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8   Colombia: Transmedia Projects in Contexts of Armed Conflict and Political Change

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Colombians have suffered almost six decades of armed conflict. It is a war sustained by structural sociopolitical causes that cannot be won militarily, but has not been resolved by peace or political agreements either. The shocking reality of violence in Colombia (more than 6 million victims in the last twenty years and more than 4 million internally displaced [OCHA 2013; CHM 2013]) underpins important questions regarding the nature of the conflict and the role of civil society in armed conflict contexts. Revisiting the academic work of García-Durán (2004) and Wills (2006) by international standards, the magnitude of the Colombian conflict can be described as a war. However, the multiplicity of factors and actors involved in the armed confrontation could designate a clear situation of multipolar violence (Vásquez 2010), the degradation of the conflict can show a scenario of war against society (Pecaut 2004) or the influence of the United States in Colombia (and the focus of its foreign policy after 11 September 2001) can equally suggest the Colombian conflict as an anti-terrorist war (Hernández 2004). As a consequence, some Latin-American academics use the label 'the war without name' (García-Durán 2004; Wills 2006) to stress how the Colombian armed conflict would appear to have a little of all these elements, highlighting the need to adopt a complex and multidimensional approach in order to understand the nature, and future solution, of this conflict.

Since 2010, and after three decades of failed peace efforts in Colombia, a Colombian model of conflict resolution is emerging that aims for the institutionalization of peace as a state policy rather than as a presidential policy. This approach addresses ethical values and norms of International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law in order to recognize guerrilla groups as valid political interlocutors. Embracing the idea that peace will entail structural changes in social and political terms, the central element of this model of conflict resolution is the active role of civil society and, particularly, the development of communicative and collective actions to promote peace and reconciliation in the country. This model of conflict resolution understands the role of civil society to shape a better future, recognizing victims' collective action as a mechanism to restore a sense of citizenship, collective belonging and construction of processes of memory, recognition and solidarity in the midst of armed conflicts.

With this context in mind, this chapter focuses on the relationship between communicative actions, civil society's collective action and human rights in the midst of the Colombian armed conflict. It analyzes the communicative and expressive dimensions of civil society's collective action as a mechanism to restore a sense of citizenship through the development of transmedia projects. It shows how collective belonging and human rights are constructed through processes of memory, recognition and solidarity, where the development of transmedia projects is key in order to catalyze social cohesion in fragile communities. The case study of this chapter is the city of Medellin (the second biggest city of Colombia), analyzing particularly the transmedia social project #noescomolapintan. A key objective of ours is to understand what kind of citizen processes this transmedia project can open up within contexts of armed conflict and

how these practices have been affecting the claiming of human rights in Medellin from a civil society perspective.

We establish in this chapter that it is evident for the Colombian case that the development of transmedia projects as part of different civil society groups can generate processes of construction of social memory, recognition and solidarity from a counter-public perspective. Furthermore, one of the principal arguments is that the development of a set of transmedia social projects for citizens is crucial to restoring a sense of citizenship inside victims' groups, and to promoting processes of national reconciliation and transition to democracy from a civil society perspective. We also argue that collective action and transmedia narratives plays a key role in mobilizing civil society in times of conflict, taking over part of the tasks normally performed by the state, inducing the formation of strong political identities and sociopolitical scenarios for conflict resolution. For this research, it is our aim to understand the role of civil society and the impact of transmedia projects and victims' collective actions in the midst of armed conflicts. We believe that if Colombia wants to start real long-term processes of peace and reconciliation in the future, then the voice of civil society and victims needs to be at the center of the process.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section introduces contemporary discussions regarding the role of civil society in contexts of armed conflict. The second section shows information regarding the armed conflict in Colombia, addressing particularities for the case of Medellin in the light of political change. The third section analyzes the transmedia social project #noescomolapintan within the context of the Colombian armed conflict and within frameworks of stigmatization. In the final section, we present the conclusions for this work, emphasizing the idea that victims of armed conflicts, addressing expressive dimensions of collective social action through transmedia projects, can reestablish social, political and cultural bonds with their local communities in the aim of promoting peace and reconciliation.

The Role of Civil Society in Contexts of Armed Conflict

Since the end of the Cold War, it is extensively documented in the literature that civil society played a crucial role in armed conflict societies, particularly in two macro issues: first, delivering or supporting processes of peace-making or peace-building; and second, generating waves of democratization in fragile contexts (Kaldor 2013; Marchetti and Tocci 2009). Ross (2000) and Rufer (2012) argue that non-state actors are more efficient in working for peace and national reconciliation than state actors, being able to talk to different parties without losing credibility and being more suitable to support transitions to democracy in post-armed conflict societies. Thus, in armed conflict contexts, people organize themselves to defend common interests or work for social and political transformations. Notably, they have an important role in four particular areas: preventing violent conflict and military operations against civilians; working with local communities in zones of high violence to deliver humanitarian aid; supporting peace negotiations; and endorsing reconstruction and reconciliation in post-conflict societies. In short, civil society groups and victims' social movements are decisive for the continuation of anti-war efforts and they are key actors to develop sustainable peace in the long-term.

Orjuela (2003) argues that in the context of armed conflicts, the primary responsibility of civil society groups is to create social cohesion, developing a sense of trust and a spirit of collaboration to promote

peace, cooperation and reconciliation between different sections of society. For Orjuela, the main consequence of an active civil society is the prevention of future armed conflicts, underlining the importance of the civic sphere in normalizing the living conditions of former victims and improving human rights records in conflict zones. The particular role of victims' social movements in promoting peace negotiations is fundamental in terms of positive influence on public opinion and in expressing victims' perspectives in the political arena. When a peace process is under way, victims' organizations can contribute to improving the legitimacy of political negotiations, addressing their claims and grievances during the process to the leaders and the general public opinion. On the other hand, in post-conflict contexts, civil society groups and victims' groups are crucial to build trust between former combatants and civilians, especially to consolidate democracy and good governance to rebuild broken societies. Thus, the principal threats for civil society in armed conflict contexts are the possible suppression of human rights, limitations of basic civil society activities, undermining of trust and erosion of social capital, as well as partial lawlessness. In this context, the free press and independent media are drastically controlled, depriving civil society organizations of communication channels connecting to other social groups, citizens and political institutions.

Importantly, the deterioration of civil society activities in armed conflict contexts makes social recovery after war even more difficult. Fear, mistrust, insecurity, uncertainty, prompted by years and years of armed conflict, all go to obstruct citizens, social groups and common people from participating in local community developments or activities. This decline is sometimes a consequence of the exile or forced displacement of different civil society groups or key social actors, undermining the capacity of social and civic organizations to remain in times of war. At the same time, the development of collective actions of victims' social movements and civil society groups in armed conflict societies can be crucial to restore participatory democracy and all forms of associational and communicative activity. In some contexts, collective action is a mechanism that strengthens the bonds between different victims' communities across armed conflict regions, restoring the sense of citizenship and collective belonging among them. In addition, civil society's collective actions are central to formulating the demands for respect of human rights in the midst of armed conflicts, facilitating processes of democratization in post-authoritarian societies, and supporting processes of construction of political and cultural memory, recognition and solidarity during and after the conflict. In summary, collective action plays a key role to mobilizing civil society in times of conflict, taking over part of the tasks normally performed by the state (for example, assisting humanitarian work) and inducing the formation of strong political identities (such as victims' or survivors' political identities) and sociopolitical scenarios for conflict resolution.

According to Marchetti and Tocci (2009) and Kaldor (2013), the interaction between contexts, identity, frameworks of action, communicative resources and political opportunity structures determines the impact of civil society in contexts of armed conflict. For these scholars, impact is taken to mean both the direct results of a particular action as well as the influence upon the wider context underlying a particular manifestation of conflict or post-conflict. Civil society's direct and contextual impact is determined by the wider conflict or post-conflict context, by the identities of civil society, by their actions within the four main frameworks of action (conflict escalation, conflict management, resolution and transformation), and by the political structure within which they operate. In other words, contexts of conflict or post-conflict shape the identities of civil society. Those identities determine their frameworks of action. In turn, the ability of civil society to navigate the political opportunity structure of

conflicts defines their overall direct and contextual impact, the latter of which feeds back into the original conflict or post-conflict contexts.

Furthermore, for Marchetti and Tocci (2009) and Della Porta (2015), during the last two decades three main macro-impacts of civil society in contexts of armed conflict can be highlighted. First, they can fuel conflict by, for example, intensifying the initial causes leading to further securitization. Second, they can hold a conflict in its current state, preventing an escalation while laying the ground for peace, as Marchetti and Tocci note:

> At a minimum and most visible level, they operate upon the most acute symptoms of conflict such as extreme violence, poverty, health or destruction, by providing immediate relief. By doing so, they may help desecuritizing the conflict environment, thus creating a more fertile ground for an ensuing tackling of its roots causes in the long term.
>
> (Marchetti and Tocci 2009, 216)

The third macro-impact of civil society in contexts of armed conflict is peace-making. It involves the range of impacts that civil society can have on reconciling incompatible subject positions by desecuritizing the conflict environment. Revisiting the work of Kalyvas (2012) and Wood (2015), we can argue that in post-armed conflict democracies with a strong military presence and militarized culture, civil society is often related to the push for full democratization and the civilization of politics, thus threatening the state. However, we must also be aware that the state is central to shaping the nature and role of civil society. When a state does not exist, or it is weak or failing, civil society comes to occupy part of the space normally filled by the functioning state. In contexts of armed conflict, when the state lacks stability, sovereign or independence, civil society can shape the actual nature of the state in question. In this context, from a political science perspective (Della Porta 2015; Marchetti and Tocci 2009), civil society needs to be both permitted and protected by the state; its existence, nature and role is determined by democracy, outlining the scope of associative freedom, as well as by the existence of other basic rights and freedoms normally protected within democratic states.

Nevertheless, we argue that when these freedoms and rights are curtailed, civil society is expected to act beyond legal boundaries, often aiming to subvert the state rather than interact with it, problematizing further the distinction between 'civil' and 'uncivil' civil society actors. In contexts of armed conflict, the shape of civil society is affected also by the specific nature of the democratic order in question. In other words, civil society functions and roles are fundamentally shaped by the specific armed conflict context in question. As a result, civil society is both an independent agent for change and a dependent product of existing structures, where 'civil' and 'uncivil' actors carrying a wide range of actions can interact within the state, both influencing and being influenced inextricably by it.

From the perspective of this research, a lack of a communicative approach limits the analysis of civil society's collective action in contexts of armed conflict. Therefore, a number of questions need addressing. What is the role of communicative agency in these contexts? How are the communicative dimensions of collective action helping civil society to address the three main macro-impacts (fuelling conflict, holding conflict, and peace-making)? And what is the impact of transmedia projects in shaping social cohesion in fragile or contested contexts? These are questions that need to be answered in order to fully understand the contemporary role of civil society and communicative strategies in fragile social

contexts. If we can better understand the communicative and expressive dimensions of collective actions, it is possible to analyze how civil society creates social cohesion, developing a sense of trust and a spirit of collaboration to promote peace, cooperation and reconciliation in fragile social contexts. Our main argument here is that civil society is one of the principal social actors that has to develop a new type of socio-communicative regime in armed conflict societies, demanding in different spaces, fields or 'sociopolitical arenas' the recognition of communicative rights as citizen rights. Thus, this recognition is crucial to start a process of communicative democratization, where citizens' collective social action and the development of transmedia projects are principal resources.

Medellin and the Colombian Armed Conflict

Colombia has a population of 48 million, a landmass of 1.139.000 km^2, with 5 million internally displaced people, 480,000 refugees, two left-wing guerrilla groups/armies and more than six new right-wing paramilitary groups/armies called BACRIMS. Also, Colombia has the most unequal distribution of wealth across the continent, with 30% of its population living in poverty, and it is experiencing one of the longest armed conflicts in the world, lasting almost 50 years (Fisas 2009; UNDP 2010). The United Nations Development Programme identifies five structural factors underlying the chronic armed conflict in the country: drug trafficking, limited and ineffective regional and local government, persistent inequality and exclusion, the incapacity of the state to establish democratic institutions and the apparent indifference of political and economic elites (UNDP 2003, 2010). According to Sanchez and Meertens (2001), Pecaut (2004) and Wills (2006), the principal cause of the Colombian conflict is the asymmetric war between the Colombian army and other irregular military groups (guerrillas, paramilitaries, drug dealers) for control over territory and the incapacity of the state to develop democratic mechanisms in the country. From 2002 to 2010 this was exacerbated by the Government's redefinition, which informed policy of the armed conflict as a 'terrorist threat' (Republic of Colombia – Ministry of National Defence, 2010).

In 2002 Colombia started to undergo deep sociopolitical change. After a failed peace process between the guerrilla group of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC-EP) and the government of conservative president Andrés Pastrana (1998–2002), a new president, Alvaro Uribe Vélez, was elected with the support of paramilitary groups and extreme right parties (Lopez 2010; Romero 2007). This right-wing president introduced a new policy called Programme of Democratic Security which was based on the militarization of the civilian population and military combat against the guerrillas. This program was supported by the government of the United States through the Colombia Plan (Fisas 2009). After four years of Uribe's government, the president, using his political influence, changed the constitution to get a second term in 2004. As a result of his eight years in office (2002–2010), he established a strong relationship between paramilitary groups and official political parties, where the reconfiguration of the state in favor of illegal groups was the principal consequence. During these years, 77% of Colombian MPs were paramilitary group supporters, which resulted in huge damage to democracy in the country (HRW 2010; Lopez 2010). Furthermore, a radicalization of public opinion into two groups (the supporters of Uribe's government vs. the critics of Uribe's policies) shaped the stereotypical and misleading image of both sides: groups who upheld the extreme right policies were associated with paramilitary groups, while groups who supported center and left policies were associated with guerrilla's groups (Gonzalez 2010; UNDP 2010).

Another consequence of the implementation of the program of 'democratic security' during these years was government's persecution of journalists, trade union workers, teachers, human rights activist, United Nations employers, lawyers, Colombian MPs, Supreme Court judges and NGO activists; particularly in principal cities, such as Bogotá, Medellin and Cali and regions with the highest levels of violence as Caquetá, Putumayo, Montes de María and Antioquia (HRW 2010; UNDP 2010). In 2010, Juan Manuel Santos, former Minister of Defence of Uribe's administration, was elected as new Colombian president for a period of four years (2010–2014) in order to continue the development of these right-wing policies. However, president Santos distanced himself from this ideology and opened up peace talks with the FARC-EP in 2012, although still keeping heavy military operations across the country and his government receiving technical cooperation in defense issues from the United States. In 2016, and after a long process of negotiations, the Colombian Government and this guerrilla group signed a ceasefire deal. However, the Colombian public rejected this agreement in a plebiscite. Nevertheless, The Colombian Government and the FARC-EP signed a revised peace agreement that it is pending approval by the Colombian Congress.

As a result, the principal victims of the Colombian armed conflict are civilians. The Colombian research center 'Program for Peace' states that 86% of the 6 million victims of the Colombian war in the last twenty years were noncombatants, out of which 71% were women (Program for Peace 2010). Thus, Medellin (the capital city of the County of Antioquia) is the city with the highest number of victims of interurban forced displacement in the country (more than half a million victims) and the highest number of victims of forced disappearance with more than 100,000 people reported missing or kidnapped by illegal groups. Furthermore, Medellin supplied 43% of child soldiers to the conflict, and Antioquia is the county with the highest number of victims of the Colombian armed conflict (1.2 million) (Medellin City Council Victims Unit 2017).

However, the principal aspect to consider in the case of Medellin is the permanent suffering of civilians in the midst of the armed conflict. The citizens of this city had experienced all the possible consequences of war (stigmatization, forced displacements, massacres, persecutions, marginalization, extra-judicial executions, tortures, etc.), and they are victims of all forms of violations and human rights abuses. Thus, three main aspects can characterize Medellin as a representative example of the dynamic of war in Colombia: first, the ongoing fighting between different illegal and legal armed groups for control over the local territory and its resources; second, the co-optation of civilians by illegal forces to affect social cohesion and trust; and finally, the establishment of illegal economies around drug trafficking, kidnapping and extortion that strongly affects the urban economy.

According to García de la Torre and Aramburo (2011) and Duncan and Eslava (2015), it is possible to establish three main characteristics of the humanitarian crisis in Medellin. First, it is the rise of an 'uprooting generation' with immediate effects in the social structure of the city; where the negative process of interurban forced displacement has deeply undermined social and cultural ties of families and communities with this particular territory. The second characteristic is the establishment of a culture of fear and distrust between local communities of the urban areas of Medellin as a result of the asymmetric armed conflict. Often erroneously, illegal groups have been related to some particular neighborhoods, creating an environment of dangerous stereotypes and rumors inside the population. As a consequence, the justification of some military operations was often based on those erroneous generalizations, targeting specific people as local leaders, politicians or human rights defenders. A good example of this it is the case of 'Operation Orion' in Comuna 13 (a poor neighborhood in Medellin) in

2002, where it is evidence of a military collaboration between the Colombian army and paramilitary groups and where five female social leaders were killed in a heavily populated urban area of Medellin. The third characteristic is the targeting of civilians as a method of war. This strategy is utilized by both illegal and legal armed groups, and became the main objective of their military operations. By killing innocent bystanders, they prove their power, superiority and ownership of specific urban areas to their rivals, as well as undermining the social and cultural base of support for another armed group. Regarding this third characteristic, the International NGO Amnesty International notes:

> All the parties to the conflict – guerrilla groups, the security forces and paramilitaries – have been responsible for widespread and often systematic human rights abuses and violations of IHL mostly, but not exclusively, committed against civilians. Such abuses include threats against and killings of civilians; enforced disappearances; hostage taking; forced displacement; torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; and indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks against the civilian population. These abuses constitute crimes under national and international law. Most victims have been either campesinos or community leaders who the security forces have falsely claimed were guerrillas killed in combat. The victim is typically taken from their home or place of work in front of witnesses and taken to another location to be killed. The body is presented wearing army fatigues by the security forces, although witnesses testify that the victim had been wearing civilian clothes when detained. Many of the victims are buried as unidentified individuals despite being identified by family members. The bodies also often show signs of torture.

> (Amnesty International 2008, 25–26)

In summary, it is possible to argue that the current situation in Medellin is a good reference to understand in holistic terms the contemporary dynamics of the armed conflict in Colombia. This particular case reveals the main strategies that illegal groups have been developing in Colombian cities since 1993, and how some war tactics were implemented first in Medellin in order to replicate it in other Colombian urban areas. For example, Medellin was the first place where guerrillas groups used human shields to prevent territorial control for part of the Colombian army, or where paramilitary groups implemented massacres against civilians as a war strategy in order to spread fear and terror.

The Case of the Transmedia Social Project #noescomolapintan

La Loma neighborhood is a geographically strategic area for the armed conflict in Medellin city, where guerrillas and paramilitary groups have been using this territory as a main corridor to transport war supplies and illegal materials. According to the Victims Unit of Medellin City Council one guerrilla group, The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC-EP), five particular paramilitary groups, Carlos Castaño's Self-Defence group, Magdalena Medio Self-Defence group, Metro bloc, Cacique Nutibara bloc and Heroes of Granada bloc, and, on the other hand, the Colombian Army and Medellin's Police forces, have been struggling to gain control over this territory and its resources for more than twenty-five years (Medellin City Council Victims Unit 2017).

In order to understand the impact of the armed conflict in La Loma neighborhood one fact is relevant: since 1980 more than 234 families were interurban displaced as a consequence of the military actions between legal and illegal forces in this territory. Furthermore, in the last three decades in La Loma more than 154 people have disappeared or kidnapped, thirty-five massacres happened (72% of victims were women) and seventeen mass graves have been discovered in neighboring rural areas (Colombian Government 2003; Medellin City Council Victims Unit 2017). However, the principal impact of the war in La Loma is that the neighborhood is territorially divided into areas controlled by gangs (known as 'combos') loyal to one side or the other, creating a phenomenon called 'invisible borders' that divide the territory into criminal territories, undermining the social cohesion of the local community.

In this context, since 2013 the inhabitants of La Loma started a socio-communicative project to generate processes of solidarity, recognition and memory in the local community. This project, called 'The Social Initiative of La Loma neighbourhood', aims to create social cohesion in this territory by developing communicative and transmedia initiatives. As a result of an alliance between the Victims Unit of Medellin City Council, EAFIT University and the Historical Memory report, 'Medellin Enough Already!' In 2014, the transmedia social project #noescomolapintan began to show the process of resistance that this urban community has been doing since 1980 in the midst of the armed conflict. A key objective of this project was to fight against stigmatization, stereotypes and discrimination by developing transmedia products where the local community presented nonofficial narratives regarding the war, and using victims' perspective to understand the dynamics of contestation in the construction of memory, recognition and solidarity during the conflict.

From 2015 to 2016, this transmedia social project created a Media-Lab in La Loma to develop five strategies. The first strategy called Communicative Citizenship was an effort to involve the community in public discussions about the war, victim reparation and reconciliation from a communicative perspective. The aim of this strategy was to build communicative and political agency to the inhabitants of this neighborhood to imagine new forms of collective action with transmedia narratives as a principal tool. The second strategy, named Cartographies of Resistance and Hope, was focused on to develop social, territorial and sound cartographies from a victims' perspective to recognize two elements: first, the repertoire of actions of resistance made by this community to overcome the war since 1980, and, second, the expressive and communicative dimension of the territory of La Loma from the inhabitants' point of view. The third strategy was the Narrative Strategy. This strategy wanted to bring storytelling skills to the participants in order to create stories that help the construction of collective memory from the point of view of the local community. Developing writing exercises and collaborative storytelling workshops, the participants created eight stories to be implemented in the final transmedia product.

The fourth strategy was the Creating Content Strategy, where members of La Loma Media-Lab developed a variety of communicative products in order to create the transmedia project #noescomolapintan. Specifically, products such as collaborative cartographies, video games, illustrations, timelines, stop-motions videos, comics, video clips, short videos, photographs and radio programs were produced to present the history of La Loma neighborhood, and provided this community with social and cultural strategies for dealing with the impacts of the armed conflict. In short, the overarching strategy of this transmedia project was to have a main narrative (that of the original history of La Loma neighborhood from the victims' point of view) and extend this original narrative into five different products in order to create a transmedia product.

The final phase, the Dissemination Strategy, aimed to present and disseminate the results of this transmedia project to other civil society and victims' groups through the alliances made between La Loma Media-Lab and nongovernmental organizations. In order to do this, we disseminated the results in three levels: first, we delivered an academic seminar and workshop at EAFIT University in Medellin in May 2016 to present the results to academics and organizations from Antioquia. Furthermore, we presented the results developing another academic seminar and workshop at Javeriana University in Bogotá (the capital of Colombia) to present the results to academics, NGOs, INGOs, mass media and organizations based on the capital of the country. The presentation of results was directed toward two key institutions of the Colombian Government: the Centre of Historic Memory (CNRR) and the Colombian Human Rights Office. Following this first level, we then focused on disseminating the results inside the community of La Loma by delivering workshops, presentations and organizing a cultural festival in December 2016. The rationale behind the organization of this event was to show to the community how it is possible to claim justice, truth, reparation and human rights in context of violence using communicative and transmedia strategies. For the final phase, we presented the results of this transmedia project internationally. We disseminated an 'informative pack' about this initiative presenting this project and key results using the networks of our project partners UNHCR (The United Nations Refugee Agency), COALICO (The international coalition against the involvement of boys, girls and youth in the armed conflict in Colombia) and EAI (Audiovisual School Project) in order to address stakeholders and key institutions.

Components of the Transmedia Social Project #noescomolapintan

As we described earlier, one of the main characteristics of the armed conflict in Medellin city is that, often erroneously, illegal groups have been related to some local communities, creating an environment of dangerous stereotypes and rumors inside the population. In the last twenty-five years, some actors such as paramilitary and guerrilla groups and the Colombian army had tried to establish symbolic orders in urban social contexts around the idea that 'killing civilians is allowed in this neighborhood because these people do not support our actions and they are against us' (Program for Peace 2010, 34–35). For this purpose, they were creating this stigmatizing narrative inside those communities and neighborhoods, introducing a dangerous symbolic dichotomy between the good people (civilians supporting legal or illegal armies) and the bad people (civilians supporting no-violent actions, claiming human rights in the midst of the conflict and protesting against any kind of ties with legal or illegal army groups). Those constructions of stigmatization are part of narrative strategies that legal and illegal actors have been developing in La Loma to create new symbolic orders and, through them, gain the support of civilians in the midst of this armed conflict. Thus, it is clear that this approach is highlighting the militarization of civil society as a war strategy, and particular constructions of official and nonofficial narratives are the result of this operationalization of ideology into public collective narratives. The result: the official narrative of stigmatization that if you are an inhabitant of La Loma in Medellin you are a dangerous person who probably support guerrilla or paramilitary groups and lives in a 'no-go area' of the city.

In this context, and after developing different workshops with the residents of La Loma, we found that this stigmatization is one of the main problems of the community in terms of building social cohesion and recognition. Furthermore, in order to establish interpretations about what has been happening in

more than three decades in La Loma, this transmedia project is an example of the permanent tension between official narratives about war created by the Colombian government, the Colombian army, paramilitary and guerrilla groups ('the official warriors'), and nonofficial narratives created by civil society organizations, social movements, civilians and victims ('the unofficial war actors'). In other words, one of the main contributions of this transmedia project was to present these nonofficial narratives regarding the armed conflict in La Loma from the victims' perspective, analyzing how these narratives evidence the expressive dimensions of victims' collective action and resistance in the public sphere and their impact.

The principal narrative component of #noescomolapintan is the main story regarding the history of the neighborhood. In order to create this first narrative element, the inhabitants of La Loma made a collaborative story, called 'Our History', during the workshops, using timelines, cartographies and photography. In this story, three residents of the families that founded the neighborhood in 1940 are the focus point to introduce main historical events important for the community, showing processes of communal resistance in the midst of the armed conflict. The community also created four different stories, focusing on different groups of residents to expand the principal story and create a transmedia narrative. The components are video clips presenting the story of the 'Paniagua Folk Music Band', the video game 'Talla de Reyes' that address the tale of the collective of street art of La Loma, stop motions showing the anecdotes of two religious collectives that celebrate Easter week making processions every year, and the comic 'La Loma Salsa Club' that highlight the story of the salsa club in the neighborhood. As a result, this transmedia project created a website and a Facebook page where it is possible to access all these transmedia products.

Furthermore, and following the experience of the project of the Children's Audiovisual School (EAI) of Belén de los Andaquíes in Caquetá, Colombia, #noescomolapintan offered training and education in new technologies, storytelling, audio and video production for children of La Loma during the time of the Media-Lab project. One of the main aims of the EAI is to inspire children to create, develop and disseminate multimedia narratives, audio-visual stories, chronicles and news about their personal social context, recreating through these audio-visual narratives their own visions of themselves and their territory. Any children of the area (older than seven years) can approach the EAI with a story to tell, and the school offers him/her different alternatives to produce it. The child has to conduct the whole process: create the narrative, take pictures, do the editing and develop the digital soundtrack, receiving help from tutors (usually former members of the EAI). As a final stage, the audio-visual product is projected on a big screen placed out in the street in front of the producer's residence, transforming the street into a space where town people can watch the audio-visual piece and discuss local issues. Finally, we followed this methodology by producing three short videos with children of the neighborhood to address the role of new generations in the construction of the collective future of La Loma.

After different working sessions with the participants, it was decided that the best method for addressing the history of resistance of the inhabitants of La Loma in the midst of the armed conflict was presenting La Loma neighborhood from a counter-public point of view. The meaning of the Spanish sentence 'no es como la pintan' in English is 'it is not what you think it is'. This sentence was the catalyst for creating the main narrative of this transmedia product, and the reason behind the name of the project #noescomolapintan. For this community, some people cannot have senses of belonging with the territory as a consequence of the war, and they feel shame of belonging to a neighborhood where everybody believes that it is a place of horror and sadness. A few residents believe that one of the

biggest impacts of the armed conflict in La Loma is the impossibility to be part of your community again, after you witnessed armed conflict actions, such as massacres or extrajudicial killings. Therefore, the stigmatization or defamation to particular groups of people inside those communities (including human rights defenders, victims or witnesses) are some of the main consequences of this long-term armed conflict; affecting the construction of collective narratives of belonging and representations of cultural memories for part of those social groups. As a result, one of the aims of #noescomolapintan is to overcome this problem and change these perceptions inside the community itself.

Conclusion

This transmedia project highlights how the community of La Loma had understood cultural memory, social recognition and solidarity as social and generational institutions, and therefore they had developed transmedia narratives to provide senses of memory, recognition and solidarity to generations that do not have a formalized memory as a consequence of a lack of fixed points with the past. As a consequence, #noescomolapintan became the realization of sociocultural belonging, affection and assimilation that shapes the dynamics of association and dissociation in La Loma. The narratives and representations developed at #noescomolapintan are establishing historical truths about what happened in armed conflict confrontations, providing degrees of reparation and symbolic restitution to the victims. Thus, the efforts of the inhabitants of La Loma are addressing the idea of the public sphere as a place to disclose memories, identities and narratives in the communicative activity, corresponding with the human condition of plurality and freedom through visibility, recognition and representation in public spaces.

Furthermore, this transmedia project is addressing the relationship between trauma theory and constructions of traumatic memory as a tool to contest the past in La Loma for part of victims' groups. It is clear that in this neighborhood this aspect of traumatic memory is crucial to understand how particular groups of victims can apprehend and create transmedia narratives about their past after witnessing traumatic events, such as massacres, displacements or other experiences of violence. In this context, the development of transmedia narratives is a clear example of how constructions of memory, recognition and solidarity are a healing process for victims in contexts of armed conflict. Thus, the development of transmedia products to construct memory narratives is based on expressive activism as an instrument to exercise political and social actions in the public spheres of this Colombian city.

In conclusion, then, the case of #noescomolapintan is an example of how subjectivity, transmedia narratives and expressive dimension can create social agency to generate collective actions of memory, recognition and solidarity in armed conflict contexts. As this case shows, feelings such as pain, suffering, fear, anxiety or rage can be the main motivators to encourage the development of transmedia projects. The construction of transmedia narratives is not just a rational or formal victims' collective action; it can also combine, at the same time, different formal or substantives levels of rationality and non-rationality. In summary, the case of La Loma is a striking example of the importance and relevance of emotional reasons and expressive dimensions as a key element behind transmedia social projects and how, through this method, human rights can be exercised from communicative perspectives in armed conflict scenarios.

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