came to be known as *caudillismo*. Loveman (1999, p. 39) defines the *caudillo* as a ruler whose authority over a limited area derives from his personal control over the means of violence and around whom a network of loyalty revolves. It is thus described more as an authority deriving from a personal ability than from the rule of law (1999, p. 39). This understanding is linked with different trajectories in the region: the *caudillo* can be a professional officer in the command of regular army units, a militia officer, or a civilian leading a militia. The element connecting these contrasting trajectories is the absence of a formal institutional bound and the political influence of these *caudillos* on a specific human group, in a specific region. In Weber’s terms, the *caudillo* is far from the “legal authority” not only because lacking a bureaucratic state apparatus attached to his ruling, but also because his leadership is remarkably personalized, once based on his charisma.

To Sarmiento, *caudillismo* was a rural phenomenon and threatened the civilized character of life in the city and the progress the latter represented:

Such is the character of the *montonera*<sup>108</sup>, since its beginning; a singular kind of war and justice making (...) which must never be mistaken with the habits, ideas and customs of the Argentinian cities, which were, as every American city, a continuation of Europe and Spain. The Argentinian War of revolution has been double: first, war led by the cities, waged within the European culture, against the Spanish, aiming at giving a wider reach to this culture; and second, war led by the *caudillos* against the cities, aiming at avoiding any subjection to civil authority and developing its character and hatred against civilization<sup>109</sup> (SARMIENTO, 1999, p. 66).

<sup>108</sup> A widely used term in Latin America in reference to a troop of mounted rebels.

<sup>109</sup> In the original: “Tal es el carácter que presenta la *montonera* desde su aparición; género singular de guerra y enjuiciamiento (...) que no ha debido nunca confundirse con los hábitos, ideas y costumbres de las ciudades argentinas, que eran, como todas las ciudades americanas, una continuación de la Europa y de la España. (...) La Guerra de la revolución argentina ha sido doble: 1º, guerra de las ciudades, iniciadas en la cultura europea, contra los españoles, a fin de dar mayor ensanche a esa cultura, y 2º, guerra de los *caudillos* contra las ciudades, a fin de librarse de toda sujeción civil y desenvolver su carácter y su odio contra la civilización” (SARMIENTO, 1999, p. 66).

The dualism built by Sarmiento between the urban and the rural is based upon the association of each of these environments with a specific and contrasting character. The city was the site characterized by Europeanized, civilized, educated and productive social relations; the countryside was marked by brutality, disorganization and laziness. The city represents all that which the civilizing process had managed to achieve as a condition for and an effect of modern life (SARMIENTO, 1999). In this sense, *caudillismo* constituted more than a threat to the amalgamation of a coherent territory that could be considered as “national”: it also challenged the consolidation of a space where civilized conducts could be nurtured, hindering thereby the formation of a space upon which a rational and institutionalized government could be developed. It was, thus, an obstacle to civilization and modernization. It is not surprising, in this sense, that Sarmiento associated *caudillismo* with barbarism.

Moreover, the disorganization of violence expressed, according to Sarmiento, by the *caudillos* went against the “European culture” in the sense that it implied the absence of “any subjection to civil authority”. Under these terms, *caudillismo* challenged the realization of civilization in Argentina in two main directions. Firstly, it imposed a logic of violence to the regulation of human coexistences, hindering the consolidation of a “pacified social space”, given the recurrence of sudden attacks, either in the urban or in the rural areas. In such a context, the primacy of *civilité* over “warlike actions” is impossible, just as it is the establishment of the “good government”. Secondly, the fracture in the rural-urban axis characterizing the distribution of violence in Argentina is a condition that makes it impossible for civil elites to create a set of stable institutions and rules aiming at optimizing the circulation of goods, allowing for progress to flourish.

By evoking terms such as “brutal ferocity” and “terrorist spirit” (SARMIENTO, 1999, p. 65) in order to refer to and condemn the *caudillo* way of governing, Sarmiento is suggesting that the virtues of a republic cannot flourish from the character he identifies with *caudillismo*. This is so because he sees civilization as the appropriate content of republican governments – the “good government”. Sarmiento’s objection to

*caudillismo* is, thus, also a claim of a proper character of politics – the civilized one – and, with it, a demarcation of a “domain of politics” – which must be tackled by “political men” (in his words, “civil authority”), and not uncivil men whose use of violence is irrational.

It is noteworthy that, when identifying the two different kinds of war that there had been, under his perspective, in Argentina – the war led by the cities and the war led by *caudillos* against the cities –, Sarmiento is not claiming that violence exists in opposition to civilization. According to the author, the wars led by the cities against the Spanish ruling were fought “within the European culture”. The richness of details in the depictions drawn by Sarmiento of the brutality of the *caudillos* (see, for instance, SARMIENTO, 1999, pp. 65-66) finds no equivalent when he addresses the “European culture” of waging war. The contrast between the richness of detail on the brutal side and the silence on the civilized side suggests that the latter is more aseptic, more calculated – rational. The violence wielded by the *caudillos* is barbarian not only in the sense that it is excessive, “sanguinary” (SARMIENTO, 1999, p. 66) and unpredictable – once not based on established rules –, but also because it leads to dictatorial, despotic governments. Contrastingly, the violence wielded by the sculptors of civilization in Argentinian cities is unleashed only to the extent it leads to freedom. More than justified, it is a *necessary* violence.

Thus, Sarmiento’s *Facundo* sheds light to two elements which are relevant for our discussion. The first one is that violence is constitutive of civilization in this discourse, but not any kind of violence. Sarmiento draws a hierarchical relation between the civilized violence – wielded “within the European culture” – and the barbarian violence of the *caudillos*. The former is considered as superior to the latter because it is rational and civilized – “therefore”, subjected to a civil authority. According to Sarmiento, the war of the *caudillos* against Argentinian cities deforms the words of the civil dictionary, corrupting the values and purposes of civilization<sup>110</sup> that had been erected in the Argentinian cities throughout the years (SARMIENTO,

<sup>110</sup> In the original: “Doy tanta importancia a estos pormenores porque ellos servirán a explicar todos nuestros fenómenos sociales y la revolución que se ha estado obrando en la República Argentina; revolución que está desfigurada por palabras del diccionario civil, que la disfrazan y ocultan, creando ideas erróneas”.

1999, p. 59). This leads us to the second aspect I would like to underline: ultimately, what differentiates the “civilized violence” from that of the *caudillos* is the absence, in the latter, of a power superior to that of the arms (BEDREGAL, 1971, p. 23 *Apud* ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 63). What is at stake in this discourse is, therefore, the foundation of a “civil space” – a “pacified social space”, governed by the diffusion of ideas of socially accepted behaviors. Under the terms of civilization, violence must be tamed and subjected to a civil authority, so that a republic can be established.

Bridging the historical processes observed in Europe with the one in Argentina is not a strange move under the terms of the discourse of modernization which Sarmiento is an expression of. Indeed, the author makes no differentiation between Europe and the Argentinian cities in the post-independence context: for him, the cities in Argentina were a “continuation of Europe and Spain”. In the excerpt transcribed above, Sarmiento is not identifying the independence wars with an attempt to deny Europe: rather, it is an effort which, inspired by the European culture, aims at breaking the European ruling over the colonies in Latin America.

Importantly, Sarmiento sees in Facundo and Juan Manuel Rosas two kinds of *caudillos*. The latter was the Governor of the United Provinces of the Rio de la Plata and the Argentine Confederation from 1835 to 1852 and advanced a federalist organization of the state, persecuting political opposition, especially unitarists – such as Sarmiento. Writing from his exile in Chile, Sarmiento considers Rosas to be a sanguinary bureaucrat. More specifically, that a *caudillo* managed to become the head of state resulted in the impregnation of Rosas’ sanguinary character in the state bureaucracy that had taken shape throughout the years in Argentina. In other words, he was a bureaucrat murderer, who had others to murder for him: “Rosas never goes into a fury; in the quiet and seclusion of his office, he calculates and, from there, the orders are sent to his hired assassins”<sup>111</sup> (SARMIENTO, 1999, p. 176). Juan Manuel Rosas represents, in this sense, a violation of what Sarmiento thought as the proper character for the Argentinian nation to be built. For it was not the countryside invading the city: it was the

<sup>111</sup> In the original: “Rosas no se enfurece nunca; calcula en la quietud y en el recogimiento de su gabinete, y desde allí salen las órdenes a sus sicarios”.

barbarian that Rosas represented destroying the civilization that had been built in Buenos Aires throughout the years. Under the ruling of Rosas, cities had “their spirit, government, civilization” (SARMIENTO, 1999, p. 60) devastated and watched the formation of the “central, unitary, and despotic Government of the *estanciero*”<sup>112</sup> Juan Manuel Rosas, who hammers, in the civilized Buenos Aires, the *gaucho*’s<sup>113</sup> knife and destroys the work accomplished during centuries – civilization, laws and freedom”<sup>114</sup> (SARMIENTO, 1999, pp. 60-1).

Although the author identifies brutality with any kind of *caudillismo*, Sarmiento contrasts Rosas’ cowardliness with the bravery he sees in Facundo. The latter is, according to the author, the “faithful expression of a way of being of a people, of their preoccupations and instincts; Facundo, in short, being who he was, not by an accident of his character, but by unavoidable antecedents (...), is the most singular historical character”<sup>115</sup> (SARMIENTO, 1999, p. 14). Through this specific angle, Sarmiento seems to “forgive” Facundo, for he “was not cruel, was not bloodthirsty; he was just a barbarian who did not know how to contain his passions, which, once irritated, knew neither measure nor limit” (SARMIENTO, 1999, p. 175). Facundo’s problem is his lack of civility: being a *gaucho* turned *caudillo*, he threatened the realization of civilization in Argentina just as Rosas, but Sarmiento seems to nurture a certain nostalgia for his bravery and authenticity, a passionate conduct that is gradually effaced with the rationalization characterizing the modernization process.

<sup>112</sup> The owner of a ranch spread over a vast extension of land in rural areas. These private landholdings have been historically used to raise livestock or for plantations during the colonial period in South America.

<sup>113</sup> Roughly, a *gaucho* is the expression used to describe a *mestizo* who inhabited the rural region surrounding Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil, and Rio de la Plata in Argentina and Uruguay during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Although this expression is used in these regions until the present day, by that time, it was attached to a migratory horseman, whose main economic activity was related to cattle work.

<sup>114</sup> In the original: “en Facundo Quiroga, últimamente triunfante en todas partes, la campaña sobre las ciudades, y dominadas éstas en su espíritu, gobierno, civilización, formarse al fin el Gobierno central, unitario, despótico, del estanciero don Juan Manuel Rosas, que clava en la culta Buenos Aires el cuchillo del gaucho y destruye la obra de los siglos, la civilización, las leyes y la libertad” (SARMIENTO, 1999, pp. 60-1).

<sup>115</sup> In the original: “Facundo, expresión fiel de una manera de ser de un pueblo, de sus preocupaciones e instintos; Facundo, en fin, siendo lo que fue, no por un accidente de su carácter, sino por antecedentes inevitables y ajenos de su voluntad, es el personaje histórico más singular”.

Sarmiento's contrasting attitude towards Rosas and Facundo seems to point to the limits of the author's quest for civilization in Argentina, once revealing the tensions between tradition and reason and a certain appreciation of the author for the former. However, the message of *Civilización y Barbárie* is clear: civilization is the path to be pursued (SARMIENTO, 1999). If the portrayal of Rosas as a tyrant defined the destiny that Sarmiento envisaged to him – annihilation –, what would be the attitude towards what Facundo represented? Sarmiento looked at the United States, whose cities he characterized as the “continuation of Europe and Spain”, and highlighted that there he found “the only people in the world that massively reads, and uses the writing for each one of its necessities (...) and where education and welfare are diffused in every corner”<sup>116</sup> (SARMIENTO, 1981, p. 454, p. 471 *Apud* PAMPLONA, 1997/1998, p. 40). With this, Sarmiento was sketching a set of human interventions on the effects of nature in the constitution of Argentina as a nation. For Sarmiento, education would be the “vaccine” against the “barbarism” characterizing a society resulting from the mixture of “indigenous, primitive, and pre-historical races, without any basic element of civilization and government”<sup>117</sup> (SARMIENTO, 1915, p. 454 *Apud* PAMPLONA, 1997/1998, pp. 42-43). The United States served as an example to Sarmiento in yet another aspect: he observed that half a million immigrants arrived each year from different parts of the world to the United States and pondered that Latin American states had to open towards the exterior and stimulate the immigration of “races which were naturally inclined to progress” (SARMIENTO, 1915, p. 454 *Apud* PAMPLONA, 1997/1998, p. 42). Sarmiento thereby identified in both education<sup>118</sup> and immigration two different paths leading to the consolidation of civilization in Argentina. Both operated in the direction of assimilating and filtering, through a Europeanized lens, those “races” which were considered as “naturally

<sup>116</sup> In the original: “el único pueblo del mundo que lee en masa, que usa de la escritura para todas sus necesidades (...) y donde la educación como el bienestar están por todas partes difundidos”.

<sup>117</sup> In the original: “[sociedades] mezcladas a nuestro ser como nación, razas indígenas, primitivas, prehistóricas, destituidas de todo rudimento de civilización y gobierno”.

<sup>118</sup> The implementation of an educational system inspired in Europe was one of the veins he explored while a President (1868-1874), years following the publication of *Civilización y Barbárie*, in 1845 (PAMPLONA, 1997/1998, pp. 40-41).



unmodern”, gradually breeding civilized values and conducts into the Argentinian society through schools and the interaction with “races” considered as “prone to progress”.

The analysis on Sarmiento’s *Facundo* shows how his problematization of *caudillismo* clearly reproduces the constitutive elements of the discourse of modernization, as expressed in the works of Elias (2000) and Weber (2004). To be clear, these elements are marked by: (i) the monopolization of the means of violence as the condition for both the foundation of the civil space and the claim on the legitimacy of the state; (ii) the centrality of civilization as a condition for and an effect of modernization; (iii) the central position of specific professionalization processes within both the civil and the military domains; (iv) a specific organization of violence, marked by its subjection to the civil authority, as an imperative of modernity; and (v) eurocentrism, that is, the position of Europe as the norm to which the Latin American experiences had to adjust<sup>119</sup>.

Although Sarmiento focused his analysis on Argentina, he mentioned cases of *caudillos* in other states in Latin America, such as Peru and Bolivia (SARMIENTO, 1999, p. 226, p. 261). The pervasiveness of the discourse of modernization in Latin American states – will become clear in the next section, in which we turn to the main effects of the reproduction of such a discourse. Particularly, we will draw attention to how the claim on the need to tame the military was translated, since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, into the creation of military schools with the assistance of European missions. The argument I want to advance from this analysis is that the pillars constituting the discourse of modernization are the conditions for the emergence of a circuit in which specific *savoirs* were valorized and transmitted between military professionals.

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<sup>119</sup> Importantly, masculinity could be added to the list, given how most discourses making sense of the formation of “modernity” are shot through with gendered constructions constituting the divide between public and private; subject, object, and abject. However, a whole dissertation would have to be developed about this topic. For further information on the connection between modernity and masculinity, see Pateman (1988); Weber (1998); Lugones (2007); Enloe (2014).

## 4.2. The “military professional” is not improvised: professionalization and the emergence of a circuit of military *savoirs* in Latin America

The independence wars in Latin America<sup>120</sup> had resulted in the strengthened position of the military in terms of their share in the national budget in many states in Latin America (BUSHNELL, 1993, p. 87; LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 41; ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 62). The centrality of the means of violence in those independence processes also contributed to a privileged position of the military in political disputes. As Loveman highlights, military officers who had participated in war campaigns during the independence wars in Mexico, Venezuela, Bolivia, Peru, and Uruguay dominated post-independence politics until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 28; ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 72). At the same time, the multiplicity of axes through which those wars were fought, involving different groups depending on the site the confrontation took place, resulted in the diffusion of arms throughout the territory of these states. Either framed as *caudillismo*, rebellion or banditry (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 37), the characterization of widespread violence offered the grounds for claims on the need to pacify “internal commotions”. Under these terms, “extraordinary powers” were granted to the military in the Constitutions of these independent states, allowing practices such as the confiscation of property and the preservation of the *fueros* (special courts for the military), as well as the neutralization or annihilation of the “internal enemies” (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 38). This general characterization of Latin America during mid-19<sup>th</sup> century had two main implications which are

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<sup>120</sup> If the reader finds scarce mentions to Central-American cases, this is mainly due to the particularities of the discourses on state formation in this region, especially as regards their relation with the United States. For instance, according to Loveman (1999, p. 28), “In Central America, independence came virtually without war, although civil-military *caudillos* created the new nations that fragmented from the failed Central American Federation (1824-1838)”. This way of reading the formation of Central American states contrasts with the discourse of modernization mobilized in reference to South America, which is marked by the taming of the military by the “civil” domain in the post-independence context. Such a difference points to another set of questions which cannot be developed in this study. Among them is what appears to me as an insistence on addressing Central America as a terrain of “undisputed politics”, absent of any resistance to the *caudillos* in a first moment, and to the United States, in a second moment – in which the region is framed as a “zone of influence” of the United States (LOVEMAN, 1999, pp. 204-205).

relevant for our discussion. The first one is that the monopolization of the means of violence was framed as one of the main concerns regarding the “security of the Republic” in these states – as expressed in the wording of the 1821 Constitution of Gran Colombia (*Apud* LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 38). The second is that what to do with the military emerged as a problem to be dealt by the “civil” elites engaged in the establishment of a republican government in a specific state.

In this Section, we go through some of the main practices undertaken as a result of this specific problematization. As we will see, at the same time that the military forces were invested in the pacification of states in Latin America, the “problem of the military” constituted the basis for the invitation of several European missions to the region. Among the most recurrent cases are French and Prussian military missions, which were generally expected to assist in the “professionalization” of the military, mainly through the crystallization of a set of rules establishing “military careers” and the creation of military schools in Latin American states. My argument is that the reproduction of the pillars constituting the discourse of modernization has allowed for the emergence of a circuit of military professionals in Latin America, which has operated towards the homogenization of aspects such as uniform, curriculum, disciplining mechanisms, as well as operations. As we will see on Section 4.3, however, the case of Colombia reveals that, despite the harmonizing effects of this circuit, the particularities through which the discourse of modernization is filtered offer us some hints on the limits of the universalizing pretense of such a discourse.

Amidst the attempts to tame the military in the post-independence context in Latin America, a decision often made was to dismantle the Army in order to build another, almost from the sketch. In Chile, for instance, the official historiography refers to the years following independence wars as “anarchy” (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 65) – which is put in sharp contrast to the “order” allegedly established by later governments. Indeed, in 1830, the claim on the need to pacify Chile was mobilized by the Conservative government of José Tomás Ovalle – the first president of the Chilean republic – when purging the military officials identified as Liberals off the

army, as well as those who had participated in mutinies. Aiming at putting an end to factions disturbing order in the new republic, the minister of the Interior (1830-1831; 1835-1837), Diego Portales, reduced the size of the Chilean Army to 3,000 members and created “militarized civil militias”, which have reached 25,000 men (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, pp. 65-6). The creation of a “civil space” was claimed as necessary so that the Chilean republic could prosper.

As we will see on Section 4.3, a similar project was implemented by Rafael Reyes (1904-1909) in the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the Army was dismantled almost in its entirety after the civil war known as the Thousand Days War (1899-1902) (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 21). Much earlier, the tension between the so-called “civil elites” and the military was already pervasive in political discourses in New Granada. Particularly, the political disputes between the “civil” elites and the military by that time was framed as one involving, on one side, the “men of Law”, and on the other, “the men in arms”. Such tension reveals the terms under which the content of the “Political Man” of the recently independent republic were disputed. Indeed, the “men of Law” represented an authority whose legitimacy derived from rationally created rules, as illustrated by the educational background in Law of Francisco de Paula Santander, one of the main exponents of this characterization of the civil elites (BUSHNELL, 1993, p. 55). Contrasting to Simón Bolívar, whose professional trajectory was anchored on military campaigns, Santander represented the promise of the primacy of *civilité* over violence as a mechanism for the regulation of human coexistences in New Granada.

According to the historian José Manuel Restrepo, who occupied several public offices in New Granada from 1819 to 1860, the military were seen as representing a threat to republican ideals – a “cancer that is devouring the people’s substance” (RESTREPO, 1858 *Apud* BUSHNELL, 1993, p. 71). On the other hand, the military considered to be an outrage that lawyers “are in open war with an army to whom they owe their very existence”, declared the Venezuelan General José Antonio Páez (SAFFORD; PALACIOS, 2002, pp. 116-117). The persistence of the suspicion towards the military led to successive reductions in its outlays, for

its share in the national budget was the largest one. As Bushnell underlines, “[t]he size of the military establishment was kept under strict control, with the authorized force level hovering around 3,300 men, or one for every 500 inhabitants, more or less” (BUSHNELL, 1993, p. 87). At play in these disputing narratives<sup>121</sup>, there was the claim on the need to subject the military to civil authority, a move which is simultaneous to the demarcation of a domain which is specific to politics. These historical processes are presented as a necessity so that the republican ideals could flourish in New Granada.

Additional cases could be mentioned regarding Peru, Ecuador, and Mexico, for instance (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, pp. 64-68; LOVEMAN, 1999, pp. 57-58), although the play of forces and the implications of the tension between civil elites and the military resulted in specific processes of bureaucratization and professionalization regarding the military. Such processes are described by Rouquié as “state building against the military” (1984, p. 65) and “political consolidation against militarism” (1984, p. 67) – terms evoked by Rouquié in reference to the tensions between the civil and the military which are constitutive of modernizing experiences in Latin

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<sup>121</sup> There is an additional aspect that merits attention here. Once education and literacy were opportunities that have, since the Spanish rule, been concentrated in the *criollos*, the social ascension of the military in accordance to their achievements in battle added another component of tension: elites in New Granada complained about the lack of good manners (SAFFORD; PALACIOS, 2002, p. 116) and education in the military establishment. Underlying this dispute, there is an opposition between terms anchored on practical experience and terms based upon education: while empiricism that nurtures the heroic self-portrait of the military is guided by merit, effectiveness and courage; lineage, protocol and etiquette are magnified through the discourse of education. The concentration of education – especially in the university level – in the *criollos* population revealed that education was not thought as a path through which individuals could achieve their social ascension: rather, it was a path that reaffirmed and accentuated their social differentiation. The refined vocabulary and the technicality of mastering the laws acquired through studying Law in the university increased the distance between *criollos* and the rest of society. Education was here mobilized by the civil elites as a parameter for social prestige. On the other side, if education was indicative of the social privileges of a certain social class, the military rank achieved through experience in battles sought in merit the substance for the claim of social ascension – “I deserve to be here”. But social differentiation involved etiquette, protocols, and ways of speaking and acting in public. In other words, the ascension through military experience still faced barriers of manners and customs. As we have seen on Section 4.1 with Elias, the crystallization of mechanisms of social differentiation is not incompatible with the discourse of merit in the discourse of modernization. On the contrary, the civilizing process walks hand in hand with both: if in the court society, the illusion of keeping up with the court in terms of social prestige stimulated the bourgeoisie to work more in order to accumulate more resources, the constant update of rules of behavior and etiquette on the part of the nobility made this levelling of the bourgeois with the noble impossible.

America. As we have seen in more details with the cases of Chile and New Granada, the dismantling of the armies under the claim that the fractures constituting the “internal violence” were reflected in the composition of the forces was undertaken in different states in Latin America. Purging off those military framed as “opposition” and reducing the personnel to the minimum necessary. Now, once the claim on the need to “pacify” the “internal space” coexisted with practices towards the dismantling of the armies, how to dispense with the means of violence if the latter is indispensable? Of course, there were various concrete “answers” to that, but the creation of “militarized civil militias” was an avenue recurrently taken by the government in the region aiming at taming the military (PALAU, 1907, p. 32; ROUQUIÉ, 1984, pp. 65-6). In other words, Rouquié’s “state building against the military” must be inscribed in the asepsis within the armies in the region, but also in the logics invested in pacification practices. Under these terms, however, “state building” is not a solution to the problem of violence: the search for a politically aseptic army mobilizes a similar logic to the search for a politically aseptic society.

Importantly, the dismantling of the armies only corresponded to a preliminary process of a more comprehensive project, that is, the professionalization of the armed forces, which was understood as a key process in the modernization of Latin American states. Here, Europe was placed as the main reference for this professional to be built. Interestingly, this was the case even before the creation of military careers in Latin American states, when *caudillos* travelled to European states at least since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in search for the improvement of their abilities in war through the pursuit of a military career in Europe<sup>122</sup> (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 69). On the other direction, European military officers and mercenaries also worked as advisors, and in some cases directly participated in wars in Latin American states (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 63).

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<sup>122</sup> The Argentinian General San Martín, for example, joined one of the regiments in Spain in 1789, in which he pursued his military studies until 1812, when he returns to Argentina with the rank of lieutenant colonel (*Tenente Coronel*). Upon his return, San Martín organized the Army of the Andes (*Ejército de los Andes*) as a regular army: with a command hierarchy, the creation of specialized divisions based on arms or services and uniform troops in terms of equipment (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 69). Importantly, San Martín was not the only career officer in the Army of the Andes.

Once these participations were made on an *ad hoc* basis and in specific campaigns, they did not result in the formation of permanent and regular armies. As Rouquié argues, “in the majority of the cases, the commanders of the independence armies had never known a regular army, nor had they pursued military studies”<sup>123</sup> (1984, p. 70). They were more “empiricists”, deriving their expertise on the military affairs from their direct participation in battles. Therefore, even those considered as “career officers” by then were not “professionals” of violence in the terms of the discourse of modernization. As such, they were not part of a stable bureaucracy, nor were they schooled on war as a domain of knowledge, neither permanently trained to be disciplined – the taming the military was, therefore, unstable. In this sense, many Latin American states sought the establishment of military schools as a necessary path for the creation of “modern regular army”. This has been pursued in different moments of these states’ trajectories, but the first moves in this direction were concentrated in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Before we explore the main traits and effects of those moves, it is important to highlight two historical aspects which contributed to the catalysis of the consolidation of military schools in Latin America.

The first one is related to the integration of many Latin American economies into the “global market”. The global political economy in which the Latin American states were found after independence reaffirmed the position they occupied while colonies, as providers of *commodities* to Europe and the United States. One of the main effects of the mobilization of the discourse of modernization in Latin American states in this context was that it authorized, as it has already been mentioned, the monopolization of the means of violence through the pacification of the social space, aiming at optimizing the circulation of goods and services, both within and outwards. This “extrovert growth” (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 74) requires “political stability” and “social peace” and goes hand in hand with a legislation specifically devoted to the optimization mentioned above, the building of an

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<sup>123</sup> In the original: “Pero en la mayoría de los casos, los jefes de los ejércitos de la independencia jamás han conocido un ejército regular ni realizado estudios militares”.

infrastructure allowing for the connection of the territory and the deepening of the bureaucratization of the state apparatus.

In addition to that, the historical context of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was marked by international wars in Latin America – among which, the War of the Triple Alliance (1864-1870)<sup>124</sup> and the War of the Pacific<sup>125</sup> (1879-1884). Considered to have revealed “the cost of unpreparedness, military weakness, and poor political leadership” (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 48), these wars resulted in the incorporation of an additional element to the claim on the need to professionalize the military. If the regime of justification of such an effort was firstly focused on the imperative of pushing the military away from the “domain of politics”, creating a specific domain for the “professional of violence”, and subjecting it to the “civil authority”, this justification also came to encompass the claim that the formation of regular armies was the condition for a more efficient use of violence in international wars. In other words, regular armies were considered to fight such wars better. By the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the “professionalization” of the military was thus constituted by two main elements: at the same time it referred to the “de-politicization” of the military, it involved the build-up of an army that made an efficient use of violence. As mentioned above, the preparation of such “professionals” was not to be sculpted solely by the Latin American military personnel, nor by the civil elite who was favorable to the discourse of professionalization. It was mostly in European military schools that many of Latin American states have searched for references for the professionalization of their armed forces. Different states in Europe were invited to send official missions aimed at contributing to the building of “professional” and “apolitical” public forces in Latin America.

With contrasting levels of scope and functions, foreign military missions were in charge of the supervision of the reforms of military laws and regulations defining the terms for the creation of a “military career”; the establishment of military schools; the introduction of new curricula; the

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<sup>124</sup> The War of the Triple Alliance opposed Paraguay, on one side, and a coalition formed by Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay, on the other.

<sup>125</sup> The War of the Pacific was fought between Chile against Chile and Peru.



diffusion of military doctrine, strategy and tactics; and the implementation of routine drill and maneuvers (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, pp. 90-98; PIZARRO L., 1987a; LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 64, p. 66; ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, pp. 43-44, p. 51). Despite the contrasts between, for instance, the Spanish, the French and the German organization of troops and strategy, professionalization was generally understood as the formation of an elite corps of academy-educated officers and a consistent career system.

The “de-politicization” of the Latin American military personnel was expected to be achieved through the creation, perfecting and valorization of what was considered as specific to the military: warfare, not politics. Indeed, the practices mobilized through these foreign missions reproduced the boundary between what was specific to the domain of politics (the “civil”) and that which pertained exclusively to the military domain. From the creation of a Penal Code and Tribunal especially for the “military professional” to the creation of journals exclusively dedicated to the debate and diffusion of military doctrine, strategy and tactics – all of these practices aimed at demarcating the specificity of function and knowledge of the military (“hence”, also special duties and rights). It is through these lines that we must interpret, for example, the declaration given by the Peruvian General Pedro Pablo Martínez, in 1935:

The twelve years in which General Clément and Colonel Dogny presided over the Military School as its directors marked the ‘golden age’ of our Army. Only military ideas were heard in its classrooms. Political interests dared not intrude on its grounds. (...) the Chorrillos School was a temple of military science (MARTÍNEZ, 1935 *Apud* LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 63).

In this excerpt, we see the celebration both of the “military domain” and the legacy of the French mission. The former is expressed through references such as “golden age” and “temple”, attached to the Chorrillos School, the Peruvian military school built in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the assistance of the French mission. The demarcation of a domain specific to the military acquires architectural traits as the school is presented as the site where “only military ideas were heard” – indicating the impenetrability of “political interests” in the “temple of military science”.

Most notable, however, is the disdain towards the “political interests”, which “dared not intrude” on the school. Here, there is more than the separation of the “domain of politics” from that of the military: there is a clear attitude of superiority of the latter towards the former. As we will see more attentively on Section 4.3, the military schools, the main site for the production of the “military professional”, offered a “totalizing” experience (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 118; LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 70; CASTRO, 2004): created in order to operate in a boarding-school format and with an all-encompassing curriculum (stretching from the most basic writing and reading skills to classes on history and geography), the military schools provide a “self-sufficient infrastructure”, including dorms, health clinic, chapel, as well as priests, doctors, musicians, hairdressers and veterinaries – most of them, being military themselves (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 87). By introducing the military professionals in the making to a socialization which is different from that of the “rest of the society”, the military schools aim not only at mimicking the conditions of a military campaign, but also isolating them in an environment where “virtues, expertise, and patriotic values” are superior to the ones of “civilians” (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 118; LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 70; CASTRO, 2004, p. 46). This isolation allows for the military professionals to develop, under the specific regime operating within the military school, a disciplined conduct which will later be diffused as an example of obedience and efficiency to various instances outside the military schools (from sports practicing, to regular schools and prisons). It is in the combination of the isolation of the military and the belief in the superiority of the procedures and values nurtured within the military schools that the disdain towards “political interests” in the excerpt above must be interpreted.

A third element I want to highlight in General Martínez’s declaration is the association he draws between the French mission and the Chorrillos School’s “golden age”. As suggested by the excerpt, the French contribution to the erection of this “temple” of military science is a key part in the process of consolidating what is specific to the military. More than a French “footprint” that cannot be erased from the Peruvian military historiography, such a declaration points to the superior position enjoyed by the French

mission in relation to the Peruvian military officers. This is not a particularity of Peru, neither of France: interestingly, in many cases, the leaders of the European missions invited to work in the professionalization of the military in Latin American states formally occupied chief positions in military schools, ministries, and in the police in some of these states. In Chile, for instance, Captain Emil Körner was named Chief of Staff (*Jefe del Estado Mayor*) by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (EJÉRCITO DE CHILE, 1924, p. 117; ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 91); in Bolivia, the Prussian mission's director, Colonel Hans Kundt, was named the minister of war in that state (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 67); and in Colombia, the French Commissioner Jean-Marie Marcelin Gilibert was named the first Commander of the National Police (CASTAÑO C., 1947, pp. 58-59).

The recurrent mentions to French and Prussian military professionals in Latin America should not come as a surprise, for they were considered as the most prestigious of the world in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Indeed, they corresponded to the more representative number of military missions sent to Latin American states by that time. For instance, French military missions were sent to Argentina in the 1860s, Peru in the 1890s, Bolivia in the 1900s, and Brazil in the 1910s; and Prussian missions were sent to Chile in the 1880s, Argentina and Brazil in the 1900s, and Bolivia in the 1910s (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, pp. 90-97; LOVEMAN, 1999, pp. 70-96; ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, pp. 35-42). Importantly, it seems that the French and the Prussian armies were taken as a reference for different reasons. After its victory in the Franco-Prussian War<sup>126</sup> (1870-1871), the German army has become a synonym of efficiency in waging war: its officers participated in military missions whose scope ranged from the organization of war games and codes to the elaboration of curricula and military codes of conduct, in addition to a direct engagement with training and teaching in the military schools (NUNN, 2001, p. 16). In the war against the French Empire, the Prussian troops have revealed a well-trained and consistent leadership, in addition to

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<sup>126</sup> The Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) was an armed conflict between the Second French Empire of Napoleon III and the German states led by the Kingdom of Prussia. Signed in 1871, the Treaty of Frankfurt transferred the territory of Alsace-Lorraine from France to Prussia. In addition to marking the fall of the French Empire and the formation of the Third Republic of France, the war also marks the unification of the German Empire.

an efficient mobilization of troops. The latter resulted, firstly, from a rail network that made the logistical support not only possible, but efficient; secondly, from a conscription system which was able to assure wide reserves of personnel (SCALERCIO, 2015, p. 94). Of course, these characteristics must be inscribed in the context from which the material conditions for such a “military efficiency” emerged: the colonial relations that allowed for the concentration of capital by Prussia; and the technological advances – especially rail and arms industries – without which victories in the strategic and tactical levels would be unthinkable.

As for the French army, it is noteworthy that it has remained as a reference even after its defeat to the German troops: indeed, French missions were sent to Bolivia, Brazil and Peru during the 1890s and 1900s. Although it has been known for the victorious campaigns characterized by the *levée en masse* since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the French army has become more notorious for its professionalism only after the Franco-Prussian War. Interestingly, part of the officers that have composed the French military mission sent to Peru in 1890s had served in Northern Africa (NUNN, 2001, p. 16), in French colonies. In this regard, it is relevant that the curriculum reformed by the French officers in Peru included the texts *Du rôle social de l'officier* (“On the social role of the officer”) and *Du rôle colonial de l'armée* (“On the colonial role of the army”), written by Hubert Lyautey and published in 1891, after having served in Algeria. In these works, this French officer argued that officers and colonizers had to realize their “civilizing mission” towards, respectively, the lower-ranked military and the colonial population: to educate them and to be their moral and cultural mentors was at the core of the mission of the military (NUNN, 2001, p. 20). It was indeed for his knowledge on colonial administration in Algeria, Madagascar, Indochina and Marroco that Lyautey’s military expertise relied on in the years following to the publication of the essays mentioned above. In this sense, if the hallmark of the Prussian army was efficiency through discipline and leadership through the effective use of infrastructure and weaponry, what distinguished the French army seemed to be more attached to what was considered as an efficient management of colonial order – the transformation of manners and human conduct in

general being a key part in this process. As we will see on Section 4.3, however, the effects of the professionalization of the Colombian Army resonates in many aspects the terms developed through the works by Lyautey.

Having this in mind, it would be misleading to claim that Latin American states have adopted a “French model” or a “Prussian model” for the professionalization of their armed forces. Indeed, it was often the case that a given state invited missions to offer guidance on this process<sup>127</sup>. In 1901, for instance, a Prussian mission constituted by three officers was sent to Bolivia with the objective to direct the War College and the Military School. Six years later, French officers visited Bolivia (1907-1910) with the same objective, followed by a German mission in 1911 (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 67). In Brazil, the change from a Prussian (1906) to a French mission (1919) occurred in less than fifteen years. In Colombia, this was no different: right after the end of the Thousand Days War (1899-1902), Colombia received military missions from Chile (1907; 1909-1911; 1911-1913; and 1913-1915), Switzerland (1924-1933), Germany (1929-1934) and France (1939) (BUSHNELL, 1993, p. 157, p. 193; SAFFORD; PALACIOS, 2002, p. 283). In this sense, with a few exceptions, the most common configuration of such professionals in Latin America resulted from successive attempts to build “modern military forces” with the assistance of foreign missions from different European states, or from the juxtaposition of the elements characterizing the foreign missions which had worked in a given country.

Chile is an interesting case in this regard, for it was not only a state whose military professionalization was more consistently developed in reference to a specific reference – Prussia –, but also because Chile was itself invited to send military missions to other states in Latin America (namely, Ecuador, Colombia, El Salvador and Venezuela) once it was

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<sup>127</sup> It is important to recognize that a myriad of elements constituted the equation resulting in the formalization of a contract with a specific military mission. As we will discuss in more details ahead in this Section, the provision of arms was often part of the package – as it still is – comprehended in the work of foreign missions in Latin American states. At the same time, the involvement of the European great powers in the First World War constrained the horizon of contractee options. At the same time, as we will see on Section 4.3, the choice for a specific foreign military mission may derive from the fact that it is the one some Latin American states are able to afford.

considered as the closest to the Prussian mission that could be found in the region. Chile was the first Latin American state to establish, in 1817, a military school – the *Academia Militar* (Military Academy). As the War of the Pacific (1879-1884) was close to an end and the Chilean forces defeated Peruvian and Bolivian armies, a commission of military officers was created to assess the needs of the Chilean army and its errors in the recent war<sup>128</sup> (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 80). Mobilized by the idea that professionalizing the military forces was key for Chile not to be vulnerable before Peru or Bolivia in case of another armed confrontation, or before Argentina, whose military campaigns aiming at expanding the territory could affect Chile (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 90; LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 80; ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 36), the commission was sent to Berlin in early 1880s in order to negotiate the establishment of a Prussian mission. Importantly, the nitrate and copper reserves expanded with the victory in the War of the Pacific allowed for the Chilean government of Domingo Santa María (1881-1886) to fund the mission – a condition that many states in Latin America lacked by that time.

Sent to Santiago in 1885, the Prussian mission was led by Captain Emil Körner and was integrated by thirty officers who worked as instructors both in the military schools in Chile and in the troops (EJÉRCITO DE CHILE, 1924, p. 117). Körner had participated in the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) and, by the 1880s, taught tactics, military history and ballistics in the School of Artillery and Engineering of Charlottenburg<sup>129</sup> (EJÉRCITO DE CHILE, 1924, p. 116). During his time in Chile, Körner reorganized the Chilean army from the highest to the lowest ranks through not only the consolidation of the laws upon which the military career would reside – being the mandatory conscription one of the most important –, but also the deepening of the specialization of its branches and the improvement of its

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<sup>128</sup> Despite the Chilean relatively easy occupation of Lima in 1881, the War of the Pacific has been extended for almost three additional years due to Peruvian and Bolivian resistance through guerrilla warfare. This has led to the assessment that the Chilean victory did not result from an undeniable military superiority, but from the relative poor capacity of its opponents. According to Loveman (1999, p. 56), the Chilean Army was criticized in the Congress and the press for “The lack of strategic plans, poor tactics, and needless loss of life” (1999, p. 56).

<sup>129</sup> Importantly, Körner had himself participated in another military circuit of *savoirs* by that time, having travelled to France, Italy, Spain and Russia in order to develop studies in the areas mentioned above (EJÉRCITO DE CHILE, 1924, p. 116).

mobility. In this regard, the Prussian mission reformed the curriculum of the *Escuela Militar*, which had been established in 1863, and created the War Academy (*Academia de Guerra*) in 1887, an institution dedicated to the formation of the high-ranked officers, as well as the officers of the General Staff (*Estado Mayor*) (EJÉRCITO DE CHILE, 1924, p. 116). As the head of the mission, Körner created specialized support-functions within the Military Forces, such as health, veterinary and supply branches. Another important front of the mission's work involved the development of an infrastructure allowing for the troops to be rapidly deployed and communications to be made more efficiently. In this sense, the Prussian mission has created battalions specialized in building railroads (1909) and telegraphs (1910) (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 81).

The Prussian mission worked in the professionalization of the Chilean army from 1885 to 1914. According to the internal documents of the Chilean Army, Körner was key to the professionalization of the military. In the 1924 *Memorial del Ejército de Chile* (*Memorial of the Chilean Army*), not only Körner<sup>130</sup> but the Prussian mission in general are celebrated for their legacy to the Chilean Army: at the core of this legacy was the consolidation of the *Escuela Militar*, where most of the officers considered as “professionals” in the outset of the 20<sup>th</sup> century started their military career (EJÉRCITO DE CHILE, 1924, p. 116). As the 1924 *Memorial* celebrates the achievements of professionalization, it contrasts it with the previous organization of the Chilean Army:

The achievements of the Army (...) since the end of the war of the Pacific are numerous (...). The discipline of this Army was magnificent and each of its members was motivated by the purest patriotism; however, neither the organization in times of peace, nor the way with which instruction was developed corresponded to the requirements of war, for the campaign itself (...) revealed both that improvisation was its characteristic and that it was necessary to create everything simultaneously to the deployment of the operations.

In the work undertaken by General Körner in our Army, one can highlight the fact that he formed a homogeneous officialdom, enthusiastic about its service and motivated by a great spirit of work. As a whole, this officialdom passed, almost without exception, by the *Escuela Militar*,

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<sup>130</sup> When first arrived in Chile, Emil Körner held the rank of Captain. His engagement and political projection in Chile was so expressive that, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, he was named chief of Staff (*Jefe del Estado Mayor*), was granted the rank of General.

which constitutes one of its most remarkable differences from the past organization, in which officers formed by this institution only corresponded to a reduced number<sup>131</sup> (EJÉRCITO DE CHILE, 1924, p. 118).

According to the excerpt, the Prussian mission was considered by the Chilean Army a watershed in its professionalization. Underlining the effects the mission had on its officialdom, the *Memorial* claims a transformation from “improvisation” to “preparedness” and from “heterogeneity” to “homogeneity”. The Army’s officialdom is thereby presented as the mirror of this new military corporation, whose professionals are not only mobilized in the context of war: it is in times of peace that more rational uses of the resources and personnel are conceived, taught and trained. Both preparedness and homogeneity operate in this direction: the latter is the condition for the former, once it allows for a more predictable and efficient use of forces.

As it concentrates the achievements of professionalization in “times of peace”, the Army’s *Memorial* reveals an understanding of “peace” which does not comprehend the numerous operations led by the Chilean Army in the repression of strikes in ports, mines, and cities – operations aimed at “pacifying” the territory. From the 1890s to 1924, that is, while the Prussian mission was still in Chile, the Army was recurrently mobilized in operations against “disturbances” of the public order. From 1911 to 1920, for instance, the Chilean Army intervened in almost three hundred strikes (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 84). As president Carlos Ibáñez del Campo (1927-1931) often highlighted, the Chilean Army held an “honorable mission”<sup>132</sup> of “healing

<sup>131</sup> In the original: “Los progresos realizados por el Ejército (...) desde la terminación de la guerra del Pacífico son numerosos (...). La disciplina de ese Ejército era magnífica y cada uno de sus miembros estaba animado del más puro patriotismo; sin embargo, ni la organización de tiempo de paz, ni la forma como se desarrollaba la instrucción correspondían a las exigencias de la guerra, pues la campaña misma (...) demostró que la improvisación había sido su característica y que hubo necesidad de crearlo todo durante el transcurso mismo de las operaciones.

De entre la obra realizada por el General Korner en nuestro Ejército se destaca en forma muy especial el hecho de haber formado una oficialidad homogénea, entusiasta por el servicio y animada de grande espíritu de trabajo. Toda ella, casi sin excepción, ha pasado por la Escuela Militar, lo que constituye una de las diferencias más marcadas con la organización antigua, en que los oficiales salidos de ese establecimiento solo constituían un reducido número”.

<sup>132</sup> A few years later, Ibáñez invited an Italian mission to work in the professionalization of the Chilean national police forces. The mission was constituted by *Carabinieri* officers



the body politic and saving the nation” (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 85). Under this discourse, and with an emphatic association of labor movements with “the dangers of communism”, the Chilean Army was systematically mobilized in the repression of strikes in nitrate plants (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 115; LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 82, p. 84).

The investment of social ordering functions to the military was not a particularity of Chile. In Colombia, for instance, the Army was often engaged in the suppression of protests organized by workers in the fruit industry (FONNEGRA, 1986) and coffee crops (BERGQUIST, 1989); in Argentina, the focus of the military operations corresponded to metallurgical workers (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 115), in Guatemala, the fruit industry (CHAPMAN, 2007); and in Peru, mining plants (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 86) – just to mention a few examples. The similarities observed in the operations with which the different armies were engaged in Latin America is one of the aspects pointing to the emergence of a circuit of military *savoirs* in the region. Importantly, at the same time the homogenization of military operations can be read as an effect of the circuit of military *savoirs*, it can also be interpreted as the condition allowing for this very circuit to emerge. In other words, as we have seen, the reproduction of the discourse of modernization in Latin America authorized a series of pacification practices, which constitute necessary references for us to understand the recurrence with which “disturbances to public order” were framed as the main problem to be solved for modernization to be realized. As I have mentioned, that strikes and protests repeatedly constituted the object of military operations is indicative that the concerns with pacifying the “internal space” and those with stimulating the production and commercialization of commodities reinforced each other.

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(LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 85), a police force which (though existing since 1814) was framed in 1861 as the first national force following the Italian unification, whose main responsibility was to suppress political opposition (NUNN, 2001, p. 21). In this sense, the option for the *Carabinieri* is indicative of a persistent logics of organization of violence in Chile, after all, the effect expected through the mobilization of the “professional military” was very similar to the function for which the “professional police” was being polished to undertake: to cope with the “internal gangrene” in Chile (IBÁÑEZ, 1927 *Apud* LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 84) – mostly associate with “leftist labor movements” (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 82, p. 85).

The intense transit of European military professionals in Latin America since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is certainly one of the main elements characterizing this circuit of military *savoirs*. The work advanced by these missions was not only invested in the regulation of the “military career” and in the establishment of military schools, nevertheless. The creation of military archives and specialized reviews, as well as the translation of manuals and textbooks corresponded to an addition front in which these missions worked (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 93; LOVEMAN, 1999, pp. 73-74; CASTRO, 2001, p. 67; NUNN, 2001, pp. 18-20). Here, Europe also enjoyed a privileged position, once constituting both the object of the experiences addressed in these texts, and, in many cases, the source from which they were translated. As an example, in Chile, the Prussian mission created a military archive in 1903 for the storage of documents, manuals and issues of military journals such as the *Revista Militar de Chile* – which had been recently created, in 1885 (LOVEMAN, 1999, pp. 80-81). In Argentina, where a Prussian mission worked in the professionalization of the military officers from 1899 to 1914, and then from 1921 to 1930 (ATKINS; THOMPSON, 1972, p. 257, p. 259, p. 261), half of the 120 articles published between 1918 and 1930 in the *Biblioteca del Oficial* were translated from German (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 93). This was also a remarkable feature of the Prussian mission in Chile (EJÉRCITO DE CHILE, 1924, p. 117). It is noteworthy, in this sense, that the book by Colmar von der Goltz, *Das Volk in Waffen* (*The People in Arms*), published in 1883 in Prussia, has been translated to Spanish and widely used in the curricula of the military schools reformed by Prussian missions in Latin America (NUNN, 2001, pp. 18-19). Given that illiteracy was pervasive among soldiers in all of the Latin American countries by that time (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, pp. 111-113), these texts were mainly used by military officers.

Among the conditions that made the establishment of the archive in Chile possible was the enduring character of the knowledge produced for and by the military. Something similar can be argued regarding the creation of specialized reviews. Indeed, the *savoir* upon which the professionalization of the Chilean Military Forces relied was not as volatile

as the kind of *savoir* derived almost exclusively from the experience in the battlefield that had characterized Latin American states in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As the archive, the military specialized reviews created in most of Latin American states from the 1880s to the 1920s<sup>133</sup> were both an expression of the professionalization of the Chilean military and what allowed this professionalization to be consolidated and reproduced. By exchanging impressions on their operations, stimulating discussions on doctrine, strategy and tactics and discussing “disturbances of order” that were the object of their concerns, military officers systematized their knowledge within a specific domain, transmitted this knowledge to their counterparts, and learned from the other military officer’s texts. Such dynamics relies on the assumption that military officers, within the same state – and in some cases, even across states –, are taught similar subjects, engage in similar operations and face similar challenges – in other words, this use of specialized reviews performs the idea that they are all “military professionals”.

Finally, it is important to highlight that the circuit of military *savoirs* is not solely constituted by the transit of military professionals, nor of manuals, textbooks and articles in specialized reviews: weapons are a fundamental element in this circuit. Indeed, it is almost impossible to dissociate the fluxes of European military professionals from the circulation of arms in Latin America. The technological development of the arms industry is the condition for a specific *savoir* to be thinkable – there is no operation for which a corresponding weapon does not exist. At the same time, the demand for arms in Latin American states stimulated the formalization of contracts for the establishment of military missions. Needless to say, it was not any weapon that was offered as part of a package comprehended in the work of a given foreign military mission. The Prussian mission emphasized the use of Mauser, Schneider and Krupp rifles and canons. For instance, seven years after the Prussian mission was established in Chile, 100,000 Mauser rifles were imported in 1892 (LOVEMAN, 1999,

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<sup>133</sup> As mentioned above, in Chile the military specialized review was created in 1885 (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 80). In the cases of Peru and Venezuela, official military periodicals were created in the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 74).

p. 81). The dependence created through the foreign missions is exemplified again in the Chilean case, for the establishment of ammunitions and gunpowder factories in 1894 was strictly devoted to supply the military use of the weapons that had been procured from Prussia (LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 81). In this sense, transmitting military *savoirs* to Latin American states was part of a broader development policy, based on the arms industry. More than a military counterpart, Latin American hosts of Prussian and French missions were a consumer market for weapons – not to mention the construction of rail networks, which was also part of Krupp’s business in the region, for instance.

The discussion developed in this Section shows that the emergence of the circuit of military *savoirs* in Latin America in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century must be inscribed in the context of the independence wars in the region. Although the relation between newly-independent states and European states was then based on the principle of equality among sovereign units, we saw that the reproduction of the discourse of modernization by Latin American states positioned Europe as a reference for the professionalization of the military in the region. Once the organization of violence was a key element in such a discourse, as argued on Section 4.1, Latin America looked up to Europe as the “future” it wanted to be part of, and to the Prussian and French military, as what it “needed” to be in order to leave its “political past” behind. In more concrete terms, French and Prussia were the states in Europe often invited to assist in the creation of a “military career”, as well as to work in the creation of military schools and the implementation of its curricula.

Two aspects are noteworthy regarding the political dynamic of this circuit. Firstly, that it was connected to Europe in very specific terms: constituting referential “models” to the production of “military professionals” in Latin America, whenever European missions were hired to assist in such a process, they established a hierarchical relation with their hosts. We will see some of the implications of this aspect on Section 4.3. Secondly, even among Latin American states there were asymmetries: those with more capital could invest more in the build-up of their apparatus of

violence – hiring a foreign mission and negotiating the acquisition of arms, for example.

What I call a circuit of military *savoirs*, therefore, emerges within a specific historical context and is constituted by intense fluxes of military professionals, which are not unidirectional. Although the French and Prussian missions were systematically invited to assist in the professionalization of Latin American military, there were specific cases in which the latter attended courses in Europe in order to polish their knowledge and skills. However, the asymmetries characterizing the circuit imply that some fluxes are more remarkable than others – in this case, from France and Prussia to Latin American states. In addition to that, as we have seen, the professionalization of the Chilean Army has allowed for this state to position itself within the circuit of military *savoirs* as a reference of the “Prussian model”. In the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Venezuela and Colombia hired Chilean missions, and not European, in order to work in the creation and reform of military schools.

The textual edifice erected upon the circuit of military *savoirs* constituted a set of mechanisms through which knowledge was diffused among military professionals. Its content reflected the lines of asymmetry within the circuit, as discussed above in reference to manuals, textbooks, and specialized reviews. Both the fluxes of military professionals and the textual texture characterizing the circuit are mechanisms that point to the *savoirs* that are valorized in a specific historical context.

Interestingly, the Chilean missions that worked in the reform of military schools in Colombia, in the 1900s, and in Venezuela, in the 1910s, encouraged the procurement of Prussian weapons. This leads us to another trait of the circuit of military *savoirs*: that fluxes of weapons cannot be dissociated from those of *savoirs*. Such a circuit is the condition for and the effect of the transmission of military *savoirs*. Indeed, that several South American military officers were being taught the same courses, for instance, allowed for them to exchange *savoirs*. At the same time, such a practice reinforced the circuit. In this sense, the circuit allows for military *savoirs* to endure throughout time.

Finally, two effects of this circuit are noteworthy for the purposes of our analysis. By claiming the need to consolidate a domain specific to the military and away from the “domain of politics”, the reproduction of the discourse of modernization enabled and catalyzed practices such as the adoption of the mandatory conscription for the military, the establishment of similar rules for the military career, the translation of manuals and texts from Europe, as well as the diffusion of certain customs and manners. As an effect of such processes, by the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in contrast to the previous century, the military in Latin America were significantly similar in terms of uniforms, textual references, conduct and discourse, despite the different historical and geographical contexts in which the professionalization has been triggered in such states (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 86; LOVEMAN, 1999, p. 63). The second effect of the circuit of military *savoirs* is a certain similarity in the operations for which the armies were mobilized in Latin America. Despite the differences between the French and Prussian missions, the examples mentioned above reveal that the armies in Latin America were systematically engaged in the pacification of the “internal space”. Importantly, this does not mean that such similarities are the result of a single process, nor that they involved linear processes, nor that this general effect resulted from a rational plan of military professionals participating in the circuit of *savoirs*. In other words, when the Chileans signed the contract with the Prussian mission, they did not expect that the professionals resulting from such an effort were as much similar as possible to those of its former opponents in the War of the Pacific.

In the next Section, we examine how Colombia was positioned in the circuit of military *savoirs*. More specifically, I analyze the main axes guiding the work of the Chilean military mission, in particular the implementation of a military school for Cadets, as well as, in a later stage, schools aimed at professionalizing the line of command. As we will see, such work was undertaken amidst resistances by the military officers. In this sense, my objective on Section 4.3 is to discuss the effects and the limits of the discourse of modernization by exploring the tensions deriving from the civilizational trait constituting the work of the Chilean mission towards the Colombian Army.

#### 4.3. “Technical, not political”: the “military professional” as the “citizen-soldier”

When the first Chilean military mission arrived in Colombia, in 1907, the Presidency of General Rafael Reyes (1904-1909) had its efforts concentrated in recovering the country from the devastating impacts resulting from the Thousand Days’ War (1901-1903) – of which the political groups backing him up had participated. Placing emphasis on the reconstruction of infrastructure and the integration of the national territory, as well as on the development of mechanisms of social order, Reyes’ government has been almost invariably referred to as a centralized project of modernization in Colombia (to mention but a few, see PIZARRO L., 1987a; BERGQUIST, 1989, p. 225; BUSHNELL, 1993, pp. 158-159; ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994, pp. 56-58; ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, pp. 19-20). Considered as one of the “turning points” in the trajectory of the professionalization of the Colombian Army (PIZARRO L., 1987a; ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994, pp. 56-58; ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, pp. 19-20), the period corresponding to the Reyes’ administration is key for us to grasp what is at stake in a context when the reproduction of the discourse of modernization was translated in systematic initiatives towards the production of the “military professional” in Colombia.

It is to this analytical effort that we turn to in this Section. Particularly, I draw from a close examination of the scope of the Chilean mission, as well as of the *Escuela Militar* (Military School). The latter constituted the center of gravity of the work of the Chilean military officers: it was in the *Escuela Militar* that a specific profile of disciplined, hygienic and literate soldier was expected to be produced – the “citizen-soldier”. Drawing from a discussion on the profile of the students in the *Escuela Militar* and its curriculum, I give special attention to the tensions deriving from the work of the Chilean mission with the Colombian military officers. Here, I am interested in what these frictions tell us regarding the limits of the reproduction of the discourse of modernization: what it enables, but also what it precludes. For us to understand the main processes and tensions constituting the axes identified above and explore the position of the professionalization of the military

within those axes, let us first turn to two widely known mottos mobilized by Reyes.

In reaction to “politics” – which he considered as an obstacle to the modernization of Colombia –, Reyes’ motto “more administration and less politics” (“*mucha administración y menos política*”) (PALAU, 1907, p. 27; ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 19) aimed at building a government *above* the disputes of the two main political parties, which had characterized the trajectory of Colombia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In this sense, “administration” was conveyed as that which would allow modernization to be actualized – differently from the disputes nurtured through the vein of “politics”, which, for decades, had hindered the consolidation of projects towards the monopolization of the means of violence and the consolidation of infrastructure, for instance. An illustration of how “administration” was here understood can be found in the claim that the formation of Reyes’ government staff was based on a “technical” and practical profile, and not on political party affiliation (PIZARRO L., 1987a; ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 20). Following these lines, Reyes has not only assigned ministries to both Liberal and Conservative parties: he has also named one of the main leaders of the Liberal party by then, (General) Rafael Uribe Uribe, for the position of plenipotentiary Ambassador for South America.

Such measures were said to aim at reinforcing the “technical” and downplaying the “political” as the privileged criterion for the organization and management of a government whose task was to modernize the state<sup>134</sup>.

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<sup>134</sup> Interestingly, however, the very condition for any choice based on “technical” criteria was an even distribution of political offices among the Conservative and Liberal Parties. According to Pizarro Leongómez (1987a), the Reyes’ administration established the conditions for a “consortium democracy”, “which created a favorable atmosphere for the national consolidation, the development of internal market and the absence of generalized conflicts”. That is, what is celebrated as a “technical” decision made in a “favorable context” is, firstly, possible because the political circumstances allowed for the emergence of the discourse on the authority deriving from “technical” knowledge. In addition to that, what is taken as “technical” – the choice of a political opponent because of his expertise in a given area – is a choice operating within rules of distribution of political offices among the two main Parties. In the original: “a partir de 1907 fue el surgimiento de una ‘democracia de consocios’ a partir del gobierno de Rafael Reyes, que creó un clima favorable para la consolidación nacional, el desarrollo del mercado interno y la ausencia de conflictos generalizados”.



Importantly, however, both Reyes and Uribe were military<sup>135</sup>. The presence of both Reyes and Uribe in leading positions in civil offices of the government is indicative of the continuous authority enjoyed by the military in Colombia since independence wars (PIZARRO L., 1987a; 1987b; 1988; BUSHNELL, 1993, pp. 50-73; ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994). Furthermore, it suggests that the mobilization of the discourse of modernization in Colombia was, by that time, emphatic to “technicality” and to the need of professionalizing the “Political Man”, but not to the need of separating what is “civil” from that which is “military”.

Framed as a condition for the establishment of the technical administration mentioned above, the pacification and the monopolization of the means of violence were the main axes through which Reyes advanced another motto of his government: “peace, harmony and work” (“*paz, concordia y trabajo*”). As for the pacification of the country, Reyes has created, through Presidential Decree, special commissions in charge of the collection of guns, ammunitions and “other war elements” from civilians. The work of this commission resulted in the seizure of 53,000 guns (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 21). As we will see, however, the processes comprehending both pacification and monopolization of the means of violence had several additional effects, ranging from a systematic effort towards the professionalization of the public forces to an intolerant disposition towards social conducts understood as unacceptable – as it was repeatedly the case for strikes, and for printed material considered as seditious. By its turn, the mobilization of “work” in the motto is both an effect of and a condition for the pacification and monopolization aspired by the Reyes’ administration. In other words, the pacification of the social space would constitute a fruitful environment for a productive labor force to be mobilized and a modern Colombia to be built. At the same time, pacification and the uses of violence it implied were considered as necessary for the disciplinarization of this labor force. The production of a disciplined labor force was, moreover, to be advanced not only through the mobilization of the

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<sup>135</sup> While Rafael Reyes was granted the military rank of General after his participation in the “pacification” of a Liberal rebellion in Panama in 1885, Rafael Uribe Uribe was ranked General after having led the Liberal rebel army during the Thousand Days’ War.

police or the army, but towards the public forces themselves. That is, disciplinarization techniques were projected towards the military and police personnel itself aiming at producing obedient professionals, but also using them as labor force in the construction of a physical infrastructure for this “modern Colombia”.

Before we plunge into the intricacies running through those two mottos, we must consider that the practices we are about to explore were taken against the backdrop of the recovery from the Thousand Days’ War (1901-1903), an armed confrontation which, although fought in many regions of the country and by different groups (BERGQUIST, 1989), has been recurrently framed as a civil war between the two main political parties in Colombia (Liberal and Conservative). As it has been underlined in the Introduction to Part Two, the “politicization” of the public forces was framed as one of the main obstacles to their professionalization. Although Rafael Nuñez (1892-1894) had already been a fierce supporter of the idea that “if there is plenty of Army, there is plenty of peace” (“*Si hay mucho Ejército, hay mucha paz*”), the outbreak of the Thousand Days’ War exposed what was considered as the persistence of the “politicization” of the army by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The War also strengthened the claims on the need to tame the military through their professionalization. Thus, although seen as key for the modernization of Colombia, building a strong Army was also considered with suspicion.

It is through these lines that we must read the dismantling of the Colombian Army undertaken in the first year of the Reyes’ administration. While the Army had 50.000 men from 1901 to 1902 – that is, during the Thousand Days’ War –, in 1903, this number was reduced to 5.000 men (PIZARRO L., 1987a; ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 21; REY E., 2008, p. 163). Such an expressive dismantling of the Army suggests that the new government considered the “politicization” of the military to be irreversible: the professionalization of the Army would have to start almost from the sketch. As for the remaining group, Reyes ordered, through the Ministry of War (*Ministerio de Guerra*), that entire battalions of *zapadores* were dedicated to civil construction projects, such as bridge- and road-building, not only in the capital but especially in remote areas (PIZARRO L., 1987a; REY

E., 2008, p. 163). According to one of the historiographical registers published in 1907 by the governmental press (Imprenta Nacional<sup>136</sup>) on the Presidency of Rafael Reyes:

The national army, in the present peace era, has been reduced to its minimum expression, with a remaining troop which is strictly necessary for the service, and the majority of the soldiers constituting the national militia have been assigned to work as *zapadores*, and are currently working in the public streets for the benefit of trade, industry and progress<sup>137</sup> (PALAU, 1907, p. 32).

On the one hand, the threatening character attached to the Colombian Army was evoked in order to justify its reduction to the “strictly necessary for the service”. On the other, the remaining 10% of the Army was assigned the task of engineering the nation, aiming at fostering progress. The Army was both a threat to the nation and what the nation needed in order to prosper. This tenuous line allegedly separating the risk from the need is permanently harassing discourses of professionalization of the military<sup>138</sup>. Reyes’

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<sup>136</sup> It is noteworthy that centralizing the official press was also part of this more comprehensive process of modernization. In the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Colombian government counted on two privately-owned printing houses on an *ad hoc* basis. It was only in 1894, during Miguel Antonio Caro’s administration (1892-1898) that the “Imprenta Nacional” was created and, thereby, the official press was centralized and inscribed under the scope of the Ministry of Government (Decree No. 504). To the Imprenta Nacional, it was incorporated not only the management of the National Archive, but also the printing and dissemination of the Official Journal (*Diario Oficial*), which had been created in 1864, as a daily consolidation of laws, decrees, acts, and pertinent documents of the President, Congress, and governmental agencies. In this sense, centralizing the information produced by the government was more a process of gradual absorption, by the state, of practices that were already undertaken in private printing houses. In lines which are analogous to the ones of Foucault’s account on how the “modern police” resulted from the gradual state-control of disciplinary mechanisms (1995, p. 213), I suggest that the centralization of the press can also be seen as the “statization” of techniques for the production, archival, and dissemination of information produced by the government. It is within this context that the apparently neutral report of the “achievements” of the Rafael Reyes’ administration must be interpreted. For more information, see: IMPRENTA NACIONAL (n.d.).

<sup>137</sup> In the original: “El ejército nacional en la presente era de paz ha sido reducido a su mínima expresión, dejando un pie de fuerza armada estrictamente necesario para el servicio, y aun la mayor parte de los soldados que constituyen la milicia nacional han sido destinados a trabajos de zapadores, y trabajan en las vías públicas en beneficio del comercio, de la industria y del fomento”.

<sup>138</sup> I take this tension between taming and empowering the military to be an unsurmountable one, for it is constitutive to discourse of professionalization. We need the military to be strong, but a professional military, whose strength derives from discipline and obedience, and who is subjected to the civil authority. According to Rouquié (1984, p. 86), however, it was the very professionalization of the military that allowed them to develop their own organizational logics inside the military schools and barracks – which, according to the author, resulted in the emergence of military regimes in Latin America. In other words,

administration is no different from this logic. In times of war, the function of the *zapadores* is crucial: they are responsible for facilitating the mobility and defense of troops, as well as for creating obstacles to the enemy's mobility (by laying or clearing minefields and demolishing strategic buildings, for instance). Under the Reyes' government, however, the *zapadores* engaged, in times of peace, in the physical integration of this modern-to-be Colombia<sup>139</sup>. Connecting the territory was essential to the production of the "nation" in two main senses. Firstly, it conferred concreteness to this nation by allowing its association to a "connected whole" – a territory, and the population inhabiting it, both of them under the jurisdiction of a central government. Secondly, the constitution of this whole allowed for the rationalization – as well as an aspired optimization – of the production and circulation of goods. The latter was also a condition for the increase in exports of key products – such as tobacco and coffee, which had been registering decreasing numbers since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (PALACIOS, 1980, p. 7, p. 19). Using the *zapadores* for the development of infrastructure was also justified as a means of saving resources in times of economic crisis, especially considering that Colombia had just gone through a three-years war. In the words of the Minister of War at that time, Manuel Sanclemente: the work of the *zapadores* had a "double effect, considering that the investment in constructions of public utility reduces the cost of the troops; at the same time that arms that, in the barracks, would remain deprived from working, are kept in the social economy"<sup>140</sup> (SANCLEMENTE, 1907, pp. 313-314).

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professionalization, which was thought as the solution for the civil control over the military ended up trapping this civil authority in the military ruling from the 1960s to the 1980s in Latin America. It is important to highlight that the solutions historically provided to problems on how to increase the civil control over the military have invariably been "more professionalization" or "better professionalization". That is, the efforts to overcome the tension between taming and empowering have always been translated as the improvement of institutions, the re-articulation of a set of rules, the cut of budget assigned to the military and so on.

<sup>139</sup> This was not an exclusive feature of Colombia. Brazil, Argentina and Chile are among the cases mentioned by Loveman (1999) in which the military played an active role in public work projects. During the 1960s-1970s, this concern with engaging the military in "national development" projects, as framed by the vocabulary of National Security Doctrine, becomes even more prominent.

<sup>140</sup> In the original: "para hacer tanto menos sensible a la Nación el sostenimiento del Ejército cuanto sea el incremento que la industria y el comercio obtienen con la mayor facilidad de las vías de comunicación, el Gobierno lo ha aplicado a trabajos de zapadores; medida de doble efecto, puesto que si se invierte en obras de pública utilidad el costo de las

But above all – and as suggested in the excerpt above –, using the *zapadores* for the development of the national infrastructure was a way of making those military productive men. Instead of idle bodies piled up in the barracks, active arms invested in the “social economy”. Work was, according to this view, not a natural disposition of those soldiers but a disposition made natural through the training of their bodies. Furthermore, Reyes considered work to be an activity that allowed for moral regeneration: “Today, the soldier has once again acquired the habit of morality and work and can be offered as an example of strength and correction”<sup>141</sup> (REYES, 1906, p. 19). Reyes’ was not the first<sup>142</sup> – nor the last – presidential administration in Colombia in which work was thought as a disciplining and regenerating mechanism to both the body and the morale of the soldier.

Nevertheless, the dismantling of the army was only a first step within a more comprehensive project of professionalization of the military. To the problem of how to discipline the military and make them obedient to the “civil authority”, Reyes’ administration proposed a comprehensive, systematic and institutionalized approach towards the “regenerative mission” of the military. More professionalization – and a better one – was thus claimed as the solution to the “lack of discipline” in the Army.

In order to do this, Reyes named (General) Rafael Uribe Uribe for the position of plenipotentiary Ambassador for South America, as it has already been mentioned above. One of his main tasks was precisely to visit Latin American states, aiming at understanding how the best military forces in the region were organized. In 1905, he visited Panamá, Ecuador and Chile with this mission (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, pp. 24-25). The fact that Ecuadorian

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tropas disminuye; también se le conservan a la economía social brazos que en los cuarteles permanecerían secuestrados del trabajo”.

<sup>141</sup> In the original: “Hoy el soldado ha vuelto a adquirir hábitos de moralidad y trabajo, y puede ser ofrecido como ejemplo de fortaleza y corrección”.

<sup>142</sup> Indeed, these elements constituted the backbone of the discourse on professionalization since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Colombia. During the period known as “*Regeneración*” (Regeneration), the president Miguel Antonio Caro (1892-1898) adopted several measures aiming at establishing discipline among the military, ranging from religion to literacy, cooking and hygiene. The radius in which the motto guiding Caro’s administration – “*Regeneración o catástrofe*” (Regeneration or catastrophe) – has resonated was actually more comprehensive than the military sphere. The project of “Regeneration” was also pursued through an intensive enforcement of anti-vagrancy and anti-beggary laws, which already existed since the 1820s (CASTRO B., 2011; BOTERO J., 2012), as well as through the protagonism of the Catholic Church as a social educator, both in the mass and the school.

forces had been trained by Chilean military missions and that some Chilean instructors were still working in Ecuador while Uribe visited the country suggests a consistent interest on the Chilean model – or, as a more distant legacy, on how the Prussian model was being incorporated to professionalization experiences in Latin America. In this sense, it is unsurprising that it was about Chile that Uribe provided to the Presidency a more detailed description of his visit (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, pp. 25-27).

Uribe's impressions regarding his visit to Chile were registered in a document titled *Memoria sobre las instituciones militares de Chile* (Memoir on Chile's military institutions). The emphasis on the "complete transformation" of the military as a result of the work of such institutions upon the individual reveals one of the main effects expected to result from the professionalization of the military: the production of the "ideal citizen", reflected in the image and substance of the soldier once he leaves the school. According to Uribe's *Memoir*:

Pictures have been taken in order to illustrate how torn the Chileans are when they enter the barracks and how they leave it: it is a complete transformation in their clothes, in the way they present themselves, in their expression and appearance, in their habits and in their moral orientation<sup>143</sup> (Uribe *Apud* ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 29)

In another passage of the same document, Uribe claims that the organization of the Chilean Army "corresponds to the requirements of the modern military art and that in its ranks not only soldiers are formed, but also citizens are educated through the instillation of ideas of civism, respect for authority and intellectual culture"<sup>144</sup> (Uribe *Apud* ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 29). Both excerpts expose that the purpose of that official mission went beyond the reproduction of a set of buildings, regulations and procedures that would result in the amelioration of, for instance, the skills on how to use a

<sup>143</sup> In the original: "Se han tomado fotografías ilustrativas del modo como los rotos chilenos llegan al cuartel y del modo como salen: es una transformación completa en el vestido, en la manera de presentarse, en la expresión de la fisionomía, en las costumbres y en la orientación moral".

<sup>144</sup> In the original: "De lo expuesto se deduce que la organización del Ejército de Chile corresponde a las exigencias del arte militar moderno y que en sus filas no sólo se forman soldados sino que se educan ciudadanos, infundiéndoles ideas de civismo, respeto a la autoridad y cultura intelectual".

certain weaponry or on how to arrange and deploy troops. At the core of the official mission was the concern on how to establish and to consolidate a complex of institutions and professionals aiming at producing not only a soldier who masters the “modern military art”, but also a citizen who masters the principles of civism. The description Uribe provides of the pictures taken in his official mission, as detailed in the excerpt above, suggests that this “civism” comprehended the appearance (“their clothes, in the way they present themselves”), as well as the “habits” and “moral orientation”. The “military school” was, thus, also a “school of citizens”. The transformative experience expected to result from the period soldiers spent in the school was therefore both visible (ranging from the manners to the material elements of a “civilized presentation”, such as the clothes of the soldier) and inner (the moral and the naturalization of conducts into habits).

The “military school” was at the heart of this project, understood both as the architectonic form and the pedagogical purpose of the latter. Among the numerous institutions visited by Uribe in Chile<sup>145</sup>, the center of his attentions was turned to the *Escuela Militar*. Importantly, the name often given to these institutions (Infantry School, War Academy, Military School etc.) does not provide any element indicating the emphasis on the formation of citizens: rather, it puts war skills and weaponry in evidence. This is so because it is within the complex of institutions, in the curriculum and the rules of conduct organizing the routine of the students, that this comprehensive pedagogical purpose is advanced. In this regard, a remarkable feature of this project lies in the differentiation made within the schools’ schedule between “instruction” and “education”. When describing how the Chilean Army was organized, Uribe highlighted that, in the Military School, the Cadet

does not only receive a perfect military education, but also knowledge that is useful to men in his search for life (...). It is common sense that the other Chilean Institutes *instruct*, but that the Military School *educates*, once

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<sup>145</sup> In Chile, Uribe visited the Military School (*Escuela Militar*), the Schools of Application (*Escuelas de Aplicación*), the War Academy (*Academia de Guerra*), the General Inspection, the Archives, the Administrative Department, and the Direction of Arsenal, Parks and Cavalry Training (*Dirección de Arsenales, Parques y Maestranza*) (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 28).

autonomous men are physically, morally and intellectually formed through knowledge, character and honor<sup>146</sup> (emphasis in the original; Uribe *Apud* ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 29)

The passage above exposes that “education” was considered as a more comprehensive kind of formation, including the physical preparation of the military personnel, but also its moral and intellectual formation. Although neither “instruction” nor “education” are conceptually defined in the excerpt, this differentiation is reproduced within the complex of military institutions through two kinds of professionals entailed in each of these spheres, as well as the site in which they operate, and the elements in the soldiers’ profile expected to be developed through the work of such professionals. According to Uribe’s notes on the organization of the Military School in Chile, the “educator” is the key figure in the formation of “citizen-soldiers”: his work is not only invested by a hands-on logics, aiming at the development of skills (physical training), but also at transmitting a moral and intellectual content. Once implemented, the curriculum of the *Escuela Militar* in Colombia was based upon two different kinds of professional: the instructor, whose role was strictly related to the training of the soldier’s body; and the teacher, whose work had a remarkably intellectual and moral content. Although part of the instruction-related activities were developed in the classroom, the characteristic environment of the work of the instructor was the training field. Contrastingly, most of the content transmitted by teachers – Literacy, History, Geography, and Doctrine, to mention but a few – was based in the classroom. It was precisely the combination of the work of both professionals that built up a comprehensive character to the project of forming disciplined soldiers and civilized citizens – the “citizen-soldier” – within military schools.

Thus, the project of building a “new army” in Colombia was concerned with the creation of a complex of military institutions which could, simultaneously, discipline and civilize the military personnel. Furthermore, as Uribe has registered in his *Memoir*, the complexity of the task also derived

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<sup>146</sup> In the original: Todo el personal del ejército se ha formado en la Escuela Militar, establecimiento donde recibe el Cadete no sólo una perfecta educación militar, sino todos aquellos conocimientos útiles al hombre en su lucha por la vida (...). Es opinión común la de que en los demás Institutos de Chile se *instruye*, pero en la Escuela Militar *se educa*, por cuanto física, moral e intelectualmente se forman hombres dueños de sí mismos por el saber, por el carácter y por el pundonor”.



from the challenge of how to consolidate that institutional complex, once it was created. Indeed, the first military schools established after independence had existed for a considerably short period, having had their activities interrupted by violent confrontations. To mention but a few examples: the School of Civil and Military Engineering (*Escuela de Ingeniería Civil y Militar*), created by the Decree 632 of 1880 was extinguished five years later due to a civil war; the Military School of Cadets (*Escuela Militar de Cadetes*) was created in 1896 and closed in 1899 due to another civil conflict. Given the concern with how to make the complex of military institutions last, in the expectation that the middle- and long-term effects of disciplinarization and civilization over the military personnel could be harvested, it is not surprising that the high-ranked military had a strategic role in this project. They not only had a position of command in eventual military campaigns, but were also the main candidates for the positions of teachers and instructors<sup>147</sup>. Importantly, as we will see, the high-ranked officials were not only one of the central groups towards which the professionalization of the Colombian military was advanced by the first Chilean mission: some years later after the mission was established, this was also the group in which the strongest resistance against the professionalization was found.

In the next pages, I argue that the production of a “citizen-soldier” involved different practices according to the category and rank of the military personnel. For soldiers, serving under a specific regime of mandatory conscription, literacy, hygiene and discipline were found at the core of the transformative process of their professionalization. Towards the Cadets (*Cadetes*) constituting the first group of students in the *Escuela Militar* in Colombia, the professionalization involved a comprehensive palette of courses, from Topographical Drawing to German and History, for instance. These contrasts are related to the social fracture separating the military

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<sup>147</sup> It is in this sense that Uribe’s *Memoir* sent to the Reyes’ administration suggested that five or six Chilean military officials were contracted by the Colombian government in order to organize and implement the regulations and activities in the military schools; but also that Colombian military officers already graduated were sent to the Chilean Army for two or three years, with the objective of transmitting what they had learnt back in Colombia (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 29).

officer<sup>148</sup> (*oficial*) from the enlisted personnel (*suboficial y soldados*)<sup>149</sup> (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 97). This mechanism of social differentiation among these categories of the military personnel occurs in two main directions. Firstly, within the context of “universal conscription”, the social cut results from a series of criteria allowing for the higher social strata to circumvent the mandatory character of the military service – a diploma, a document proving an experience as pilot, or as a member of a shooting club are but a few examples (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 111). Secondly, requirements such as a specific level of education or even literacy automatically excluded the lower social strata, whose access to education was considerably restricted by that time (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 99). Deprived from the access to the military officer career and facing a narrow range of exceptions to the “universal” character of the military service, the lower social strata came to historically form the frontline of military campaigns, battles, and operations – as soldiers. As we will see, this does not imply the absence of any kind of practices aiming at disciplining and civilizing the military officers, but that the practices constituting the production of the “citizen-soldier” circulating in these specific social circles were different.

After the invitation of the Chilean military mission was formalized, in 1907, the Prussian General Emil Körner, whose privileged position within the Chilean Army was already mentioned on Section 4.2, appointed two Chilean Captains to lead the mission: Arturo Ahumada Bascuñán and Diego Guillén Santana<sup>150</sup> (PIZARRO L., 1987a; REY E., 2008, p. 169; ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 45). Their main objective in Colombia was to instill and consolidate

<sup>148</sup> In the Colombian Army, the ranks of the military officers are ordered as follows (from the lowest to the highest): Second Lieutenant (*Subteniente*), Lieutenant (*Teniente*), Captain (*Capitán*), Major (*Mayor*), Lieutenant Colonel (*Teniente Coronel*), Colonel (*Coronel*), Brigadier General (*Brigadier General*), Major General (*Mayor General*), Lieutenant General (*Teniente General*), General (*General del Ejército*).

<sup>149</sup> In the Colombian Army, the ranks of the enlisted personnel are ordered as follows (from the lowest to the highest): Private Basic (*Soldado*), Third Corporal (*Cabo Tercero*), Second Corporal (*Cabo Segundo*), First Corporal (*Cabo Primero*), Second Sargeant (*Sargento Segundo*), Sargeant First Class (*Sargento Vice-Primero*), First Sargeant (*Sargento Primero*), Sargeant Major (*Sargento Mayor*), Command Sargeant Major (*Sargento Mayor de Comando*).

<sup>150</sup> Both had consolidated careers in the Chilean Army and complementary areas of expertise: the former, infantry; the latter, artillery. While the former had developed his studies in Germany, where he was also an aggregate in the Infantry Regiment for two years, Guillén Santana was chosen as the best Captain of the Chilean Army in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and was military aggregate (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 45).

a new rationale in the military personnel through: i) the elaboration of an organic regulation on the military career; ii) the reorganization of the high-ranked military; and iii) the re-organization of how the troops were operatively deployed<sup>151</sup> (PIZARRO L., 1987a; REY E., 2008, ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 44). The privileged position granted to the Chilean mission in the professionalization of the Colombian Army both reflected and authorized an all-encompassing role of the mission in this process. Indeed, the tasks assigned to the mission ranged from the definition of the uniform to be used (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 51) by the “new-professionals-in-the-making” to the organization of the whole military career system and the criteria for ascension (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 44).

The focal point of this work was the *Escuela Militar*, created in April 13, 1907 (Decree No. 434), and built through the reform of what was then the San Agustín Convent. The head of the Chilean mission, General Ahumada, was appointed as the director of the *Escuela Militar* by the Ministry of War (Resolution No. 38). The first group of students was formed by 38 Cadets (*Cadetes*) and 20 military officers – among which, 3 Captains (*Capitanes*) and 13 Second Lieutenants (*Subtenientes*) (REY E., 2008, p. 170). Importantly, the profile of these students was characteristic of the higher social strata – and this could be no different, considering the application requirements defined by the Chilean mission. Indeed, establishing secondary education as a criterion for eligibility in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Colombia implied restricting the access to the military career to the higher social strata (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 99; BUSHNELL, 1993, p. 55; SAFFORD; PALACIOS, 2002, p. 116; ATEHORTUA C., 2009, pp. 46-7). In addition to that, physical requirements such as a minimum stature were added to the list of mechanisms of exclusion. Although presenting itself as a “technical criterion” of eligibility, the minimum height defined by the *Escuela Militar* for its students was impeditive for anyone with, for instance, physical traits characteristically indigenous – in this case, with short stature (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 99;

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<sup>151</sup> As regards this last aspect, for instance, the military formation implemented in Colombia was the same as the one in Chile, which, by its turn, was very similar to the one in Prussia. The Colombian Army was organized into divisions constituted three regiments of infantry and one of artillery. To these, the cavalry and the engineers were later incorporated (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 44).

ATERHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 47). The fact that the selection process was concentrated in the capital, Bogota, was itself a constraining condition – not to say impeditive – for the participation of individuals living in remote areas. This is especially significant in the case of Colombia, not only because the transportation and communication networks were scarce, but because they were so in a territory whose geography was characterized by a *cordillera* (“Colombian Andes”). As an illustration, one of the 38 Cadets in the first group of students of the *Escuela Militar* took 27 days to arrive in Bogota for the selection; for other 4 Cadets, the trip took from 14 to 17 days (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, pp. 47-48).

Such constraints operated towards the homogenization of the students in the *Escuela Militar*: many of them spoke at least one language in addition to Spanish, studied in the university and resided in Bogota (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 48). Amongst the university courses they were attending by the time they entered the *Escuela Militar*, one can find Law, Medicine and Odontology. Once the access to university was deeply elitized by that time, this reveals that the Cadets were part of the higher social strata in the Colombian society<sup>152</sup>. The fact that such students chose to attend the *Escuela Militar* instead of continuing their studies on Law, Medicine or Odontology suggests that the Army was not anymore seen as a “degenerated” institution. Also, that one could migrate from Law to the Army was possible through the reproduction of the discourse on the civilization of the military through its professionalization, allowing for the claim that the military officer was an honorable profession, whose association with social prestige was thinkable.

Nevertheless, it is precisely regarding some of the main effects of the civilizing work of the Chilean mission that a set of frictions emerge. Indeed, the claim on the need to build the Colombian Army as an institution based on rational and stable rules led to an insistence on the vocabulary of “merit” and the rigorous vigilance of the criteria organizing the ascension within the military career. In other words, the puzzle with which the Chilean mission

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<sup>152</sup> In addition to that, these courses corresponded to two domains of knowledge which were particularly relevant to modernization: the study of laws that would regulate the civil life; and the study of pathologies and the development of their cure that would assure a healthy and productive life. In this sense, the professionals emerging from Law and Medicine are considered as central to the development of civilization, for both are concerned with the sanitation of society and social conducts.

was engaged – how to realize “meritocracy” into a set of regulations and procedures that, if rigorously followed, could nurture obedience and discipline – ultimately resulted in revising the rank granted to some of the military officers.

As an illustration of how “meritocracy” was invested in the work of the Chilean mission, Cadets and officers were severely evaluated in the *Escuela Militar*. According to Atehortúa (2009, p. 46), the average grade granted in 1907 to the students was 6.8<sup>153</sup>. The severe grading of the students was a way of exposing the gap between the Chilean and the Colombian military regarding the quality and consistence of their background formation. In other words, it aimed at exposing the distance separating the military professionals from those whose promotions were still too connected to patronage (*padrinazgo*) and whose formation was still based on empiricism and improvisation, which was seen as deriving from their lack of preparation. The rigor with which students from the Colombian elite were evaluated exposed to embarrassment those who did not meet the standards set by the Chilean mission, and, in the case of the officers constituting the group of students, to questions regarding the criteria through which they were granted their military rank. In this sense, it is no surprise that the resistance of the Colombian military officers to the Chilean mission grew as the work of the latter advanced in the *Escuela Militar*.

The educational program was formed by two main domains of knowledge: a “military” and a “civil” one. The former included courses such as “Infantry Tactics” (“*Táctica de Infantería*”), “Artillery Tactics” (“*Táctica de Artillería*”), “Topographical Drawing” (“*Dibujo Topográfico*”), “Fortification” (“*Fortificación*”) and “Knowledge on Guns” (“*Conocimiento de Armas*”). The “civil domain”, by its turn, comprehended courses such as “Spanish”, “German”, “Stenography”, “Universal History and Geography” and “National History” (“*Historia Patria*”) (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 46).

<sup>153</sup> In his book Atehortúa Cruz (2009, pp. 44-45) specifies that “there was no *ten* in the military courses attended by twenty-two students; in ‘Military Spirit’ (*Espíritu Militar*), there was only a *nine* and, in ‘Knowledge on Guns’ (*Conocimiento de Armas*), half of the group ended the course with grade *five*”. In the original: “En el primer curso de 1907, no hubo un solo *diez* en las asignaturas militares que cursaron veintidós estudiantes; en ‘Espíritu Militar’ solo hubo un *nueve* y, en ‘Conocimiento de Armas’, la mitad del curso cerró con calificación *cinco*”.

These courses were taught throughout the four years constituting the Cadets course, and one additional year was especially dedicated to the military formation (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 46).

The relative balance with which these the civil and military domains were distributed in the curriculum of the *Escuela Militar* reveals a central feature of the professionalization of the low-ranked (commissioned) military officer. As we have seen, the profile of the students selected by the Chilean mission was characteristic of the higher social strata in Bogota. Within this group, building “citizen-soldiers” did not involve teaching how to read and write – for they were already literate –, nor habits of hygiene – for their conducts were already in accordance to socially accepted norms of hygiene. Rather, it involved a comprehensive curriculum, indicating that the “citizen-soldier” expected to result from such a course was to be built with far more than the key areas of the military domain. In addition to the main spheres of the Prussian military tactics and other complementary military techniques, students had to learn how to speak proper Spanish, for instance. The “military professional” emerging from the *Escuela Militar* also had to learn German, which can be interpreted as a sign of how Prussia was pertinent to the model of military professionalization diffused by the Chilean Army. Furthermore, that the students had to attend history classes (“Universal History and Geography” and “National History”) is indicative of a curriculum whose objective is to produce an illustrious citizen. Considered within the context of the project implemented through the *Escuela Militar* – and within the discourse mobilized through it –, the incorporation of “National History” into the curriculum can also be read as a way to situate and justify the military professional in a broader political trajectory. Under this narrative, exposing the history of the *patria* as a troublesome landscape of violence provide the background for the professionalization to be justified and claimed as a need for the modernization of Colombia – for there can’t be no modernization without taming the military, so the argument goes. According to such logics, the coexistence of a course on “National History” with another on “Universal History and Geography” – that is, a universal that does not include the particularity of Colombia – seems to provide the historical adjustments for Colombia so that it can eventually fit the “Universal History”. In this sense,

in addition to transmitting a knowledge on “civil domains” that the military professional has to master, the two courses mentioned above allow to re-write history so as to justify the project of military professionalization.

In light of the differences highlighted so far as regards the soldiers, on the one hand, and the low-ranked military officers, on the other, narratives on the “transformative” effect of the *Escuela Militar* acquire a different meaning from that of the “complete regeneration” of the military personnel through its professionalization. When the Chilean diplomat based in Colombia, Eugenio Rodríguez Mendoza, highlights that many of the young Cadets “belonged to the best society of this country”<sup>154</sup> (RODRÍGUEZ M., 1908 *Apud* ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 49), he is not only shedding light to the privileged social status that came to characterize the Army’s military officers by that time: he is also fighting the negative image with which military institutions had been associated in Colombia until then. In a document the Chilean diplomat sent to the Minister of Foreign Relations of Chile in 1908, Rodríguez Mendoza reports that:

Before the mission arrived, (the army) was incredibly distant not only from a scientific and modern organization, but from any organization at all: the soldier was recruited by force, he lacked any of the most basic habits as regards the civilized life, he slept on the floor, in the demoralizing company of his indigenous companion and he was kept in the military ranks through the brutal discipline of the whip. This deplorable state has already been considerably changed: they begin to acquire new habits, the uniforms are not the same, nor are the instruction methods (RODRÍGUEZ M., 1908 *Apud* ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 51)<sup>155</sup>.

As it has been discussed above in this section, the problem of discipline in the military was partially interpreted as resulting from the lack of quality in the leadership, but it was also considered as deriving from the indiscipline of the troop. This view is clearly expressed in the excerpt: before

<sup>154</sup> In the original: “El resto lo forman jóvenes cadetes, muchos de los cuales pertenecen a la mejor sociedad de este país”.

<sup>155</sup> In the original: “Hasta el arribo de la misión (el ejército) estaba increíblemente distante no solo de una organización científica, moderna, sino en general de toda organización: el soldado era reclutado por fuerza, carecía en absoluto de los hábitos más rudimentarios en materia de vida civilizada, dormía en el suelo, en la desmoralizadora compañía de su camarada indígena y era mantenido en filas mediante la disciplina brutal del azote. Este estado deplorable ha cambiado ya considerablemente: empiezan a ganarse nuevos hábitos, los uniformes no son los mismos, ni tampoco los métodos de instrucción”.

the arrival of the Chilean mission, the Colombian soldier was portrayed as uncivil, immoral and lacking the manners of a “civilized life”. There are two main movements operating through such a statement. Firstly, the Chilean diplomat’s view demarcates clearly what he sees as the positive effect of the military mission in Colombia: according to him, the pedagogical project and the instruction methods mobilized by the Chilean mission were able to transform the manners and habits of the Colombian soldiers. The fact that the work of the mission was focused on the *Escuela Militar* suggests that Rodríguez Mendoza is using the word “soldiers” quite generically here when addressing the effects of the school in order to refer to the Cadets. Through his report to the Chilean Minister of Foreign Affairs, the diplomat reinforces the civilizational effect of the Chilean mission over the Colombian military, thereby establishing a hierarchy between the two Armies. Interestingly, however, this asymmetry between the Chilean and Colombian Armies is not expressed through terms specifically linked to the domain of warfare – for instance, equipment, weaponry, or strategy. Although it can ultimately result in a superiority that manifests itself within warfare terms, the fundamental character of this hierarchy is discipline, which is inevitably associated with manners and social conducts of the “civil life”. Under such reading, discipline is the condition for the development of strategy and tactics: without discipline, every Army is “distant not only from a scientific and modern organization, but from any organization at all”.

The second movement operating through the Chilean diplomat report is that what he considers as a transformation achieved by the military mission in the civility of the Colombian soldier was actually the elitization of the Army – which was now formed by “the best society of this country”, according to Rodríguez Mendoza. In other words, when the Chilean diplomat claims that the military mission had managed to transform the “civilized” habits and manners of the Colombian soldiers, his ideas of “before” and “after” are not commensurable, for they do not refer to groups of individuals with the same social profile. According to the Chilean diplomat’s assessment, this “deplorable state” was already considerably changed by 1908. As we have seen, however, the eligibility criteria defined by the Chilean mission for the Military School were difficult to be met, not to say impeditive, for a



significant part of the Colombian population at that time. Operating as a mechanism of social exclusion, these criteria produced what was conceived as a morally superior Army. According to this logic, the formation of “model battalions”<sup>156</sup> both in the infantry and artillery, which was the basis of the educational project of the Military School, could only be undertaken with “the best society of this country”, for only they could inspire civilized conducts across the military ranks. It is perhaps this very materialization of the idea of “moral regeneration” that allowed for the highest social strata to understand the Army as a professional niche as prestigious as the domains of Law and Medicine, for instance.

Connecting the two analytical movements identified in the Chilean diplomat’s report puts in evidence the reach and the limits of the discourse of modernization, as it was appropriated by the Chilean mission leading the professionalization of the Colombian Army. The processes explored above are set in motion by the claim that civilizing the Colombian military was a fundamental stage of the professionalization led by the Chilean mission. One of the remarkable characteristics of this specific appropriation of the discourse of modernization is the idea that the social conducts of the highest social strata are not only superior from those of the lower social strata – hence “the best society of this country” –, but also more attuned to what a modern society must be. Although this sense of superiority has a material foundation – for instance, the possessions and capital that allow and reproduce the stratification of society –, it is also anchored on manners and habits considered to be typical of the “civilized life”. In this sense, the “transformation” in the civility of the Colombian military claimed to be achieved by the Chilean mission had, as its condition of possibility, the mechanism of social exclusion. In other words, the civilization aspired by the Chilean mission, in the short period established in the contract, was only considered to be possible in the higher social strata, for their manners and

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<sup>156</sup> The concern with the consolidation of the military schools, expressed in the terms of Uribe’s *Memoir*, was translated into the formation of small groups that would organize the schools specialized in sub-officers. Additional small groups were formed in order to constitute what the Chilean mission referred to as “model-battalions”, which were invested in the domains of infantry and artillery (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 44). As it has been mentioned earlier, these two domains of military warfare corresponded to the areas in which the two main names of the Chilean mission were specialized in.

habits were already seen as superior, hence more easily adjustable to the civilizational work of the military mission – contrastingly to the “deplorable state” of the military personnel from the lower social strata. In the first years of the *Escuela Militar*, the Chilean mission was devoted to polishing those who were to become educators and instructors in military schools and training centers.

Importantly, however, “the best society of this country” also had to be civilized, given their inferior position in relation to the Chilean military. For instance, the use of the whip and other punishment techniques persisting since the colonial period, were considered as barbaric and, therefore, had to be substituted by more rational punishment methods (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 76). Moreover, as we have seen, if the rigor with which the Chilean mission evaluated the low-ranked military officers in the *Escuela Militar* had caused frictions, the possibility that some of the high-ranked officers had their military ranks invalidated was the object of an even stronger resistance. The higher the military rank, the stronger was the resistance against the civilizing traits of the Chilean mission. An illustration of this can be found in the composition of the Colombian Army by the 1910s, which the Chilean mission considered as far from that of any modern military formation<sup>157</sup>: there were 4,000 high-ranked officers for a significantly inferior number of low-ranked officers and soldiers in the Army by that time (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 54). The distribution of categories of military personnel is revealing of both the (socially) selective criteria upon which the dismantling of the Army by Reyes was undertaken, as well as of the difficulty in changing the criteria organizing the ranks related to the higher social strata. Within this context, when the Chilean mission had its contract renewed, in 1909, and the focus of its activities was turned to the professionalization of the line of command (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 51), the resistances against its work increased.

<sup>157</sup> According to the *Guide for the education on military organization* (in Spanish, *Guía para la enseñanza de organización militar*), elaborated by the Chilean mission and used as the basis for courses taught in the Colombian Military School, the recommended composition of the military forces had 400-500 officers, and around 6,000 sub-officers and soldiers. As an illustration, the Chilean mission suggested the following distribution of military personnel: 4 generals of division (*generals de división*) and 12 generals of brigade (*generals de brigada*), 22 colonels (*coroneles*), 30 lieutenant colonels (*tenientes coroneles*), 40 majors (*mayores*), 84 captains (*capitanes*), 137 lieutenants (*tenientes*), 159 second lieutenants (*subtenientes*), for a troop with 6,749 men (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 71).

After having established the Superior War College (*Escuela Superior de Guerra*) and the General Staff College (*Escuela del Estado Mayor*) (Decree No. 453/1909), the Chilean mission saw the margin for its objectives to be pursued gradually narrowed.

Some of those who labelled themselves “republicans” or “civilists” in Colombia contributed to newspapers in the capital with articles defending the Chilean mission and condemning “The speed with which in our wars high-ranked military are fabricated, ignoring most of the most elementary principles of the honorable military career”, as an editorial published in the newspaper *La Fusión* stated in October 1909 (*Apud ATEHORTÚA C.*, 2009, p. 58). According to the same editorial, the persistence of such a practice put in evidence “not the warrior who will sustain the national flag with the pride and dignity that it deserves, but the eternal chieftain who the contingencies of our political resentments have transformed into a fearful *caudillo* of much machete and very little civilization”<sup>158</sup> (*LA FUSIÓN*, 1909 *Apud ATEHORTÚA C.*, 2009, pp. 58-9).

The Chilean mission also complained about the lack of respect those high-ranked officers had towards the criteria, parameters and rules nurtured within the professionalization program they were implementing in the *Escuela Militar* in Colombia. For instance, officers graduated in that program were dispensed from service by high-ranked officers, and their positions were filled with those who were considered to be loyal to the Minister of War or recruited without attending the courses in the *Escuela Militar*, according to a letter sent by the heads of the mission to the Chief of Staff of the Chilean Army (DÍAZ; CHARPÍN, 1909 *Apud ATEHORTÚA C.*, 2009, p. 60). The same document claimed that there was a systematic promotion of Generals (*Generales*), Colonels (*Coroneles*) and Majors (*Mayores*) without any regard to their virtues and merits, nor to the rules and criteria legally established for the military career (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 60). Such attitudes had clear impacts towards the pedagogical schedule with which the Chilean mission

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<sup>158</sup> In the original: “La rapidez con que en nuestras guerras se fabrican militares de alta graduación que ignoran la mayor parte los más elementales principios de la noble carrera militar, nos impele a ver en ellos, no el guerrero que sostendrá el pabellón nacional con la altivez y la dignidad que se merece, sino el eterno gamonal a quien las contingencias de nuestros rencores políticos han convertido en medroso caudillo de mucho machete y muy poca civilización”.

was working in the *Escuela Militar*. In one of the cases reported, almost all of the officers with the highest ranks were removed from the two groups with the best preparation in the capital one day after the instruction course had started (LA FUSIÓN, 1909 *Apud* ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 61). In this sense, the Chilean mission not only faced resistance to change the criteria guiding the organization of the high-ranked military career: this very difficulty impacted the work the Chilean mission was undertaking with the low-ranked military officers in the *Escuela Militar*.

In light of these circumstances, the proposition presented by the Chilean mission to the Ministry of War included an expressive reduction in the group of senior officers, so that those concluding the professionalization program of the *Escuela Militar* could better express the meritocratic criteria the mission aimed at crystallizing within the Colombian Army. The resistances against such proposition were strengthened after the creation of a course specifically dedicated to the General Staff (*Estado Mayor*), whose first selection process had only one Colombian high-ranked officer approved (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 58). In a letter sent in September 27, 1909 to the Chief of Staff of the Chilean Army, Francisco Díaz and Pedro Charpín, the two heads of the Chilean mission after the contract renewal, argue that they had submitted to the Colombian Executive bills on manpower (*planta y pie de fuerza*); organization of military divisions; career progression criteria; recruitment; wages; and retirement, but after months, none of these bills had been presented to the Colombian Congress (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 59).

Soon it became clear that, in order to advance the reorganization of the military forces aspired by the Chilean mission, the latter needed the support of both the Minister of War and the Colombian Congress. Indeed, the changes proposed by the mission relied on military internal decisions that had to be made official through the *Military Official Bulletin* (*Boletín Militar*), as well as on rearrangements on rights and criteria guiding the existing regulation of the military career. Ironically or not, General Luis Enrique Bonilla, the Minister of War by that time, had the exact profile that the Chilean mission was aiming to combat. In an editorial published in October 10, 1909, the newspaper *El Domingo* commented with irony:

General? Yes, gentlemen. Of division. Observe, gentlemen, how he has divided, or more appropriately, how he has partitioned the backbone of the scientific organization of the Army. (...) And when at his desk in the Capitol, he demolishes with decrees based on party lines what the Mission has founded. Mister Bonilla does not aspire to a National Army, entirely of the nation. His ideal is a Conservative Army, the Army who deliberates, the Army of a party<sup>159</sup> (EL DOMINGO, 1909 *Apud* ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 58).

The Minister of War is seen, in the excerpt above, as an evidence of a reminiscence of a historical past in Colombia: a professional whose work had to be devoted to the construction of a “National” and “scientific” army was, contrastingly, influenced by the disputes involving the Liberal and Conservative parties – in favor to the latter. On the other hand, the work of the Chilean mission is here presented as the foundation of what the trajectory of a modern Army must be: an a-political and scientifically organized Army, in service of a whole nation – and not a specific political party. Importantly, the superiority with which the Chilean mission regarded the Colombian military in general, and most notably the high-ranked officers, had to be negotiated with its reliance on a certain level of support in the political game in Colombia.

The intricacies of the tensions involving the Colombian Presidency, the Minister of War, its counterparts in Chile, and the mission itself as regards the reach and depth of the authority the latter would be granted in order to advance its program are certainly a fertile ground for one to investigate the limits of discourses reinforcing the boundary between the “technical” and the “political”. Here, I want to address a specific point in this regard: the unavoidability of an active engagement of the Chilean mission with party politics in Colombia, aiming at building a play of forces which is favorable to the work undertaken by the Chilean military. Part of this game, for instance, resulted in the deposition of Minister Bonilla from the Minister of War.

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<sup>159</sup> In the original: “¿General (Luis Enrique Bonilla)? Sí, Señores. Y de división. Vean Ustedes cómo ha dividido, mejor dicho, cómo ha partido por el eje la organización científica del Ejército. (...) Y cuando funciona en su pupitre del capitolio, demuele con decretos partidistas lo que la Misión ha fundado. El Señor Bonilla no aspira a un Ejército Nacional, enteramente de la patria. Su ideal es el Ejército Conservador, el Ejército que delibere, el Ejército de un partido”.

This is further made explicit in the trajectory of the fourth Chilean mission in Colombia. Increasingly stronger frictions emerged between the modernizing, meritocratic, and “technical” objectives of the mission and vested “political” interests of institutionalized forces, leading to a gradual erosion of the mission. One important instance of these tensions revolves around issues of recruitment (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, pp. 100-103). On the one hand, the Chilean mission supported universal mandatory recruitment as the system that could not only assure national security, but also – and importantly – strengthen the formation of national armed forces in service of the homeland. In this, they sided with internal interests in Colombia, such as the Minister of War José Medina Calderón, whose similar demand was meant to avoid the need to attract recruits by raising wages. On the other hand, local forces led to the inclusion of forms of avoiding recruitment through payment, effectively reducing recruitment to poor urban and rural populations who couldn’t afford to dodge the draft – a situation the Chilean mission strongly objected.

Two dynamics are made bare in this tension. First, the Chilean mission’s aim – and, more broadly, the boundary authorized in the modern discourse analyzed above – of keeping the Armed Forces “technical” and away from the “political” could only be accomplished through the active participation in politics. Likewise, and inversely, the “political” purity of the Armed Forces could only be achieved by turning “political disputes” into “technical matters” of how to most effectively achieve a (non-politically) given set goals. Hence, the condition of possibility of the boundary between the “political” and the “technical” is shown to lie, paradoxically, in its crossing. Second, the Chilean mission constant meddling in Colombian “politics” led to the erosion of its position in the country, ultimately leading to the Presidential opposition to its continuation and, soon after, to its departure from Colombia. It is noteworthy how such departure has been justified in the press: “the Chilean pullout must not be accorded the importance of a conflict between States” since the responsibility for the failure of the Mission was attributed to “the lack of experience and military knowledge of the Colombian agent charged with contracting, in Santiago, the

latest Mission”<sup>160</sup> (ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 103) – another instance of the preservation of the distinction of “technical” and “political” through a depoliticizing claim to what is technical (lack of experience) aiming at preserving a technical definition of what is political (State conflict).

#### 4.4. Conclusion

As discussed in the Introduction to Part Two, some of the most renowned works on the professionalization of the Colombian Military Forces identify “points of inflection” based on two main criteria: i) the institutionalization of a technical – “a-political” – educational program specialized in the military; and ii) the transgression by the military of an alleged boundary between the “civil domain” and the “military domain”. The first is associated to the foundation of the military as a “profession”, once inscribed in a domain of knowledge specific to the military, with a career program and regular wages. The second, on the other hand, is associated to the violation of the boundary which was supposedly instituted with the creation of the military schools, whereby this “military professional” was produced.

This Chapter engaged with the professionalization of the military through another angle, however. Based on the discussion advanced on Section 4.1 about the discourse of modernization, I argued that its constitutive pillars authorize the pacification of the “social space” as the condition for progress to flourish. Furthermore, exploring how civilization and professionalization are entangled in the process of organizing violence within the “pacified social space” allowed us to grasp the main stakes in the claims on the need to professionalize the military – among them, the boundaries between the “civil” and the “military”, and the one between the “technical” and the “political”. Finally, I showed how Europe was taken as a

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<sup>160</sup> The second quote is from the newspaper *La Sociedad*. In the original: “la inexperiencia y falta de conocimientos militares del agente de Colombia encargado de contratar en Santiago la última Misión venida al país” (*LA SOCIEDAD*, 1915 *Apud* ATEHORTÚA C., 2009, p. 103).

reference in the reproduction of the discourse of modernization by Latin American states following the independence wars.

In light of these elements, on Section 4.2, I argued that the elements mentioned above constitute the conditions for the emergence of a circuit of military *savoirs* in the region. Considering that France and Prussia were the main references for solving the “problem of the military” in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Latin America, I identified the main fluxes of “military professionals” and the main channels for the transmission of military *savoirs* characterizing such a circuit. Finally, I discussed the main aspects allowing for us to identify the homogenization of the armies in Latin America as one of the main effects of the reproduction of the discourse of modernization in the professionalization of the military in the region.

On Section 4.3, I analyzed Colombia’s position within this circuit of *savoirs*. More specifically, I discussed the work of the Chilean mission, invited to assist in the building of a “military professional” in Colombia, as well as the main frictions deriving from the civilizational traits of the mission work towards the Colombian Army. Firstly, I argued that the curriculum and profile of the students in the *Escuela Militar*, and the two schools focused on the professionalization of the line of command revealed a concern with the production of a specific type of professional – the “citizen-soldier”. The latter was understood as an ideal of what the Colombian citizen had to be, in both his visible form and moral. However, I showed how the civilizing practices triggered in the professionalization of the military in Colombia were different according to the category – officer or enlisted personnel – and rank of the officer – high or low. The social cuts organizing the civilization of the “military professionals” in Colombia is revealing on how the discourse of meritocracy was invested by an elitist content. Finally, as we have also seen on Section 4.3, the quest for the approval of those regulations upon which the work of the Chilean mission was based led to its inescapable engagement with disputes in the “domain of politics”.

In this sense, this Chapter challenges the logics recurrently operating in the studies on the professionalization of the military in two main directions. Firstly, because the multiplication of ideas of “citizen-soldier”



across the social cuts within the military hierarchy is itself the production of specific kinds of “political subjects”. In this sense, the military school as a project aiming at keeping the military away from the “domain of politics” did not preclude the projection of politics into the barracks. Likewise, if politics is concerned with the “problem of the military” and the military schools are producing specific “political subjects”, the processes running through the barracks are also being projected into society. Thus, the unavoidability of engaging with politics in order for the Chilean mission to advance in its “technical” work exposes how the “civil domain” and the “military domain” are, constitutively, far from hermetic containers operating with different logics.

Through the discussion here advanced, I argued that despite the homogenizing effects of the circuit of military *savoirs*, the dissection of the practices running through the professionalization project in Colombia points to the tensions deriving from residues of tradition amidst a claim for rationality, of patronage amidst a claim for meritocracy, of politics amidst a claim for technicity, of particularity amidst a claim for universality. Since we cannot understand the professionalization of the military in Colombia away from the circuit of military *savoirs*, my argument is that this is not an exclusive feature of Colombia, but an unavoidable fracture constituting the discourse of modernization

## 5. “All they understand is force”: counterinsurgency and the “expert-soldier”

We have started Chapter 4 with how the circuit of modern military professionalization, formerly concentrated in Europe, has come to encompass the Latin American independent states. We have also identified the centrality of “civilization” in the discourse sustaining this circuit. Within this dynamic, Prussia and France enjoyed a privileged position, as references for the professionalization of the military of those newly-independent states, for these states were considered as the ones with the most victorious performance in the “conventional wars” in the 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-centuries Europe.

This Chapter brings to the surface a set of processes that have coexisted with the narrative of professionalization anchored on the concept of “conventional wars”: the operations that have come to be known as “counterinsurgency”. On Chapter 4, we have seen how the *savoir* on “conventional wars” was developed based upon the claim that the professionals engaged with this type of military operations were within the parameters of “civility” of that time. In this sense, the excellence of both French and Prussian military was not only claimed in terms of their victories in battles: it also comprehended the idea that these military professionals constituted a reference because they were more civilized than the other military in Europe. Now, I turn my attention to one of the conditions under which this claim was possible: the silencing of a competing military *savoir*. As we will see, counterinsurgent practices coexisted with those of conventional wars, but circulated under different conditions. Their resonance was expected to be confined in the European colonies in Africa by the 19<sup>th</sup> century, for it was understood as a more brutalized – “hence” less civilized – domain of ordering practice. On Section 5.1, I identify the main terms of the competition between these two *savoirs* and discuss the limits of the boundary drawn between them.

We will then explore the mechanisms through which counterinsurgency (COIN) travelled from Europe to the United States and

then to Latin America, as well as the conditions that allowed for these fluxes to take place. The discussion will show that even when French military – and this was also the case for the Prussians – were leading professionalization missions in some of the states in Latin America by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the boundary drawn between conventional war and COIN was recurrently trespassed. Indeed, one of the purposes of this section is to provide some initial thoughts on the implications of this trespassing.

On Section 5.2, I discuss how the United States came to interact more systematically with the Colombian Army in the context of the Cold War. I show how the professionalization based on irregular warfare in Colombia was focused on the training center – and not on the school. Based on the creation of the Escuela de Lanceros in the early-1950s, I analyze the course program of the lanceros and argue that the content of their professionalization was turned towards the large-scale production of tactically efficient bodies through short-term programs focused on the tactical level.

In line with those features, Section 5.3 explores how Plan Colombia is related to this configuration of professionalization. By identifying the main axes in which the resources of the Plan were invested – intelligence, specialization, irregular warfare, and mobility – I argue that it kept the main practices involved in the production of the “military professional”, although intensifying them. Most importantly, I argue that Plan Colombia consolidated a project of “professionalization” based on the category *soldado profesional*, that is, a conscript soldier who, after 18-24 months of service, chooses to integrate the Military Forces, without, however, being incorporated to the military career. I conclude this Chapter by contrasting the main elements characterizing the building of the “military professional” in the “citizen-soldier” and what I call the “expert-soldier”

### **5.1. Counterinsurgency: an old new military *savoir***

“Quasi-professionals”. These were the terms with which military officers who advocated for the superiority of the conventional warfare

referred to military engaged with “small wars” (PORCH, 2013, p. 2). One of the main axis upon which the difference between these two was demarcated was the degree of “civility” attributed to each of these two *savoirs*. Particularly, the civilized character of conventional war was read as a result of the set of principles and rules guiding war fighting and as a remarkable characteristic of those who waged war – both the soldiers and the sovereign state on behalf of which they fought (ROUQUIÉ, 1984; PORCH 2013, p. 21). Contrastingly, those who engaged in “small wars” were considered as uncivilized soldiers, both because the *jus ad bellum* and the *jus in bello* did not apply to them, or to the “enemies” against whom they fought. Thus, the lack of civility attributed to the “small wars” derived from the “nature” of the combat – or, further, from the “nature” of the enemy. When Clausewitz, widely known for the posthumous publication of *On War* (1832), a referential text for conventional war strategy until the current days, disdained “small warriors” as irrelevant because the rules of civilized warfare did not apply to them (PORCH, 2013, p. 21), the core of his position was to be found in the character he attributed to the enemy small warriors fought. Indeed, the Prussian General considered insurgents to be non-professional warriors, whose methods were not only uncivilized, but also ineffective, for only the scientific knowledge pursued by conventional warfare would lead to the optimization of the means of combat. Under such terms, it is as if the brutality in “small wars” was justified because of the savage character associated to the enemy being combated – “as if” because, as we will see, a regime of justification and a set of procedures was also crystalized around the “small wars” category throughout the decades. To put it more bluntly, it was not so much that the European soldiers waging small wars were uncivil, but that the enemy was so, and the latter justified means that were not prescribed in a set of rules conceived “exclusively” for two civilized parties, whose regular armies were in armed confrontation – by the 19<sup>th</sup> century, European modern states.

The fact that the category of this kind of conflict is known as a “small” or an “irregular” kind of war is revealing of the privileged position the “conventional war” enjoyed in the architecture of military *savoirs* by that time: the latter constitutes the norm, and the other kinds of war are

deviations from its regular and symmetric characterization. Through these lines, the British Major General Sir Charles Callwell, the founder of one of the first schools dedicated to the professionalization of small warriors, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, conceptualized “small wars” as operations of regular armies against irregular forces (PORCH, 2013, p. 4). Importantly, both the noble title “Sir” and the military rank indicate that, although a highlight in the underprivileged domain of small wars, Callwell was neither outside the military ranking system, nor outside the criteria through which social prestige was attributed.

If “civility” was so central to the differentiation of conventional and small warfare, we can infer, considering the analysis developed on Chapter 4, that tensions would emerge from the implications of attempts to professionalize “small wars” as a discrete category of warfare. This is so, firstly, because this would imply a certain validation of small wars and, consequently, the possibility of a competition with conventional wars for efficiency, legitimacy and so on. Secondly, the discourse of professionalization cannot be dissociated from the civilizing process, as we have discussed on Chapter 4. In this sense, the efforts towards the professionalization of “small warriors”, a civilizing battle with an uncivilized character, would undermine the civilization of the modern military soldier himself. After all, what kind of “citizen” would result from the production of the “citizen-soldier” through the professionalization of “small warriors”? This could be interpreted as a paradox, given the “incivility” to which the practice of “small wars” was invariably associated. If not a paradox, the validation of “small wars” as a discrete category of warfare would certainly require a significant re-articulation in the regime of justification of the professionalization of modern military. For if the ideal citizen was expected to emerge from the specific socialization of the soldiers within the barracks, what kind of “ideal citizens” would result from the professionalization schools specialized in the brutal and uncivilized warfare known as “small wars”?

The challenge for those who advocated for a position for “small wars” in the edifice of military *savoirs* (WASINSKI, 2012) was to crystalize a set of principles and rules that could constrain excesses of violence in

“small wars” and avoid its association with brutality. More specifically, through such an effort, massacres that could easily slide into accusations of barbarism could instead “be explained as anomalies inflicted by stressed-out conscripts, by conventional soldiers untutored in the hearts and minds fundamentals of war among the people (...) rather than as patterns of racialized violence endemic to small wars” (PORCH, 2013, p. 3).

If the British military are considered as the ones who first advanced towards the professionalization of “small wars” through the creation of specialized schools in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this was a *savoir* whose lineage was claimed to stretch back to the French colonial experience in Africa, in the first half of that century. Therefore, for us to dissect the professional code built around “small war” as a discrete category of modern military warfare, it is worthy to take a close look into one of the most prominent names of this French trajectory of colonial ordering, which is recurrently brought up as the theater in which the main principles of the “small wars” *savoir* were consolidated.

The names most recurrently mentioned in the hall of fame of counterinsurgency historiography include the French General Louis-Gabriel Suchet, to whom is granted the deed of formulating a successful information operations campaign, aiming at winning the “hearts and minds” of Aragonese and Catalans in French-occupied Spain from 1808 to 1812. Particularly, the project comprehended infrastructure and institutional improvements, presented as materializations of the Napoleonic modernization project. Suchet built hospitals, orphanages and schools and addressed values such as liberty, fraternity and equality in his speeches (FEW, 2010). This concern with disseminating information about the benefits of acknowledging legitimacy to one’s project of government has been systematically present in “psychological operations”, which, by their turn, are found at the core of small wars.

It is not of my interest here to dissect the “facts” of colonization in order to authorize or not the justifications on which the incorporation of Suchet into this historiography are grounded. Instead, my point is to explore what is at stake in the narrative surrounding this and other French Generals when incorporated into that hall of fame of counterinsurgency. It is here that

the claim of a Revolutionary France lineage matters. The so-called effort of combining persuasion and clemency in these kinds of operations was presented as a condition for the alleviation of the brutality historically attached to “small wars”, but also aimed at operating in direct contrast with institutions anchored on traditions and customs, considered as obsolete within the context of the French Revolution.

The imperial project being mobilized through the latter had as its fundamental document the “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen”, which implied that France was not only “liberating” its own citizens from the Ancient Regime: it was addressing the world on behalf of “manhood”. What is relevant for our purposes is that the imperial project was forged as a liberating project: the Article 2 of the Declaration defines the “rights of Man” as “liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression”. Countless were and still are the wars fought on behalf of those words – and that was also the motto of counterinsurgent operations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Indeed, the main objective of psychological operations was to build a friendly image to imperialism, under the claim that a government’s legitimacy is anchored in the consent of the governed. In the case of Suchet, for instance, it was only necessary that the Spanish were aware of the benefits deriving from the French administration for them to acknowledge its legitimacy. As we will see with Bugeaud, this embryo of “population-centric approach” was systematically enhanced by counterinsurgency tacticians in order to circumvent what were interpreted as problems of “cultural resistance” of the population to “hearts and minds” programs and of infiltrated enemies amongst the “friendly population”.

General Thomas-Robert Bugeaud had its name encrusted in the historiography of counterinsurgency as one of the first tacticians in this domain of warfare. But first it is important to highlight that the privileged position of conventional war was based on a “validation test” (WASINSKI, 2012), according to which the combination of military technology with the subordination of a set of tactics to a grand military strategy had to prove its efficiency in the battlefield, through a “decisive victory”. Its scientific character was precisely the refinement of that combination so as to achieve victory through the optimization of resources applied in war. In this sense,

“small wars” needed more than a “hearts and minds” program in order to earn a position in that edifice: it had to adjust to the criteria according to which validation was granted. More specifically, it needed to provide tactical answers to eventual resistances against the friendly establishment, for instance, of French military in Algeria as a legitimate force. However, at the same time this validation test posed a challenge to “small wars”, it offered an opportunity to it.

For us to understand what this means in more concrete terms, it is pertinent to draw attention to Porch’s historical reservation that it was only by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that one could observe the remarkable contrast between conventional and small warfare, especially when it comes to the arsenal mobilized by each of them. According to the author, it was through the intensification of Industrial Revolution that the technological differential between the two achieved a disproportionate level, serving the “need” created by the development of *savoirs* of modern military conventional warfare “to acquire significant technical and managerial skills to mobilize, coordinate, combine, maneuver, and motivate mass armies” (PORCH, 2013, p. 13). Thus, technological advances in military weaponry walked hand in hand with the development of the edifice of *savoirs* on conventional warfare: actually, one was the condition for and the effect of the other.

The “opportunity” mentioned above was precisely connected to both the *savoir* of conventional warfare and the means evoked as appropriate in order to fight those kinds of wars. It is in this regard that Bugeaud’s engagement in Algeria stands out, for his “successful” experience there was attributed to the development of a tactical *savoir* particular to counterinsurgency. When sent to Algeria in 1840 to take the position of Governor General, the bulk of Bugeaud’s Napoleonic wars experience had been spent fighting *partidas* in Spain (PORCH, 2013, p. 19), guerrilla formations disputing the control of the Iberian Peninsula with the French army in the 1800s. Because the French professional soldiers of that time were not taught guerrilla warfare in the classrooms of military schools, the package of tactics lapidated by Bugeaud had mainly the battleground as its source of inspiration.



As Rid argues (2009, p. 618), the French conquest of Algeria puzzled European strategists for failing to fit the “decisive battle” paradigm. The series of clashes that did not point to the ending of the conflict was closer to what those strategists saw as a characteristically “pre-modern” dynamic of warfare (PORCH, 2013, p. 22). However, there was nothing more modern than a military made General through the stairs of colonization, who voiced critics to the irrelevance of conventional war to the domination of parts of Africa that could yield profitable results to France. Similarly, there was nothing more modern than translating such argument to a set of criteria which constituted the validation system of interstate wars.

According to Bugeaud, the technology developed for conventional wars was not adjusted to the conditions of armed confrontations in Algeria. Once irregular warfare was mostly characterized by the avoidance of great armed confrontations and by the attraction to the enemy army into one’s own territory, oversized expeditions and heavy weaponry were not only less agile, but also easy targets for the enemy. Believing mobility was the key for the success of the French occupation in Algeria, Bugeaud created small military formations, equipped with light weaponry and nurtured by an intelligence network (PORCH, 2013, p. 20), to which we will come back more attentively in the next pages. The mobility with which French forces operated in Algeria soon became the core of the “scientific” refinement with which European tacticians of “small wars” would engage in the following years. The effort to perfect the tactical *savoir* of “small wars” has resulted, according to Bugeaud, in military forces “even more Arab than the Arabs” (*Apud* PORCH, 2013, p. 20) – that is, for him, the French are better in being Arabs when mimetizing them.

Given that both the French forces and the “insurgents” had mobility as the fundamental principle of their tactical operations, grand strategies such as the ones governing the planning and the organization of conventional wars were of small use; the transformation of the war scenes was more accelerated. Hence the centrality of tactics in “small wars”, according to Bugeaud. Importantly, when advocating for the centrality of tactics to “small wars”, Bugeaud was arguing for an operational edge of “small wars” over conventional ones, taking into consideration the

particularities of the conditions found in Algeria, thereby highlighting the gaps in the edifice of *savoirs* built around conventional warfare.

In this sense, rather than denying the set of criteria which constituted the validation system of interstate wars, Bugeaud and other proponents of counterinsurgency as a discrete category of modern warfare aimed at refining the military edifice, so that the latter could encompass a *savoir* specialized in another type of enemy. As mentioned in the opening of this section, the conventional wars corresponded to a category conceived and refined for an armed confrontation involving civilized parties. The “opportunity” identified by Bugeaud was, therefore, related to the absence of a category of *savoir* built upon the idea of an enemy with an inferior, savage nature. Here, it is noteworthy that the development of tactics specialized in small wars was not matched by regulations on the use of violence in this kind of warfare: indeed, contrastingly to the densification of international regulations of conventional warfare during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was a regulatory silence towards small wars.

A remarkable feature of how the tactics designed by Bugeaud rely on the assumption of the inferior “nature” of the enemy are the *razzias*. Distilled by Bugeaud while Governor General in Algeria, the *razzias* aimed at suffocating the resistance against French occupation through the eradication of anything that could be used as food, shelter and clothing (PORCH, 2013, p. 22). Speaking in defense of Bugeaud’s *razzias*, Marshal de Castellane wrote: “how do you act against a population whose only link with the land is the pegs of their tents? (...) The only way is to take the grain which feeds them, the flocks which clothe them. For this reason, we make war on silos, war on cattle, the *razzia*” (1852 *Apud* PORCH, 2013, pp. 21-22). Intensified by the narrative of the racial inferiority of the enemy, by the end of the 1840s, the *razzias* had unfolded into an excessive brutality aimed at eliminating any economic and psychological condition of resistance – military tactics claimed by Bugeaud as necessary for the “acceptance” of the French “occupation” (PORCH, 2013, p. 25).

The racial pillars constituting Bugeaud’s *razzias* relied on an information apparatus built even before he arrived in Algeria. In 1833, the French created the *bureaux arabes* in each of the military districts in Algeria

with the objective of gathering intelligence on politics and key individuals of the “Algerian tribes” through a network of agents, spies and informants. A similar information apparatus was built by the British in India: initially composed by civilians admitted through a severe test in native languages, history, and law, the Indian Political Service was mainly constituted by military personnel by the 1830s (PORCH, 2013, p. 32). This system of information collection was directly linked to the *goum*, local soldiers who served in auxiliary units attached to the French Army of Africa, and which were in charge of undertaking the *razzias*, punishing the treacherous, terrorizing neutrals and giving incentives to those who were loyal to the French troops (PORCH, 2013, 31).

As the connection of the intelligence apparatus with the activities of the *goum* reveal, information gathering was turned to the identification of suspects and to the differentiation of degrees of “dangerousness” amongst the population. An illustration of such practices can be found in 1871, when the British issued the “Criminal Tribes Ac”, whereby “entire castes, communities, and tribes were registered (...) as ‘habitual offenders’ requiring constant surveillance and control” (PORCH, 2013, p. 37). Thus, although presented as mechanisms focused in contributing to a better understanding of the intricacies of the local culture, the *bureau arabe* and the Indian Political Service used information in order to better control the Algerian and Indian populations.

At the same time, this information apparatus increasingly operated in symbiosis with psychological operations, an upgraded version of the “hearts and minds” programs, as we will see below. Referring to this kind of operation, one of the last French commanders in Algeria, by the end of the 1950s, assessed that the psychological operation undertaken in that state had failed “because it was incapable of finding a sentiment to exploit” (PORCH, 2013, p. 195). It is particularly to this use of cultural intelligence that the military refer to when they mobilize the expression “to weaponize culture”, that is, to instrumentalize the cultural aspects of the population in order to optimize the efficiency of the military mission, both through the amplification of its acceptance by the locals and through the better

identification of the enemy – in the more current jargon, that is what is conceptualized as the “human terrain” of a military operation.

Moreover, the production of “cultural information” through this apparatus operated within – not against – the assumption of racial inferiority. In other words, the hierarchical position of superiority with which the French colonizers –the ones we are looking more closely here – gazed at the Algerian population was not challenged through this information apparatus. As every form of control is constituted by practices of normalization, the *bureau arabe* worked more towards the gradual dismantling of the Algerian culture than towards the promotion of a better understanding of that culture (PORCH, 2013, p. 30).

In this sense, the symbiosis between intelligence and military apparatus had a double political effect in Algeria: at the same it allowed for a more efficient control of what was conceived as dangerous by the French, the information collected was used so as to produce the “acceptance” of the French troops in Algeria. As regards the latter, it is worth specifying that “legitimacy” was expected to emerge from a series of information campaigns aimed at building a positive image of the French, contrastingly to the image of those resisting the “occupation”, which were taken as enemies. Here, one cannot avoid but noticing that the locals are seen with no ability of critical thinking and with no political discernment: they are either manipulable by the French “hearts and minds” programs so that they can “safely” be considered as “friends”; or they must be “rescued” by the French forces because they have been manipulated by the enemy.

As we have seen, the information apparatus, the *razzias*, and the emphasis on mobility were the three main arms of the tactics designed by Bugeaud based on his experience on the Algerian terrain. All of these operational axes were grounded on the claim of inferiority of the Algerians, as well as of the irregular character of the combat. Bugeaud’s place in the historiography of counterinsurgency derives from the mobilization of such operations as an efficient answer to the challenges facing colonial ordering practices. More than that: Bugeaud and his supporters advocated that these operational lines merited recognition as a military *savoir* as modern as the conventional warfare. Indeed, the “efficiency argument” was advanced as an

attempt to translate the *savoir* on “small wars” into the validation terms sustaining the edifice of military *savoirs*. A similar movement was made in the identification of a gap within that edifice, one which did not comprehend wars involving an inferior, uncivil enemy. As it has been pointed out, the translation of “small wars” operational advantages into the terms of the edifice of military *savoirs* was not so the result of a consciously designed strategic schema by Bugeaud: rather, it was more the effect of his own military trajectory, whose initial professionalization was immersed in that system of validation.

Of course, much more was at stake in granting or not this position to “small wars” in this metaphorical edifice. First of all, such process is not consensual: both amongst military organizations of different states and within each of them, resistance could be found towards the acknowledgement of “small wars” as a valid form of modern warfare. Secondly, because such acknowledgement is not linear nor irreversible. Suggesting an acknowledgement of its efficiency, the tactics developed by Bugeaud – especially the *razzia* – was replicated by Russia, Great Britain, the United States and Prussia during the 19<sup>th</sup> century (PORCH, 2013, p. 26) in variated forms, such as internment, resettlement, curfew, house demolition and food control (PORCH, 2013, p. 22). Despite having been erected upon the experience in colonial terrains, the circulation of this *savoir* proved to be wider than in populations colonized by European states. In the United States, for instance, it was applied during the 19<sup>th</sup>-century wars against the Indians.

However, it was only decades later, with the French Army Major David Galula, that counterinsurgency started to enjoy a more privileged position within the edifice of military *savoirs*. To be sure, it was only after the II World War that counterinsurgency was more systematically incorporated into the curriculum of military professionalization schools in Europe and in the United States. If the incorporation of Bugeaud into the historiography of counterinsurgency derives from his tactical contribution on this kind of warfare, the French General never translated his experience in Algeria into a counterinsurgency doctrine (PORCH, 2013, p. 165). Porch’s definition of “doctrine” helps us to understand what is at stake here:

“Doctrine is a trailing indicator of inherited practices and a receptive intellectual environment, combined with tactical and operational routines developed by units to meet current contingencies” (PORCH, 2013, p. 179).

In the absence of a doctrinal framework, there were no channels through which experience and “lessons learnt” could be transmitted from one French colony to another, for instance. The case of Indochina is an emblematic example, for, unlike Algeria, no intelligence apparatus analogous to the *bureaux arabes* had been built in Indochina, although both were French colonies by the same period in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (PORCH, 2013, p. 165). Having served in Algeria in the 1950s, almost a hundred years after Bugeaud, Galula (2006, p. v) claimed: “In my zone, as everywhere in Algeria, the order was to ‘pacify’. But exactly how? The sad truth was that, in spite of all our past experience, we had no single, official doctrine for counterinsurgency warfare”. It is in this regard that Galula is considered as key in the trajectory of this specific *savoir*: he is not only one of the first who attempted to condense the French experience into a set of prescriptions and to crystalize a counterinsurgency doctrine, but also the one to have bridged the French experience with the US one (PORCH, 2013, p. 163, p. 175).

It is at least intriguing that Galula’s name has reached such a projection, considering that the Algerian War in which he participated terminated in 1962 with the Algerian independence, and not with the accomplishment of the mission he was assigned to – keeping the colonial order. When Galula was assigned to the 45<sup>th</sup> Colonial Infantry Battalion, the French army established a systematic approach to the gradual maturation of a counterinsurgency doctrine. Particularly, the Battalion was responsible for keeping the colonial order firstly in an experimental area, where counterinsurgency methods were firstly tested, and, if considered successful, were later applied in other parts of Algeria throughout the late 1950s (PORCH, 2013, p. 179). According to Galula, however, the absence of a counterinsurgency doctrine was a key factor in the outcome of the Algerian War because it allowed for a heterogeneous materialization of tactics throughout the Algerian territory.

In his two books *Pacification in Algeria 1956-1958* (1963) and *Counterinsurgency Warfare* (1964), Galula distills what he considers as the main lessons from the French experience in small wars into a set of prescriptions that would come to constitute a counterinsurgency doctrine, specifying the ramifications of such tactical operations and translating them to the context of a “communist threat” – or the “*guerre révolutionnaire*”, in the words of Colonel Charles Lacheroy, a French military known for his theorization of this kind of warfare as “the conflict scenario of the future” (PORCH, 2013, p. 173).

In general terms, the counterinsurgency doctrine systematized by Galula preserved the three main axes of tactical operations developed by Bugeaud in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Algeria. The emphasis on tactics rather than on strategy is kept and is also boiled down to a central concern with mobility; psychological operations are similarly taken as the core of counterinsurgent work; and a derivation of the *razzias* is incorporated to the doctrine. Nevertheless, it is only by looking attentively at what both Lacheroy and Galula conceived as the specificity of the “revolutionary war” that we can grasp the wires connecting the counterinsurgency doctrine as it was developed by Galula with that consolidated in the United States.

After having served in the Indochina War (1946-1954), Lacheroy insisted that the conflict scenario was more remarkably characterized as a “communist conspiracy” against the French Empire than as a colonial war. One of the specificities of the “revolutionary wars” was the difficulty to distinguish friend from foe – which both Galula and Lacheroy associated to the “unlimited” character of this kind of conflict. According to the former, it is precisely this aspect that makes the early identification of the “insurrection” a necessity for the military, for once it reaches the population, “neutralization” is even more difficult (GALULA, 1964, 2006). The more such a conflict lingers, Galula argued, the more vulnerable the military forces become before the public opinion in their home countries – in this case, France – which makes timing a key concern (GALULA, 1964).

In this “new” context, Galula re-appropriated one of the main effects of the *razzias* – curfews and resettlements – and prescribed the separation of the population from the rebels. In Algeria, for example, facing difficulties in

stabilizing villages, the French military displaced Algerians from their lands towards camps so that they could better control them – what the Army referred to as *regroupement* (PORCH, 2013, p. 187), a very subtle word for a process often undertaken with the use of force. The unavoidable paranoia deriving from the idea that every friend may actually be a foe led to the agglomeration of a set of other practices to the *regroupement*, such as the issuing of identity papers, food rationing, house searches, curfews, and the creation of self-defense groups (PORCH, 2013, p. 187). Although the infiltration of individuals who were claimed to be enemies risked de-authorizing *regroupement* as an inefficient operation, the latter was persistently used. One of the possible reasons for that is that *regroupement* enabled another kind of control: the creation of “free-fire zones” in the regions which had been cleared through the resettlement. With the assumption that the control techniques were infallible (*sic*), anyone found in those zones was taken as an insurgent, and hence could be killed (PORCH, 2013, p. 188).

All of the aspects analyzed so far operate within a “population-centric approach”, that is, a logics according to which the population, rather than the enemy’s arsenal was the key for victory in “revolutionary wars”. Drawing from his experience in Indochina, Colonel Lacheroy claimed that the French failed to counter the insurgent’s propaganda that manipulated the population against the French forces (PORCH, 2013, p. 174). He believed that, in addition to the *regroupement* operations, the French needed a propaganda campaign that was successful in building a positive image of the French, convincing the population that the war was not about colonialism, but about liberating Algerians from the communist threat (GALULA, 1964, p. 99). In this sense, in 1956, psychological operations units were created in each division of the French personnel mobilized in Algeria, with the objective of building confidence of the population in the French mission (PORCH, 2013, p. 186).

Despite the persistent asepsis aiming at purging the racial underpinnings from the counterinsurgency doctrine through the re-reading of its French experience out of the colonial terms, the suspicion with which Galula recommended that the French military gazed at the Algerian



population resonated the colonial legacy of counterinsurgency. According to Galula (2006, p. v), the French military had to “Outwardly treat every civilian as a friend; inwardly you must consider him as a rebel ally until you have positive proof to the contrary”. This prescription had two main effects. On the one hand, it displaced the burden of proof to the Algerians, who had to prove that they did not support the insurgents. On the other, it authorized practices such as the *quadrillage* (the segmentation of a zone in search for insurgents), the *ratonnades* (an army sweep of areas to arrest “suspects”), and the “swarming tactics” (multiple-units attack from all sides of a target), as well as the arbitrary arrests, interrogations, torture, and decapitation of the “insurgent organization” – that is, killing its leaders – that derived from those operations.

Read together, the burden of proof and these “rat-chasing-operations” met Galula’s prescription that the ideal moment for the counterinsurgents to initiate the “purge” (GALULA, 1964, pp. 89-92) was “not when the cell members have been positively identified – a process that would take much time and leaves much to chance – but instead, when enough information has been gathered on a number of suspected villagers” (GALULA, 1964, p. 91). Such an “indirect approach”, privileging the arrest and interrogation of villagers rather than the cell members as a first step of the “purge”, was based on the belief that “every villager normally knows who the cell members are, or at least knows who is screening them” (GALULA, 1964, p. 91). In other words, the arrest and interrogation of villagers<sup>161</sup> was a moment in which his “collaboration” to the counterinsurgent effort was tested: he was either an informant to the counterinsurgents or a supporter of the insurgents. As for the cell members, once captured, leniency was conditioned to the “sincerity” of his repentance, which must attend two criteria: “a full confession of their past activity and a willingness to participate actively in the counterinsurgent’s struggle. Another advantage of a policy of leniency is to facilitate the subsequent

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<sup>161</sup> Galula warns that “The main concern of the counterinsurgent in his propaganda during this step is to minimize the possible adverse effects produced on the population by the arrests. He will have to explain frankly why it is necessary to destroy the insurgent political cells, and stress the policy leniency to those who recognize their error” (GALULA, 1964, p. 92).

purges” (GALULA, 1964, p. 91). The population as the center of gravity of the “revolutionary war” had two main senses according to this logics: it was both a source of information and a source of resistance to be countered. This need that either the “suspect” or the “repentant rat” actively revealed the side he was in and concretely collaborated with the “right side” led to an antagonism which aimed at encompassing the totality of the area under “pacification” – hence the importance of the *quadrillages*. There was no room for hesitation in this binary political positionality: with or against “us”.

If pacification through counterinsurgency is understood as the work whose objective is the absence of organized violence against the state – or the military working on its behalf –, and if, during this revolutionary war, there is no room for indifference towards the military mission goals, peace must be seen here as the absence of any resistance. Furthermore, this pacification is undeniably legitimate in the eyes of counterinsurgents. Indeed, in an excerpt from *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, Galula claims that:

The administrator in peacetime has to preserve a politically neutral attitude toward the population, has to let ‘a hundred flowers blossom, a hundred schools of thought contend’, but not in counterinsurgency, where his duty is to see that only the right flower blossoms and not the weed, at least until the situation becomes normal again (1964, p. 70).

Divergence was, therefore, only possible amongst the “right flowers”: only in peacetime, contention may exist, but within the terms considered as acceptable by the counterinsurgent forces. Until then, it is an unescapable trait of the mission’s work not only the consent of the “friends”, but also their proactive collaboration in order to prove to the counterinsurgents that they are indeed the “right flowers”, not the “rats” to be purged from the meticulously swept terrain.

A remaining and extremely relevant topic to address was the emphasis laid by Galula on the need that the military acting in a “revolutionary war” scenario abandon what he considered as the core of the military profession – waging war – and turn to policing as its central mission (PORCH, 2013, p. 191) – “civic action”. If waging war against insurgents was a key phase of the pacification process with which the

French were engaged in Algeria, keeping the peace required police work, according to Galula's view. Importantly, however, this was concretely translated into the transference of military into police personnel, given that the latter was scarce in Algeria by that time (PORCH, 2013, p. 191). In concrete terms, this "change of approach" did not change neither the content of the "French mission", nor the content of the operations against the Algerian population. It allowed, on the other hand, the collection of intelligence in a context of "peace".

According to Porch, that part of the army personnel is put in the position of police is highly problematic, for soldiers "have no experience in solving crimes, apprehending suspects based on probable cause, or collecting evidence that will stand up in court" (PORCH, 2013, p. 192). Even if the effect of policing comprehended the practices enumerated by the author, Porch's discomfort towards the blurring of civil and military functions is strange to the terms of his own analysis. First of all, the practices undertaken by the military persisted when the police took over the responsibility of a given area precisely because it was only in the uniforms worn that the police personnel was different from the military one. As Porch himself highlights, the personnel of the Algerian police was not only French, but trained in military schools.

Similarly, as it has been discussed, there was no concern with conducting counterinsurgency operation within the law. One of Lacheroy's three rules for victory to be achieved in counterinsurgency campaigns was precisely not fighting such a "revolutionary war" within the legal framework (PORCH, 2013, p. 180). Indeed, as we have seen, the "lawless character" of counterinsurgency as it has been practiced in the French colonies derived from the idea of the inferior "nature" of the enemy. Following this logic, there is no "law and order" where Porch is searching for, not because the "soldiers make lousy cops" (PORCH, 2013, p. 192), but because "order" was pursued at the expense of the law. The same point can be made as regards Porch's stance that there was a "militarization of legality" when the French Army acted as police in Algeria (PORCH, 2013, p. 192). Actually, the persistence of a discourse on the inferiority of the enemy is the condition for the Army personnel to slide to the police and then back to the military.

A good way of illustrating what is at stake in the military appropriation of the work of police can be found in David Kilcullen's depiction of counterinsurgency as "armed social work" – in his own words, "an attempt to redress basic social and political problems while being shot at" (KILCULLEN, 2006, p. 33). Lacheroy and Galula, as we have seen, also underlined the relevance of "civic work" to counterinsurgency. Importantly, however, it is through the practices constituting the "population-centric approach" that we have analyzed so far that this "civic work" must be read. We need to understand it, firstly, as a civilizing work: to spread progress by redressing "basic social and political problems", under the condition that those who are benefiting from it act accordingly to the norms of conduct set through counterinsurgency operations – amongst them, to actively collaborate whenever requested.

But we also must read this "civic work" as one which puts those who are "helping" in danger – after all, they are "being shot at" while bringing progress to villagers. The "civic work" provides the content for the discourse of enmity, in the sense that the enemy is framed as that who resists the progress that is delivered through the pacification of a given area. The radical otherness constituting counterinsurgency is, thus, interpreted as a threat to the civilizing mission operating through such operations. The "civic work" thereby builds a contrast between the enemy and the counterinsurgent forces, allowing for the mobilization of the population so as to support the mission goals and to defend the latter as its own. At the same time, such a discourse authorizes both the suspicion with which the villagers must be observed and the shooting of the enemy by counterinsurgent soldiers, in "self-defense" from those who were aiming against them.

The elements mentioned above are in the foreground of counterinsurgency operations until the present days. In a document addressed to the military professionals in order to discuss the main practical fundamentals of counterinsurgency<sup>162</sup>, Kilcullen, who has vast experience as

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<sup>162</sup> By doing so, Kilcullen is not denying the pillars that we have discussed so far. At the same time, the emphasis on tactics allows for counterinsurgency to be constantly rearticulated, this work still has Galula's texts as one of its main "theoretical" or

strategist and consultant on this kind of warfare in the United States government<sup>163</sup>, claims that

Your role is to provide protection, identify needs, facilitate civil affairs and use improvements in social conditions as leverage to build networks and mobilize the population. Thus, there is no such thing as impartial humanitarian assistance or civil affairs in counterinsurgency. Every time you help someone, you hurt someone else – not least the insurgents. So civil and humanitarian assistance personnel will be targeted. Protecting them is a matter not only of close-in defense, but also of creating a permissive operating environment by co-opting the beneficiaries of aid – local communities and leaders – to help you help them (KILCULLEN, 2006, p. 34).

Reading what the population “needs” and providing protection and civil work in order to address those needs is, in the excerpt above, part of the quest for improvements in social conditions with the objective of mobilizing the population to “the right side”. Indeed, Kilcullen recommends, further in the same document, that “For your side to win, the people do not have to like you but they must respect you, accept that your actions benefit them, and trust your integrity and ability to deliver your promises” (KILCULLEN, 2006, p. 29). Furthermore, as Kilcullen suggests, disagreement (“not liking you”) must give way to respect so that the “right side” can achieve victory and the population can harvest the benefits of pacification once the insurgency is “finally” defeated. The respect due to counterinsurgent forces is related to its ability to see beyond what the population is able to see – “hence” its superiority and its leading role.

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“philosophical” references. According to Kilcullen: “Your company has just been warned for deployment on counterinsurgency operations in Iraq or Afghanistan. You have read David Galula, T.E. Lawrence and Robert Thompson. You have studied FM 3-24 and now understand the history, philosophy and theory of counterinsurgency. (...) But what does all that theory mean, at the company level? How do the principles translate into action – at night, with the GPS down, the media criticizing you, the locals complaining in a language you don’t understand, and an unseen enemy killing your people by ones and twos?” (KILCULLEN, 2006, p. 29).

<sup>163</sup> David Kilcullen is a Lieutenant Colonel who has served for 25 years in the Australian Army. In the 2000’s, he worked as Chief Strategist in the United States’ State Department’s Counterterrorism Bureau. He also served as Senior Counterinsurgency Advisor to General David Petraeus in Iraq and worked as Special Advisor for Counterinsurgency to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, during George Bush’s second administration. Kilcullen currently runs the Consultancy Caerus, specialized on “urban warfare”. Available at: <https://www.newamerica.org/our-people/david-kilcullen/>. For more on Caerus, see: <http://caerusassociates.com/about-caerus/>.

As in Galula, Kilcullen conditions the success of counterinsurgency to a submissive position of the population, to whom the silent roles of beneficiary, protected and collaborator (whenever requested) are the key to success. The population is to be co-opted so that victory can be achieved. Perhaps as important as the voiceless position the population is rendered with, is the transfer of the responsibility of the protection process to the population: Algerians, as Afghans and Iraqis, have to help counterinsurgents to help them – or, in other words, the burden of proof that they merit the protection to be delivered by the military is transferred to the population.

That the French and the US counterinsurgency doctrines are very similar in their main axes is not a coincidence. Indeed, professionals from the French Army who had directly participated in the Algerian War attended symposiums and taught courses in military schools in the United States during the 1960s. Galula was himself amongst the participants of a symposium held at the RAND Corporation's<sup>164</sup> Office in Washington in 1962 with the objective “to distill lessons and insights from past insurgent conflicts that might help to inform and shape the U.S. involvement in Vietnam and to foster the effective prosecution of other future counterinsurgency campaigns” (HOSMER; CRANE, 2006, p. vii). Since its foundation, in 1948, RAND has worked hand in hand with the US government in the development of research and models that spoke directly to the issues considered at the top of the security agenda of the United States (JARDINI, 2013).

By then, “limited wars”, as the armed conflicts in Korea and in Vietnam were initially framed by the US government (JARDINI, 2013, p. 136), did not constitute a priority in the RAND agenda, comparably to the projects dedicated to nuclear strategy<sup>165</sup>. It was only after 1964 that the

<sup>164</sup> RAND Corporation, think tank based originally formed in 1948 by the US aircraft manufacturer Douglas Aircraft Company to provide research and analysis to the United States Armed Forces.

<sup>165</sup> Through a historical analysis of the RAND Corporation and its main research projects from 1945 to 1975, Jardini (2013) argues that “While the Korean experience did stimulate a small amount of interest in limited warfare at RAND, its analysis and research remained geared almost exclusively to strategic nuclear conflict. Counterinsurgency research was especially distasteful to the Air Force since that service seemed to play no independent role in anti-guerrilla operations. Not surprisingly, then, in 1961 RAND devoted just two percent

share corresponding to research on “counterinsurgency” was expanded. In that year, RAND’s president by that time, Frank Collbohm created a committee within the Corporation in order to assess “RAND’s competence to address U.S. security problems in Southeast Asia and to make recommendations concerning RAND’s Southeast Asia research program” (1965, p. i *Apud* JARDINI, 2013, p. 144). According to the director of that committee, the economist Charles J. Zwick:

We are convinced that there is a great opportunity for RAND once again to enter into an area of national policy in which there is today a considerable vacuum – that of policy, doctrine, and techniques related to countering and discrediting revolutionary warfare as a Communist strategy (...) A significant opportunity to influence policy and techniques is there (1965, pp. 1-2 *Apud* JARDINI, 2013, pp. 144-145).

It is in the context of this “opportunity” taken by RAND, aiming at expanding its research program as well as the adherence of the latter to the US government’s agenda, that the 1962 symposium held in its Washington’s Office must be read. The participation of French and British military officials in this event is key for us to grasp the wires connecting the practices of counterinsurgency undertaken by these European states with the development of a counterinsurgency doctrine in the United States in the context of the Cold War.

Two aspects are noteworthy in the list of participants of the 1962 RAND symposium – amongst them, Lieutenant Colonel David Galula (HOSMER; CRANE, 2006, p. xi). Firstly, the absence of the word “colonial” (and its variations) in the report published as the result of the event. Galula is presented as an officer with a “wide variety of experience in a number of theaters of revolutionary warfare” (HOSMER; CRANE, 2006, p. xix). As regards Algeria, for instance, the report highlights his campaign as a succesful accomplishment in “clearing militarily and returning to governmental control in the two years of his command [in the district of Kabylie]” (HOSMER; CRANE, 2006, p. xx). The silent experience of colonization speaks, however, through the “deeds” highlighted in each of

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of its Project RAND work (...), approximately five man-years, to limited warfare (JARDINI, 2013, p. 143).

the participants' short-bios presented in the opening section of the RAND report. From Philippines, to Malaya, India and Algeria, all of the participants' trajectories have a footprint in former European colonies<sup>166</sup>. According to Porch, the sanitization of the French military experience in Algeria "from its context of racism, brutality, and the implosion of French civil-military relations" (2013, p. 175) makes Galula a palatable reference for the US counterinsurgency.

Interestingly, Galula's active participation in the RAND symposium (HOFFMAN, 2006, p. vii) resulted in the invitation, made by Stephen T. Hosmer, then the host of the event, to write a detailed study of his experience in Algeria for RAND – which was published in 1963 with the title *Pacification in Algeria, 1956-1958* (HOFFMAN, 2006, p. vii). In his narrative, Galula only uses the word "colonial" with inverted commas (for instance, GALULA, 2006, p. 14, p. 49, p. 86, p. 232) or when referring to the name of the Battalion he commanded (the Colonial Infantry Battalion) and other branches of the French apparatus in Algeria (to mention but a few, GALULA, 2006, p. 1, p. 65, p. 200). An excerpt of his narrative, in a footnote, suggests that this is far from an unconscious semantic preference, however:

The French colonial troops, from the seventeenth century to the end of the nineteenth, were Marines, employed and supported by the Navy. As our colonial empire grew, so did they, until the Navy complained that the Marines were using too large a share of appropriations. At the turn of the century, the Marines were separated from the Navy, attached to the Army as an independent force, and called the Colonial Army. The government realized recently that "colonial" has become a bad word, and in May 1958 we were given back our old name of "Marines", and the 9<sup>th</sup> R.I.C. [Régiment d'Infanterie Coloniale] became the 9<sup>th</sup> R.I.M. (Régiment d'Infanterie de Marine) (GALULA, 2006, p. 213).

In this sense, although the whole experience of Galula in Algeria merited longevity through the publication of his *memoirs*, the vocabulary mobilized in order to refer to the apparatus built through decades of French presence in Algeria was seen as needing to be updated to the "new times". In the context of the Cold War, Lacheroy's "revolutionary war" terminology

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<sup>166</sup> It is important to highlight, however, that, by the time the RAND symposium took place, Algeria was still a French colony in formal terms. Indeed, the Algerian independence was only declared in July 1962, three months after the event held by RAND.



offered an alternative. “Pacification”, on the other hand, was not only kept in the title of Galula’s *memoirs*: it was also preserved as a motto of counterinsurgency campaigns during the “revolutionary wars”. This indicates that the *savoir* developed in order to pacify resistance in colonies could be applied in other contexts, for even domestic dynamics fitted in the radical otherness upon which that *savoir* was based.

The second aspect that I would like to underline regarding the participants of the RAND symposium is that all of their experience has been somehow incorporated to military schools and research centers linked to defense policy making, through which “lessons learnt” and their expertise could be transmitted. To mention but a few cases, the British Lieutenant Colonel Frank E. Kitson taught at the British Army Staff College at Camberley and at the United States Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk (Virginia) in the 1950s and 1960s (HOSMER; CRANE, 2006, p. xx). His courses were based on his experience in Kenya with intelligence gathering by police forces, and in Malaya, with antiterrorist campaigns (HOSMER; CRANE, 2006, p. xx). As for Galula, he taught courses on unconventional warfare and on the war in Algeria in the National Defense Headquarters in Paris from 1958 to 1962 (GALULA, 2006, p. ix). After having attended the Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk (Virginia) for a six-month period, Galula (this time as Lieutenant Colonel) joined the Center of International Affairs at Harvard University as a research associate in 1962 (HOSMER; CRANE, 2006, p. xx).

Other French military officers who also taught in US military schools by that time – but who were not amongst the formal participants listed by RAND – include Lieutenant Colonel Roger Trinquier, a specialist in psychological warfare, who commanded a battalion in Indochina during the 1940s and another in Algeria in the 1950s; and General Paul Aussaresses, who in the 1950s worked with intelligence in Algeria under the command of General Jacques Massu. Hosted by the US Army Special Warfare School at Fort Bragg in the 1960s (PORCH, 2013, footnote No. 40, pp. 371-372), both Trinquier and Aussaresses are known for the systematic use of torture in the operations they were part of – which, logically, does not mean that torture was invented by them. Importantly, however, they

provided detailed accounts of the torture techniques used in their operations, as well as a regime of justification for such a use<sup>167</sup> – “a Cartesian rationale for the use of torture”, in the words of Bernard Fall in the Introduction to the 1985 English version of Trinquier’s *Modern Warfare*, translated by the US Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth (FALL, 1985, p. xv). In 1961, Aussaresses became France’s military *attaché* in Washington, while he was also instructor in counterinsurgency tactics at Fort Bragg (PORCH, 2013, p. 176). In the 1970s, he also instructed Brazilian and Chilean military officers on “subversive warfare” and counterinsurgency techniques (PORCH, 2013, p. 176).

That military schools quickly absorbed the experience of military officers in colonial wars during the 1960s is directly related to the United States engagement in Vietnam. Indeed, the relevance of such a “terrain” is undeniable for the re-articulation of the main pillars constituting the French counterinsurgency into a *savoir* proclaimed as a doctrine “made-in-USA” (SALOMONE, 2008; PORCH, 2013). As we have seen, such a re-articulation comprehended the asepsis of the theoretical edifice in order to remove the colonial vocabulary of a *savoir* significantly based on the French experience in Algeria and its re-reading into the terms of the so-called “revolutionary wars”. On the one hand, Galula’s systematization of his experience in Algeria into “lessons” and tactical guidelines is certainly an exponent of the trajectory of counterinsurgency by the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. On the other, although the crystallization of a *savoir* on counterinsurgency “made in USA” has certainly intensified in the 1960s, as the US forces engagement in Vietnam was deepened, the circulation of the French experience had already found resonance in the United States back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when Bugeaud’s experience in Algeria was taken as reference by the United States in the wars against the Indians, as mentioned above.

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<sup>167</sup> Trinquier, for instance, claims that is necessary that interrogations are “conducted by specialists perfectly versed in the techniques to be employed” (1985, p. 23), and then identifies a set of action-reaction sequences that may take place during an interrogation and what kind of information is expected to be delivered in such situations. Aussaresses, by its turn, narrates in rich details specific cases of torture and execution, under the basic logics that “Some prisoners started talking very easily. Others only needed some roughing up. It was only when a prisoner refused to talk or denied the obvious that torture was used. (...) They would therefore either talk quickly or never” (AUSSARESSES, 2010, p. 128).

The persistent claim of an inferior “nature” of the enemy was the condition allowing for “updated” versions of the colonial pillars of counterinsurgency from the 19<sup>th</sup> century – if not before<sup>168</sup> – to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and then to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Hence the preservation of the main tactical lines developed by Bugeaud under different names: not anymore the “colonial wars”, but the “revolutionary wars”; not anymore the French *regroupement*, but the “strategic hamlets”. The connection of the wars against the Indians and the war in Iraq, for instance, is made explicit in Bass’ account of a “strategy implementation seminar” on counterinsurgency he attended at the US Army War College, in Carlisle, where a Colonel reportedly declared that “We used to be real good at dealing with tribes. Back in the days of Manifest Destiny, we were geniuses at setting one group of Indians against another. This is what we need to do in Iraq. Get some Sunnis on our side, to block the crazy Shi’a” (BASS, 2008, p. 233).

In this sense, the 1962 RAND symposium must not be interpreted as a water-shed: rather, it can be read as a catalyzer of the rise of counterinsurgency as a *savoir* to a privileged position within the edifice of modern military warfare. Importantly, this was the result of a set of processes that did not only involve military officers, but also economists and other researchers both informed by and informing the US security agenda. Secondly, the increased relevance of counterinsurgency in the United States was, by its turn, stimulated and justified by the effervescence of guerrilla movements based on a combination of elements extracted from doctrines ranging from Mao to Guevara, amalgamated by French and US counterinsurgency theorists as “revolutionary wars”. Attached to an energetic anti-communist “National Security Doctrine”, this context was repeatedly evoked as the “conflict scenario of the future” (JARDINI, 2013,

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<sup>168</sup> According to Bass, the Carlisle Barracks were originally established in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century for the preparation of British and Provincial troops to fight against the Indians. By then, the motto of the Carlisle School was “Kill the Indian and save the man”. Closed only in 1918, the barracks served as the basis for the establishment of the US Army War College in Carlisle in 1973. Despite the change in the name, the maintenance of the infrastructure symbolizes an enduring component of that brutality. The declaration of the Colonel registered in Bass’ account (2008, p. 233), celebrating the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries as a time when the United States knew how to handle tribes militarily, suggests more than an abandoned fragment in the debris of the wars against the Indians: rather, it expresses a persistent claim of “racial inferiority” projected towards those against whom counterinsurgency is mobilized.

p. 136; PORCH, 2013, p. 173). Finally, as we have seen, the making of a *savoir* on counterinsurgency “made in USA” cannot be understood away from the close interactions French and British officers held with the US military officers since the 1950s. A crucial aspect in this regard was the institutionalization of these *savoirs* in military schools, which operated both as a condition for and an effect of the consolidation of counterinsurgency as a privileged military *savoir*.

It is particularly its incorporation into a set of schools, training programs and instruction manuals that interests us here. If that movement already existed by the 1950s – as the *Operations Against Guerrilla Forces* manual (1950) shows<sup>169</sup> –, counterinsurgency took the fore of military professionalization from the 1960s onwards. In this process, the “brutality” that was once evoked by conventional warfare strategists in order to refuse the status of “professional military” to “small warriors” faded away and was gradually covered with a so-called theoretical sophistication. To be sure, this did not imply the erasure of brutal practices such as the ones described above as part of the French colonial legacy. In the case of torture, for instance, this “sophistication” was used in order to present it as a set of “interrogation techniques” (CIA, 1963, p. 3) with its own theory (CIA, 1963, pp. 82-85), which included categories of “interrogatees”, situation-specific categories of coercion, and professionals that would join the military in the interrogation, such as the doctor, whose participation in the process aimed at turning the escalation of the pain of the “interrogatee” into an object of scientific observation. The first US manual on this kind of operation was produced in 1963 by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Titled *Kubark Counterintelligence Interrogation*, the manual used the terminology of “coercive counterintelligence interrogation of resistant sources” (1963, p. 52) instead of torture.

The web of US military schools built around counterinsurgency has contributed to the diffusion of this *savoir* far beyond the colonial circuit

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<sup>169</sup> This is considered as the first manual on counterinsurgency in the United States. Dated 1950, the manual does not even mention Latin America in the section about the main concerns of the United States regarding “guerrilla warfare” in the world. Instead, the manual highlights the states constituting the Soviet “zone of influence” and Asia (especially Philippines) as the core security concerns of the United States on this matter (THE US INFANTRY SCHOOL, 1950).

which characterized the circulation of the expertise on counterinsurgency by the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Decades later, in 2002, Amnesty International estimated that there were around 275 military schools and installations in the United States, and more than 4,100 courses offered through this institutional web, through which approximately 100,000 foreign police and military, from more than 150 countries, were trained per year (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2002, pp. iii-iv). In addition to the tens of thousands that were trained in these programs, many more received US training in their own states (AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, 2002, p. iii).

As we will see more attentively in the next section, this dense web of military schools in the United States came to be taken as the main reference in the circuit of *savoirs* on counterinsurgency – similarly to the position Prussia and France had to Latin America, for instance, in the professionalization on conventional warfare during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Schools such as the US Army War College and the US Army Special Warfare School were among the main hubs through which the *savoirs* on counterinsurgency were transmitted to military officers from other Latin American states. Part of this complex of military institutions, the School of the Americas (SoA) constituted the destination of many military officers in Latin America, particularly in the period stretching from the 1960s to the 1980s, during the military regimes in Latin America. In the Cold War context, the SoA mobilized counterinsurgency *savoirs* through a palette of courses focused on matters related to “national security” – irregular warfare, internal security, civil-military action, intelligence and counterintelligence and interrogation techniques. This web of military schools anchored on the “US military expertise” contributed to the gradual homogenization of military practices across Latin American states. As an illustration, from the 1960s to the 1980s, the interrogation practices taught in the SoA could be observed in different states in Latin America (ROUQUIÉ, 1984; GILL, 2004; LOVEMAN, 1999).

If 2-6 weeks is the average duration of courses offered to the major part of students circulating in the SoA, the “Command and General Staff Officer” (CGS), a year-long course taught to mid-level military officers seeking promotion to the Colonel rank, reveals an additional effect of the

School over the Latin American military forces. During this year, the students are allowed to take their families along, and a complementary program is invested in the routine of the family members, who had an “American military sponsor” as their host while the course lasts. Beyond the military *savoir* taught in the classroom, the CGS shows that the educational program of the SoA was more comprehensive: it involved instilling the values of American society, as well as with those of the “military institution”, in the families of the officers attending the CGS course (GILL, 2004, pp. 123-125). In her detailed account of the SoA, Gill quotes a retired Colombian General interviewed by her, according to whom: “I don’t believe that what the boys learn or don’t learn is particularly important. (...) The relations that they establish with others are at bottom the most important” (GILL, 2004, p. 110). It is noteworthy, in this sense, that the main effect expected to result from the CGS course is not to learn a given doctrine, but to expand and to consolidate the students’ networking.

In the discussion to follow, we will resume the social cut characterizing the professionalization of the military while discussing the Colombian interaction with the US military based on counterinsurgency *savoirs*. Here, our focus will be projected to the ramifications of such a circuit in Colombia, similarly to the analytical effort made on Section 4.3.

## **5.2. Professionalizing counterinsurgency in Colombia: training centers as the site of the “professional”**

The specialized literature on the professionalization of the military in Colombia associates what the authors consider to be a prominent role in “internal order” with the close articulation of Colombian and US military officers in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (ROUQUIÉ, 1984; PIZARRO L., 1987b; ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994; LEAL B., 2002; RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006; VARGAS V., 2014). Indeed, if *prusianización* (“prussianization”) was a metaphor used in order to illustrate the professionalization process which had Prussia as a reference and Chile as its “messenger” in Colombia, some of the authors in this literature use the term

*norteamericanización* (“Americanization”) (ROUQUIÉ, 1984, p. 153) to refer to the transference from Europe (Prussia, most notably) to the United States as the military to look up to for their professionalization projects.

Two aspects must be highlighted in this regard, however. Firstly, that the *prusianización* of the Colombian Army must not be interpreted as the juxtaposition of every rule, procedure, doctrine, curriculum and operation characterizing the Chilean military professional over the Colombian one. As we have discussed on Section 4.3, the political disputes in the “civil domain” served as either constraining or propelling effects to the professionalization project led by the Chilean mission in Colombia since the early 1900’s. This resulted in the reduction of the national budget reserved for the Colombian Armed Forces, or in the difficulty in having the military career regulation approved in the Colombian Congress that would constitute the basis for the reorganization of the Army undertaken by the Chilean mission. Another example can be found in the resistance of Colombian military officers in accepting the severity with which they were evaluated in the Military School by their Chilean counterparts, as well as the revision of the criteria through which their ranks were granted. Similarly, the *norteamericanización* of the Colombian Army did not mean the erasure of the Chilean footprints in the procedures and rules reproduced through the routines of military schools in Colombia. Nor does it mean that the close interaction with the US military faced no resistances regarding the incorporation of certain doctrinal aspects.

Rather, the characteristics of the Colombian military professional will be here interpreted as reflecting the historical sedimentations resulting from durable socializations with their counterparts and experiences in battle. It is in this sense that the Chilean mission, which led the professionalization of the Colombian Army for almost 30 years, is key for us to grasp how the specific understanding of the “military professional” has resonated in Colombia since the 1900’s. In this section, we will dissect the most remarkable features – and tensions – of the systematic interaction of the Colombian military with their counterparts in the US. Although the “Prussian traits” sedimented through the works of the Chilean military mission in Colombia have not been completely erased, we will see that the

center of gravity of the professionalization process was transferred from the Military School to the *Escuela de Lanceros*, the infantry specialization built in analogy to the US Rangers School. The latter is one of the effects of a robust web of institutions, including military schools, that was built by the US around the discourse of “hemispheric security” and “national security doctrine” following the II World War. In this sense, the creation of the *Escuela de Lanceros* was one of the materializations of a series of interactions that were already taking place since the 1940s. At the same time, the creation of that school was a condition allowing for a more intense circulation of US professionals in Colombia. All of these processes expressed the valorization of counterinsurgency as a military *savoir* that spoke more directly to the specificities of what the Colombian military considered as the main terrain of their operations.

Importantly, the objective of this section is not to explain why conventional war has lost its privileged position as a military *savoir* in the Colombian Army – or in the Americas. I am mostly interested in how the Colombian military officers themselves justified the importance of counterinsurgency to their “terrain” and how that *savoir* was operationally translated to the specificities of Colombia. Through the section, I want to explore the implications of this professionalization which had the US Army as its main reference both for the population (-centric approach) and the channels through which the rules on the use of violence are transmitted amongst the military personnel. One of the main challenges here is to understand how different are the concrete effects of the professionalization based on conventional wars from that one based on counterinsurgency in Colombia. In other words, if, as argued on Section 4.3, the Colombian Army was recurrently mobilized in order to repress union strikes and other social protests in the 1920s and 1930s, the mere mobilization of the military forces in operations of “internal order” cannot be claimed as the element distinguishing the *savoir* based on conventional wars from that of counterinsurgency.

In order to address those puzzles, it is relevant to turn our attention to the 1950s, for it was by this period that the incipient interaction with the US Army started to crystallize into assistance programs, instruction



materials, and training programs. A fruitful starting point for our discussion is the Korean War, presented by renowned military officers in Colombia, such as General Álvaro Valencia Tovar, as “a source of extraordinary experiences (...) which divides the modern history (of the army) in two eras: before Korea and after this experience, when the army was modernized and learned how to fight accordingly to modern concepts” (*Apud* PIZARRO L., 1987b). Although this statement can be challenged through many angles, what is important for our purposes is to understand how the Korean War was capitalized in the trajectory of the professionalization of the Army in Colombia, and what were the implications of that.

The Korean War (1950-1953) was the first experience in battle that the Colombian Army had with the US Military Forces. One would expect that this resulted from a consistent interaction involving military professionals from both states previously to the War. However, this was not the case: less than five months separated the Decree that officially created the “Colombia Battalion No. 1” (Decree No. 3927, December 26, 1950) from its deployment in Korea, on May 1951. The only direct assistance given by the US military forces in this context was focused in adapting the Battalion to how the troops were to be organized (RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 54).

Nevertheless, the Korean War was not a watershed in the relations of the military personnel of both states. Despite the absence of any systematic bilateral flow of Colombian and US military professionals, there had been punctual military visits of US Army officers in 1938, in addition to the active participation of Colombian military officers in the series of meetings which culminated in the creation of the Inter-American Military Junta. The “Colombia Battalion No. 1” was thus an expression of processes that were already taking place towards the inscription of Colombia in the hemispheric circuit of military professionals, which had the United States as its main reference. More specifically, the Korean War was mostly capitalized by the Colombian government and military officers as an opportunity for the intensification of the professionalization of the Army through “US lines” and for the provision of arms (ATEHORTÚA C., 2008). That Colombia had been the only Latin American country to support the US-led UN forces was

insistently mentioned by the Colombian government – mainly through the Ministry of War – in attempts to negotiate the provision of arms and equipment to the Military Forces<sup>170</sup> (ATEHORTÚA C., 2008, pp. 67-70). Facing difficulties in having its request attended, the Colombian government considered deserting the War by 1953, when the armed conflict in Korea was intensifying. In an internal official communication of this same year, the Lieutenant Colonel (*Teniente Coronel*) Alberto Ruiz Novoa, who commanded the Battalion, reported: “My personal opinion is that, if we are not receiving a tangible benefit and with a strong will for our participation in Korea, the Battalion must be withdrew”<sup>171</sup> (1953 *Apud* ATEHORTÚA C., 2008, p. 70).

The low priority given to the “Colombian Battalion No. 1” as a combat test for the Colombian Army can also be seen on the improvised recruitment in order to build the troop. As Atehortúa Cruz argues (2008, p. 66), at least 15 volunteers joined the Battalion right before it departed to Korea: although they were formally enlisted, many of them did not have any previous military instruction. Another group of the Battalion was selected amongst those who their superiors considered to be supportive to the Liberal Party in Colombia. According to his *Memoirs* of the Korean War, the Lieutenant Gabriel Puyana García received from his subordinate the report that the selection under that specific military jurisdiction had focused on “all of those who we believe are liberals or at least whose relatives support that party, and we are sure that no mistakes have been made”<sup>172</sup> (PUYANA G., 1993, p. 64 *Apud* ATEHORTÚA C., 2008, p. 66).

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<sup>170</sup> One year after the “Colombia Battalion No. 1” was sent to Korea, Roberto Urdaneta, then the Minister of War, discussed with the United States government the possibility that arms and equipment were provided to the Colombian Military Forces (ATEHORTÚA C., 2008, p. 67). Under the requirement that the US military aid needed a bilateral agreement of military assistance in order to do so, an exploratory commission, mostly formed by US military officers visited Colombia on January 1952. A few months later, the bilateral agreement was signed under the framework of the Military Assistance Program (MAP), through which the United States government provided military assistance to other states engaged in the fight against communism.

<sup>171</sup> In the original: “Mi opinión personal es que si no estamos recibiendo un beneficio tangible y con buena voluntad por nuestra participación en Corea, el Batallón debe retirarse”.

<sup>172</sup> In the original: “Se escogió a todos aquellos que creemos que son liberales o por lo menos que sus familiares son de este partido y estamos seguros de no habernos equivocado”.

Both the insistent request for arms and the party-cleansing undertaken within the Military Forces must be read within the context of *La Violencia* and of the military regime established as an attempt to “pacify” Colombia. As it has been already mentioned, *La Violencia* is referred to as a period of intense “political violence” in Colombia (PIZARRO L., 1987b; ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994), mostly revolving around the two main political parties, but with deep ramifications throughout the Colombian territory and across different social groups (PÉCAUT, 2010). Given that the Conservative Party controlled a significant part of the public armed forces with “political police” powers (or “high police”), the bulk of the armed resistance – mainly (but not exclusively) Liberal and Communist – emerged as guerrilla warfare (LEONGÓMEZ P., 1987b; PÉCAUT, 2010) in the end of the 1940s.

In one of his attempts to negotiate with the United States government the provision of arms, the Colombian Minister of War, José María Bernal, blamed the “communist *bandolerismo*” (“communist banditry”) for the internal instability and presented Colombia as a “democracy” threatened by “communism” (*El Tiempo*, 1952 *Apud* ATEHORTÚA C., 2008, p. 69). In a 1952 public conference in Bogota, Bernal claimed that:

Communism, the universal enemy, operates in the whole world with an unabated activity and through identical systems, but adjusting itself in each site to the particularities of the terrain and adopting the name which is more suitable for the achievement of its goals. In each country, it holds the flag of the opposition in order to sow chaos in every crisis. [En Colombia] at least apparently, communism widely operates under the flag of liberalism. And liberalism, consciously or not, serves the Soviet plans of internacional domination<sup>173</sup> (BERNAL, 1952, p. 15 *Apud* ATEHORTÚA C., 2008, p. 69).

In the excerpt above, opposition and liberalism are seen as different forms of communism and, thus, must also be considered as “the universal enemy”. By framing opposition as a radical otherness, this notion of “democracy”

<sup>173</sup> In the original: “El comunismo, enemigo universal, opera en todo el mundo con incesante actividad y con sistemas idénticos pero ajustándose en cada sitio a las peculiaridades propias del terreno y adoptando la denominación más adecuada para el logro de sus propósitos. Echa mano en cada país de la bandera de la oposición para sembrar el caos a todo trance. (En Colombia) al menos en las apariencias, el comunismo opera a sus anchas bajo la bandera del liberalismo. Y el liberalismo, consciente o inconscientemente, sirve los planes del dominio internacional soviético”.

expands the margins of what can be claimed as a threat and authorizes the use of violence to fight those threats.

Such a discourse allowed for three interwoven political effects. Firstly, it provided an alternative reading to the context of widespread repression in Colombia: it was presented as a struggle aimed at preserving “democracy”, thereby justifying the mobilization of violence, “political police” and military force. Secondly, it suggested that the “internal crisis” and the situation in Korea were symptoms of the same problem – communism, which adjusted “itself in each site to the particularities of the terrain”. In this sense, if the first US Army manual on counterinsurgency, dated 1950, did not mention any example of guerrilla warfare in Latin America (THE US INFANTRY SCHOOL, 1950), the discourse running through the Colombian government provided the US Army with such an example. More than that: it inscribed Colombia in the “fight against communism” that marked the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In this regard, the “Colombia Battalion No. 1” was framed as the international face of a combat that was also fought internally. Likewise, just as the United States portrayed the fight against communism as a war waged by the “free world” and “civilized world”, the Colombian participation in the Korean War was presented by the Presidency as a manifestation of the “defense of the Christian civilization”, aimed at avoiding that “inequity dominated the world”<sup>174</sup> (ATEHORTÚA C., 2008, p. 73). Read under these terms, the provision of arms to the Colombian government could be justified as a reasonable and necessary decision, for it would constitute an assistance to a partner in the hemisphere in the fight against communism.

Far from proposing alternative terms for the discourse above, the bilateral agreement signed in 1952 specifies the kind of assistance that the United States would provide to Colombia in order “to maintain peace in the Western hemisphere”. To be clear, the clause underlining Colombia’s commitment that the arms, equipment and training were to be used only for the ends the agreement was signed for (ATEHORTÚA C., 2008, p. 68) did

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<sup>174</sup> In the original: “defender la civilización Cristiana” and “evitar que la iniquidad domine la tierra”. These words were part of the speech proclaimed by Laureano Gómez as the “Colombia Battalion No. 1” departed to Korea.

not challenge the terms of the discourse advanced by the Colombian government. After all, maintaining “peace in the Western hemisphere” was an end that could be accommodated within the claim that the guerrilla war waged by the Liberal Party was no different from the guerrilla warfare characterizing communism in Korea, for instance.

Even before the United States Army provided arms and training in a more systematic way under such an agreement, General Rojas Pinilla, right in the beginning of his military government, in 1953, has ignited the creation of a set of mechanisms aimed at intensifying the repression against communism. Right in the beginning of his military government (1953-1957), General Rojas Pinilla established a commission with the task of studying the more efficient policies to be mobilized against every group or individual associated with communism (RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 41). Based upon the report delivered by the commission, in the following year, Rojas issued a decree through which the Communist Party was made illegal (Decree No. 0434). In addition to that, he created the National Anticommunist Center (*Centro Nacional Anticomunista*), a branch of the Colombian Presidency with ramifications throughout the national territory in charge of collecting information on so-called “communist activities” (RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 41). Importantly, by 1956, the Liberal Party was not anymore linked with the category “communism”, as it had been since the outbreak of *La Violencia*. The Benidorm Agreement, signed in that year, established the rules for a system of coexistence between the two main political parties in Colombia – the National Front (*Frente Nacional*)<sup>175</sup> – and cleared the ground for the association of “guerrilla warfare” with leftist armed groups, which came to be taken as the unequivocal basis for the counterinsurgency doctrine that would be developed in the following years. The latter has not precluded the preservation of unions and other social movements in the category of “insurgency”, however, as discussed on Chapter 3.

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<sup>175</sup> The Benidorm Agreement was signed by Laureano Gómez and Alberto Lleras Camargo, leaderships representing, respectively, the Conservative and the Liberal Parties. The *Frente Nacional* entered into force in 1958 and lasted until 1974.

The synchronization by the United States of its “anticommunism” discourse with the situation in Colombia only gained traction in the 1960s, after the Cuban Revolution. Nevertheless, the return of the “Colombia Battalion No.1” has been capitalized both by the Presidency<sup>176</sup> and the Military Forces as a remarkable contribution to the motivation of the troop, as well as as an experience in “modern warfare” that could trigger the technical and professional character of the Colombian Army (PIZARRO L., 1987b, p. 32; LEAL B., 2002, p. 20; RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006). As we will see, the high-ranked military officers that commanded the Battalion in Korea were not only the main vocalizers of such a narrative: they were also the ones who have led the translation of the “valuable contributions” of the experience in Korea into doctrinal and operational terms. The aspects discussed above related to the low strategic endeavor invested by military and political leaders in Colombia towards the Battalion selection process, training and equipping may produce a reaction of surprise when it comes to the enthusiasm regarding the contributions extracted from that experience in the battlefield<sup>177</sup>. As it has been also highlighted, however, the intersection

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<sup>176</sup> When the Battalion returned to Colombia, on November 1954, General Rojas Pinilla, who was by that time at the head of the Presidency in Colombia, claimed that “Only a few armies can count, as ours, with the invaluable lessons drawn from modern warfare and with the experience gained by the distinct fronts in which we have acted. All of this experience has an inestimable worth for national defense, given that the knowledge, technique and use of the new equipment constitute a repertoire that the Nation has as a reserve before the foreign contingents, as well as a security for its internal life. Repeat to your brothers the lesson learnt in Korea: organization of the troop, unified command, cooperation while in service, arms stretched to the comrade under the most acute torments, greatness of the soul when defeated, and serene rejoicing when victorious. Discipline, patient preparation, methodic training, loyalty, agile mobility towards the objective, without letting the spirit to be intimidated nor the muscle to be weakened” (ROJAS P., 1954, pp. 243-244 *Apud* RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 56). His speech is quite expressive of the point advanced above. As for how a very similar narrative was vocalized by the some of the Colombian military officers, we will develop a bit further this discussion in the next few pages. In the original: “Pocos ejércitos como el nuestro pueden contar con las invaluable enseñanzas de la guerra moderna y con la experiencia adquirida en los distintos frentes en que nos ha tocado actuar. Toda esta disciplina alcanzada en los campos de combate es de valor incalculable para la defensa nacional, pues los conocimientos, la técnica y el manejo de los nuevos equipos es un acervo que la Nación tiene como reserva ante los contingentes exteriores y una seguridad para su vida interior. Repetid a vuestros hermanos la lección aprendida en Corea: organización de las fuerzas, unidad de mando, cooperación en el servicio, brazos tendidos al camarada en las supremas angustias, grandeza de alma en la derrota y sereno regocijo en el triunfo. Disciplina, paciente preparación, entrenamiento metódico, lealtad, ágil movilización hacia el objetivo, sin que el espíritu se amilane ni el músculo flaquea”.

<sup>177</sup> On a side note, the precariousness characterizing the preparation and equipping of the Battalion was not a problem to the UN forces either. After the experience in Korea, Colombia participated in another military mission under the UN mandate. Under the Organization’s request, the Colombian Army created the “Colombia Battalion No. 2”, an

of the framing articulated about the internal context of violence with that about the situation in Korea provided the common ground for an “anticommunist” approach on both fronts, which, by its turn, allowed for an overweighted strategic approach – in the military appropriation of the term – to the “management of public order”.

As Leal Buitrago (2002) argues, the 1960s were marked by an intellectual effervescence both in terms of the function the military would perform in the “internal order” and of the doctrinal elements that would underlie this engagement. After more than five years of administrations led by military officers, the question on what to do with the military was one of the main concerns of Alberto Lleras Camargo’s Presidency, the first government within the system established by the *Frente Nacional*. To be clear, what had been considered by part of the elite of the political parties and the private sector as a solution during *La Violencia*, was now seen as a problem: namely, the “irruption of the armed forces as political actors in the national life” (PIZARRO L., 1987a, p. 28). In this sense, the terms into which this concern was translated at the opening of the *Frente Nacional* were very similar to those which had already been at play in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: how to confine the military in their own domain (the barracks) and away from “politics”. Lleras renowned 1958 speech expresses such terms with clarity:

All of your life has been dedicated to obey and, as a consequence, to know how to command, when the time is appropriate, but to command people who do not ponder over your orders, nor discuss them. This is an exercise radically different from the command within the civil life. (...) Politics is the art of controversies, by excellence. Militia, of discipline. (...) Keeping them [the Armed Forces] away from the public deliberation is not a whim of the Constitution, but a necessity of their function. If they engage in a deliberation, they do so with their arms. (...) This is the reason why the Armed Forces (...) must not deliberate in politics. Because they have been created by the whole nation, because the whole nation (...) has given them arms (...) with the mission of defending its common interests, (...) and all of this with a condition: that they do not invest all of their weight and force over innocent citizens in the name of others. (...) I do not want the Armed Forces, instead of the people, to decide on how the nation must be governed, but I do not want, in any way, that the politicians decide how they must manage the Armed Forces,

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infantry military formation sent to the Suez Canal in 1956. For more information on these Battalions, see Rodríguez Hernández (2006, p. 57, p. 59)

as regards their technical function, their discipline, their regulations, their personnel (LLERAS C., no date, pp. 211-214 *Apud* LEAL B., 2002, p. 38)<sup>178</sup>.

The boundary drawn between the “civil domain” and the “military domain” reproduces the constitutive elements of the discourse of civilization analyzed on Chapter 4. The use of arms is considered as foreign to politics, according to the formulation advanced by Lleras – later known as the “Lleras doctrine” (*doctrina Lleras*). Divergences, controversies, arguments, opposition and agreement are presented as the remarkable dynamics of the “civil domain”: in such a discourse, social relations are not anymore regulated by violence within the “civil domain” – the “pacified space”. Arms are to be used not in the defense of a specific party or social group, but in the defense of the “common interests” of the “whole nation”. Just as the professionalization of the Armed Forces was claimed as a necessary condition for Colombia to become a modern state in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the same confinement of the military in its own professional domain was, in 1958, claimed as a necessary condition for the civilized exercise of politics.

In light of what has been argued on Chapter 4, the concrete effects of such a claim never implied the confinement of the military exclusively to interstate wars or to the surveillance of the national frontiers, nor the confinement of discipline in the barracks. As we have seen, the military were recurrently mobilized in the repression of strikes and other public demonstrations since the 1920s. Moreover, the discipline nurtured inside the barracks had a pacification effect in two main senses: at the same time it

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<sup>178</sup> In the original: “Toda la vida de ustedes ha estado dedicada a aprender a obedecer y, como consecuencia, a saber mandar, cuando les llegue su tiempo, pero a mandar personas que no deliberan sobre sus órdenes ni las discuten. Es un ejercicio radicalmente distinto del mando en la vida civil. (...) La política es el arte de la controversias, por excelencia. La milicia, el de la disciplina. (...) El mantenerlas [las Fuerzas Armadas] apartadas de la deliberación pública no es un capricho de la Constitución, sino una necesidad de su función. Si entran a deliberar entran armadas. (...) Por eso las Fuerzas Armadas (...) no deben ser deliberantes en política. Porque han sido creadas por toda la nación, porque la nación entera (...) les ha dado las armas (...) con el encargo de defender sus intereses comunes, (...) y todo ello con una condición : la de que no entren con todo su peso y su fuerza a caer sobre unos ciudadanos inocentes, por cuenta de los otros. (...) Yo no quiero que las Fuerzas Armadas decidan cómo se debe gobernar a la nación, en vez de que lo decida el pueblo, pero no quiero, en manera alguna, que los políticos decidan cómo se debe manejar las Fuerzas Armadas, en su función técnica, en su disciplina, en sus reglamentos, en su personal”.



produced soldiers expected to reflect what the “ideal Colombian” was supposed to be – disciplined, obedient, and docile –, it projected such discipline to the social body through the operations undertaken by the military in order to repress “socially unacceptable behaviors”. In addition to that, the military workforce was used in infrastructure projects that were discursively mobilized as the building of Colombia as a nation by administrations led by “civil” political leaders. Finally, the high-ranked military enjoyed a privileged position amongst specific circles in the “civil domain”, eventually even taking leading positions in civil offices such as the Ministry of War. Contrastingly, the low-ranked military were those who effectively did not deliberate in politics. In this sense, what the “whole nation”, “the people”, “innocent people” and “controversy” stand for does not rely specifically on a boundary between two different sites or institutions– the civil offices and the barrack – but to a boundary drawn between what is socially deplorable and what is socially acceptable within the road to democracy the *Frente Nacional* was claiming to perform.

In order to understand the concrete effects of the discourse of civil-military relations expressed through the “Lleras doctrine”, we must resist the terms of mutual non-interference as they are explicitly presented in the excerpt of Lleras’ speech. Rather, it seems that exploring how each of these “domains” enable and constrain the other, as well as what *savoirs* are circulated across these “domains”, offer us important hints on what are the practices authorized by the relation of the “civil” with the “military”. It is with this in mind that I suggest we look at the dynamism with which the military officers have engaged with the development of a doctrine that could inform anticommunist operations in Colombia.

According to Leal Buitrago (2002), in his analysis of the period stretching from 1958 to 1990, the autonomy of the Army resulting from the *Frente Nacional* has coexisted with the absence of a military state policy: “Once the scarce and modest existing political guidelines on the role of the military in society were not revised nor updated, the high-ranked military

officers took the task of designing it in an improvised fashion”<sup>179</sup> (LEAL B., 2002, p. 39). Two elements are noteworthy here: that Leal Buitrago considers that the “autonomy” of the military was a case of “negligence” on the part of the civil governments; and that there is a relation of causality between this “negligence” and the deepening of the military engagement with national security operations in Colombia – “national security without military state policy”<sup>180</sup>, in his own words (LEAL B., 2002, p. 35). Instead, as I have suggested above, I read the regulatory silence Leal Buitrago is referring to as a consent of the civil government that the military developed the knowledge and skills required to the management of internal order. An evidence of this can be found in the fact that the *Frente Nacional* nominated a military high-ranked officer for the position of Minister of War (which was only renamed Ministry of Defense in 1965), thereby allowing for the alignment of barracks, Chief of Staff, head of the Military Forces and Ministry of War.

The military officers who had returned from the Korean War actively participated in the development of counterinsurgency operations in the Colombian Army in the 1960s. Amongst them, General Alberto Ruiz Novoa is key for us to understand how the experience in Korea was translated into “lessons” for “technical” improvements in the Army, as well as how the processes triggered by those officers relied on the assistance provided by the US Army and resulted in tensions between the boundary drawn between the “civil” and the “military” domains. Having commanded the “Colombia Battalion No. 1” from July 1952 to June 1953, General Ruiz Novoa has registered what he considered as the main contributions from the “Colombia Battalion No. 1” experience in three different books<sup>181</sup>.

In the tactical level, the aspects highlighted by General Ruiz Novoa derive from guerrilla warfare, as in the relevance he attributes to the role of infantry, to the small-units patrol and to the training infantry soldiers not

<sup>179</sup> In the original: “Al no revisarse y actualizarse las escasas y tímidas directrices políticas del papel militar en la sociedad, los altos mandos castrenses asumieron su diseño en forma improvisada”.

<sup>180</sup> In the original: “Seguridad nacional sin política militar de Estado”.

<sup>181</sup> These works were titled: *El Batallón Colombia en Korea: 1951-1954* (published in 1956); *Enseñanzas militares de la campaña de Corea aplicables al Ejército de Colombia* (1956); and *El Gran Desafío* (1965).

only for body-combat, but also for long-distances marching, instead of counting with motor vehicles for that purpose (RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 64). For this kind of operation, he considered the portable weapons to be more appropriate, such as bazookas, assault rifles and mortars. The aspects emphasized by General Ruiz Novoa pointed to the need of replacing the heavier and costlier non-portable artillery used in campaigns designed in accordance with conventional warfare standards, like cannons, howitzers, and war tanks (RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 65).

On the one hand, the lessons underlined above implied the gradual fade-out of the Chilean footprint in the professionalization of the Colombian Army. On the other, General Ruiz Novoa more explicitly pointed to the usefulness of military transportation helicopters and communication equipment that could be provided by the United States. One of the main contributions Colombia could gain from a closer interaction with the US Army was specifically related to psychological operations, according to General Ruiz Novoa: he argued that the use of propaganda, rumors and information campaigns could be useful in the de-moralization of communist guerrillas – as it had been the case in Korea (RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, pp. 65-66).

In this sense, although the Korean War was fought by a combination of conventional and irregular warfare, the lessons singled out by General Ruiz Novoa in his narrative on the experience of “Colombia Battalion No. 1” only emphasize the elements characterizing the latter. More than that, his narrative offered the basis for the justification of the position of the US Army as a reference on professionalization that was more attuned to the “problem of communism” facing Colombia. It is noteworthy, however, that the terms of General Ruiz Novoa’s analysis define its own limits: to be clear, his claim that the Colombian arsenal was not the most appropriate for the fight against communism implied an extra weight on Colombia’s reliance on the United States for the provision of arms. As the General argues, “we, in the Colombian Army, cannot and must not aspire to the comfortable conditions we enjoyed in Korea (...) [for] although they are

delightful, they are unnecessarily costly”<sup>182</sup> (RUIZ N., 1956, pp. 290-291 *Apud* RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 63). In other words, the particularities of the Colombian Army (here included a reduced availability of economic resources), as well as the traces left in the latter by the Chilean missions, resulted in a force of resistance as regards the transformation of both the repertoire of weapons at the Army’s disposal and the *savoirs* mobilized through the military schools and training centers. At the same time these conditions had a constraining effect over the claims that were being advanced by a group of military officers in Colombia by that time, they were also an opportunity.

And General Ruiz Novoa’s trajectory is crucial to this process of transforming a constraint into an opportunity – as well as to the exposure of the limits of such process. He is known for having conceived the main lines that came to constitute “Plan Lazo”, a set of military operations launched in 1962, when Novoa was the Minister of War. With the objective of “pacifying” Colombia, the rationale of the Plan was based on the argument that violence had social and economic roots (LEAL B., 2002, p. 43). In a speech published in 1964 in *Revista de las Fuerzas Armadas*, Novoa addressed the connection between the military and development as follows:

As there has been astonishment towards the fact that the Minister of War copes with such issues, I have to explain the reasons why: (...) it is evident that social and economic injustices lead to the generation of violence as much as *bandolerismo* emerged as an effect of the political violence, and that this situation of unbalance significantly affects public order, whose preservation is the responsibility of the Minister of War<sup>183</sup> (RUIZ N., 1964, p. 240).

Here, the Minister explains violence in Colombia as an effect of poverty (logics which is still recurrent in our days), instead of the contrary – poverty

<sup>182</sup> In the original: “nosotros, en el Ejército de Colombia no podemos ni debemos aspirar a las comodidades de que gozamos en Corea; en este sentido debemos tender a asimilar la organización de los servicios, pero que no nos parece conveniente dar al soldado una serie de comodidades que si muy agradables son innecesariamente costosas”.

<sup>183</sup> In the original: “Como se ha mostrado cierta extrañeza porque el Ministro de Guerra trate estos temas, debo explicar las razones: (...) es evidente que las injusticias sociales y económicas son tan generadoras de violencia como el bandolerismo aparecido como secuela de la violencia política y que esta situación de desequilibrio incide fundamentalmente sobre el orden público cuyo mantenimiento, corresponde al Ministro de Guerra”.

itself as a result of the violence of a capitalist mode of production that leads to social inequality, for instance. According to him, social and economic underdevelopment meant insecurity, hence an issue that had to be tackled by the military. Particularly, “the philosophy of the Plan was ‘to remove the water from the fish’, that is, to remove the peasant’s support to the guerrilla”<sup>184</sup> (RUIZ N., 1992 *Apud* LEAL B., 2002, p. 44) through a set of social and economic policies that would be added to the intervention by military combat. At the core of such “philosophy” was what Novoa called the “civil-military action” (*acción cívico-militar*), a comprehensive engagement of both “civil” and “military” institutions focused on reaching the state action to the less privileged classes, especially the Colombian peasants (RUIZ N., 1964, p. 247).

In practice, civil-military action often involved the distribution of pamphlets containing information on the mission of the Colombian Army, in addition to very punctual services offered by the military in small villages, such as shoes repair and tooth extraction. Under the argument that this was not a task for the Army, a group of Generals resisted to incorporate civil-military action initiatives in the operations within their respective jurisdictions (LEAL B., 2002, pp. 44). Furthermore, it is important to highlight that the provision of those services coexisted with armed confrontations and with psychological “techniques”, such as infiltration and torture, aimed at obtaining information on the insurgents. Novoa’s account of one of the main operations held under Plan Lazo is revealing in this regard:

The operation Marquetalia resulted in the extinction of the “independent republic”. This was achieved with the support of operations of the psychological kind. We were helped by former liberal *guerrilleros*, such as “Peligro” [codename meaning “Danger”, in Spanish]. We entered Marquetalia without the peasants having to be evacuated. On December 1965, the last operation in El Pato and Guayabero was undertaken<sup>185</sup> (RUIZ N., 1992, *Apud* LEAL B., 2002, p. 44)

<sup>184</sup> In the original: “La filosofía del Plan era ‘quitarle el agua al pez’, o sea, quitarle el apoyo campesino a la guerrilla”.

<sup>185</sup> In the original: “Con la operación Marquetalia desapareció la ‘república independiente’. Se hizo con el apoyo de operaciones de tipo psicológico. Nos ayudaron antiguos guerrilleros liberales como ‘Peligro’. A Marquetalia entramos sin que salieron los campesinos. En diciembre de 1965 se gestó la última operación en El Pato y Guayabero”.

Marquetalia was the region where the “independent republic” was founded by a group of peasants who had fought as Liberal guerrillas during *La Violencia* and who, after the arrangement made by the two political parties in Benidorm, in 1956, were combatted as “communist guerrillas”. Interestingly, the operation in Marquetalia is a central event in the narrative constructed by the FARC about its foundation (ARENAS, 1966; MARULANDA V., 1973). However, it seems plausible to argue that General Ruiz Novoa’s silence on the persistence – or even the intensification – of the armed resistance following that operation is key for the Plan Lazo to be claimed as a success. Additional questions could be raised towards the statement that the operation was undertaken “without the peasants having to be evacuated”. The image of a surgical military intervention does not find resonance in other accounts of Plan Lazo, which portray the operation as an excessively violent one. Finally, in the excerpt above, the “hearts and minds” approach characterizing the psychological operations is particularly evident in the use of former Liberal *guerrilleros* as a source of intelligence for the military operation.

In light of the elements raised above, it is surprising that Novoa is considered as one of the first *desarrollistas* (“developmentalists”) amongst the Colombian military officers (LEAL B., 2002, p. 45; RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 61). After all, if that label is based on his alleged emphasis on addressing the social and economic roots of communism, those aspects are absent in his account of one of the main operations of Plan Lazo. Nevertheless, for us to understand what is at stake in this perspective of bringing development to the design of military operations, it is necessary to identify what were the main frictions regarding *desarrollismo*. As it has been mentioned, a group of Generals resisted the incorporation of initiatives that they did not consider as characteristic of the military work. This resistance had already been manifested: in an interview, Novoa reported that Plan Lazo was actually developed while he held the Command of the Army and, when he submitted it to the Chief of the Colombian Armed Forces, the Plan was outright rejected (RUIZ N., 2002, p. 44). After the operation in Marquetalia, in a speech addressed to the Colombian Society of Farmers (Sociedad de Agricultores de Colombia), Novoa argued that a structural

land reform was necessary so that violence was minimized (RUIZ N., 1964). According to General Ruiz Novoa, that speech costed his departure of the Ministry of War and of the Army (RUIZ N., 1992 *Apud* LEAL B., 2002, p. 44).

The promotion of Novoa to the Ministry of War, allowing him to advance Plan Lazo even after it had been previously rejected by the General Command of the Armed Forces, suggests that the Plan was aligned to another set of relevant processes. If the defense of land reform can be considered as one of the reasons for Novoa's removal from the Army, then it was not *any* kind of development policy that was suitable to the *desarrollismo*. However, the general ideas of development mobilized through Plan Lazo were in line with the "Alliance for Progress" and the "strategic revolution" that marked the debates on warfare in the United States in the 1960s (RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 61).

Plan Lazo is actually the first concrete experience in combat resulting from a more systematic interaction between Colombian and US military officers. Before that, the United States had only sent a military mission in 1939<sup>186</sup>, and military officers of both states often met in the Inter-American Defense Board meetings, held since the institution was created, in 1942. The "Colombia Battalion No. 1", as we have seen, was far from a well-trained and well-equipped military unit. Contrastingly, the forces participating in the operations constituting the Plan Lazo had been trained on irregular warfare in the Lancers' School (*Escuela de Lanceros*), established in 1955 as a specialized unit of infantry. Months before the foundation of the School, a commission formed by five Colombian high-ranked military officers visited the facilities at Fort Benning (Georgia) in order to attend the "Ranger Course" (LEAL B., 2002, p. 44; RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 77). The rangers had been formalized as a specific department within the US Army Infantry School in 1951, and their skills in infiltration,

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<sup>186</sup> The material on the effects of that US mission is scarce. According to a campaign manual on war in the jungle (*La Guerra en la Selva, Manual de campaña*) published in 1944 by the Colombian Military Forces General Staff, the content was "translated and adapted by the Military Mission from the United States (ESTADO MAYOR GENERAL DE LAS FUERZAS MILITARES, 1944, p. 3). However, Rodríguez Hernández (2006, p. 47) claims that the US military mission was focused on Naval and Air Forces and that it did not involve the Colombian Army.

sabotage and body-combat were mobilized during the Korean War. The rangers are agile and flexible small-unit soldiers engaged in irregular warfare, whose formation corresponded to short-term courses, based on counter-guerrilla doctrine for jungle and urban terrains, instruction on how to perform ambush and infiltration in addition to a set of exercises focused on physical preparation and resistance (RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 77). With the assistance of US Army's Captain Ralph Puckett, the Lancers' School was built as a mirror of the Rangers School in terms of training and military procedures.

In an article published in 1959 with Captain John Galván in the official review of the US Army Infantry School (*Infantry Review*) and then in the Colombian *Revista Militar*, Captain Puckett claimed that the Colombian Army interest on the "Ranger Course" derived from the massive presence of guerrillas and *bandoleros* in specific regions:

These irregular groups have been, for a long time, a continuous threat to the peace and security of the Colombian people; experts on the paths in the mountains and jungle, they are very difficult to find and defeat, and the Army has not been so successful in dominating them. To overcome this difficulty, it was necessary to advance a specific training in this special kind of operation, and since small units were used to combat the anti-socials, the solution was evident: selected officers and non-commissioned officers had to be trained in order to fight the enemy in his own terrain and with the same methods. The Lancers' School took this mission and did it very well (PUCKETT; GALVÁN, 1959, p. 94 *Apud* RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 78)<sup>187</sup>.

As the excerpt above shows, the creation of the Lancers' School was considered as a concrete response to a security necessity, for it offered not only the agile mobility such an irregular warfare required, but also a specialized *savoir* on the terrains the guerrillas and *bandoleros* were experts on: the mountain and the forest. Indeed, the *lanceros* as a specialized

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<sup>187</sup> In the original: "Estas bandas irregulares han sido desde hace mucho tiempo una continua amenaza para la paz y seguridad del pueblo colombiano; expertas conocedoras de los caminos en la montaña y la selva, son muy difíciles de descubrir y vencer, y el Ejército ha tenido muy poco éxito en su misión de dominarlas. Para obviar esta dificultad, fue lógicamente necesario adelantar un entrenamiento específico en este tipo especial de operaciones, y desde que pequeñas unidades se emplearon para combatir a los antisociales la solución fue evidente: oficiales y suboficiales seleccionados debieron ser entrenados para combatir al enemigo en su propio terreno y usando sus mismos métodos. La Escuela de Lanceros llevó a cabo esta misión y lo hizo muy bien".



department in the infantry is but one manifestation of a more generalized trend of specialized ramifications within each of the most traditional military forces. This process will be further deepened by the end of the 1990s in Colombia “as a response” to the escalation of the conflict, with the creation of Mountain and River Battalions (VARGAS V., 2014, p. 140). Importantly, the whole training provided by the Lancers’ School is claimed to be based on previous study on where and how the “anti-socials” fight. According to a campaign manual dated 1944, translated and adapted by the US military mission to the Colombian Military Forces, “In the war in the jungle, the soldier fights two different enemies: man and nature. Amongst these two, nature is often the most impressive one”<sup>188</sup> (ESTADO MAYOR GENERAL DE LAS FUERZAS MILITARES, 1944, p. 5).

In order to make the soldiers more familiar to the hostile conditions of the jungle, the manual instructs troops to count on local guides, “carefully selected, [and] whose loyalty and integrity are undisputable”<sup>189</sup> (ESTADO MAYOR GENERAL DE LAS FUERZAS MILITARES, 1944, p. 50). The “native population”, in the words of the manual, is both necessary for the military to feel safer in a terrain they are not familiar with, and suspect, for they may be the enemy infiltrated in the troop. It is by means of a more sophisticated selection process, as well as of constant surveillance over the selected “natives” that the risk of infiltration can be minimized. The manual argues that the work of instructing the native troop is compensated by the benefits gained with their knowledge of the local inhabitants and language: “The use of organized native troops (...) will not only help to dissipate any objection to the presence of our troops, but also strengthen the solidarity against a common enemy”<sup>190</sup> (ESTADO MAYOR GENERAL DE LAS FUERZAS MILITARES, 1944, p. 51). The population is portrayed as either

<sup>188</sup> In the original: “En la guerra en la selva el soldado combate contra dos enemigos: el hombre y la naturaleza. De estos dos, la naturaleza es con frecuencia el enemigo más formidable”.

<sup>189</sup> In the original: “guías cuidadosamente seleccionados, cuya lealtad e integridad sean indiscutibles”.

<sup>190</sup> In the original: “La familiaridad de estas tropas con el terreno y su conocimiento de los habitantes y del idioma compensarán ampliamente el trabajo de instruirlos. El empleo de tropas nativas organizadas y controladas por el comandante de la fuerza expedicionaria. No solamente ayudará a disipar cualquier objeción a la presencia de nuestras tropas sino que fortalecerá la solidaridad contra un enemigo común”.

the enemy to be defeated or an asset to be explored so that the operation succeeds – constituting a source of knowledge on the terrain and language which are foreign to the non-“native”, as well as a source of intelligence and legitimacy.

With the assistance of the US military mission, the Lancers' School dedicated a significant part of its training program to the familiarization of the soldiers with the hostile environmental conditions of the jungle. More specifically, its main course comprised a twelve-week instruction, structured into four phases. In the first one, which lasted for six weeks, the objective was to prepare the soldier physically, through military gymnastics, fencing with bayonet, personal defense, swimming, and survival. During this period, the soldier was also taught on intelligence and tactics, as well as on how to read aerial-photographic maps, to work with explosives, and to lead. The second phase (two weeks and a half) corresponded to patrolling in a flat, jungle terrain, where the soldiers were given eight different counter-guerrilla missions. During the two weeks constituting the third phase, the soldiers patrolled in mountainous terrains and participated in technical and tactical exercises on how to prepare and protect from an ambush<sup>191</sup>. Moreover, in this part of the course, the soldiers engaged in combat simulations, with a mission, a target, and a weapon, and were trained on how to jump on the river with their equipment and uniform. In the final week of the Lancers' Course, the soldier was submitted to several tests on command, patrol and physical resistance (RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 80).

The program was eligible for subaltern military officers – that is, Captain (*Capitán*), Lieutenant (*Teniente*), and Second Lieutenant (*Subteniente*) –, non-commissioned officers (*suboficiales*) – from Sergeant Major (*Sargento Mayor*) to Third Corporal (*Cabo Tercero*) –, to soldiers (RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 79). As for the commanders of those small-units, 200 military officers graduated in 1959, ranked as follows: 3 Mayors (*Mayor*), 1 Captains, 102 Lieutenants, and 6 Second Lieutenants

<sup>191</sup> The physical preparation and familiarization of the soldiers with locations commonly associated with the guerrillas – jungle and mountains – was so central to the Lancers' Course that the School's headquarters were established in Nilo, in the Cundinamarca department, a region whose geography was characterized by abrupt variations in both vegetation and altitude.

(RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 81) – that is, all of them subaltern officers. The first groups graduated in the Lancers' School were attached to the brigades operating in regions considered to be “infested with guerrillas”, in the words of the Colombian captains who published an article in the *Revista Militar*, the Colombian official military review, in 1960 (VÁSQUEZ; NEGRET V., 1960, pp. 60 *Apud* RODRÍGUEZ H., 2006, p. 81). The 1960 *memoirs* of the Minister of War by then, Rafael Hernández Pardo (1959-1960), celebrated the efficiency of the *lanceros* in controlling “subversion” *foci* in those regions. A few years later, this infantry specialization already constituted the backbone of Plan Lazo, implemented in 1962.

In addition to the US mission that assisted the Colombian Army in the creation and implementation of the Lancers' School training program, a group of military officers from the US Army Special Warfare School at Fort Bragg (North Carolina) visited Colombia in 1962 in order to participate in the design of Plan Lazo (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 1996, n.p.). It was by the same period that the US Army Special Warfare School hosted Lieutenant Colonel Roger Trinquier and General Paul Aussaresses – French military officers whose “acknowledged expertise” on psychological warfare and counterinsurgency tactics derived from their experience on Algeria. Although this does not imply that Trinquier and Aussaresses's expertise was flowing directly to Colombia, it does point to the areas of expertise that were valorized in the US Army Special Warfare School by that time. And it was to that particular military School that Colombia was turning its attention when rearticulating the professionalization of its military personnel in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

It is not surprising, in this sense, that the US military mission visiting Colombia on February 1962 emphasized the areas of counterinsurgency and intelligence (which was at the core of the so-called “psychological operations”). Led by General William P. Yarborough<sup>192</sup>, Commander of the

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<sup>192</sup> General William P. Yarborough commanded the US Army Special Warfare Center – later named JFK School – at Fort Bragg (North Carolina) from 1961 to 1965. During this period, General Yarborough reviewed training and doctrine, as well as expanded the special warfare program, creating additional groups and courses, such as “Unconventional Warfare Course” and “Counter-Terrorism Course”. He is also known as “the father of the Green Berets”, for he advanced the idea that the Special Forces needed a symbol or an object that could distinguish them from the other US military forces. Finally, it is worth mentioning

US Army Special Warfare School by then, the mission recommended the creation of a “civil defense” force that would give direct support to the military troops. According to a supplement to his report presented to the Chief of Staff, General Yarborough argued that a

concerted country team effort should be made now to select civilian and military personnel for clandestine training in resistance operations in case they are needed later. This should be done with a view toward development of a civil and military structure for exploitation in the event the Colombian internal security system deteriorates further. This structure should be used to pressure toward reforms known to be needed, perform counter-agent and counter-propaganda functions and as necessary execute paramilitary, sabotage and/or terrorist activities against known communist proponents. It should be backed by the United States (YARBOROUGH, 1962 *Apud* McCLINTOCK, 1992, Chapter 9).

The articulation of the Colombian Army with self-defense groups for strategic purposes is, according to a Human Rights Watch report (1996), part of a more generalized US Cold War strategy: to train “civilian irregulars” was considered as “most effective when they included army reservists, retired officers predisposed to a fierce anticommunism, and men familiar with local residents, customs, and terrain” (1996, section II). Throughout the decades of the armed conflict, the Colombian Army has often made an instrumental use of the “self-defense groups” – or, as in one of the cases reported by journalist Ronderos, “anti-subversive armed groups” (2014, p. 35). For instance, these groups kept an armed presence in specific regions after the Colombian Army defeated guerrillas, served as “security personnel” to land owners and, in many occasions, also engaged in massacres (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, 1996; GUZMÁN B.; MORENO Q., 2007; RONDEROS, 2014). Particularly, the Army provided intelligence and logistical support to such groups in the form of guides and “leaked” lists of those considered as suspects of being members of the FARC (HUMAN

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that General Yarborough has directly contributed to intelligence operations against black protests in Detroit and Newark in 1967. Named “Continental United States Intelligence” (Conus Intel), this federal operation aimed at monitoring members of groups considered as “subversive”. Years later, a federal investigation about Conus Intel revealed that thousands of civilians had been inserted into a computer system, and categorized according to their “potential for causing trouble”. For more information, see Bernstein (2005).

RIGHTS WATCH, 1996, section III). Such a use of illegality<sup>193</sup> with a strategic purpose drew from practices of the German and Japanese Armies during the World War II and was replicated by the United States in Philippines, Korea, and Vietnam, and by the British in Malaya – to mention but a few cases (McCLINTOCK, 1992).

Another effect of the 1962 US mission to Colombia was the selection of a group of military officers to attend an intelligence course – one of Yarborough’s main expertise – at Fort Holabird<sup>194</sup> (Maryland). Amongst the selected officers was Lieutenant Colonel (*Teniente Coronel*) Ricardo Charry Solano<sup>195</sup>, currently known as “the artificer of military intelligence in Colombia”. By the time he was sent to the United States, he was teaching irregular warfare in the Superior School of War (*Escuela Superior de Guerra*)<sup>196</sup>. Ranked Colonel (*Coronel*) upon his return from the United States, Solano articulated the first intelligence networks of the Colombian Army and organized, with the other officers who had visited Fort Holabird, the first “Intelligence and Counterintelligence Course to Military Officers” and “Intelligence Course for Sub-Officers” in 1963. In the same line, the Command of the Army created the Intelligence and Counterintelligence Battalion (BINCI, in Spanish)<sup>197</sup> in 1964 (Resolution

<sup>193</sup> As mentioned on Section 3.2, it is important to highlight that this relation with illegality is not an invention of the United States, nor an exclusive feature of Colombia, nor a specific trait of the Cold War. Moreover, in the case of Colombia, the sequence of armed confrontations characterizing the trajectory of Colombia since independence resulted in the proliferation of arms and in its use for “self-defense” purposes long before the creation of “organized self-defense groups” was stimulated as a military strategy. Finally, as the armed conflict gained complexity with the emergence of various guerrillas and paramilitary groups, some of the latter oscillated between partners and enemies of the Armed Forces in combat. In other words, the Colombian Armed Forces did not have full control of such groups – as it has been also remarked on Section 3.2.

<sup>194</sup> The US Army Intelligence School and Counter-Intelligence Records Facility operated at Fort Holabird until 1971, when they were both transferred to Fort Huachuca (Arizona). Both the US Army Intelligence Center and the 111<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Brigade, based on Fort Huachuca, conduct training programs on human intelligence (for instance, interrogation and counterintelligence) and imagery intelligence, amongst other courses.

<sup>195</sup> See: <http://www.esici.edu.co/?idcategoria=217198>. Access on: February 15, 2017.

<sup>196</sup> Before taking that position, he had already commanded the Artillery Battalion No. 6 “Tenerife”, where the instruction on counterinsurgency tactics was mobilized in the fight against the so-called “independent republics”. For more information, see: <http://www.esici.edu.co/?idcategoria=217198>. Access on: February 15, 2017.

<sup>197</sup> As it is common amongst the military, battalions and schools are baptized in honor of “great deeds” – for instance, a specific battle or an officer (more often than a soldier). Following this logic, the BINCI was named “Intelligence and Counterintelligence Battalion School Brigadier General Ricardo Charry Solano” (*Batallón Escuela de Inteligencia y Contrainteligencia Brigadier General Ricardo Charry Solano*).

No. 20/1964), whose facilities were based in the Military School (*Escuela Militar*).

The creation of the BINCI not only formalized the entanglement between intelligence and irregular warfare in the operational level: the so-called “anti-subversive armed groups” figured as a recurrent component of the operations designed within the BINCI. According to a 1979 report from the US Embassy in Bogota<sup>198</sup>, the BINCI created the American Anti-Communist Alliance (known as “Triple A”) in 1979 as a branch of the Battalion (UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE, 1979) to which missions such as exploding “apparatuses” which were considered as strategic to the enemy, as well as torturing and assassinating members of “leftist-groups” in Colombia were assigned<sup>199</sup> (EL DÍA, 1980; CINEP, 2004; EVANS, 2007). The disclosure of the Embassy report was considered as an evidence that Colombian high-ranked officers were not only aware but commanded “para-terrorist operations”<sup>200</sup> (EVANS, 2007) – words which, by their turn, reveal that the meanings attached to “terrorism” do not (or must not) conceive the possibility that the state may be the perpetrator of acts labelled as such.

All the elements mobilized above express three aspects that I consider noteworthy for the purposes of this analysis: the circulation of military *savoirs* in the hemispheric circuit; the social cuts conditioning the circulation of those *savoirs*; and the entanglement of irregular warfare and intelligence in Colombia. Firstly, they reveal not only how specific *savoirs*

<sup>198</sup> The document is a report on the human rights situation in Colombia, sent from the US Embassy in Bogota to the US Department of State. Labelled as “classified” in 1979, that is, confidential information, the full content of the report was only disclosed in 2007. Available at: [http://static.iris.net.co/semana/upload/documents/Doc-1474\\_2007630.pdf](http://static.iris.net.co/semana/upload/documents/Doc-1474_2007630.pdf). Access on: February 18, 2017.

<sup>199</sup> Suspects of collaborating with the “leftist-groups” were also targeted by the “Triple A”. In July 1980, for instance, five military officers who used to integrate the Battalion denounced the BINCI for planning and carrying out, through the “Triple A”, the explosion of the headquarters of the magazine *Alternativa*, as well as of the newspapers *El Bogotano* and *Voz Proletaria*. See: *El Día*, 1980.

<sup>200</sup> As it has been discussed on Chapter 3, the countless accusations of human rights violations were repeatedly dodged through the evocation of the “bad apples” narrative or the change in the name of the combat of command unit towards which the accusation was made in a specific case. It was no different with the BINCI, which had its name changed to “20<sup>th</sup> Brigade” (*Brigada 20*). As the accusations of abuses in the use of violence continued to flow towards the Brigade, the latter was extinguished on 1998. For more information, see: CINEP (2004); Evans (2007).

circulate, but also the main mechanisms through which they circulate. As we have seen, the military missions were important channels through which the military expertise on irregular combat (the *lanceros*, for instance) and intelligence were transmitted. The format of such missions varied in terms of duration (the 1962 intelligence mission to Fort Holabird lasted for 8 months, for instance) and scope (to attend a course, to instruct a troop, to create a military school and build its curriculum are some of the examples). As in the case of the Lancers' School, the purpose of the US military mission visiting Colombia was not only to crystalize a *savoir* on irregular warfare in the form of a specialized school, but also to generate the conditions for the transmission of that *savoir* – as a consequence, its multiplication. It is in this sense that a group of high-ranked military officers visited the facilities at Fort Benning to attend the “Ranger Course”: to make sure that they were in the position to teach others when they returned. As we will see below, the School of the Americas was but one of the destinations of Colombian military personnel for them to familiarize with a specific technique, domain or doctrine.

The fact that both Captain Ralph Puckett and General William P. Yarborough had been to Korea before their engagement with the Colombian Army suggests that the participation of the “Battalion Colombia No. 1” in the Korean War catalyzed what, until then, had been punctual interactions of the Armies of Colombia and the US. It is not my point here to identify a “point of origin” from which a more systematic interaction of Colombian and US Armies ensued. However, the recurrence with which the Korean War is brought up as a turning point for the modernization of the Colombian Army – as Valencia Tovar has repeatedly formulated – is indicative of the privileged position in which that War is placed in the narrative the Colombian Military Forces nurture of their own professionalization<sup>201</sup>.

Of course, the hemispheric institutional fabric that started to gain shape in the 1940s, in the context of the Cold War contributed to: (i) the creation of synergies between military forces across the Americas; and (ii)

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<sup>201</sup> One could argue that this may be a position held only by Valencia Tovar. However, it is noteworthy that he has been repeatedly invited to write texts on the contribution of the Korean War to the Colombian Army in various channels, such as the *Revista de las Fuerzas Armadas* and *El Tiempo*.

the consolidation of the United States as the main reference for the professionalization of Military Forces in Latin American states<sup>202</sup>. To be clear, the organization of regular meetings and competitions, as well as the creation of permanent commissions on specific topics allow for the exchange of doctrine and instruction materials, the comparison of forces (equipment and personnel, for instance), the design of cooperation mechanisms, the articulation of a “common” agenda, and networking. These practices are shared, compared, and discussed in the main inter-American institutions constituting that fabric: the Inter-American Defense Board, the Organization of the American States (OAS), and the School of the Americas. Such a fabric and the interactions it allowed for operated towards a gradual harmonization of military operations throughout Latin America during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

A closer look at the School of the Americas will help us to illustrate this point, as well as to expose the limits of this harmonization. First of all, Colombia only figured most prominently in the students’ population of the School of the Americas from the 1970s onwards<sup>203</sup>. Between 1970 and 1979, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Honduras, Panama, and Peru sent between 1,100 and 1,800 students each, accounting for 63% of total enrollment in the School (GILL, 2004, p. 78). This information shows how the methodological decision to explore the circulation of military *savoirs* offers an analytical ground for us to raise questions on the distinction between “democracy” and “dictatorship” based upon the civil or military character of the groups in the highest positions of the government in a given state. What is interesting for us to register here is that Colombia is the only state in the list above which did not have a military officer in the Presidency by that time. Indeed, the fact that Colombia was not formally identified as a

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<sup>202</sup> Herz (2011) discusses in more details how the United States were pervasively present in the security agenda of Latin America in the context of the Cold War. According to Herz (2011, p. 28): “The first 50 years of the organization were marked by the Cold War and its features in the Western Hemisphere. The organization was central in the process of building a perception of the threat of communism in the region”.

<sup>203</sup> According to Gill (2004, p. 74), after the Cuban Revolution, the SOA had a 42% increase in the number of students in comparison to the 1950s. During the 1960s, when the SOA was transferred from Fort Benning (United States) to Fort Gulick (Panama), 13,500 students attended courses at the School. Venezuela, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Panama, and Peru responded for the greatest shares: from 1960 to 1969, between 1,000 and 2,000 trainees were sent by each of these states.



military regime in the context of the so-called Operation Condor constituted the basis of the claim that Colombia was the most “enduring democracy” in South America (PIZARRO L., 1987a; ATEHORTÚA C.; VÉLEZ R., 1994; GALLÓN-GIRALDO, 2001; GÓMEZ-SUÁREZ, 2010, p. 152). Nonetheless, the Colombians were attending the same courses on counterinsurgency and intelligence – to keep with the most recurrent cases – that the military personnel from Chile, for instance, while the latter was under a military regime.

Likewise, Latin American military officers referred to the same manuals irrespective of the existence of a military regime in their state. An example can be found in two texts used in the professionalization programs of Colombian young officers in the 1960s: *Los Medios de Expresión en la Guerra Psicológica* (1961), written by the Argentinian Lieutenant Diego Manrique Pinto; and *Guerra Revolucionaria Comunista* (1964), by the Argentinian General Osiris G. Villegas. Signed by the Colombian Army Command, the Prologue to the first edition of the book reads:

the war is already happening inside our borders. The dangers it poses to national security are as serious as those of the classic war, given that its purpose is essentially the same; to destroy the adversary's capacity or willingness to fight and impose the law. (...) Definitely, the *destruction of the Nation, of the Patria* and its permanent essences, *is the objective of this mortal enemy*. (...) Consequently, the emphasis one gives to the *anti-national* character of communism is never exaggerated. Peace, progress, democracy, sovereignty, legality, development and economic dependence, social justice, fraternity between the peoples etc. constitute sound and logical aspirations of every collectivity that nobody can reject<sup>204</sup> (emphasis in the original; VILLEGAS, 1964, pp. 7-8).

The aspects mentioned above are revealing of one of the main features of the circuit of military *savoirs* that constitute our object here: that the flows of military professionals from one state to another in the circuit are only

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<sup>204</sup> In the original: “la guerra se desarrolla ya dentro de nuestras fronteras. Sus peligros son tan graves para la seguridad nacional como los de la guerra clásica, ya que su finalidad es esencialmente la misma; quebrar la capacidad o voluntad de lucha del adversario e imponerle la ley. (...) En definitiva, la *destrucción de la Nación, de la Patria* y sus esencias permanentes, *es el objetivo de este mortal enemigo*. (...) En consecuencia, nunca será exagerado el énfasis con que se señale el carácter *antinacional* del comunismo. La paz, el progreso, la democracia, la soberanía, la legalidad, el desarrollo e independencia económica, la justicia social, la hermandad de los pueblos, etc., constituyen aspiraciones sanas y lógicas de toda colectividad que nadie puede rechazar”.

possible because their professionalization is based on similar constructions of threat. We could even go further and argue that, by their turn, these similar constructions of threat are anchored on a discourse of what is at stake in the “preservation” of civilization, for the “enemy within” was claimed as the obstacle separating Latin American societies from the pacification that allows for the flourishing of civilization.

As the framing of what constitutes a threat was re-articulated throughout the decades, the configuration of the School of the Americas (SoA) changed both in terms of the courses offered and the states presenting the greatest shares of students. In this sense, if the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the US Army Special Warfare School were active in sending their professionals – both civil and military – to the School of the Americas so that they could teach Latin American students, the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and the Federal Bureau Agency (FBI) undertook similar practices as drug trafficking was raised to the position of the main threat facing the Americas by the 1980s, as it has been discussed on Chapter 2.2. As for the students’ population, Mexico, El Salvador and Colombia responded for 9,000 students in the 1980s – 72% of the total students’ population (GILL, 2004, p. 83). In the case of Colombia, however, it was only by the 1990s that the Colombian Armed Forces – both police and military personnel – attended specific courses on drugs at the School of the Americas.

The SoA Watch database<sup>205</sup> illustrates this “rise and fall” of courses offered by the School of the Americas. For instance, the “Patrol Operations” course, attended by 129 low-rank military officers<sup>206</sup> and non-commissioned officers (*suboficiales*) from Colombia during the 1980s, disappeared as such in the following years<sup>207</sup>. More than that, the database reveals that only 30 Colombian high-ranked officers<sup>208</sup> attended courses at the School from 1960 to 1989

<sup>205</sup> Available at: <http://soaw.org/about-the-soawhinsec/13-soawhinsec-graduates/4281-soa-grads-database-online-ur>. Access on: February 17, 2017.

<sup>206</sup> From Second Lieutenant (*Subteniente*) to Major (*Mayor*).

<sup>207</sup> From 1978 to 1988, the course was attended by 823 Latin American students.

<sup>208</sup> From Lieutenant Colonel (*Teniente Coronel*) to General (*General*). However, only Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels attended courses at the School of the Americas in the period mentioned above.

A couple of observations are noteworthy here. The list of courses offered by the School was not imposed by the United States to the Latin American armies. On the contrary, some of the courses were “taylor-made” according to the particularities of a specific state or group of states – the case of “Jungle Courses”, for instance. In addition to that, the economic constraints facing many of the Latin American states since the end of the 1970s led to a significant decrease in the number of students at the School of the Americas. As an effort to facilitate the flow of students by that time, the Gerald Ford administration issued, in 1976, the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. Funded by the foreign aid appropriation process, IMET paid for the training of foreign troops (GILL, 2004, p. 78). By the 1980s, when many Latin American states were immersed in an economic crisis, these resources funded Mobile Training Teams (MTTs), that is, small teams formed by US military officers, who trained troops *in situ* (GILL, 2004, p. 75, p. 85). With time, this came to constitute the main vein through which military training was provided in Latin America.

Likewise, when students returned from the School of the Americas, they brought the instruction manuals used in the courses they had attended with them. As one of the former students reported in one of the interviews conducted by Gill (2004, p. 99), “the manuals that dealt with antisubversion were translations from English. (...) The instructors brought packages of manuals that you could recognize by the color: the North American manuals were yellow” (interviewee Juan Ricardo *Apud* GILL, 2004, p. 99). Once they returned from the School of the Americas, some of these former students multiplied the reach of the *savoir* they were considered to be expert on by taking teaching posts in military schools (GILL, 2004, p. 99).

If it is true that the professionalization based on conventional warfare also presented a physical training component, the core of its formation program was developed in the Military School – the classroom, to be more accurate. My argument is that the transfer of this center of gravity from the Military School to the Lancers’ School reflects the transformation of the professionalization logics: from the regeneration of the soldier into the “ideal citizen” of Colombia to the production of tactically efficient

bodies, whose short-term training program allows for its reproduction in large scales. Importantly, the social cut separating officers, on one side, from non-commissioned officers (*suboficiales*) and soldiers, on the other side, persists in both moments of the military professionalization in Colombia. The higher ranks are more directly engaged in the discussion, consolidation and refinement of military doctrine, and continue to enjoy a closer interaction with politics in “civil offices”. Contrastingly, it is in the lower ranks that the transformation of the professionalization logics becomes more explicit, for the emphasis on the physical preparation characterizing the production of “military professionals” in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is concentrated on this share of the military hierarchy. This process will be strengthened in the end of the 1990s, with Plan Colombia. Indeed, while training was being provided to Colombian low-ranked military personnel in the Lancers’ School under the US supervision, the high-ranked officers were being taught on irregular warfare doctrine at Fort Benning (Georgia).

### **5.3. Training as teaching: Plan Colombia, the “expert-soldier” and the re-positioning of Colombia**

In the previous section, we discussed how the context of the Cold War was marked by the emergence and consolidation of a hemispheric circuit of military *savoirs*, anchored both on the position of the United States as the main reference of military professionalization and on the discourse of communism as the “mortal enemy” to be combatted. This circuit was constituted by hubs through which the *savoirs* were transmitted, multiplying their outreach by polishing the education of the educators. At the same time, these hubs allowed for the military professionals to build networks, conferring density to the circuit, in addition to a sense of “hemispheric community” amongst the military – although the United States remained as the main reference and the main provider of resources nurturing the flows of such professionals. Despite a shared interest on specific military *savoirs* – namely, intelligence, irregular warfare, and

counterinsurgency – constituted the amalgam of these flows of military professionals, we have also seen the social cut characterizing such a circuit. On the one hand, high-ranked military officers attended, in very small numbers, long-term courses on doctrine-related contents, whose transmission was physically based on the classroom. On the other, hundreds of non-commissioned military officers (*suboficiales*) were sent to short-term courses on the operational aspects of irregular warfare, whose instruction was mostly based on the physical preparation of the students in training centers.

As I have shown, the creation of the Lancers' School and the mobilization of the first groups of *lanceros* in the counterinsurgency operations under Plan Lazo in the 1960s marked a more systematic interaction of Colombian and US military professionals. As regards the organization of the military *savoirs*, this process has also deepened the specialization of forces within the Colombian Army. Indeed, the operations carried out by the *lanceros* – these agile and small military units that were trained in order to fight guerrillas and to familiarize with the jungle – were complemented by intelligence techniques of infiltration, interrogation, propaganda, as well as the training of “anti-subversive armed groups” as a form of illegality that could be strategically useful in the operations.

However, it was with Plan Colombia that these processes were taken to another level, in terms of the resources mobilized, specialization of the forces within the Army, and the position of training centers in the professionalization of military personnel. Before we explore the intricacies of Plan Colombia that are relevant for this analysis, we must understand the position of the Army in the security architecture of Colombia in the context of the so-called “war on drugs”. This is so because the re-articulation of the discourse of enmity around narco-trafficking organizations in the 1980s had a profound impact on the position of the Army in operations related to “internal security” in Colombia.

The levels of production of marijuana during the 1970s in Colombia had already resulted in the crystallization of a punitive approach towards drugs in the 1980 Penal Code, as we have seen on Section 2.2. By that time, the César Turbay Ayala's administration (1978-1982) oscillated between the

military and the police as the branch of the Colombian Armed Forces to which the control of narcotrafficking would be assigned. For instance, the Decree 2144 issued in 1978 concentrated in the Military Forces the power to undertake patrol and control operations aiming at “re-establishing public order”. It was under the umbrella of this Decree that the “Operation Fulminant” (*Operación Fulminante*) was conducted in the Colombian Atlantic coast in 1978, through the mobilization of the Army Second Brigade and the support of the Air Force and the Navy<sup>209</sup> (LIZARAZO V., 2008, p. 45; GUANUMEN P., 2012, p. 240). Contrastingly, in 1982, the Ministry of Defense determined that all of the narcotrafficking-related initiatives were placed within the scope of the Colombian National Police – more specifically, of the Department of Control of Substances that Produce Physical and Psychic Addiction (COSAS, in Spanish), created in 1981.

Even before the US counternarcotic agencies saw a decline in the marihuana crops as a result of their eradication campaigns, the concerns of the United States were drawn to the two robust networks of cocaine production that took shape during the 1980s in Colombia – which came to be known as the Medellin and Cali drug cartels<sup>210</sup>. The impulse given by these two networks to the cocaine exports towards the United States consolidated Colombia as the center of gravity of Ronald Reagan’s “supply-side approach” to the “problem of drugs”. In this context, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) was raised to a privileged position in the constellation of US agencies engaged with counternarcotic policies abroad, along with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). In 1985, the DEA had 2,234 special agents and an annual budget corresponding to US\$ 362,4 million (DEA, n.d., p. 44), in contrast to the US\$ 1,470 agents and US\$ 75 million annual budget the DEA had at its disposal when it was created, in 1973.

The strengthening of the “supply-side approach” and the protagonism of the DEA in counternarcotic initiatives resonated in the

<sup>209</sup> The Operation is reported to have resulted in the seizure of 3,500 tons of marihuana and the destruction of more than 10,000 hectares of marihuana crops (LIZARAZO V., 2008, p. 47).

<sup>210</sup> Their level of profitability derived from the concentration of the whole production chain in these networks – which cannot be understood outside the context of the strengthening of the prohibitionist discourse.

intensification of the federal agency's participation in eradication and interdiction operations in Colombia, as well as in the channeling of resources from the United States to the Colombian National Police. An emblematic example can be found precisely in the contrast between the design of the *Operación Fulminante* (1978) and that of the "Operation Quiet Village" (*Operación Tranquilandia*), held in 1984 against a major cocaine processing laboratory of the Medellín cartel. If the former, as we have seen, had the Military Forces in charge of executing the operation, the latter stemmed from the intelligence provided by the DEA<sup>211</sup>, was conducted by the Police's COSAS and had the marginal support of the Army, whose contingent was responsible of keeping the control of that area once the operation was considered as finished (LIZARAZO V., 2008, p. 53). The destruction of the laboratories in Tranquilandia and the surrounding areas constituted an operation immersed in the context of flowing resources from the DEA to the Colombian Police in the form of instruction courses (for instance, on the use of human sources of information and on investigation focused on drugs), as well as equipment (such as vehicles specifically equipped for the interception of phone calls) (LIZARAZO V., 2008, p. 52).

While the "war on drugs" – and the resources it mobilized – increasingly stimulated a close articulation of the DEA and the Colombian Police, attempts to advance negotiations for the de-mobilization of different guerrilla movements were undertaken by the Colombian Presidencies from Belisario Betancur (1982-1986) to Andrés Pastrana (1998-2002). Despite the differences related to the effort invested in such negotiations in each of these administrations, as well as the success achieved by these initiatives, all of them have faced a strong resistance of the Military Forces. To a group of

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<sup>211</sup> The historical narrative the agency built about itself fames the *Operación Tranquilandia* is an emblematic example of how the DEA became aware of the strategic value of chemical precursors to counternarcotic operations. According to the DEA, the operation started "when the DEA country attache in Bogota asked for a study on chemical imports, especially ether and acetone entering Colombia. The study determined that 98 percent of the imported ether (90 percent originating from the United States and West Germany) was being used to make cocaine. Due to the findings of the chemical report, the DEA contacted U.S. chemical companies to ask for their cooperation in alerting law enforcement about unusually large chemical orders" (DEA, n.d., p. 53).

The DEA had long understood the vital link of chemicals and drugs. Without chemicals, traffickers could not manufacture their drugs. One of the DEA's early attacks on the chemical trade had occurred in 1982 with Operation Chem Con, short for Chemical Control.

the high-ranked military officers – whose opinions circulated more often in editorials and newspapers columns –, the amnesties granted to de-mobilized groups fueled the war, rather than contributed to peace. In an editorial published in the *Revista de las Fuerzas Armadas*, General Fernando Landazábal Reyes, by then the Ministry of Defense (1982-1984), wrote:

When on the verge of a decisive military victory over the armed groups, the political authority intervenes, once more, in order to lift the state of siege. In this way, the determination of the subversive armed groups to fight receives oxygen (...) [and they] transform the defeats they had suffered by the military action into political victories of great resonance. (...) We hope this is the last amnesty<sup>212</sup> (LANDAZÁBAL R., 1982 *Apud* RAMÍREZ V., 1989, p. 115).

Somehow counterintuitively, the Amnesty Law (No. 35/1982) that was approved in the context of the de-mobilization of the M-19 was followed by an increase in the budget assigned to the Colombian Armed Forces (RAMÍREZ V.; RESTREPO M., 1989, p. 114). According to the law, the percentage of the resources corresponding to the Military Forces would be channeled to “civic-action programs” aiming at contributing to the reduction of poverty in Colombia (RAMÍREZ V.; RESTREPO M., 1989, p. 95) – which was far from the concrete uses and effects related to such programs during the 1960s and 1970s, as we have seen on Section 5.2. The military discontent towards the negotiations with the M-19 and those that followed with the EPL, ELN, and the FARC, however, never coexisted with the engagement of the Military Forces in operations “other than war” – in the sense of providing services to local communities or building a physical infrastructure such as a school or a bridge, for instance.

Instead, the ambiguity characterizing the treatment of disarmament in the peace negotiations of the first half of the 1980s<sup>213</sup> allowed for the Military Forces to present themselves as the guardians of the “cease fire”. In

<sup>212</sup> In the original: “Cuando ha estado a punto de obtener la victoria militar definitiva sobre los alzados en armas, la acción de la autoridad política interviene para levantar nuevamente el estado de sitio. En esa forma la voluntad de lucha de los grupos armados de la subversión recibe el oxígeno (...) [y ellos] transforman las derrotas sufridas por la acción militar en victorias políticas de gran resonancia. (...) Esperamos sea la última amnistía”.

<sup>213</sup> Particularly, the “cease fire” agreement signed with the FARC in 1984 did not require the surrender of weapons by the guerrilla, nor incorporated the Military Forces as a party in the agreement with specific responsibilities in the de-mobilization (RAMÍREZ V., 1989, pp. 208-209).



other words, if the de-mobilized members of the FARC used the weapons which were not surrendered, the Military Forces claimed to be “constitutionally obliged” to combat them. Using the vocabulary of “banditry” to refer to the FARC, General Miguel Vega Uribe, Ministry of Defense by then (1984-1985)<sup>214</sup>, circulated amongst the branches of the Military Forces a document whereby he recommended that intelligence operations were intensified and combat units remained alert and acted whenever it was necessary. Under the claim that it was impossible to distinguish those who had de-mobilized from those who were not committed to the peace agreement, Vega ordered the Military Forces to “fight and repress, with no hesitation, any detected manifestation of armed groups”, and added that the “FARC gangs” that disobeyed the commands given by the Military Forces had to be “eliminated” by the latter (VEGA U., 1984 *Apud* RAMÍREZ V., 1989, pp. 209-210).

Underlying this license to kill in the name of peace keeping, was the vocabulary of “banditry”, which extinguished any possibility of legitimacy for the guerrillas by dissociating them from any “political motivation”. The use of arms by those groups was considered by both Landazábal and Vega as a threat to the “constitutional order”. According to the former, there could be no “middle ground” in this regard, for arms could only be used with the objective of overthrowing the government (RAMÍREZ V., 1989, p. 211). Importantly, such “dangerousness” could only be assumed, given the impossibility – acknowledged by Vega to his counterparts – of distinguishing those who had de-mobilized from those who had not. It is the claim of this very “impossibility” that constitutes the possibility for the expansion of the margins of what is considered as a threat to the “constitutional order” – as well as for the expansion of the scope of the authorization to kill in the name of that order. Again, the dividing line

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<sup>214</sup> The high rotativity of Ministers of Defense points to a context of intense disputes in the civil-military relations – although not exclusively on this axis. Moreover, it is important to highlight that the profile of the two first Ministers of Defense during Betancur’s administration, Landazábal and Vega, were not only Generals, but also military officers with a solid background on guerrilla warfare and intelligence. This is indicative both of the credentials required for ranks to be granted within the Military Forces, but also of the *savoirs* privileged for the command of the Ministry of Defense.

drawn between “dissidence” and “disturbance to order” is the one upon which indiscriminate killing is authorized.

In the case of Colombia, this line was (re)drawn in all of the historical contexts analyzed throughout these chapters. Nonetheless, it seems plausible to claim that this “impossible” and yet recurrently mentioned line is a persistent feature of claims to order— therefore, the drawing of such a line cannot be read as a practice deriving from the armed conflict in Colombia. What is specific to each political and historical context is the vocabulary<sup>215</sup> and the effect of such line. Particularly, the social groups and their specific “social conducts” framed as threats to order is what partly distinguishes the limits defined by that dividing line in different historical contexts. In such dynamics, the mechanisms operating towards the crystallization of a specific threat to order can contribute to the stabilization of such line, allowing for the normalization of certain “unacceptable social conducts”. In this sense, every peace contains within itself the conditions for war. The mechanisms of order do not demarcate the alternation between peace and war, however: rather, they demarcate the limits for the coexistence of peace and war, in terms of social groups and conducts taken as “acceptable”, on the one hand, and (radically) “unacceptable”, on the other.

As it is possible to infer from the discourses analyzed so far, the mobilization of the military in the operations aimed at keeping public order is often anchored on the claim of the radical character of the danger posed by a specific social group and its social conduct. The “emergency” with

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<sup>215</sup> As an illustration, in his first speech as Colombian President, César Gaviria (1990-1994) defined that line as one dividing “violence” from “peace”: “Throughout its history, Colombia has invoked political solutions from time to time in order to face the armed rebellion and insurrection. These solutions will be preserved for the guerrilla groups that seek shelter in the majoritarian sentiment of the nation: to put an end to violence. Dialogue is a concession that civil society makes to those who are violent. It is useful when the armed groups accept that it cannot be a scenario for their political protagonism, when it serves (...) to pursue their demobilization and disarmament, and their bonding to society, with the objective that they can pursue their political goals through pacific means” (GAVIRIA, 1990 *Apud* LEAL B., 2002, p. 86). In the original: “A lo largo de su historia, Colombia ha apelado a las soluciones políticas una y otra vez para hacerle frente a la rebelión armada y al alzamiento. Ellas serán preservadas para los grupos guerrilleros que se acojan al sentimiento mayoritario de la nación: acabar con la violencia. El diálogo es una concesión que la sociedad civil hace a los violentos. Es útil cuando los alzados en armas aceptan que no puede ser un escenario para su protagonismo político, cuando sirve (...) para buscar su desmovilización y desarme, y su vinculación a la sociedad, con el fin de que puedan perseguir sus objetivos políticos por medios pacíficos”.

which such mobilization is evoked relies on the idea that the “social space” needs to be pacified so that progress can flourish. A “natural” implication of this logic is the appeal to “exceptional measures” – for instance, the substitution of the ordinary legislator by that of an extraordinary character; the substitution of the ordinary judicial system by military courts; and the modification of “penal types” (VANEGAS G., 2011, pp. 262-263) –, that come to appear as “natural” implications of the intensity of the disturbance to public order and of the emergency characterizing the need to restore order. The fact that five states of siege were declared in Colombia during the 1990s<sup>216</sup> (VANEGAS G., 2011, p. 287) expresses how pervasive was the claim of “radical danger” as the justification for the adoption of exceptional measures. This repetition transformed the temporary character of such measures into a persistent feature of the regulation of the social space.

If, on the one hand, the “firepower” claimed as necessary to face those threats was associated to the work of the military, on the other hand, the scaling up of violence mostly related to the “drug cartels” in the 1980s constituted the basis for the justification of the increase in firepower of the Colombian National Police. Indeed, the “militarization” of the Police was an additional constitutive element of the state of siege. It consisted not only in the incorporation of weapons traditionally associated to warfare, as it has already been mentioned, but also in the provision of training on military tactics. This was the case of the Junglas, a militarized branch of the Counternarcotic Direction of the Colombian National Police (DIRAN, in Spanish).

There is yet a third effect of the claims on the intensity of the threats as the basis for the mobilization of either the military personnel or the military *savoir*. Namely, the legislative work aiming at preserving certain aspects of the state of exception as an ordinary form of regulation of social coexistences. A remarkable example can be found in César Gaviria’s Public Order Law (*Ley de Orden Público*, No. 104/1993), which established

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<sup>216</sup> The total duration of those state of sieges was 647 days. Importantly, however, this was not a particular feature of the 1990s: during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a persistent appeal to the “state of siege” as an ordering mechanism. In some of these occasions, the Constitutional Court considered the establishment of the state of siege as unconstitutional, as observed by Vanegas Gil (2011). For more information, see: Gallón G. (1979), Vanegas (2011) and *Semana* (1982).

“instruments for the pursuit of coexistence and the effectiveness of justice”<sup>217</sup>. More specifically, the Law created mechanisms allowing for the re-incorporation of de-mobilized guerrilla members and “popular militias” (or the so-called “self-defense groups”) – for instance, the reprieve and the protection of witnesses. The Law thereby aimed at offering incentives for the de-mobilization of armed groups through peace talks. At the same time, however, the same legal instrument authorized the Military Forces to attack guerrillas that did not engage with those negotiations. In other words, the Public Order Law expresses that peace negotiations and war making were more than compatible: they were part of the same strategy of peace building – or pacification – in Colombia. As the subtitle of the Law suggests, both means were “instruments for the pursuit of coexistence and the effectiveness of justice”.

The processes implied in the approval of the Public Order Law reveal that in both drawing lines of threats and crystallizing them into ordinary rules, the so-called “civil domain” is part of the web of conditions that make the mobilization of war power possible. In this sense, the limits for the use of firepower and the lethality characterizing it are not expressions of the violence that the “civil domain” aims at purging out of the “social space”. Rather, the “civil domain” is part of the processes producing the framings that result in demands for more war power, for it is against radical kinds of socially unacceptable conducts that the latter is mobilized.

The approval of the Public Order Law by the Colombian Legislative in 1993 involved a series of political disputes. As part of the effort to advocate for the need of such instrument, the government argued that the state of siege declared in 1992 and in force for 270 days (VANEGAS G., 2011, p. 287) had yielded “successful results”, but the terms of the Public Order Law would allow for these “achievements” to be consolidated. The “success” referred to by the government spokesperson before the Congress had specific numbers: 760 guerrilla members killed and other 1,860 detained (amongst which 20 commandants); 10,000 assaults against the

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<sup>217</sup> The original subtitle of the Law is: “que consagra instrumentos para la búsqueda de la convivencia y la eficacia de la justicia”.

Medellin cartel; and detention and killing of “the most important” second-rank leaders of that cartel (LEAL B., 2002, pp. 94-95)<sup>218</sup>.

These numbers had been produced within the context of an “integral war”, as the government often referred to the “permanent offensive” launched with the 1992 state of siege – although one could argue that such efforts were already taking place since the 1960s. Both the state of siege and the Public Order Law were based on the claim that it was not possible to distinguish narcotrafficking organizations from guerrilla, nor the latter from “ordinary delinquency” (LEAL B., 2002, p. 98). Such a claim had three main effects. Firstly, it allowed for the de-legitimization of the guerrillas by linking it to “banditry” or “ordinary delinquency”, as it has been already observed. Yet, the guerrillas were framed as a specific kind of delinquency, for all of the practices invested against these groups were anchored in the claim of their high level of dangerousness – a dangerous form of illegality (FOUCAULT, 1995). Secondly, the possibility of a link between narcotrafficking and guerrilla opens room not only for the de-legitimization of the latter, but also for the emergence of “narcoguerrilla” – which came to constitute one of the main categories upon which the problematization of violence in Colombia relied, as we have seen on Chapter 2. There is yet a third effect of the claim on the difficulty in making the distinction between narcotrafficking organizations, guerrillas, and “ordinary delinquency”. Once the first two were framed as the “radical otherness” the war was being waged against, the incorporation of “ordinary delinquency” as part of the same spectrum of dangerousness within which the “integral war” was fought reinforced, at once, the inscription of the Police into the dynamics of war; and the consolidation of the Armed Forces’ engagement in the provision of operational solutions to the problem of public order. To be sure, the intensity of the threat was used as the grounds for the claim that more firepower was needed in order to face the “grave disturbance of

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<sup>218</sup> It is noteworthy that while the metrics of success used to justify the need for the Public Order Law’s approval corresponded to the number of “enemies” killed, the Colombian “success story” that has been widely narrated since the end of the 2000s is focused on the reduction on indicators such as homicide. I will come back to this point in the next pages.

internal public order”<sup>219</sup>. Indeed, the “integral war” mobilized during Gaviria’s administration involved 277 days under the state of siege, granting both to the Police and the Military Forces exceptional powers. In this sense, the strengthening of the Penal Code analyzed on Chapter 2 is further enhanced as, in addition to the “carceral solution” to an expanding margin of what can be potentially framed as delinquency, a militarized system emerges as a form of tackling what is framed as a radical kind of delinquency. This system, which increasingly encompasses the Police and the Military, is marked by the license to kill and exceptional judicial procedures to fight these especially dangerous forms of socially unacceptable behavior. Importantly, such a system coexists with the policing, incarceration, and judicial ordinary procedures characterizing the carceral system. Needless to say, if the metrics upon which the “success” of the “integral war” relied upon the number of executions claimed as necessary for pacification to be achieved, the competition between the Police and the Military Forces within the Colombian security architecture operates around this metrics. That is, the Police and the Military increasingly converge in the mobilization of war power.

In a context marked by expanded margins of what can be conceived as an “unacceptable social conduct”, the resulting dynamics is an increasing use of firepower as a mechanism for the regulation of social coexistences. As we have seen, this was achieved through the normalization of some of the practices characterizing the state of siege when transformed into disciplines of the Public Order Law. Moreover, the expanded architecture and personnel directly involved in war making – both the Military Forces and the branches of the Police that had been militarized – constituted an additional form of normalization of the mobilization of physical violence as a form of regulation of the social space, for once more arms and personnel were engaged in such an “integral war”, a certain inertia was created as regards the modification of that engagement. An example can be found in the creation of the JUNGLAS within the Colombian National Police’s DIRAN, whose privileged position as an elite force specialized in the jungle

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<sup>219</sup> This was actually the wording of the 1991 Constitution when defining the conditions under which the state of siege can be evoked in Colombia.

terrain since 1989 was unchallenged even after the drug cartels were dismantled, in 1993: on the contrary, in the present days, the JUNGLAS are taken as a reference for the training of elite forces in other countries (SÁNCHEZ-BUSTAMANTE, 2012). Something similar could be claimed regarding the increase in the number of professional soldiers during Gaviria's administration: if, in 1990, the Colombian Army had 2,000 professional soldiers<sup>220</sup>, in 1994 there were 23,000 soldiers of that category (LEAL B., 2002, p. 99). As we will see in the next pages, the use of professional soldiers instead of regular ones skyrocketed with the approval of Plan Colombia, in 1999.

Despite – and because – this robust security architecture that was gradually taking shape in Colombia, the levels of violence during the 1990s achieved unprecedented levels (ECHANDÍA, 2006). Importantly, the Colombian state – especially the Armed Forces – was not considered as part of the problem of violence<sup>221</sup>, but as part of the solution to that problem, as it has been more attentively discussed on Chapters 2 and 3. Within this specific problematization, such levels of violence in Colombia were understood as deriving from the impossibility of making distinctions between guerrillas and narcotrafficking organizations – that is, the increasing symbiosis of these two categories that resulted in the emergence of “narcoguerrillas”. The narrative built upon this reading of violence claimed for the strengthening of the Colombian state as a solution to that problem – notably, the claim for “more state” was translated as one for “more security” in order to allow for the delivery of other “public goods”. Through this logic, the horizon of possible solutions to the scaling up levels of violence during the 1990s not only included, but privileged the refinement of the security architecture in order to “solve the problem of violence”. By its turn, refining such an architecture was specifically understood as boosting the military and police forces in terms of personnel, arms and equipment, as well as training – and not as the reformulation of those forces, so as to expose and tackle, for instance, the connections

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<sup>220</sup> I will discuss the specificities of this category of soldier in the next pages, when the use of the “professional soldiers” becomes even more expressive.

<sup>221</sup> This point has been developed more attentively on Chapters 2 and 3.

between military and paramilitary forces as an ad hoc association that also contributed to the levels of violence.

Movements towards the strengthening of the Colombian security architecture were triggered in the second half of the 1990s, as the Army was defeated by the FARC in combats waged in fronts considered as strategic by the Colombian Armed Forces. Amongst the cases piled up as evidences of a so-called “military crisis” (EL PAÍS, 1998; RANGEL, 1998; REVISTA SEMANA, 1998; VILLAMIZAR, 2003), the ones most recurrently mentioned are the defeats in the departments of Caquetá, Guaviare and Vaupés – all of them in 1998. The first one involved an ambush against the Army’s Counterguerrilla Battalion No. 52, which was part of the Mobile Brigade No. 3, an elite force formed by professional soldiers trained in counterguerrilla warfare. The attack in El Billar (Caquetá) resulted in 62 soldiers killed, and 43 made prisoners by the FARC (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 22). This was considered as an alarming event: differently from the previous attacks suffered by the Colombian Army, this was against well-trained and experienced soldiers, in a strategic base (RANGEL, 1998). A few months later, both the Police and the Army were simultaneously attacked by 1,200 FARC soldiers in Miraflores (Guaviare). The offensive against the Seventh Brigade’s Infantry Battalion 19 “Joaquín París” and the Antinarcotic Police base resulted in 100 members of the Army and the Police kidnapped, 30 killed, and 50 wounded (EL TIEMPO, 1998). Three months later, the military base in the capital of Vaupés, a Colombian department in the amazon region, was taken by the FARC, revealing that the group had human and material capacity to take the capital of a department (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 25). The takeover of the Mitú municipality (*Toma de Mitú*) is repeatedly brought up as an emblematic example of mistakes to be avoided in military operations. Here, the main concern regarded intelligence, for there were rumors that the FARC was planning the operation three weeks before it took place, and yet, no action was taken in order to avoid or confront the attack (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 25).

More than specific operational problems, these cases were evoked by the main Colombian newspapers and magazines as a sign that a military



reform was both necessary and urgent<sup>222</sup>. Particularly regarding Mitú, an offensive that took place days before the Andrés Pastrana's administration (1998-2002) established the de-militarized zone where the negotiations with the FARC were to be ignited, the need for such a military reform was advocated by the media under the argument that the *modus operandi* of the guerrilla clearly pointed to a strategy in which the peace negotiations did not imply the abandonment of war (EL PAÍS, 1998; RANGEL, 1998; REVISTA SEMANA, 1998). That is, the war waged by the FARC had to be confronted with war.

In addition to the widespread outreach of this narrative through the main newspapers and magazines in Colombia, the military offensive led by the FARC during the second half of the 1990s also constituted the object of discussions amongst “specialists” on security. This was the case of Fundación Seguridad & Democracia (Security & Democracy Foundation, in English), a policy center created in the context of Plan Colombia and funded with resources from the United States<sup>223</sup>. Its director, the economist Alfredo Rangel, was part of a group in the Universidad Nacional de Colombia

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<sup>222</sup> Ten years after the *Toma de Mitú*, many were the stories in the newspapers that recovered the event by narrating the excesses of violence of the FARC and highlighting the stories of the families of members of the police and military forces that had not been liberated by the FARC since the takeover in 1998. Described as “hell”, “the bloodiest strike of the FARC”, as well as a “violation of all of the humanitarian law rules”, *Mitú* is framed as an illustration of the unwillingness of the FARC to engage in peaceful talks. The mobilization of *Mitú* as a key moment for the construction of the collective memory of violence in Colombia has political effects. Considering that the military reform through Plan Colombia had not only been implemented but also renewed by 2008, the coverage of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Mitú* reinforced the indisposition towards any room for negotiation with the FARC – when this attitude was already solid in Uribe's administrations (2002-2010). Furthermore, as Martin and Jaramillo-Marín argue, the absence of multiple voices in the practices of news coverage of *Mitú's* 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, as well as the widespread dissemination of such a de-contextualized narrative, “promotes a specific kind of memory, resulting in an anecdotal, episodic and spectacular learning about violence in the country. (...) Moreover, the actions of the FARC are detached from the context of an internal armed conflict involving not only two parties, but also citizens” (MARTIN; JARAMILLO-MARÍN, 2014, p. 404). In other words, the *eventalization* (FOUCAULT, 1988) of *Mitú* not only contrasts the brutality of the FARC with an alleged openness to negotiations – it is because the guerrilla cheats that peace negotiations are not possible –, but also erases the population in that dynamic, as victims caught in the crossfire – and as fuel to the conflict, I would add. In the original: “Cuando la conmemoración de este tipo de acontecimientos se encuentra descontextualizada, se promueve sólo un tipo de memoria, que genera un tipo de aprendizaje anecdótico, episódico y espectacular de la violencia del país. (...) Además, las acciones de las Farc son desvinculadas del contexto de un conflicto armado interno que no implica solamente a dos partes, sino que también involucra a la ciudadanía”.

<sup>223</sup> See: <http://lasillavacia.com/quienesquien/perfilquien/alfredo-rangel-suarez>. Access on: March 13, 2017.

(Colombia's National University) engaged in a research project on the armed conflict in the 1990s – by then, known as a new generation of “*violentólogos*” (LA SILLA VACÍA, 2016). The choice of Rangel to lead a policy center analogous to the RAND Corporation in the United States, with close ties to policy making, cannot be dissociated from a context marked by the valorization of an “econometric” grid with which any policy diagnosis was thought and elaborated – a process which was not restricted to Colombia, as discussed on Chapter 3. In this sense, at the same time the Fundación's emphasis on data, impact measurement and models<sup>224</sup> partly derived from some of the researchers' educational background on Economics<sup>225</sup>, the privileged position of the Fundación in the debates about the military reform must also be framed within a broader picture: of how it expressed a specific form of knowledge production that was considered as more accurate and translatable to impact assessment. By its turn, the fact that the information produced by the Fundación was made possible by resources flowing from Plan Colombia reveals that the “openness” of the policy debate on the military reform to the participation of civil society (LEÓN, 2010) was quite controlled, for it was under the terms of and based upon the specific agenda of the Plan that the work of the Fundación was advanced. These are not marginal details to our discussion on the historical transformations of the military *savoirs* in Colombia, for the understanding of how the military professionalization resulting from the reform should look like was immersed in the dynamics mentioned above.

In 1998, the Minister of Defense Rodrigo Lloreda Caicedo (1998-1999) created the Commission for the Restructuration and Modernization of the Armed Forces, with the objective of analyzing “what went wrong” and developing a comprehensive reform in light of the military and police capacity. Resulting from the work undertaken by its “civil” and “military” members, the “technical diagnosis” of the Commission pointed to four main

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<sup>224</sup> See, for instance, the list of the reports and studies published by the Fundación Seguridad & Democracia in: [http://fes-seguridadregional.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=2220:-fundacion-seguridad-a-democracia-colombia&catid=217:autores](http://fes-seguridadregional.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2220:-fundacion-seguridad-a-democracia-colombia&catid=217:autores). The Fundación's official website was de-activated and extinguished by 2010.

<sup>225</sup> One could add that it also derived from an econometric logic which was also pervasive amongst the political scientists that were part of the policy center.

axes through which the “modernization” of the Military Forces had to be advanced: command, equipment, mobility, and training.

When Plan Colombia was implemented, in 1999, the first significant change in the level of command had already been undertaken, when Generals Manuel José Bonett Locarno and Mario Hugo Galán were substituted by Generals Fernando Tapias and Jorge Enrique Mora in the Command of the Military Forces and the Army, respectively. Tapias and Mora were known in Colombia as “*troperos*” – that is, high-ranked officers acknowledged for their vocation for military operations, as well as for an offensive approach. An in-depth study on the military reform produced by Fundación Seguridad & Democracia in 2003 argues that this was the first time *troperos* achieved a position of command (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 29). It seems plausible to argue that the change in the profile of the Military and Army commands is related to an aspect often mentioned in the narrative of the “military crisis”: that the 1998 defeats can be partly explained by flaws in the domain of strategic intelligence, which was not able to grasp the military reorganization of the FARC. According to the study developed by Fundación Seguridad & Democracia,

one can claim that the enemy was seriously underestimated. This can be partly explained by the traditional attitude [of the Military Forces] of classifying the insurgents as “bandits”, “delinquents” or “thieves”, ignoring its military capacity and generally seeing them as despicable ordinary criminals<sup>226</sup> (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 32).

As mentioned earlier, the impossibility of distinguishing, firstly, the de-mobilized members of the guerrillas from those who were not engaged in the peace negotiations, and then, the guerrillas from narcotrafficking organizations in the context of an intense war against the latter did not point to a passive position of the Military Forces in that dynamics. As I have argued, this very “impossibility” granted a license to kill to the military against what they arbitrarily considered as a threat to the ceasefire and to order. In this sense, the framing of the guerrillas as “bandits” did not

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<sup>226</sup> In the original: “En pocas palabras, se puede afirmar que se subestimó de manera grave al enemigo. Esto se explica en parte por la actitud tradicional de catalogar a los insurgentes como ‘bandidos’, ‘facinerosos’ o ‘cuatrerros’, desconociendo su capacidad militar y en general menospreciándolos al verlos como simples criminales comunes”.

preclude the mobilization of warlike practices against them. On the other hand, the change in the Command of the Military Forces and the Army was marked by the re-articulation of a vocabulary of “maintenance and re-establishment of public order” to one of “winning the war” (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 30). Indeed, the motto often repeated by General Tapias was “We are in war and we are winning it” (“*Estamos en guerra y la estamos ganando*”) (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 30).

In order to achieve this goal, one of the first initiatives taken within the context of Plan Colombia involved the simplification of the structure of the General Command of the Military Forces. Four central offices (*jefaturas*) were created in 2002<sup>227</sup>: personnel; logistics; training and doctrine; and operations – each of these under the responsibility of a Major General (*Mayor General*), that is, a high-ranked military officer. In this process, an interesting merge has taken place: the Central Office of Operations engulfed the offices of Operations, Intelligence and Civil-Military Relations<sup>228</sup> (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 60). If, as we have seen on Section 5.2, the BINCI formalized the merge of intelligence and irregular warfare in the operational level, the merge of the Civil-Military Relations, Operations and Intelligence offices within the Central Office of Operations crystallized that same logics within the Command structure. The logics underlying this specific re-organization cannot be dissociated from the reading that part of the “military crisis” derived from the mismanagement of the “human sources” of intelligence: the population (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 33). In this sense, the Central Office of Operations was expected to coordinate the work on tactical intelligence, in order to control the population before the insurgents do so – as the classical counterinsurgency, since Galula (2006, p. 176), advised.

Another tactical problem tackled by the military reform was related to the air power: the defeats such as the one in Mitú are known as examples of the failure of the Colombian Military Forces to provide aerial support to the units under attack (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 33). The acquisition of

<sup>227</sup> The General Command was formerly constituted by six central offices: Personnel, Intelligence, Operations, Logistics, Integral Action and Strategic Planning.

<sup>228</sup> This kind of operation, by its turn, was renamed “Integral Action” (*Acción Integral*) instead of “Civil-Military Relations”.

airplanes and helicopters was undertaken with the objective of multiplying the military forces through the use of some of these aircrafts for aerial assault, logistic support, transportation of troops and reconnaissance of the terrain where the enemy operates. With the resources comprehended in Plan Colombia, 74 helicopters were supplied by the United States; and additional ones were procured by the Colombian government (VARGAS V., 2014, p. 140). Four years after Plan Colombia had been implemented, Colombia presented the third greatest fleet of helicopters in the Americas, after the United States and Brazil (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 50). As of 2003, the police and military forces in Colombia had 230 helicopters, amongst which 30 are of the assault kind and most of them produced in the United States (Black Hawk, Bell, Huey, and Hughes)<sup>229</sup> (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 51).

An additional feature of Plan Colombia was the creation of specialized forces of combat. Although this process characterized the professionalization of the Colombian Armed Forces since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as we have seen on Chapter 4, the specialization of the forces of combat was intensified during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For instance, the Colombian Army had already created the *Lanceros* in the 1950s as a military unit specialized in the jungle, and, in the context of the intensification of the “war on drugs”, the Colombian Military Forces created the Urban Anti-terrorism Special Forces Group (*Agrupación de Fuerzas Especiales Antiterroristas Urbanas* – AFEUR, in Spanish) in 1985, with the

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<sup>229</sup> Although this enhanced airpower could have stimulated the design of joint operations (*operaciones conjuntas*), this was not the case. Rather, each of the branches of the Colombian Armed Forces – the Police, the Army, most expressively – used part of those helicopters in order to reinforce an air force of their own. Even the simplification of the General Command mentioned above did not result in the increase of joint operations. When addressing the case of the General Command of the Military Forces, Villamizar (2003, p. 65) claimed that: “The General Command is not a Command as such. Although the General Command is the military officer with higher rank, its staff does not support its work as a strategic leader of the Military Forces. On the contrary, the General Command (...) is more invested in administrative tasks than the actual conduction of the joint operations for which it was established. The operational control, that is, the conduction of war is in the hands of each of the Forces (Army, Marine, and Air Force) separately. And each of these forces fights, in a certain way, its own war” (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, pp. 65-66). In the original: “el Comando General no es un Comando como tal. Si bien el Comandante General es el oficial militar de más alto rango, su staff no apoya su labor como conductor estratégico de las FF.MM. Por el contrario, el Comando General (...) está más dedicado a labores administrativas que la conducción real de las operaciones conjuntas para lo cual fue establecido. El control operacional, es decir, la conducción de la guerra está en manos de cada una de las Fuerzas (Ejército, Armada y Fuerza Aérea) por separado. Y cada una de estas fuerzas pelea, en cierta forma, su propia guerra”.

objective of countering and neutralizing terrorist actions in the main urban areas of Colombia. In 1996, the Army created the Unified Action Groups for the Personal Liberty (*Grupos de Acción Unificada por la Libertad Personal* – GAULA, in Spanish)<sup>230</sup>, exclusively dedicated to avoiding and finding solutions to practices of kidnapping and extortion. With Plan Colombia, this specialization was taken further, organized in accordance to a particular characteristic of the Colombian territory, as it is the case of the four Mountain Battalions (*Batallón de Alta Montaña*)<sup>231</sup>; to a specific skill mobilized through military operations, as in the four Mobile Brigades and the Rapid Deployment Force<sup>232</sup> (*Fuerza de Despliegue Rápido* – FUDRA, in Spanish), both trained so as to react rapidly; and, finally, in accordance to a category of threat, as it is the case of the Counternarcotic Brigades (*Brigadas Contra el Narcotráfico* – BACN, in Spanish). Currently, the FUDRA, the AFEUR, the GAULA, and the BACN are four of the 6 Special Forces of the Colombian Army<sup>233</sup>.

Among those specialized forces, the case of the BACN presents interesting elements regarding how the United States were involved in the training of military forces in Colombia in the context of Plan Colombia. The creation of the first BACN<sup>234</sup> in 1999 was presented by General Fernando Tapias, by then the Commandant of the Military Forces, as a necessary response to the “tough” character of the fight against drugs in some parts of the country. The BACN was in charge of operations involving the dismantling of drug production laboratories (where the coca leaf is transformed into coca paste, and then into cocaine chlorohydrate); the

<sup>230</sup> Currently, the FUDRA, the AFEUR, the GAULA, and the BACN are four of the 6 Special Forces of the Colombian Army. For more information, see: <https://www.ejercito.mil.co/index.php?idcategoria=279742>. Access on: March 18, 2017.

<sup>231</sup> In the Colombian Navy, a force specialized in the surveillance of rivers was also created within this logics. The Riverine Infantry Brigade (*Brigada Fluvial*) was created as a unit responsible for the surveillance and control of the 8,000 kilometers of rivers in Colombia. The equipment provide to these military units allows for the patrol of routes often used for the transportation of illicit cargo, as well as for the transportation of troops in river operations.

<sup>232</sup> Actually, the FUDRA is constituted by three Mobile Brigades (No. 1, 2, and 3) and a Special Forces Brigade, in addition to the assault helicopters and airplanes the Force has.

<sup>233</sup> For more information, see: <https://www.ejercito.mil.co/index.php?idcategoria=279742>. Access on: March 18, 2017.

<sup>234</sup> Although the “baptism” of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was held on August 1999, it was only with the publication of Ministerial Resolutions No. 1296 (September 1, 2000) and No. 005 (December 8, 2000) that the Counternarcotic Special Brigade was formally created, with a military base in Larandía (Caquetá).

control over the transportation of substances used in the production of illicit drugs; the arrest of members of drug trafficking organizations; the destruction of drug trafficking infrastructure (such as camping, plane airstrip); and the fumigation of coca leaf crops. In these operations, the Brigade relies on the use of helicopters, given the difficult access to the regions where the drug trafficking activity is concentrated.

The three Counternarcotic Battalions<sup>235</sup> were trained by the 7<sup>th</sup> Group of US Special Forces in Fuerte Tolemaida<sup>236</sup>. The training program was constituted by four pillars. The first one involves a technical preparation in which the soldier learns how to master weapons and equipment such as compass, GPS and night vision devices, as well as techniques such as how to build an improvised vessel. In this phase, soldiers are also trained on “ranger operations”. The second pillar corresponds to training on physical tactics, including physical resistance exercises such as marching, trotting and training in specific formations (polygonal) and self-defense, in addition to the emphasis on swimming for river crossing and rescue. The third component of the training program is focused on the psychological preparation of the soldiers, mainly through simulations on how to deal with situations under pressure. Finally, the program aims at familiarizing the soldiers with the legal frameworks on human rights and humanitarian law. In this last phase, the courses instruct soldiers on how to deal with local authorities, and how to proceed with invasion, capture and confiscation.

The training program combines a concern with physical preparation with the familiarization of the soldiers with terrains such as the jungle and

<sup>235</sup> Currently, the Brigade is constituted by three maneuver units (BACN No. 1, 2 and 3), and one support unit – the Counternarcotic Services and Support Battalion (*Batallón de Apoyo y Servicios Contra el Narcotráfico* – BASCN, in Spanish), responsible for the provision of materials, budget and logistics to the maneuver units (EJÉRCITO NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA, 2017).

<sup>236</sup> The military fortress of Tolemaida (Cundinamarca) was founded in the 1950s, during the general Gustavo Rojas Pinilla administration (Frente Nacional). The fortress has received massive investments aiming at ameliorating its infrastructure and transforming it into a center of excellence in military training. Examples of these improvements include the building of the Military Airport Gustavo Rojas Pinilla. It is in this context that the fortress has its name changed to CENAE (acronym for National Training Center). Currently, the fortress has nine schools specialized in lancers (ESLAN), military parachuting (ESPAM), army tactics (ESERT), support and services for training (BASEN), special forces (ESFER), professional soldiers (ESPRO), shooting (ESTIR), high mountains (ESAMO) and jungle (ESSEL). For more information on the CENAE, see: <http://www.cenae.mil.co/>.

mountain – hence the use of boats and compass, for instance. Moreover, the training program points to the relevance of the “rangers” as an irregular form of warfare that is still considered as key for the conduction of military operations in Colombia. One could pertinently remark that these features were already present in the Rangers’ Course since the 1950s, as well as the training program of the Lancers’ School since the 1960s. Indeed, tactics, mobility, small units of combat, specialization, and emphasis on the physical preparation of soldiers were at the core of the training of the rangers and the *lanceros*. However, what is specific of Plan Colombia in this regard is the explicit incorporation of counternarcotic policies into the domain of military expertise through the creation of three BACN from 1999 to 2000, in the first years of Plan Colombia.

As regards the irregular warfare which had characterized the tactical preparation of rangers and *lanceros* since the 1950s, my argument is that the transformation introduced by Plan Colombia is more related to a matter of scale than to the provision of a new tactical logics. In order to advance this claim, it is relevant to highlight that the vocabulary of “professionalization” was mobilized in a very particular way in Plan Colombia, comparably to the practices orbiting around that term which have been analyzed on Sections 4.2 and 4.3. More specifically, when the term “professionalization” is evoked in the context of Plan Colombia, it refers to a category of soldier that was massively incorporated to the Military Forces by then: the “professional soldier” (*soldado profesional*). This category corresponds to those soldiers who, after having concluded the mandatory military service (18-24 months), voluntarily decide to remain in the Military Forces, after receiving a specific training and a salary for their work (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 61). If, in 1998, there were 22,000 professional soldiers in Colombia, in 2002, this number corresponded to 55,000 (VARGAS V., 2014, p. 141). Such an increase mentioned above resulted from the so-called *Plan 10,000*, issued in 1999 with the objective of substituting 10,000 “regular soldiers” for the same number of “professional soldiers” each year, for three years (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, p. 61). As a result, the proportion of “regular soldiers” has significantly decreased in relation to the “professional soldiers” throughout the implementation of Plan Colombia.



“Professionalizing” the Military Forces, in this sense, came to be strictly associated with an increasing incorporation of “professional soldiers” in the troops.

As in the years before, the military service was not *de facto* universal – that is, within specific social conditions and connections, the mandatory character of military service could be circumvented, as discussed on Section 4.3. The persistence of such a practice preserved a certain social characterization of the composition of the troop. My point here is that, if the “professional soldier” is a category emerging from mandatory military service and the latter is “more universal” for the lower social strata than to the higher ones, then it is likely that the “professional soldiers” also present a predominant social characterization. Importantly, this category of soldier is not part of the military career track: even after ten years of service, his position will still be equivalent to the “regular soldier”. In this sense, his salary does not have a perspective of a significant increase<sup>237</sup>.

The short-term preparation process involved in the conversion of the “regular soldier” into a “professional soldier” allowed for the rapid multiplication of combat soldiers in Colombia. Most of the “professional soldiers” were incorporated to Counter-guerrilla Battalions (BCG, in Spanish) and Mobile Brigades (BRIM, in Spanish) (VILLAMIZAR, 2003, pp. 61-62), after a 14-weeks training program<sup>238</sup>. Preparing thousands of soldiers for combat required a specific infrastructure: created on December 1999, the School of Professional Soldiers (ESPRO, in Spanish)<sup>239</sup>, based in Nilo (Cundinamarca), offered training facilities and short-term courses specialized in the physical preparation of the soldiers (with swimming, running and physical resistance exercises, with heavy equipment<sup>240</sup>). Interestingly, the polishing of the military officers that were to become

<sup>237</sup> It is under these circumstances that the “professional soldiers” are offered an additional commission in cases of positives (enemies killed in battle) registered on strategic confrontations. I will resume this discussion on the “Final remarks”, when I address the “False Positives” scandal.

<sup>238</sup> See: <http://www.espro.mil.co/?idcategoria=412825#>. Access on: May 5, 2017.

<sup>239</sup> See: <http://www.espro.mil.co/?idcategoria=189706>. Access on: May 5, 2017.

<sup>240</sup> The first group of instructors who attended, on March 2000, courses in Fuerte Tolemaida for this purpose was formed by 11 commissioned officers (*oficiales*) and 15 non-commissioned officers (*suboficiales*). In addition to that, 25 Second Corporals (*Cabo Segundo*) attended the Lancers’ School in order to work as instruction assistants. See: <http://www.espro.mil.co/?idcategoria=412477#>.

instructors in the ESPRO was undertaken in Fuerte Tolemaida<sup>241</sup>. Indeed, the facilities of the School present many similarities

The analysis on Plan Colombia developed above points to the articulation of three main domains of military *savoirs*: counter-terrorism, counterinsurgency, and counternarcotic. The first domain was reflected in the organization of Army combat units since 1985, with the anti-terrorist special forces (AFEUR), the second, since the 1960s, with Plan Lazo's emphasis on the *lanceros*, and the third corresponded to one of the units incorporated to the Colombian Army's structure in the beginning of the implementation of Plan Colombia. These domains constitute the juxtaposition of terrorism, guerrilla, and drug trafficking which characterized the specific problematization of violence in Colombia: from the vocabulary of "narcoguerrilla" to the one of "narcoterrorism". In line with these domains, the discussion developed above on Plan Colombia allows us to pinpoint three main concerns guiding the transformation of the Military Forces under this initiative: i) advance in the specialization and improve the mobility of military forces; ii) expand the "professionalization" of the Military Forces, specifically understood as the gradual substitution of "regular soldiers" for "professional soldiers"; iii) develop the infrastructure and facilities required for the training of soldiers (especially the "professional" ones). As regards the role of the United States in this program, 80% of the US\$ 4.6 billion of US foreign aid to Colombia from 2000 to 2006 (ISACSON, 2006) were invested in the acquisition of weapons, equipment, and helicopters (most of these, produced in the United States), as well as in contracts through which military officers of the US Army (especially from the US Special Forces) trained the newly created combat units.

The discussion above pointed at an additional relevant aspect: the social cut characterizing the "professionalization" of the Colombian Army. As we have seen, the emphasis on physical training and the preparation of the soldiers' bodies to resist hostile conditions of the jungle and mountain terrains was concentrated in the "professional soldiers", and the latter, by

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<sup>241</sup> See: <http://www.espro.mil.co/?idcategoria=189706>. Access on: May 5, 2017.

their turn, were characterized as a profile of lower social strata. The analysis built in this Section also highlighted that speaking about the “professionalization” of the Colombian Army in the particular context of Plan Colombia came to acquire a very restricted meaning<sup>242</sup>: troops organized with a(n increasingly) higher proportion of “professional soldiers” in comparison to “regular soldiers”. If the emphasis on the physical training already constituted the tactical approach characterizing the counterinsurgent *savoir*, what distinguishes the “professional soldier” from the “regular” one is precisely that the former is produced through short-term courses, through which the “military professional” is considered as prepared for counterinsurgent, counternarcotic, and/or counter-terrorism operations. It is the characterization constituted by the traits analyzed above that led me to frame this soldier as an “expert-soldier”, not without leaving traces from the “citizen soldier”.

In contrast to such dynamics, the non-commissioned officers (*suboficiales*) and the low-ranked military officers are those who are polished to become instructors and teachers, respectively. As regards the high-ranked military officer, he remains in the “classroom”, that is, in a formation process less anchored on the training center and more on *ad hoc* courses and events, improving networking – similarly to the function of the School of the America’s Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGS), in which “they learn many things, but that is really of secondary importance. The relations that they establish with others are at bottom the most important” – as the Colombian General Alberto González Herrera commented in an interview, after having attended the CGS course (GILL, 2004, p. 110).

Indeed, the high-ranked military officers were more often mentioned in this analysis in two kinds of passages: when referring to positions of decision in the Military Forces’ structure, and on Section 5.1, when I analyzed more attentively the circuit of military *savoirs* based on counterinsurgency. This last aspect allows us to insist on the position of the high-ranked officers as the social group constituting the condition under

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<sup>242</sup> I have used “transformation of the Military Forces” in order to differentiate more general processes characterizing the production of the professional within the military domain.

which the circuit acquires durability across time, as well as expands its outreach. Such a circuit, however, does not exist in the absence of troops formed mostly by lower social strata, which, through the social exclusion mechanisms operating within the military hierarchy differentiate the effects of professionalization across the Colombian Army.

Built through these lines, the transformation of the Military Forces in Colombia has been presented as the condition allowing for the “success story” to be possible. As we have seen on Chapters 1 and 3, the experience in a kind of irregular warfare combining guerrilla warfare, drug trafficking, and terrorism has been capitalized as an expertise that the Colombian Army can offer to countries with contexts facing threats framed within similar terms. Importantly, as we have seen throughout this research, transmitting military *savoirs* has always involved more than combining theoretical and practice in classes, using a specific book, giving examples and so on: it involves articulating those *savoirs* with a specific weaponry, as well as instilling transformations in the organization of the Military Forces.

As an example, ESPRO has been hosting short-term international courses on “tactical military operations against illegal organizations”<sup>243</sup> in the following areas: elite units; mobile units; explosive units; demolitions; and mines de-activation. In this sense, ESPRO instills not only the highly-ramified specialization that came to characterize the Colombian Army, but also the “professionalization”, in the specific terms of the “expert-soldier, of other armies in Latin America. Being the only school of its kind in South America, ESPRO has already received students from Brazil, Chile, China, Israel, Paraguay, Peru, United Kingdom and the United States themselves<sup>244</sup>. This suggests that the “operational framework” encompasses the transformations in the “military professional” dealt with in this Chapter.

## 5.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the role of counterinsurgency in the transformation of the circuits of military *savoirs* in Colombia in the 20<sup>th</sup>

<sup>243</sup> See: <<http://www.espro.mil.co/?idcategoria=189706>>. Access on: May 5, 2017.

<sup>244</sup> See: <http://www.espro.mil.co/?idcategoria=189706>. Access on: May 5, 2017.

century, when compared with the paradigm of so-called “conventional warfare” that predominated 19<sup>th</sup>-century European missions. In order to do so, I begun by identifying the practice of counterinsurgency as a shadow partner of conventional warfare since colonial times. Indeed, while counterinsurgency is usually placed as either an antecedent or a successor to conventional warfare, I have shown how both practices have always coexisted in the West. But if they aren’t differentiated by chronological means, how to mark their distinction?

Traditionally, the edifice of *savoirs* of conventional warfare and counterinsurgency have been separated by the concept of “civility”. While the former deals with conflict among civilized societies and, therefore, involves the kind of professionalization of the use of force I have discussed in the previous chapter, the latter differentiates itself precisely for dealing with so-called “less civilized” peoples in the colonies, thus engaging in more brutal methods. These colonial “small wars” led to the characterization of counterinsurgency soldiers as “quasi-professionals”, as the inherent brutality associated with COIN coexisted only paradoxically with the ideas of civilization that accompanied professionalization, thus threatening not only conventional warfare as an edifice of *savoirs*, but the very “citizen-soldier” subject.

By pointing to these contradictions, my purpose was to indicate the conditions under which COIN travelled from Europe to the United States, and how it was transformed, having crossed the Atlantic to a new context, into a fully professionalized *savoirs* of small (and brutal) wars. At the core of this transformation was the move to combine the “expertise” that had been built by France in Algeria with the North American attempts to design a military strategy for Southeast Asia in the context of the Cold War. Thus, I have argued that the association of civility and professionalization that held the boundary between conventional warfare and counterinsurgency in the colonies was dissolved in the Americas, setting the conditions for the professionalized “expert-soldier” to emerge from the military schools of the United States. But how does that professional differ from the one associated with conventional warfare?

On section 5.2, I take up this question, interrogating not why the main edifice of military *savoirs* changed in Colombia, but what were the practices constituting the professionalization programs led by the United States in the country since the 1950s and what were the concrete effects of such change. Institutionally, it is important to point to the substitution of training centers such as the *Escuela de Lanceros* for the *Escuela Militar* as the main site of reporting for those students. More fundamentally, however, is that the content of the programs was radically changed over this transformation, turning towards the large-scale production of tactically efficient bodies through short-term programs focused on the operational level. The new soldiers were thus trained around four axes: first, the technical preparation in order to better master weapons and equipment; second, the training for physical tactics; third, the psychological preparation of the soldiers (mainly through simulations); and fourth, the legal frameworks on human rights and humanitarian law.

This inflexion towards the production of a different “military professional” – the “expert soldier” – revolved around the resources flowing into the country through Plan Colombia from the 1990s onward. Indeed, it is impossible to think the proliferation of training centers and equipment without the massive investment into Colombian Armed Forces that constituted Plan Colombia. I take up the fundamental role of this turning point on Section 5.3. In doing so, I also point to the re-articulation of the very position of Colombia in the circuits of military *savoirs* in Latin America that follows from its transformations.

In sum, in this chapter, I have argued that to understand the transformation of the Military Forces in Colombia and, thus, to understand the processes through which this country came to be repositioned in a circuit of *savoirs* as a “success story”, we must grasp the 20<sup>th</sup> century shifts that took place in the Colombian Armed Forces through the massive investment of the United States. Furthermore, I have argued that in order to do so we must recover a silenced tradition of warfare – counterinsurgency – that has remained in the shadows of conventional warfare under the claim that it was restricted to the brutal dark corners of the European colonial past. By showing how counterinsurgency has always coexisted with conventional warfare and how

it has always posed problems to the latter's articulation of civilization, professionalization, and modernization, I have presented the conditions under which the 19<sup>th</sup> "citizen-soldier" could be displaced – though not done away with – by the 20<sup>th</sup> century 'expert-soldier'. Ultimately, it is only by understanding the profound effects of this transformation not only for the Military Forces themselves, but for the community in general, that we can come to terms with the regional and global meaning of the story of the Colombian "success story".

## 6. Final remarks

The point of departure for this research was the following puzzle: how was it possible that Colombia, which has been historically stigmatized as a “problematic country”, came to be taken as a reference for “solutions” to other countries? This research attacked this puzzle in two main analytical fronts. Firstly, I investigated on the conditions allowing for the “success story” to be told. Secondly, I explored how the organization of violence reproduced through the discourse of modernization has been historically transformed in Colombia. The first analytical move was guided by three main concerns: (i) what are the assumptions upon which the construction of Colombia as a “problematic country” rests?; (ii) what are the criteria upon which the “success” is claimed?; and (iii) what are the mechanisms defining what is eligible to be told? The second analytical move was guided by three main concerns: (i) what are the practices constituting the professionalization of the military?; (ii) what are the effects of the professionalization of the military?; (iii) what is at stake in the transformation of the rules through which violence is organized and transmitted?

On Part One, I engaged with the first cluster of questions. Starting from the idea underlying the Colombian “success story” is that a specific set of problems has been overcome, I analyzed the main processes through which Colombia came to be constructed as a “problematic country”. Chapter 2 plunged into the system of problematizations constituted by the “problem of violence”, the “problem of drugs”, and the “problem of the guerrillas” and argued that the reform of the 1980 Penal Code in Colombia marks the convergence between these “problems” through their inscription in the category of “ordinary delinquency”. This argument was based on three main elements analyzed on Section 2.1: the expansion of the margins through which social conducts could be framed as “disturbances to public order”; the increasing criminalization of the “problem of drugs”; and the gradual weakening of “political delinquency” as a penal category. In other words, there was an increasing provision of “penal solutions” to the



“problems of democracy” and to the “problem of drugs”, and a delinquent and de-politicizing approach towards the “problem of the guerrillas”.

On Section 2.2, I discussed how such processes intersected with the problematization of drugs in the United States, with special attention regarding the externalization and the militarization characterizing such an approach. The former had the effect of confining the source of the “problem of drugs” in the “drug producing countries”, as well as constructing Colombia as a container of pathologies to be analyzed, diagnosed and medicated. As regards the militarization characterizing the problematization of drugs in the United States, it is necessary to read it within the context of the delinquent and de-politicizing approach to war that was already being fermented in Colombia by the early-1980s. As I have argued on Chapter 2, the alchemy between these processes has resulted, by the end of the 1990s, in a very specific reading of violence in Colombia: one deriving from the activity of guerrillas which found in drug trafficking the source of financial resources for their military power. If the vocabulary of “narcoguerrilla” expresses the delinquent and de-politicizing character of the problematization of violence in Colombia, the re-articulation of such a framing as “narcoterrorism” in the context of the “war on terror” inscribes such a delinquency in the vocabulary of radical otherness.

If drugs fuel the violence of “narcoterrorists”, “then” counternarcotic policies would suffocate the guerrillas by extinguishing the source of their military power – any problematization already contains the horizon of possible solutions for the problem it points at. In this sense, it is somewhat expected that the debates concerned with the performance of Colombia in medicating its problems would orbit around counternarcotic policies. On Chapter 3, I dissected the rationale of the web of criteria upon which the “success” is claimed. Particularly, the discussion on Section 3.1 looked at the terms under dispute between governmental agencies and economics-based academics regarding the metrics used to assess “counternarcotic performance” of Colombia. I argued that the disputes around the more appropriate metrics came to be increasingly insulated in a “technocratic” vocabulary, less concerned with the constitutive pillars of the “policy solutions” under scrutiny, and more attentive to gains in precision, data

compilation, and efficiency. In this sense, although such a debate has constantly re-articulated the discursive field through marginal adjustments in counternarcotic policies, the constitutive pillars of the problematization from which those policies emerged has remained intact.

But what are the silencing mechanisms through which the discursive field differentiates what is allowed to be told from what is not? Section 3.2 engaged with such a question by exploring two kinds of discursive “monstrosities”: unionists and human rights organizations. The “monster” metaphor was mobilized in order to refer to “external critiques” invested towards the discursive field, that is, criticisms challenging the constitutive pillars of the discursive field. Building on the historical framing of strikes and other forms of protests adopted by workers as “disturbances of public order”, the intelligence apparatus has kept unionists under a silent observation, differentiating their degrees of “dangerousness” through lists of “suspects” and “targets”. On Section 3.2, I discussed how the intelligence apparatus fed military and police operations, resulting in extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances and forced detentions of unionists in Colombia. These and other violations have constituted the work of several human rights organizations, whose activities were focused on approaching the victims, compiling and systematizing information on those violations and shedding light to “state crimes”. Such denunciations were fully dismissed by political officials under the argument that the information lacked credibility and, in the context of Álvaro Uribe’s administration, when the debates on the metrics were in effervescence, these human rights organizations were framed as spokespersons of “terrorism”.

The discussion advanced on Section 3.2 showed that extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances and forced detentions are both the effect through which silencing is realized and the object of silencing. As a result of the former, workers’ demands were kept out of the discursive field. As I suggested in many passages of Section 3.2, something similar could be claimed regarding land reform, since *campesino* leaders were often the object of the same silencing practices invested against unionists. As for the silencing of denunciations of human rights violations, the effect was that the

narrative of the state as perpetrator of violence was kept outside the horizon of the disputes regarding the metrics addressed on Section 3.1.

Read as a whole, Part One discussed the limits within which the “success story” is told. If the criteria through which the “success” is claimed are anchored on the “solutions” provided to a set of “problems” resulting from a specific problematization of violence in Colombia, the “success story” defines the horizon of possibilities within which the story can be about. Firstly, the “problem” is a condition to “success”, for the latter is affirmed in reference to a set of “problems” claimed as “overcome”. However, it is a specific “problematic past” that is produced through the “success story”: a delinquent and a-political violence nurtured by resources from drug trafficking. Secondly, the “success story” produces a specific “successful present”, silencing narratives challenging its content and its constitutive pillars. As shown on Section 3.2, the “success story” cannot be about social or land reforms. Nor can it be about the state as part of the problem of violence.

Part Two plunged into what I called the circuit of military *savoirs* in Latin America. The conditions for the emergence of such a circuit were analyzed on Section 4.1. Engaging with Elias’s *The civilizing process* (2000) and Weber’s *Politics as a Vocation* (2004), I discussed how “professionalization” is inscribed in the discourse of modernization. I argued that the constitutive pillars of the latter authorize the pacification of the “social space” as the condition for progress to flourish. Also, I have shown that civilization and professionalization are entangled in the process of organizing violence within the “pacified social space”. This analytical move allowed us to highlight that the claims on the need to professionalize the military relied on a boundary drawn between the “civil” and the “military”, and another, drawn between the “technical” and the “political”. The final part of Section 4.1 mobilized Sarmiento’s *Facundo* with the objective of shedding light on how a canonical reproduction of the discourse of modernization in Latin America framed Europe as a reference of how the organization of violence had to be so that civilization was realized in Argentina.

Based on the claim that the reproduction of the discourse of modernization was the condition allowing for the emergence of the circuit of military *savoirs*, Section 4.2 showed the intense transit of French and Prussian military missions circulating in Latin America in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The work of these missions was centered on the production of “military professionals” in the host countries – which, more specifically, involved the elaboration of legislations establishing criteria for the military ascension, universal conscription, as well as the creation of military schools and their respective curricula. Furthermore, Section 4.2 mapped the main transmission currents of this emerging circuit in Latin America: in addition to the European military missions themselves, I identified the relevance of manuals, journals specialized on military *savoirs* and weapons in the transmission of rules of violence among “military professionals” within this circuit. At the same time these “transmission currents” result from *savoirs* that are valorized by the “military professional” in Latin America, they reinforce the importance of those *savoirs*, by diffusing it to military officers and teaching those *savoirs* in the military schools. Finally, the adoption of legislations defining rules for the “universal” conscription and the ascension within the military career; the use of uniforms; the similarity between the architectural and curricular traits of the military schools across the countries in Latin America are among the main aspects allowing us to recognize an effect of homogenization operating among the military forces in the region.

Following the discussion about the conditions under which the circuit of military *savoirs* emerged in Latin America and about the transmission currents and effects of this circuit, Section 4.3 analyzed the position of Colombia within this circuit of *savoirs*. More specifically, I discussed how the Chilean mission participated in the organization of the profile of students and the curriculum that would constitute the center of gravity of the professionalization process: the *Escuela Militar*. I argued that the “citizen-soldier” was the kind of “military professional” expected to emerge from the work of the Chilean mission. In other words, the production of the “professional military” emerging from such a professionalization program was characterized by: i) a comprehensive pedagogical project, which included classes on History, Geography, foreign

languages, among others; and ii) the school as the center of gravity of the professionalization process. Importantly, I argued that civilizational trait of the work of the Chilean mission towards the Colombian Army resulted in a social cut, differentiating the practices orbiting around the professionalization according to the social strata corresponding to the military rank. That is, for high-ranked military, the building of the “military professional” involved a different set of practices of those characterizing the building of the “military professional” in the soldiery. Furthermore, by discussing the tensions constituting the relation of the Chilean mission with the Colombian Army and government at that time, I argued that the drawing of the condition of possibility of the boundary between the “political” and the “technical” is shown to lie, paradoxically, in its crossing.

Chapter 5 built from the discussion on the circuit of military *savoirs* with attention to how counterinsurgency re-articulated the transmission currents, the practices comprehended in the professionalization, and the positioning of Colombia in the circuit of military *savoirs*. Section 5.1 argued that, while counterinsurgency is usually placed as either an antecedent or a successor to conventional warfare, it has coexisted with the latter. By investigating the mechanisms through which counterinsurgency has travelled from Europe to the United States, my objective was to highlight the conditions under which counterinsurgency came to be incorporated into the edifice of military *savoirs* and mobilized in professionalization programs in Latin America.

Focused on how Colombia was immersed in this dynamic, Section 5.2 discusses the Korean War as an event which is framed by the Colombian Army as the turning point of its relation with the United States, as well as with counterinsurgency. I show how the translation of irregular warfare into architectural forms in Colombia could be observed since the 1950s, when the Colombian Army created the *Escuela de Lanceros*. The analysis developed in this Section shows that the center of gravity of professionalization programs in Colombia was gradually moved towards the training centers. In order to explore the implications of this process, I dissected the course program of the *lanceros* and argued that the content of their professionalization had been radically transformed, turning towards the

large-scale production of tactically efficient bodies through short-term programs focused on the tactical level.

In line with those features, Section 5.3 explored how the resources flowing from the United States to Colombia through Plan Colombia operated in the transformation of the “military professional”. Although preserving the main axes through which the production of the “military professional” was organized, Plan Colombia reorganized the intelligence command, advanced the specialization of the small-units of combat, invested heavily in mobility of these forces, whose operations were focused in the articulation of counterinsurgency, counternarcotic and counterterrorism domains. Most importantly, I argued that Plan Colombia consolidated a project of “professionalization” based on the category *soldado profesional*, that is, a conscript soldier who, after 18-24 months of service, chooses to integrate the Military Forces, without, however, being incorporated to the military career. It is based on these particular features that I mobilized the expression “expert-soldier” in order to differentiate the emphasis on specialization, tactics, physical training and this specific understanding of “professionalization” from the traits characterizing the “citizen-soldier” of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Colombia. I concluded Section 5.3 by highlighting one of the emblematic training centers – ESPRO – in the spotlights when it comes to the expertise Colombia is now in position to teach to other states in Latin America. These particular features analyzed on Part Two allow us to raise important questions regarding the implications of the re-positioning of Colombia in the circuit of military *savoirs* for the “success story” analyzed on Part One, as well as for the transmission of rules of violence to other countries.

The main conclusions achieved by this research open new questions for further researches. Firstly, this work provided analytical elements for us to resist an institutionalist emphasis when addressing the organization of violence, for it is not capable of grasping how the military *savoirs* circulate across buildings, across countries, and how it traverses society. In this sense, any debate about the “post-conflict” must consider the conditions under which the military *savoirs* have for so long pervaded ordering practices in

Colombia. How are the mechanisms through which violence has been historically transmitted being re-articulated?

Also, this research invites consideration on how the current terms of the debate around the Peace Agreement reproduce a decades-old problematization of violence in Colombia. In doing so, I worry that the same exclusions that I have identified in this work continue to guide the solutions available on the table. In face of that, investigating how military *savoirs* and their circulation are a constitutive part of the organization of violence allows us to advance thinking in two directions. First, we can raise new questions and draft alternative solutions that might challenge the constitutive silences of the “success story”. Second, we can insist upon the interrogation of the conditions under which different solutions are developed, notably in terms of the underlying organization of violence. With that in mind, the research opens the ground for further investigation.

I am particularly interested in how the discussion developed throughout Chapters 4-5 is connected to the debates on “military culture” and violence. If the “barracks culture” (*cultura de caserna*) is often evoked as the source of the problem of the excesses of violence in the Military and the Military Police (and de-militarization as the solution), how does the idea of the “expert soldier” re-articulate such a claim? In other words, if the latter is produced through short-term courses (14 weeks, for instance), is it still pertinent for us to claim a “barracks culture” being instilled in the soldier’s world view?

Secondly, the emphasis on the circulation of military *savoirs* has encountered the police in some passages of this text. A fruitful research would involve exploring the circuit of police *savoirs*, in order to identify the mechanisms through which it differentiates the “police professional” from the “military professional”, as well as to grasp the *savoirs* in which these two circuits meet. Moreover, how have the practices constituting the “police professional” been transformed throughout the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries?

Thirdly, the intersection of the transformation of the “military professional” with the obsession with metrics that came to characterize the Colombian “success story” reveals a perverse logic linking efficiency to extrajudicial killings and their legitimation. Here, the “False Positives” is an

emblematic example, for it circumscribes how the relevance of numbers has led, on the one hand, to claims on the “success story” based on declining homicide rates, and, on the other hand, to an implicit understanding of “success” based on the increase of killing rates under-covered as a discourse of pacification. This scandal appears under new and worrisome light, given the position of the Colombian Army in the circuit of military *savoirs* in the region and the world.

Finally, this re-positioning of Colombia in the circuit of military *savoirs* raises questions regarding the transforming configurations of violence in the 21st century. If Colombia is at the core of the so-called “South-South Cooperation” in military issues (PINZÓN, 2015, p. 8), how has the position of the United States in this circuit been re-articulated? Also, we saw that Brazil does not recurrently appear in the range of examples of potential “markets” for the Colombian expertise. Yet, Brazilian military figure on the more silent lists of countries attending courses at the ESPRO and Forte Tolemaida. An intriguing object of investigation would involve mapping the *savoirs* which have been valorized by the Brazilian military in its interlocution with Colombia. In broader terms, what are the *savoirs* driving the so-called “South-South Cooperation”, how do they circulate through these channels and how do they re-articulate economies of violence throughout the circuit? Finally, and conversely, how is this configuration of military circuit related to the question on “what to do with the military” in a post-conflict Colombia? In other words, how does claims to Colombian centrality in South-South Cooperation speak not only to circuits of cooperation, but also to the Colombian present and the place of the military in it.



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